

# CONNECTIONS

OFFICE OF PUBLIC TRANSIT NEWSLETTER • NUMBER FIVE



## FTA administrator Dorn visits Cedar Rapids and Iowa City

By J.P. Golinvaux

The nation's top public transportation official, Jennifer L. Dorn, visited Iowa July 1 as the first stop on a nationwide tour to promote the benefits of public transit use and transit-related development. Dorn, administrator of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), spoke at a community-building town hall meeting hosted by the city of Cedar Rapids at the Ground Transportation Center with representatives of many transit agencies across Iowa, and Omaha and the Quad Cities. U.S. Representative Jim Leach, an Iowa City Republican, and local elected officials extended a warm welcome to Dorn, and to FTA's Regional Administrator Mokhtee Ahmad, and other FTA staff who participated in a series of meetings and tours to launch Dorn's "Community-Building Days" initiative.

The purpose of the event was to assist communities and business leaders in thinking about new ways to capitalize on economic development opportunities offered by their transit systems. Transit riders shared their concerns about the importance of public transit in their lives, while transit managers emphasized the need for greater equity in funding for bus replacement, and discussed issues such as transit-intensive communities and reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21).

Dorn praised Five Seasons Transportation and Parking (FST&P), the city-owned public transit system in Cedar Rapids, for its pioneering use of alternative fuels, like corn and soy-based fuels, and remarked that Cedar Rapids has become a model for other cities because it focuses on customer's needs and has been successful in implementing public-private partnerships. Dorn also announced grant approval for constructing a second intermodal transportation facility in Cedar Rapids.

Administrator Dorn's visit included a ride on FST&P's hybrid electric bus, as well as an orientation to present and future sites of pending FTA-funded facilities in both Cedar Rapids and Iowa City. Dorn commented that intermodal transportation centers are catching on across the country, and was pleased with the prospect of a transportation center in Iowa City that would include an intercity bus stop and stops for the Iowa City and University of Iowa's CAMBUS transit systems, as well as a day

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**Administrator Dorn participates in a ribbon cutting ceremony**



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## Director's Column

By Peggi Knight



As most of you now know, this will be my last director's column for the Connections newsletter. I have accepted another position within the Iowa Department of Transportation as the director of the Office of Transportation Data. Michelle McEnany will be taking on the duties of director of the Office of Public Transit in addition to her role as director of the Office of Aviation. For the last several months I have had the opportunity to direct both the Office of Public Transit and the Office of Transportation Data at the DOT. It was very difficult to decide between the two offices, as I have thoroughly enjoyed my transit experience. I spent 11 years in the Office of Transportation Data before coming to transit, so the unexpected opportunity to lead the office and return to my engineering roots was one that I could not pass up. It has been a pleasure to work with all of you for the past two years. You welcomed me with warmth and a spirit of cooperation, and I have developed a tremendous amount of respect and appreciation for the work that you all do everyday.

I also want to express my appreciation to the staff of the Office of Public Transit, and share with all of you the accomplishments that the office was able to achieve over the last year because of the hard work and dedication of all of them.

### Previous Year

#### Coordination

- Statewide Transportation Coordination Advisory Council suggested changes to Section 324A of the Iowa Code. These changes were approved by the Iowa Legislature during the 2002 session. (<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/GA/79GA/Legislation/HF/02100/HF02193/Current.html>)
- Worked with transit regions to develop new vehicle signage policy in response to FTA guidance, and to increase public awareness of the availability of open-to-the-public transit services across Iowa. The policy became effective for all new vehicles on June 1, 2002. ([www.iatransit.com/history/updates/signage\\_policy.htm](http://www.iatransit.com/history/updates/signage_policy.htm))

#### Communication

- Developed transit Web site. ([www.iatransit.com](http://www.iatransit.com))
- Continued to publish Connections newsletters. (They are available on our Web site, [www.iatransit.com](http://www.iatransit.com).)
- Continued transit updates for transit systems and planning agencies via E-mail. (These are also available on [www.iatransit.com](http://www.iatransit.com).)

- Authored brochure on "Health Care and Public Transit," which was then published jointly with Iowa Department of Public Health.
- Authored transit section of "Decision Guide for Older Drivers."

#### Customer Service

- Completely rewrote the Transit Manager Handbook, which is distributed in print as well as available on-line at [www.iatransit.com](http://www.iatransit.com).
- Posted "word-fillable" versions of nearly all standardized forms used by transit systems for funding applications, reporting, vehicle registrations, etc., on-line at [www.iatransit.com](http://www.iatransit.com).
- Developed a model drug and alcohol policy local transit systems may use to meet the revised program testing requirements of 49 CFR Parts 40 and 655.
- Improved the process for transit agencies to review the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the listing of projects that are candidates for statewide capital funding under the Public Transit Management System (PTMS) to ensure requests are included correctly.

