

## KPTA's Southeast Coalition on Mass Transit Meets with Governor

On Wednesday, April 24, 1996, the "Southeast Coalition on Mass Transit," along with KPTA President Beecher Hudson, met with Governor Paul Patton to discuss public transit needs.

The Southeast Coalition on Mass Transit are all members of KPTA. The coalition is comprised of the following systems: Rural Transit

Enterprises Coordinated, Inc. (RTEC); Daniel Boone Development Council, Inc. (DBDC); Harlan County Community Action Agency, Inc. (HCAA); Sandy Valley Transportation Services, Inc. (SVTS); and LKLP Community Action Agency, Inc.

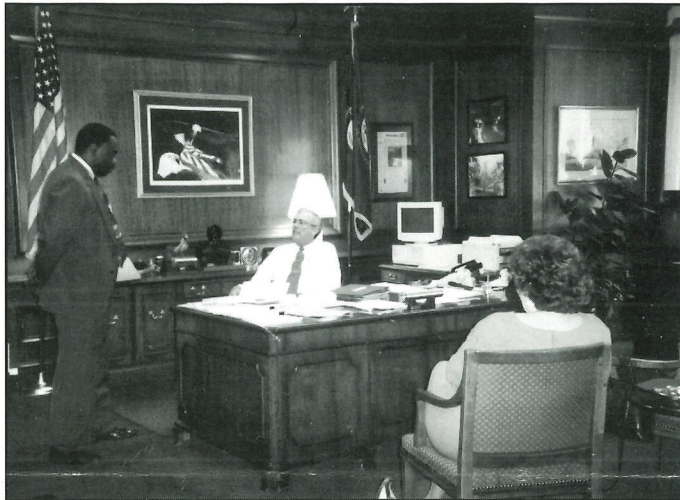
Initially, representatives of these agencies all presented an overview of their systems and their needs. KPTA President Beecher Hudson talked about the need for coordination among state agencies

(especially Medicaid) to utilize available funding in a more efficient manner. Hudson praised the governor for his Empower Kentucky initiative, and he thanked him for supporting the increase in this year's public transit funding.

Governor Patton then asked questions about funding at the federal level, and

Hudson told him that the larger transit agencies like TARC, LexTran, and TANK had received the highest cuts, but that all 5310 and 5311 agencies had taken cuts as well. Finally, the governor made the group aware that he understood public

transit's situation and that the funding picture for the federal and state governments was going to be very troublesome due to the federal deficit reduction budget.





## TARC Celebrates Try Transit Week

Louisville's Transit Authority of River City recently observed APTA's Try Transit Week, a time set aside to stress the importance of public transportation in the community.

Running from May 13-17, each day of the festivities had a different theme: Monday, May 13 was Transit in Our Community Day, with a community awareness event kicking off the week in Jefferson Square; Tuesday the 14th was Breathe Easy Day, when TARC unveiled their first compressed natural gas trolley and stressed the environmental and health benefits of public transit; Wednesday was TARC Step on Board

Day, with TARC inviting new and estranged riders to come aboard and "visit" their local transit system; Thursday the 16th was Try TARC Day, with special events on the buses and local mystery "riding stars" including radio personalities and TARC's mascot, Bus Bunny; and Friday, May 17 was Appreciation Day, with TARC recognizing its transit workers and customers.

Congratulations to TARC for a successful promotion of public transportation in the Louisville area.

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## Express Routes Take Unemployed to Work

Louisville is another city that, like Detroit, has suffered from the migration of jobs to outlying suburbs. Louisville has seen an expanding job base during the past couple of years, but those areas most in need of new job opportunities are virtually shut off from these suburban industrial parks.

To help solve this problem, the Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency (KIPDA) and the Transit Authority of River City (TARC) joined forces last year to develop an innovative approach to the age-old problem of isolation. The JOBLINKS project's goal is to prove how vital effective transportation services can be in helping people obtain and maintain employment.

The first step for KIPDA was to select the target area in West Louisville, an area ravaged by unemployment. Next, TARC

designed a new bus route to the Bluegrass Industrial Park on the East side of the city. The new route turned what had been a two to three-hour journey into a forty-minute trip.

"Jobs in the local neighborhood (in West Louisville) are just not plentiful," says Stephen Yates, marketing director for the JOBLINKS demonstration project.

To publicize the new route, KIPDA developed a coalition of community-based organizations serving Louisville, including homeless groups, job training organizations, employment centers and more. These organizations were critical to the program because they provided the client base for the route. KIPDA also worked directly with employers in the industrial park.

"The companies want transportation—they are just hesitant to provide funds for it," says

Yates. "Our program has really opened up awareness on the part of employers that transportation is not just a governmental issue and that it can have a positive impact on their operations."

KIPDA has begun evaluating the new service through a surveying effort. Forty respondents thus far have indicated that they use the service every day.

The program is also a success in TARC's eyes. Agency officials had worried that the new route could adversely affect ridership on other TARC routes in the vicinity. So far, however, ridership remains steady throughout the system.

As illustrated by the KIPDA-TARC model, sometimes the simplest approach is the most effective.

