

Paducah Area Transit System dedicates new bus facility

"U.S. Senator McConnell in attendance for ceremony"

Paducah Area Transit System celebrated their dedication and grand opening of their new transit facility on May 31, 2002.

United States Senator Mitch McConnell, Vickie Bourne Executive Director of the Office of Transportation Delivery, McCracken County Judge Danny Orazine and PATS Board Chairman Tommy Whittemore cut the ribbon for the grand opening of the PATS facility.

McConnell said the money on the facility was well spent and PATS is a wonderful organization. "I am pleased that I was able to insert a little money in the right place for such an excellent project for this community and its citizens," said McConnell.

Vickie Bourne said, "Public transpor-

tation is a vital part for independent living for individuals to move around. In 1979 few bus systems were in operation, but PATS was willing to provide quality care to maintain a bus system for their community. We are grateful to Senator McConnell for helping to provide the funding for this magnificent

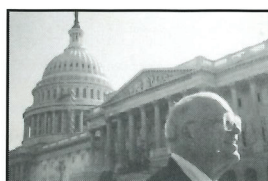
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U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell and OTD Executive Director Vickie Bourne unveil the bronze plaque on the outside of the PATS facility.

Kentucky delegations thanks Washington dignitaries

Kentuckians for Better Transportation, KBT, organized a Washington D.C. fly-in for transportation represen-



Jack Fish

tatives meet with their congressional members. This was made possible by the outstanding organization of KBT Executive Director Jack Fish.

KPTA President and TARC Executive Director Barry Barker, RTEC Executive Director, Shirley Cummins,

RTEC Board member Diana Napier, Jack Fish, and Mike Hancock, with

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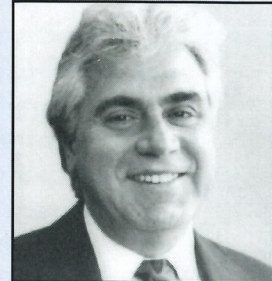
Diana Napier, RTEC Board Member, U.S. Representative Hal Rogers, and Shirley Cummins, Executive Director of RTEC.

*Send KPTA news items to:
Pam Shepherd
pam.shepherd@ftsb.org*

Dear KPTA Members:

Picture this! A seamless statewide network of rail and express bus routes providing convenient transportation for citizens across the Commonwealth. While we're at it, let's imagine the benefits of such a network.

A quick, efficient and safe network of express bus and rail transportation could provide the mobility for every Kentuckian to live where they want and have access to jobs, education, training and medical services in the area.



Why would a network like this be important? Businesses come, and, regrettably, sometimes go. The geographic location of jobs and key services such as healthcare may shift over time in response to population shifts. Yet, many folks in Kentucky have deep roots to their communities, and do not want to become nomads chasing jobs and services not readily available "close to home." We have businesses searching elsewhere, even offshore, to import workers not because they want to, but because they have to. I believe we can change that.

Much of the transportation infrastructure for this network is already in place. The existing interstate highway system could be utilized for express buses, and existing rights-of-way could be utilized for rail. Local transit systems or other transportation operators could provide feeder service to the various mass transportation centers and intermodal hubs. For example, a van used during the rest of the day for Medicaid transportation or access to elder care sites could be used in the morning to pick up folks and drop them off at an express bus stop. These customers could then, at their discretion, travel to a job some distance away, work through the day, and then return to be picked up by that same van.

Funding for such a network would have to be identified. A plan to implement such a system must be thoughtfully developed. But the result would be a robust, customer-friendly transportation system. With such an important transportation amenity, we could offer a business interested in locating in Kentucky unprecedented and ready access to a statewide workforce. In doing so, we could provide improved economic vitality and income to small, and not so small, communities throughout Kentucky.

Is this proposal a dream? I don't think so. It represents a new way of thinking that would offer our auto-dependent citizens more transportation options and more relaxing ways to travel. And, it would provide non-auto access to everything Kentucky has to offer for citizens and visitors alike.

J. Barry Barker, KPTA President
Executive Director
Transit Authority of River City (TARC)

Porter and Lester compete in CTAA Roadeo

Mike Porter, Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK) and Helen Lester, Bluegrass Community Action (BUS) competed in the National CTAA Roadeo in Austin Texas on May 19, 2002.