#### Advocacy

- Drafted transit portion of the Iowa DOT's position on reauthorization of federal transportation programs. (<http://www.dot.state.ia.us/reauthorization/index.htm>)

- Co-sponsored (with the Iowa Public Transit Association) an image campaign for public transit led by the INTEGER Group of Des Moines.
- Hired and worked with consulting team of TransSystems/Multisystems to develop a statewide implementation plan for deployment of advanced technologies, or "intelligent transportation systems" (ITS), in rural public transit.
- Applied for an additional \$490,000 grant from FHWA for rural transit ITS deployment.
- Worked with IPTA representatives to further refine the PTMS, which is used to allocate federal capital funding available for projects statewide. The changes will help make PTMS policies consistent with efforts to advocate for increased statewide funding.
- Participated with IPTA in discussing Iowa's transit needs with the Congressional delegation in Washington, D.C.
- Worked with IPTA in state legislative issues and Transit Day at the Capitol. Communicated changes in funding to transit agencies.
- Made presentations to League of Cities, Spring 2002 Conference on Public Health, and Older Drivers Conference.
- Presented Iowa's student transportation by public transit rules as an alternative to the national Head Start requirements at two national conferences.

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## Time to voice your opinion on transit programs

By Kay Thede

From “Interstate Maintenance” to “Bus and Bus Facilities,” all federal transportation programs must be renewed or “reauthorized” by Congress periodically to continue. With the highway and transit reauthorization act due to expire on Sept. 30, 2003, the time is right for public input about what should be included in its replacement.

Highway, transit and motor carrier programs were last reauthorized under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), which took effect Oct. 1, 1998.

TEA-21 has been noted for its emphasis on intermodalism and higher overall transportation funding due, in part, to guarantees that virtually all transportation revenue flowing to the federal government from the states will be given back to the states for transportation use.

The basic principles of TEA-21 have received acceptance from a wide range of government entities and interest groups. Although implementation of the many changes required has not been without controversy, this process has helped identify areas where improvements can be made. Many national associations and interest groups have developed recommendations for the upcoming legislation.

The Iowa Department of Transportation supports the basic principles included in TEA-21 and recommends they be continued. In addition, the department has drafted a

statement of recommendations specifically regarding transit to serve as a framework for discussion among other groups in the state.

The Iowa DOT recommends the following transit provisions be included in TEA-21’s successor:

- fund the transit programs at the full amount that can be financed by revenues credited to the mass transit portion of the Highway Trust Fund;
- direct a portion of the federal General Fund to transit programs; *(Many of our national transportation goals and priorities provide social and other economic benefits for the nation.)*
- provide increased flexibility for state and local governments in determining how, when and where transportation resources are spent to maximize the benefit to mobility, safety and the environment;
- avoid unfunded mandates, sanctions, burdensome and highly specific requirements, additional programs, categorization of federal aid, and additional set-asides;
- eliminate or reduce burdensome and unnecessary provisions included in the current and previous acts;
- increase funding available for bus replacement and operations in rural and smaller urban areas in recognition of the importance of transit services provided by bus transporta-

tion agencies in those areas;

- increase funding for the bus portion of the Capital Investment Program (Section 5309) from the current 20 percent to 33 percent of the program; *Bus replacement should receive priority over facilities in the bus portion of the program. Rail New Starts (now receiving 40 percent of the funding) should be reviewed for feasibility, effectiveness and long-term funding implications prior to commitment.*
- develop a minimum guarantee funding distribution formula for transit similar to the minimum guarantee for the highway program; *Typically, less than half of the dollars Iowa contributes to the transit account of the Highway Trust Fund are returned to us in federal transit funding.*
- change the Intercity Bus Assistance Program to allow states more flexibility in determining the amount of funding necessary to accomplish intercity goals, or change the funding for the intercity bus program from the Nonurbanized Area Formula Program to a program with its own funding;
- continue the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) program, maintaining the ability to use other federal programs such as Welfare to Work and Temporary

Assistance to Needy

Families (TANF) as match;

- change the formula used to allocate funds for transit in small urbanized areas to reflect performance factors as is done in the larger urbanized areas;
- streamline the administration of federal transit programs in addition to analyzing the applicability of some regulations on smaller transit systems; *For example, small urban and rural systems receiving JARC or Capital Investment Grant funds should be provided flexibility when faced with the regulations required of larger urban systems.*
- encourage coordination of transportation services among agencies and review charter rules to make the most efficient use of the transportation dollars; and
- avoid new set-asides, sub-categories or sub-allocations from current transit program funds, or the creation of new programs.

