RTAP
BULLETIN
FLORIDA RURAL TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
WINTER—VOL. 14, NO. 4

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2016 Transportation Disadvantaged Awards

This year the Florida Public Transportation Association and the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged again combined their annual conferences and workshops. The FPTA/CTD 2016 Annual and Training Workshop was held in Jacksonville on December 11-14, 2016.

As tradition, the highlight of the CTD portion of the workshop was the annual Awards Banquet, at which the 2016 Transportation Disadvantaged Awards were presented. The 2016 award winners included:

Dispatcher/Scheduler of the Year: Arlene Thompson, Votran – Volusia Transit Management

Designated Official Planning Agency of the Year: Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization

Urban CTC of the Year: Senior Resource Association, Indian River CTC

Driver of the Year: Ann Bernick, Brevard County Space Coast Area Transit

Local Elected Official of the Year: Councilwoman Patricia "Patti" Johnson, City of Pinellas Park

Outstanding Coordinating Board of the Year: Hillsborough County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board

Rural Community Transportation Coordinator of the Year: Gulf County Transportation, Gulf County CTC

Safety Award of the Year: Votran - Volusia Transit Management, Volusia County CTC

Volunteer of the Year: Doug Hall

Sheila Winitzer Shining Star Award: Lisa Bacot

William G. & Budd Bell Lifetime Achievement Award: Richard P. Shine

2016 CTD Award Winners

FDOT
CUTR
USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

William G. and Budd Bell Lifetime Achievement Award

Left to Right: Richard Shine and Marion Hart, CTD Chair

Sheila Winitzer Shining Star of the Year Award

Left to Right: Lisa Bacot and Marion Hart, CTD Chair

Combined FPTA-CTD Annual Conference and Training Workshop Drew Record Numbers!

The second joint FPTA/CTD Annual Conference and Training Workshop, combining the annual conferences and workshops of the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA) and the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) proved to be a huge success! Held from December 11-15, 2016 in Jacksonville, the event attracted a record 600+ transportation professionals.

The 2016 event was an interesting and enjoyable event with a substantial and diverse program including topics for everyone in the industry, whether they provide fixed route or paratransit services. There were sessions on planning, operations, maintenance, marketing, financial management and professional development.

Florida RTAP was active participants at the combined 2016 FPTA/CTD Workshop and Annual Conference, working with staffs of the Florida Public Transportation Association and the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged in planning the program. The Florida RTAP program sponsored three presentations – one on working with nonprofits boards and two by the Easter Seals Project Action staff on travel training and managing effective call centers. Additionally, the project team assisted the FDOT RTAP project administrator in presenting an overview of the Florida RTAP program.

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OUR MISSION

The Florida RTAP provides training, continuing education, and technical assistance to those who provide or assist in the provision of public transportation services in rural and small urban communities in order to promote the coordinated delivery of safe, efficient, and effective transit services.

Editor: Jay Goodwill Designer: Stephanie Lewis

SPOTLIGHT—Ed Clark, Director of Transportation, St. Johns County Council on Aging, Inc.

Each SPOTLIGHT edition highlights one of our many energetic Florida RTAP transit professionals and allows these individuals to introduce themselves in their own words. In this issue, the SPOTLIGHT is on Ed Clark, Director of Transportation, St. Johns County Council on Aging, Inc.

Name: Ed Clark

Title: Director of Transportation, St. Johns County Council on Aging, Inc.

Birthplace: Irvington, New Jersey

Education: BS Zoology, Florida Atlantic University, 1974; Santa Rosa Ranger Academy, Santa Rosa Community College, 1990; and Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, 1994.

Professional History: Ed Clark is currently the Director of Transportation at St. Johns County Council on Aging, Inc. (SJCCOA) This agency is the Community Transportation Coordinator for St. Johns County and is contracted by the county to provide public transportation including paratransit and deviated fixed route service. St. Johns County is comprised of both small urban and a large percentage of rural area, the county seat is St. Augustine, Americas oldest continuously settled European established city.

Before coming to SJCCOA in 2013, Ed retired as an award winning Chief Ranger in the National Park Service. This career took him to permanent assignments in 6 national parks and many temporary assignments throughout the country. Prior to joining the National Park Service he worked for almost 10 years at Florida Power and Light Company as a planner and construction services engineer. His professional career began in the sciences teaching college and doing research in animal behavior and aquaculture.

Years Working with Current Agency: 3 years

Years Working in Transit Industry: 3 years

Biggest Challenge Working in Paratransit: Continuing to provide high quality community service in the face of the impacts of Medicaid Reform. The loss of funding seriously affected our programs and worse yet adversely affected the people who knew and trusted us to transport them to their medical appointments who now have to ride with other providers.

Personal Benefit Working in Paratransit: Working in paratransit has been one of the more routinely heartwarming ways of dedicating my life to public service. On a daily basis I go home knowing that hundreds of life enhancing trips took place due to the efforts of the great people I work with.

Professional Philosophy: I believe it's my job to lead, not just manage. As such I have to communicate a vision of what our mission is and ensure that our people have all the resources they need to succeed in that mission.