From Community Transportation Reporter, April 1996. pp. 28-29.

The Kentucky Public Transit Association would like to express our condolences to Sue Jeffers of BUS, who lost her husband, Harold B. Jeffers, on Monday, May 20, 1996. We would also like to belatedly express condolences to our KPTA attorney and lobbyist Oliver Barber in the recent loss of his mother and father.



## APTA Survey Shows Impact of Budget Cuts

In a survey of 130 transportation providers across the nation, the American Public Transit Association found that approximately half of state and local public transit agencies have increased fares, decreased services, and laid off workers. This trend is due to dramatic budget cuts over a two-year period.

It is becoming harder for transit operators to provide bus service to the work force, the elderly, and the disabled. Also, the lack of funding has put a damper on expansion

plans in areas of high growth.

The federal transit aid program totals \$4.1 billion this year, down about 12 percent from 1995. Operating grants which state and local systems use to keep fares reasonable and to maintain vehicles were reduced by one half in a period of two years. President Clinton's proposed increase to \$500 million next year is not going over well as Congress tries to balance the budget.

See Conference of Minority Transportation Officials, May 1996.

## Morehead Sees Changes in Route, Fare, and Fleet

On July 1, Morehead's one-way fee increased from 25 cents to 50 cents, except for senior citizens, who will continue to pay the quarter rate. This increase will help make up for lost revenue caused by a decline in ridership and federal assistance. According to Tammy Catron, who manages the service, this fare hike was necessary to keep Morehead Area Transit in operation.

Along with the increase, the route also changed as of July 1. The new route, based on the results of a survey, includes more stops at Heritage Place, downtown, the shopping centers, and Morehead Estates.

With the help of federal and state funds, the city of Morehead will also purchase a new 14-passenger bus equipped with a wheelchair lift, which will enable it to retire a 1981 model.

## KBT Urges Delegation Support for Public Transit Funding

Kentuckians for Better Transportation went to Washington recently to discuss transportation legislation with the Kentucky Congressional Delegation. Noting that 120 Kentucky counties are served in one way or another by public transit, KBT urged a more equitable return of gas tax revenue going into the Mass Transit Account.

"Thirty cents on the dollar just doesn't make any sense," said Fish. Ward pledged to cosponsor legislation that would give Kentucky a better return.

## Garbage on the Go

One of the next alternative fuels for transit buses could come from your local trash dump. Called compressed landfill gas (CLG), it is formed from decaying garbage. A pilot plant in California is already cutting landfill odors and methane emissions while fueling a 13-vehicle fleet of passenger vans and diesel-powered trucks with an equivalent of 25,000 gallons of gasoline. The CLG meets California Air Resources Board specifications, can be used in any natural gas vehicle and has emissions comparable to compressed natural gas, which are 90 percent lower than gasoline or diesel. Special filters add the equivalent of about five cents per gallon.

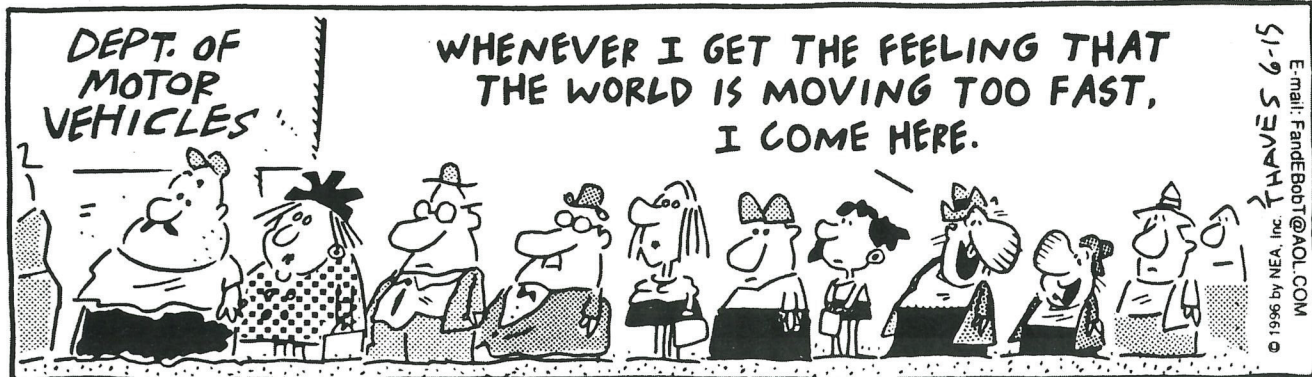
From Urban Transport News, June 5, 1996. p. 95.



From left are KBT President Jack Fish, Third District Congressman Mike Ward, Barry Barker, Executive Director of TARC and Chairman of KBT's Public Transit Committee, and KTC Secretary Fred Mudge.



Frank & Ernest by Frank Thaves



From Harlan Daily Enterprise  
6/15/96 p. 11.

## Wanted to Buy

Seeking used Minivan with ramp and lift.  
Must meet ADA requirements. Please contact  
Marceline Johnson at VanGo K.A.T.S., (606) 273-8687.

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