To view the DOT draft recommendations for transit and other modes of transportation, visit the Iowa DOT Web site: <http://www.dot.state.ia.us/reauthorization/index.htm>.

Please submit comments on the transit proposals by E-mail to: [michelle.mcenany@dot.state.ia.us](mailto:michelle.mcenany@dot.state.ia.us) by Sept. 30, 2002.

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**Compliance**

- Began program of “assisted self-assessments” of compliance with federal and state program requirements for small urban and regional transit systems to help systems make sure they will not be subject to sanctions in the case of federal review.
- Received favorable findings in financial oversight review conducted by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) contractors.

**Training**

- Hosted multi-state training on newly revised drug and alcohol testing rules for transit from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).
- Hosted multi-state training on federal procurement requirements for public transit.
- Sponsored EXPO of transit ITS technology.
- Hosted training on FTA’s electronic grantmaking and management system.

- Provided approximately 220 fellowships, funded through FTA’s RTAP program or state transit assistance, to allow transit managers, staff and planners to participate in transit training opportunities sponsored by OPT or others.
- Added transit training materials to transit training library.

The time that I have been involved in transit has gone very fast, and has been filled with great experiences. Thank you all for the opportunity to get to know you and the wonderful work that you all do for the citizens of Iowa. No matter where I go, I will forever be a transit advocate!

## Statewide ITS transit deployment plan

**By Kay Thede**

The development of the ITS deployment plan is well underway and will be completed by the end of September. John Dobies, TranSystems, and Carol Schweiger, MultiSystems, presented preliminary findings and a preliminary outline of the plan at the Iowa Public Transit Association meeting held in Davenport last June. These consultants are developing the statewide transit deployment plan and ITS architecture for the state. Working with a steering committee consisting of transit managers and Iowa DOT staff, the consultants are now fine-tuning the direction of the deployment plan. The deployment plan will be based on a needs assessment completed by the consultants earlier this year. For details and to view working papers of the consultant’s findings and the IPTA presentations, visit the transit Web site: <http://www.iatransit.com/links/project.htm>. If you have any questions or comments on the project, contact Kay Thede by calling 515-239-1048, or e-mailing her at [kay.thede@dot.state.ia.us](mailto:kay.thede@dot.state.ia.us).

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care center and parking ramp. Mayor Ernie Lehman presented designs for the pending Iowa City project to Dorn and pointed out the proposed location as part of the bus tour.

Another notable venue of Dorn’s visit was a tour of the Siemens facility in Cedar Rapids and participation in a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a bus bought and equipped by Siemens that will be jointly used by Siemens and FST&P. Dorn also met Cedar Rapids’ Mayor Paul Pate and took part in Cedar Rapids’ Freedom Festival by throwing out the first pitch at the Cedar Rapids Kernels’ game that evening.

Ahmad conveys his personal “thanks” to each of you who hosted or participated in discussions with Dorn at lunch, and during the course of her day in eastern Iowa.



**FTA Administrator Jennifer Dorn speaks at a town meeting**

# Transit's support and commitment to local communities

By J.P. Golinvaux

Public transit in Iowa is committed to supporting communities by providing transportation services in various ways throughout the state. Consideration was given to suggestions received by both Iowa City Transit (ICT) and Coralville Transit (CT) that bus-mounted bike racks would be a much appreciated passenger amenity and would make it easier for certain area residents to use public transit. Since bus-mounted bike racks have been well received by transit users in other university communities, a year ago ICT installed bus bike racks on each of its 21 fixed-route buses, and CT installed racks on its fixed-route fleet of nine vehicles. Each bike rack is mounted on the front of the bus and holds up to two bikes, with cyclists loading and unloading their own bikes. Both transit systems are now reporting good marks for the program after the first year's use.

ICT developed a brochure to assist passengers interested in using the bus bike racks, which the transit officials in Iowa City say has contributed to the project's success. It explains that, for safety reasons, the bus operator is not responsible for loading/unloading any passenger's bike, but can provide instructions. It also emphasizes an important point: bike rack users can minimize loading time by removing any item that might fall off the bike before the bus arrives. Only one hand is needed to deploy the bike rack. As such, a user is able to balance the bike with one hand, while using the other hand to deploy the rack. The user then lifts the bike approximately 14 inches and directs the bike wheels into the appropriately labeled front and rear tire slots. Then, all a user has to do is raise a support arm and position it on top of the bike's front tire.