Professional Goal: St. Johns County is at a turning point with respect to transit. We have to move beyond providing reasonable geographic coverage of the county. While we have been successful in doing so and providing reasonably good transit options for the transportation disadvantaged, we must do more. We have to diversify our funding streams so that we can provide 7-day service with longer hours, as well as bus routes that have shorter headways and more frequency. By doing this we will diversify our customer base by attracting choice riders and at the same time greatly enhance the quality/quantity of the service we offer our core TD customer base.

Personal Background: I have a grown son, a former Marine, who works for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's law enforcement branch doing IT and program management work. I live in a small, rural airport community and am lucky enough to keep my vintage airplane in a hangar behind my house so I can go flying regularly. Along with that I raise chickens and have two cats…the cats grudgingly allow me to sleep in "their" bed, after all they figure they rescued me. Along with flying I enjoy shooting, biking, hiking, kayaking, and rock climbing.

Childhood Ambition: I'm lucky to have pursued my childhood ambition of spending my adult life working in public service which started right out of high school when I entered the service.

Inspiration: I have always been inspired by those who display honor, integrity and courage in their lives despite the difficulties they face.

Save the Date: 2017 Public Transportation and Transportation Disadvantaged Legislative Awareness Day

The annual 2017 Public Transportation and Transportation Disadvantaged Legislative Awareness Day will be held on Wednesday, March 15th from 9:00am to 2:00pm at the Florida Capitol. This event is jointly sponsored by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD), the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA) and Florida Association of Coordinated Transportation Systems (FACTS).

This is an opportunity for you to show support for Public Transportation and the Transportation Disadvantaged Program. Make plans to join the hundreds of individuals, businesses and advocates expected at this gathering.

Questions concerning the 2017 Public Transportation and Transportation Disadvantaged Legislative Awareness Day should be directed by email to either FPTA to *LisaBacot@floridatransit.org* or the TD Commission at the *CTDOmbudsman@dot.state.fl.us*

Save the Date: 2017 Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo

On April 28-29, 2017, Florida's best bus drivers and technicians will gather in Daytona Beach to participate in the 2017 Annual Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo. The Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo combines the FPTA and RTAP roadeos into a single, colossal weekend honoring all of Florida's bus maintenance technicians, paratransit and fixed route operators.

The year's event is a joint effort of the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA), the Florida Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP), the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the Florida Association of Coordinated Transit Systems (FACTS), and hosted by Votran.

There will be training opportunities for the participants. The bus operator participant's skills will be tested with a written test and the on-course competition. The maintenance technicians will face similar challenges with a written test and a series of diagnostic tests.

As always, the event concluded will conclude with the Awards Banquet that crowns and recognizes the 2017 champions in the paratransit van and cutaway divisions, the fixed route bus division, and the maintenance technician's team competition.

The first place finishers in both the Cutaway and Mini-Van divisions will represent Florida at the June 10-11, 2017 Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) National Roadeo in Detroit, Michigan.

Registration for the 2017 Annual Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo is expected to open in late February.

National RTAP START (Safety Training and Rural Transit) Train-the-Trainer Workshop

January 18-19, 2017 | Ft Myers, FL

2017 Upcoming Events

The classes and conferences listed below are sponsored by the Florida Department of Transportation and the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida in Tampa. If you would like to attend any of the courses, you will find a course announcement and registration form for each course at *www.floridartap.org* in the Training Calendar section. Click on the course name to download or view training class details. If you have an idea for a training course or would like to host a course, please contact Lisa Staes at *staes@cutr.usf.edu.*

January 30 – February 3, 2017
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation (FT00435)—St. Petersburg, FL

February 13-17, 2017
Instructor's Course for Transit Trainers (FT00562-A)[1]—Tampa, FL

February 28-March 2, 2017
Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance (FT00465)[2]—Jacksonville, FL

March 3, 2017
Reasonable Suspicion and Post-Accident Testing Determination Seminar (FT00546)[2]—Jacksonville, FL

March 8-9, 2017
NTI Procurement for Small and Medium Transit Systems—Tampa, FL

[1] Required course for the Florida Transit Operator Trainer Training Certification.
[2] Register directly with the Transportation Safety Institute (TSI). Fees apply when registering.

Save the Date: 2017 FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop and Transit Safety & Operations Summit

Over 250 transit professionals are expected to be in attendance at the 2017 FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop and Transit Safety & Operations Summit, which will be held at the USF Embassy Suites in Tampa on June 5-7, 2017. This annual workshop and summit is jointly sponsored by the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR).

The annual Florida Transit Safety & Operations Summit, hosted by the Florida Transit Safety and Operations Network, will be held Monday, June 5th. State and national transit safety and operations experts will provide informative presentations on a wide variety of topics.

The traditional two day 2017 Professional Development Workshop, which will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, will offer unique professional development opportunities for Florida's public transportation supervisors, front-line employees, and other key staff in operations, maintenance, marketing, planning and administration. The one-stop workshop provides public transit professionals with an excellent opportunity to learn from industry experts, attend professional development training, learn about research updates, and network with their peers.

Registration for this combined event is expected to open in early April.