One hundred and five drivers participated in two divisions from across the United States in this year's CTAA Roadeo.

Since 1989 Community Transportation Association of America has been recognizing the importance of community transit operators by organizing the National Community Transportation Roadeo. Each year contestants and judges from all over the country converge on one parking lot to enjoy food, song and intense competition.

The Roadeo tests the skills of transit operators in the areas of driving, pre-trip inspection, wheelchair loading and securement. Plus, participants took a general knowledge written test. Awards were presented to the top five contestants in both the van

and small bus divisions. A Ricon Driver of the Year Award was also presented to the division winner who won by the largest margin. Awards were presented at a dinner banquet on the night of the roadeo.

Porter was the KPTA Roadeo winner in 2001 and received a paid trip to represent KPTA and Kentucky in the National CTAA Roadeo.

Lester placed second in the KPTA Roadeo and BUS paid to send her to the National Roadeo.

Porter and Lester were competing in their first CTAA Roadeo. Porter placed 22nd out of 82 participants with a score of 736. Lester finished in 36th position with a score of 692.

Congratulations to both participants on their first competition.

Sue Jeffers and David Ware with BUS were roadeo judges.



Croley-Peppers and Juett give presentation on employment transportation at CTAA Conference

Robin Croley-Peppers and Kalem Juett (Office of Transportation Delivery Project Managers) gave a presentation at the CTAA Conference in Austin, Texas on May 23, 2002.

Their presentation was entitled "Moving Ahead: Financing and Sustaining Employment Transportation Services". The session was to demonstrate the value of employment transportation, this workshop explored ways that your community can diversify funding sources to sustain employment transportation services.

They provided information on the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Delivery Program in Kentucky.



Kalem Juett and Robin Croley-Peppers, Office of Transportation Delivery Project Managers, during their CTAA Conference presentation.

Lextran offers 25-cent summer fare for cleaner air

LexTran officials have announced a special Summer Reduced Fare Program, which will drop fares to 25 cents from June 1st through September 31st.

The program will be funded by a \$311,600 Federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality grant. The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet grant will make up the difference between the regular fare and the reduced fare for the three months of the program.

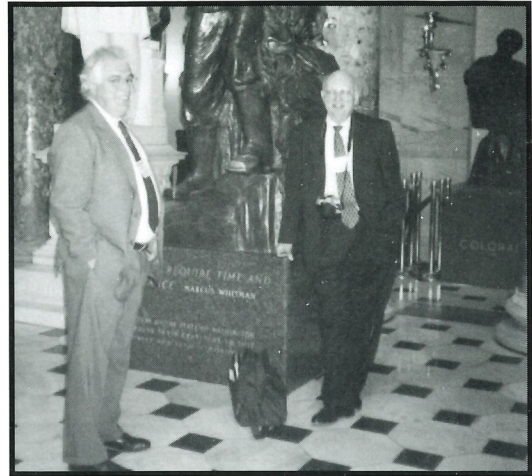
"It's very important to understand that LexTran isn't losing fare box revenue with this program. Our riders will benefit from money being brought in from outside our state, according to Jenny Williams, LexTran's Director of Marketing."

Lexington was chosen for the program because of Air Quality issues causing the city to be close to a non-attainment area.

The program is designed to help cut down on ground level ozone pollution by getting more people to ride public transportation rather than taking their personal automobile. LexTran will be promoting the program by pointing out that it is cheaper to "go see someone" on the bus than it is to "call" them-since a phone call is 35 cents. Mr. Ozone will also be promoting the 25-cent fare and will be giving other "tips" to help Lexington cut down on pollution.

LexTran and the Lexington Mobility Office will be coordinating special programs during the Ozone season which include Ozone Alerts being made available to area TV stations, a "Quarter Back Sack" with a local radio station, a fund-raiser with another radio station, and a picnic that kicks off the program. "It is our goal for people to see and hear about the 25-cent fare and it's purpose every time you turn around" said Jenny Williams, Director of Marketing for LexTran. "Our other goals are to increase ridership on LexTran and have no Ozone Alerts in our area this season, she continued."