Each bike rack costs about \$613 and takes a little over an hour to install. Except for lubrication of moving parts when routine preventive maintenance is performed on a bus, there is virtually no other maintenance required.

Ron Logsdon, ICT manager, reports about 250 bus bike rack users are transported each month in the Iowa City area. "Although bus operators were skeptical at first that the racks would get in the way on tight turns, be a visibility problem, or cause schedule delays, none of these problems have been confirmed in use and drivers seem to generally like having the racks available. Over the course of our first year's experience with bus-mounted bike racks, no bike has fallen out of the rack or been damaged. However, several bike owners have forgotten to remove their bikes, but were soon reunited with their property," said Logsdon. Both ICT and CT have received positive comments about this new amenity.

There are three other Iowa public transit systems that have installed bus-mounted bike racks that Iowa DOT's Office of Public Transit is aware of: Bettendorf Transit, Davenport CitiBus, and RIDES (Regional Transit Authority based in Spencer). Bettendorf



**An Iowa City Transit bus transports bicyclists and their bikes**

has had bike racks on its bridge route buses that use the I-74 Bridge to cross the Mississippi River to Moline, Ill., for the past 20 years. Bettendorf Transit's manager, Matt Simaytis, reports they will be equipping five new pending vehicle purchases with bike racks, which would make their entire fixed-route fleet uniformly bike accessible. "Presently, passengers are permitted to bring their bike on board a bus without a bike rack, if space is available," said Simaytis. Davenport has bike racks on two fixed-route buses that serve the cross-town route, which parallels the city's very popular Duck Creek Bicycle Path. RIDES has put bike racks on two buses it assigns to serve the Lake Okoboji area.

APTA and Metro Magazine report that 32 percent of urban transit buses are equipped with bike racks.



**A Coralville Transit bus displays new bicycle racks**

## 50-millionth passenger boards CyRide



**Ames CyRide Manager Bob Bourne congratulates and awards a prize to the 50-millionth rider, Samantha Sorrentino**

**By Donna Johnson**

On a typical winter weekday, Ames Transit Agency (dba CyRide) carries about 22,000 passengers. But Tuesday, Jan. 29, 2002, was not just another day. This date marked a day in CyRide's history; the day the 50-millionth passenger boarded CyRide.

The lucky passenger was Samantha Sorrentino, an Iowa State University (ISU) freshman from Illinois who boarded CyRide's brown bus route at the bus stop on the corner of Storm and Welch. Sorrentino received a \$500 gift certificate to Target stores. The 49,999,999<sup>th</sup> passenger was Stefani Smith. Although boarding just a bit too soon, Smith didn't go away empty handed. Smith won the second place prize of a color inkjet printer.

CyRide didn't stop with the winner and runner-up. They also gave \$50 Target gift certificates to the four passengers (50,000,001 through 50,000,004) that boarded after Samantha. They were, in order: Brent Popadych, Janna Welch, Joe Brown and Joe Krueger.

## Transit involved in Iowa Older Drivers Conference

**By Peter Hallock**

On June 19-20 the Iowa Highway Safety Management System sponsored a forum on "Safe Mobility Decisions for Older Drivers." The management system is a partnership that includes the Iowa DOT and other government and private organizations. The safety of older drivers is a major issue in Iowa. According to the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau, Iowa has 347,397 licensed drivers age 65 or older. Nearly 16 percent of Iowa's drivers are 65 or older, which is the fourth highest percentage in the nation. The state expects its ranks to grow by 30 percent by 2020.

Art Linkletter, who has long served as an advocate for American seniors, spoke on the issues facing us all as we grow older. Other presenters discussed the various effects that aging has on a person's ability to safely operate motor vehicles. Topics included programs designed to either help people undergoing these changes continue to drive safely, or to offer them alternatives for mobility.

Peter Hallock, assistant director of the DOT's Office of Public Transit, explained that Iowa offers public transportation in all areas of the state through its system of urban and regional transit systems. Service levels may not match what people find in the nation's largest cities, but even in rural areas, Iowa's open-to-the-public transit services are designed to help individuals maintain their independence. Craig O'Riley of the DOT's Office of Systems Planning participated on a discussion panel, as



**Art Linkletter speaks to a group of nearly 200.**

did Bill Sabala, a driver for Heartland Transportation, which is a contractor for the Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency.

Forum presenters included representatives from: Federal Highway Administration, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, American Association of Retired Persons, Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau, Iowa/Minnesota American Automobile Association, University of Iowa, Iowa State University Extension, American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, Iowa Department of Public Safety, and transportation officials from Iowa, Florida and Arizona.

# After 30 years in public transit, Fisher retires

By Donna Johnson

On a tip from a friend, Roger Fisher made a phone call to one of the Coralville Transit System (CT) trustees and was hired sight-unseen as the system's newest bus driver. That was back in 1971. Some of you may remember Fisher's friend, Al Baker. Baker was one of the first bus drivers for CT and the friend who shared the tip CT was looking for drivers.

Fisher's career in transit goes back just about as far as the transit system itself. The city of Coralville Transit Commission was organized in August 1969 after brief efforts by a private carrier and local cab service between Coralville and Iowa City were terminated. Two buses were ultimately placed in operation and Coralville Transit (CT) was on its way. At that time, the trustees ran the system and tried anything they thought might work while staying within budget. As drivers, both Fisher and Baker were invited to those first meetings to share thoughts and brainstorm ideas.

In recent conversations with Fisher, he reminisced about his early days with CT. Back then, Fisher held two part-time jobs; bus driver for CT and associate pastor of a Lutheran Church in Iowa City. He remembers when CT received its first new buses in 1976, five Flexibles, and then two Neoplans were added to the fleet in 1981. In the spring of 1982 Fisher was promoted to the position of CT manager and gave up his part-time job



**(Right) Roger Fisher, Coralville Transit manager, receives a plaque of appreciation for 30 years of service. (Above) Roger Fisher and wife, Linda, provide music at IPTA/IDOT Awards banquet.**

in the ministry. He quickly found that due to the age and condition of their fleet, as well as service expansion, CT would need to purchase more buses. In 1984 three Scania's were added. Older buses were eventually replaced with Orion Vs in 1989, and Gilligs were added in more recent years. CT's entire fleet is now ADA-accessible. Fisher says, "Now, after 20 years as manager, I will retire satisfied and happy to have been here for the fun!" Fisher adds, "We have a building now, twice expanded, that holds 10 buses, a bus lift, brake lathe and a pit, an office for the manager and 'on-call' person, a parts room, and a break room that doubles as a conference room when needed."

As the transit programs administrator (TPA) assigned to work with Coralville Transit for several years, I can remem-



ber working with Roger to assess the condition of the CT facility after the flood of 1993. There are still marks on the walls of their facility indicating how high the water rose. About the only thing that didn't receive water damage was Roger's office, which, when designed, was elevated a few feet above the main floor level looking out over the maintenance and storage area. The second addition was done after the flood of 1993 and is hopefully now protected with flood mitigation measures that were taken at the time.

When asked what his plans are for retirement, Fisher looks back to his beginnings and says, "I hope again to preach, and spend more time in hobbies and some leisure with

my wife, Linda." Both Roger and Linda play in the New Horizons [senior citizens] and Iowa City Community Band. Anyone who knows Roger at all knows that he is not only musically talented, and a collector of old Saabs (he has several), but also a very caring person who is committed to helping people. His dedication to his work in public transit has even influenced his wife into accepting the challenge of promoting public transit in their local community and with elected officials. Quite often, Linda tags along at transit functions with Roger and, from time-to-time, has shared with folks from around the state some of the things she and Roger have been working on. Linda attended Roger's final Iowa Public Transit Association awards banquet in Davenport last June where Roger was honored for his many years of service to his community in public transit. In turn, Linda and Roger entertained the audience with their rendition of "America the Beautiful," with Linda on the trombone and Roger on the trumpet.

Roger, your past contributions to public transit have certainly been appreciated and we applaud your continued desire to promote transit in your retirement. You will be greatly missed and we wish you well. Remember, if you are ever looking for a part-time job, there's always a bus driver position open somewhere.

# Who's who in Iowa transit

By Donna Johnson

**"From trains to buses, Bourne's career has been in transportation."**

Although Robert "Bob" Bourne enjoys his hobby of collecting miniature trains and building miles of track, he is no longer "working on the railroad." Bourne got his start in the transportation industry in high school working part-time as a railroad car repairman. He switched to public transit while attending Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., where he obtained two degrees, a bachelors of science degree in mechanical engineering, and a masters of science degree in civil engineering. Bourne's transit career started with the Chicago Transit Authority in 1969. He held numerous positions with the transit agency, and was also a bus driver for a private, fixed-route bus company, and taxi driver for the local cab company. Learning various aspects of the transit industry enabled Bourne to be offered the general manager position of Wilmette, Ill., Municipal Bus System in 1974. Within the first year under Bourne's leadership, their fleet doubled in size, from six to 12 buses. Bourne was anxious to take on a larger operation and became assistant general manager of the North Suburban Mass Transit District in Des Plaines, Ill. Once again, the program grew. In just two short years, the fleet of 88 buses had expanded to 130. After that, Bourne took the



Ames CyRide manager Bob Bourne, right, visits with driver Rick Maxwell.

position of Suburban Bus Operations Manager with the Regional Transit Authority in Chicago, Ill.