To make it easier for new riders to ride LexTran, new information signs are scheduled to be installed in early June. All new shelter locations will have signs and many of the major LexTran stops throughout town. The signs will have a route map, showing where the passenger is on the route and list all times the bus comes by that particular bus stop. The customer information number and website will also be listed. "We want to make it as easy as possible to get the information you need to ride the bus, said Ms. Williams. We also hope the signs will alleviate any apprehension new riders



KPTA President Barry Barker and KBT Executive Director Jack Fish during Washington Fly-in.

Kentucky delegations

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Secretary Codell's office, were the Kentucky delegations to Washington D.C.

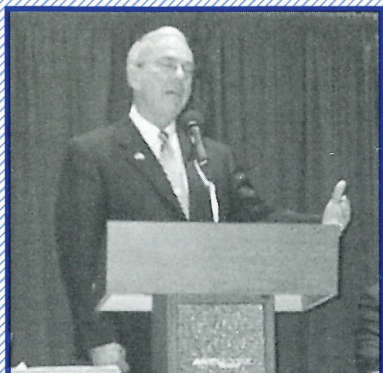
The Kentucky delegation were in Washington thanking Congressman Hal Rogers and other members of the Kentucky Congressional Delegation for their support of transportation.

Public transit funding for Kentucky has more than doubled. Kentucky highway users pay a 2.85 cents per gallon tax on motor fuels that goes into the federal mass transit account. Kentucky will get back about \$40 million for transit next fiscal year, up from \$18 million two years ago. Kentucky sends about \$80 million annually to Washington for mass transit account.

Portions taken from Mount Vernon Signal, May 30, 2002.



Transportation Conference Activities



Kentucky Governor Paul Patton and Secretary of Transportation James Codell speaking during the KBT conference in Frankfort.



John Carr, KYTC Deputy State Highway Engineer spoke to the KBT Conference and Steve Rowland, right, with LexTran.

Kentucky Transit Providers attend activities at KBT and CTAA Conferences



Beecher Hudson (Louisville Red Cross) and Jim Seibert (TANK) during the dinner at the KBT Conference.



Ray Young, Maysville Transit and Shirley Lewis, CVADD at the KBT Conference in Frankfort.



Beecher Hudson (Louisville Red Cross WHEELS), Pam Whitter (HART), Gina Boaz (Green River ADD), and Bonnie Rhoads (Owensboro Transit) during CTAA Expo in Austin Texas.



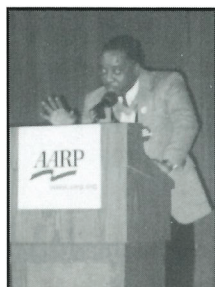
Aaron Cox (Kentucky River Foothills), Rajan Shah (GRITS), Gary Kitchin (PATS), and Louis Lindsay (GRITS) during the dinner at the CTAA Conference in Austin Texas.

Transit providers hold rally at the Capitol Rotunda

Kentucky Transit providers joined forces with the Kentucky Senior Citizens and AARP for a rally at the Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort on February 26, 2002.

Senior citizens from across Kentucky arrived in Frankfort in transit vehicles. They met with their legislators and had a luncheon at the Civic Center.

Beecher Hudson, KPTA Vice-President and Transportation Director of the American Red Cross WHEELS in Louisville spoke to the crowd. He asked the individuals how many of the senior citizens arrived in Frankfort on either



Beecher Hudson

a Community Action van, a TARC bus or a senior citizen van? Almost all hands were raised in the air. He said this is public transportation and it gives you the freedom of independence. He reiterated the importance of supporting and funding public transportation for all citizens of Kentucky.



Ray Young, Maysville Transit and Jim Seibert, TANK listen to the luncheon speakers at the Civic Center.

Paducah Area Transit

Continued from Page 1

facility designed for public transportation."

PATS General Manager Gary Kitchin credits Senator McConnell with providing the funds to make the renovations on the building possible.

"I can't say enough to express our appreciation for Senator McConnell's help in obtaining the \$2.4 million discretionary grant that provided funding for this wonderful new facility," Kitchin said. "We are very appreciative of his efforts on behalf of PATS, and his support of community mass transit in general. Without his help this new facility would have remained just a dream. Now, with his help, it's very much a reality.

The new central station went into service March 18, 2002. It is already a big hit with regular PATS riders, providing an indoor heated and air conditioned transfer point with rest rooms and other amenities.

The grant, spearheaded by McConnell, also contained funding for several new vans that are already in service, and three new buses scheduled to arrive in January.