In 1981 Bourne moved with his wife, Dr. Joan Grabenstetter, and two young daughters to Iowa, where he accepted a position with Ames Transit Agency (CyRide). This move proved to be both challenging and fulfilling in such a way that he isn't willing to give up the management reigns for a few more years. CyRide began as a city department in September 1976. Ames Transit Agency was formed in 1981 as a result of a unique venture between three funding bodies, the city of Ames, Iowa State University (ISU) administration, and Government of the Student Body. Through joint cooperation, this three-way structure provided the support needed for a small group of dedicated employees to build a comprehensive bus system in Ames, which earned the agency the "All-American City Award." Bourne says "Growth was very fast in the first years of the

transit agency, but has fluctuated somewhat over the years." He encourages readers interested in learning more about the history of CyRide to visit its Web site at [www.CyRide.com](http://www.CyRide.com).

CyRide offers fixed-route, dial-a-ride, and moonlight express service. "The major change that is occurring now is the transition to a prepaid, fare-free system for ISU students," said Bourne. When asked what the success of CyRide is based on, Bourne replied, "It's the group effort of everyone at CyRide; whether they have been here for one day or 25 years." Bourne's humor is noted when he adds, "My job is to raise the money that everyone else spends. I try to annoy my employees often enough so they know that if they do their work correctly, I will go bother someone else. Everyone knows that it is the collective effort of all employees that is responsible for our success."

CyRide enjoys the mix of young people as well as career folks who have been with

CyRide for a long time. Employees range in age from 18 to 75, with a wide variety of personality types. The young people seem to bring a lot of energy to the organization, while the older people help them focus that energy in a positive manner. CyRide has a very strong emphasis on training new employees so they are comfortable with their new job, and can be both safe and productive immediately after training. Everyone is responsible for contributing to the success of the organization, which is why training is focused on safety and productivity.

Bourne has several goals for CyRide over the next few years, including securing funding for building expansion, and adding service to meet the growth of the city of Ames. Bourne sees a need to add at least two new routes and several additional vehicles to keep up with the demand for service. In his personal life, Bourne has been married for 30 years and reports that their two daughters have grown into highly independent women. Emily, 25, is a copywriter in Appleton, Wis., and Katie, 22, recently graduated from Western Illinois University and is starting her career as a management trainee in Osage Beach, Mo. Bourne hasn't given much thought to retirement; which is still a few years away, but intends to leave a capable and compe-

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tent group of drivers, mechanics, dispatchers and supervisors for the next manager so that he or she can concentrate on acquiring funding for future growth.

Bourne has been an Iowa Public Transit Association (IPTA) board member in various capacities and participated on several ad hoc committees. He has also been on the American Public Transit Association (APTA) Small Operations Steering Committee for eight years, and on the Reauthorization Task Force for ISTEA and TEA-21. Bourne says "hopefully, the results of the reauthorization effort will be more money to replace old buses; more formula capital money for efficient bus systems in small cities; and an increase in rural funding. All of these initiatives will bring more capital money into Iowa." Bourne also has represented his peers as a voting member of Iowa DOT's Public Transit Equipment and Facility Management System (PTMS) committee, and has taken an active role in IPTA's annual meeting to discuss projects recommended for funding.

CyRide has been the recipient of several APTA, Iowa DOT and other awards over the years, and Bourne personally received the METRO Magazine's honor as one of the 10 most respected transit managers in North America. We're glad you came to Iowa over 20 years ago Bob, and that you are still representing transit, and now Iowa, in such a positive manner.

## Transit systems honored at annual conference

**By Pam Lee**

Transit systems from Clinton and Davenport were honored by the Iowa Department of Transportation for their accomplishments during the 2001 fiscal year, which ended June 30, 2001.

The city of Clinton's Municipal Transit Administration (MTA) won the award for the most improved urban transit system of the year. The award for the most improved regional transit system went to River Bend Transit (RBT) of Davenport.

The awards were announced June 20 at the Iowa Public Transit Conference in Davenport, which was jointly sponsored by the Iowa Public Transit Association and the DOT. The awards are based on a combination of ridership increases and decreases in the cost per ride.

MTA, which is headed by transportation director Dennis Hart, posted a 14.79 percent gain in ridership. This helped reduce the cost per ride by 9.88 percent during fiscal year 2001. Hart explained that while ridership increased substantially for the paratransit service, the major increase was due to the start of a new route, the Lincoln Way shuttle, which serves the entire commercial area along Lincoln Way in Clinton. This also resulted in significant ridership increases on other routes because the buses were able to operate on schedule. MTA provides public transit service in the city of Clinton.

Ridership on the Davenport-based RBT system increased 51.43 percent, while the cost per ride dropped 16.94 percent. Randy Zobrist, RTB executive director, attributes the 2001 gains to several new contracts, a significant increase in the ridership of the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) program, providing a shuttle service for customers of a medical center during construction of its parking garage, and moderate increases in existing contracts. RBT provides public transit in

Cedar, Clinton, Muscatine and Scott counties. This is the third time RBT has received this award.

Other transit agencies recognized at the conference included the regional transit systems in Fort Dodge (Mid-Iowa Development Association), Ottumwa (Region 10-15 Regional Transit Agency), and Burlington (Southeast Iowa Community Action Organization); and urban transit systems in Marshalltown, Dubuque and Iowa City.

Iowa has 16 regional and 19 urban transit systems.



**Peggi Knight presents Most Improved Urban Transit System of the Year Award to Dennis Hart, Clinton MTA (above) and Most Improved Regional Transit System of the Year Award to Randy Zobrist, River Bend Transit of Davenport (below).**



## State roadeo competition winners

By J.P. Golinvaux

Three Iowa transit vehicle operators are bound for a national competition after their driving skills earned them top honors in Iowa's 16th Annual Public Transit Roadeo held in Davenport June 22. The first place winners in each of the three categories listed will represent Iowa, and their local public transit systems, at the national level:

### Van Division

**First place** - Raleigh Borrer, Ottumwa Transit Authority (OTA)  
**Second place** - La Veta Root, Metropolitan Transit Authority of Black Hawk County  
**Third place** - Kathy Rickertsen, Clinton Municipal Transit Administration

### Small Bus Division

**First place** - Jean Dalsing, Delaware, Dubuque, and Jackson County Regional Transit Authority (RTA)  
**Second place** - Don Sours, River Bend Transit (Davenport)  
**Third place (tie)** - Sue Davis, Delaware, Dubuque, and Jackson County Regional Transit Authority (RTA), and Paul Klimesh, Ames Transit Agency (dba CyRide)

### Large Bus Division

**First place** - Chris Wisher, Ames Transit Agency (dba CyRide)  
**Second place** - Paul Klimesh, Ames Transit Agency (dba CyRide)  
**Third place** - Carl Nelson, Iowa City Transit

First place winners Borrer and Dalsing will represent Iowa in the International Paratransit Roadeo sponsored by the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) at the association's annual meeting in Philadelphia, Pa., in May 2003. Wisher will represent Iowa in the American Public Transit Association's (APTA) International Bus Operator's Roadeo conducted in conjunction with its annual meeting in Las Vegas, Nev., this September.

The roadeo's purpose is to promote and provide recognition for safe driving skills by Iowa's public transit vehicle operators. At this year's state roadeo, 55 operators from 18 transit systems displayed their skills. Each operator performed a series of maneuvers that represent many of the actual situations they encounter as they carry out their daily duties.

Five operators that have previously been roadeo division winners repeated wins or were strong competitors again this year. Jean Dalsing has, in past roadeos, excelled in the van division with first place finishes in 1996, 1999, 2000 and 2001. Dalsing's first place finish in the small bus division at this year's roadeo in Davenport follows her seventh-place finish in the national CTAA Paratransit Roadeo competition held in Austin,



**First row: Sue Davis, Jean Dalsing, Raleigh Borrer, and LaVeta Root. Second row: Paul Klimesh, Chris Wisher, and Carl Nelson, not pictured: Kathy Rickertsen and Don Sours**

Tex. May 19, 2002. Paul Klimesh placed second in the large bus division and tied for third place in the small bus division, after a first place finish in the 1997, 2000 and 2001 state roadeo's large bus division. Klimesh has represented Iowa and Ames CyRide at the APTA international roadeos and has consistently finished high in the ranking of contestants. Carl Nelson has posted second, third, fourth and fifth place finishes in the large bus division at previous state roadeos, and turned in a third place finish at this year's roadeo in the large bus division. Don Sours has placed first in the small bus division in 1993, third in 1994, and second in 1995. Sours represents River Bend Transit, the regional transit agency serving Cedar, Clinton, Muscatine and Scott counties.