Kitchin says one of the side benefits of the project is preserving a wonderful old building in Paducah's scenic Lower Town area.

Kitchin says it is appropriate that new headquarters also carries PATS into a third decade of service to the community. In addition to the direct benefits

to passengers, the new building allows the transit system to bring all operations under one roof.

"By having our offices at the central transfer point, our staff and management people are more ready available to talk with riders, allowing our passengers to communicate their needs and provide suggestions for service improvements," Kitchin said.

"Mass transit greatly enhances the quality of life for Paducah by those who actually ride on the system. It is obviously useful for the disabled and our senior citizens. It gives them access to the mall and other shopping areas," Kitchin said.

The bus system began operation in February 1981. Today PATS buses carry about 12,500 riders per month on the fixed-route system and thousands more during special events such as the American Quilter's Society Show in April. The quilt show provides the system's busiest single week.

Portions taken from West Kentucky News, June 6, 2002, p. 1.

**Send KPTA news articles to
pam.shepherd@ftsb.org.**

Louisville Wheels Driver Honored

American Red Cross WHEELS Driver Rhonda Heightchew recently received the Community Service Award from Seven Counties Services.

Rhonda transports mentally disabled passengers from Henry County to the Welcome House facility in Shelbyville. She was recognized for the extra special care that she gives her riders.

As an example, on one trip Rhonda recognized that one of her passengers was not acting in her usual manner. She stopped the van and began talking to the lady.

After some time, she finally got the rider to tell her that she was experiencing chest pains. Rhonda got on the radio, requested that EMS be sent to her location, and comforted the passenger until they arrived.

Knowing her riders and caring about their welfare allowed Rhonda to quickly react to a potentially life threatening situation. This is community transportation at its best.

The Louisville Area Chapter of the American Red Cross is very proud of Ms. Heightchew and feels fortunate to have her on our WHEELS team.

Region 6 brokerage begins July 1, 2002

Coordinated Transit Group, LLC has been awarded the Medicaid Brokerage for region 6. Reverend William Curry is the CEO and General Manager of the Louisville based business.

Human Service Transportation Delivery (HSTD) brokerage will begin providing Medicaid transportation services to residents in Louisville and surrounding counties beginning July 1, 2002.

Coordinated Transit Group began providing TANF transportation on January 1, 2002.

The Office for Transportation Delivery is very supportive of Region 6 and getting them started as the final brokerage to enter the HSTD program.

All 14 transportation brokers have renewed their HSTD brokerage contracts according to OTD Executive Director Vickie Bourne.

All Medicaid transportation needs for Jefferson, Bullitt, Shelby, Oldham, and Spenser should be referred to region 6 at 1-866-584-5158

Transit providers explain funding issues to the BGADD

Transit agencies in the Bluegrass Area Development District (BGADD) provided information about their systems to the Transportation Committee during the May meeting. Agencies represented were: Sue Jeffers (BUS), Bob Busch (CATS), Aaron Cox (Kentucky River Foothills), Ed Brady (ARC WHEELS Lexington) and Pam Shepherd (FTSB).

Committee members gave presentations on their individual systems and explained how federal, state and local funding is used for public transportation.

LexTran Bus Shelters installed

Installation of the new LexTran bus shelters began in November. A total of twenty shelters were in place by January. They are placed at locations where there is high ridership. The shelters feature seating for two and a wheelchair space.

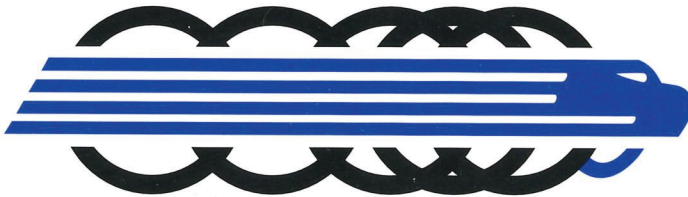
The shelters are constructed with durable screening to reduce maintenance costs. This construction also provides the same protection against the elements as glass walls. LexTran hopes to continue adding more shelters in the future.

**Call FTSB
if you have
KPTA Newsletter Items.
859/233-0066.**

Thought for the Day

*"You can travel all over
the world,
But unless you have a
receptive mind you
might as well save your
fares and stay at home"*

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