The Iowa Public Transit Association (IPTA) and Iowa DOT jointly sponsored the annual roadeo with funding under Federal Transit Administrations' Rural Transit Assistance Program. The roadeo was held at the North Park Mall in Davenport. Nikki Soto, Driver Development Manager for River Bend Transit (Davenport), coordinated the 2002 transit roadeo. Members of IPTA, and representatives of the Iowa DOT, as well as other volunteers handled judging of the competition.

The Office of Public Transit wishes to take this opportunity to thank transit systems for allowing their drivers to participate in the statewide bus roadeos held each year. We appreciate drivers taking the time to come out and compete, as well as all the transit managers, staff and volunteers who contributed to making the 16th Annual Public Transit Roadeo a success,

Next year's roadeo will be hosted by RIDES (Regional Transit Authority based in Spencer). Tentative plans are to hold the event in the Okoboji lakes area next June.

## Transit training library features CD-ROM training “Have a Nice Day”

“Have a Nice Day!” is a National Training Institute (NTI) CD-ROM training program that teaches operators skills and techniques for maintaining a safe environment on their buses. NTI says, “It encourages operators to focus on what they can do to help ensure that they have a nice day – every day.”

**Operators will learn how to:**

- reduce the risk of being attacked;
- keep problem situations from escalating;
- defend against an attack;
- understand the legal definition of an “assault”; and
- accurately report an incident to the police.

This NTI training CD can be used in a variety of settings, and in its entirety or in sections. Modules can be incorporated into new operator training or used to develop individual and group retraining. With the focus on safety, this training will be of particular interest to all vehicle operators and staff that have contact with the public.

The Office of Public Transit has a large selection of training resources available to loan at no charge to public transit systems and other passenger transportation providers. To borrow this video, or to obtain a complete listing of available training materials, call Melissa Davis-Oviatt, Office of Public Transit, 515-239-1875, or e-mail your request to [melissa.davis@dot.state.ia.us](mailto:melissa.davis@dot.state.ia.us).

## Engineers say transit is the answer

In a recent poll by the Engineering News Record, readers were asked what they felt was the best way to address the nation’s congestion problems. The number one answer, given by 47 percent of the respondents, was to increase investment in public transit. Building more roads came in a distant second with 34 percent.

*ENR, Jan 7-14, 2002.*

# 2002

### September

**Sept. 16** - Iowa Public Transit Association’s Legislative Meeting, Des Moines, Ia. (Bev Thomas, 515-440-6057)

**Sept. 17** - CTAA People and Transportation Conference, Des Moines, Ia. (Bev Thomas, 515-440-6057)

**Sept. 19-22** - International Bus Roadeo, Las Vegas, Nev. (For more information, contact APTA’s Tom Urban, 202-496-4853, or e-mail [turban@apta.com](mailto:turban@apta.com))

**Sept. 22-25** - APTA’s Annual Meeting & Expo, Las Vegas, Nev. (For more information, contact APTA’s Ingrid Tomasek, 202-496-4840, or e-mail [itomasek@apta.com](mailto:itomasek@apta.com))

**Sept. 25-27** - APTA’s Bus Equipment & Maintenance Management Workshop, Las Vegas, Nev. (For more information, contact APTA’s Jerry Trotter, 202-496-4887, or e-mail [jtrotter@apta.com](mailto:jtrotter@apta.com))

### October

**Oct. 7-8** - Elements of Contracting, Milwaukee, Wis. (For more information, contact Wyatt Osato, 414-227-3332, or e-mail [wyatto@uwm.edu](mailto:wyatto@uwm.edu))

**Oct. 31- Nov. 1** - Iowa Public Transit Association Mid-Year Meeting, West Des Moines, Ia. (Bev Thomas, 515-440-6057)

For more detailed conference listings see the following Web sites:

<http://www.apta.com/meetings>

<http://www.ctaa.org/calendar>

<http://www.fta.dot.gov/library/into/calendar/cal.html>



**OFFICE OF PUBLIC TRANSIT 515-239-1875**

## CONNECTIONS

CONNECTIONS is a quarterly publication of the Iowa Department of Transportation. It is distributed free of charge to public transit systems, agencies providing human service transportation, intercity bus carriers, and other interested individuals and organizations.

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