Public Transportation Ridership Continues to Grow
- Nearly 50 million more trips taken in third quarter 2007

From American Public Transportation Association

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) announced that Americans took nearly 50 million more trips on public transportation during the third quarter of 2007, compared to the third quarter of 2006, representing a 2 percent increase in ridership.

Noting that more and more Americans are choosing to ride public transportation as gas prices remain high and traffic congestion remains a problem, APTA President William W. Millar said, “The greater use of public transit in the third quarter of 2007 demonstrates the importance of a community having a good public transportation system to help its residents save time and money.”

In the third quarter of 2007, light rail (modern light rail, streetcars, trolleys, and heritage trolleys) had the highest percentage of ridership growth among all modes of transportation, with an 8.9% increase. Some of the areas reporting the highest increases in light rail ridership opened new services. The Regional Transit Authority of New Orleans, LA showed the largest increase at 115.7%, as it restores more service.

Other areas showing notable increases on light rail systems are: Denver, CO (65.1%), St. Louis, MO (25.8%), Kenosha, WI (23.3%), New Jersey (14.1%), Tampa, FL (13.1%), and San Diego, CA (12.5%)

Commuter rail had the second highest growth rate of all modes at 5.4% and areas with significant commuter rail ridership increases included: Harrisburg to Philadelphia, PA (50.2%), Oakland, CA (16.2%), Oceanside, CA (12.8%), Dallas-Forth Worth, TX (12.3%), Stockton, CA (12.4%), Philadelphia, PA (9.4%), and Anchorage, AK (9.0%).

Heavy rail (subways) ridership grew nationally by 4% during the third quarter of 2007. Areas showing the largest increases in ridership are: San Juan, Puerto Rico (10.6%), Atlanta, GA (10.4%), and Staten Island, NY (10.2%).

Bus ridership throughout the country showed a slight increase of 0.1%, although in communities with a population below 100,000, bus ridership showed a 7.5% increase.

Demand response (paratransit) ridership increased by 4.5% for the third quarter of 2007. Trolley bus ridership increased by 1.5% and all other types of public transportation increased by 6.7%.

To see the complete report, go to: apta.com/research/stats/ridership

APTA is a nonprofit international association of 1,500 member organizations including public transportation systems; planning, design, construction and finance firms; product and service providers; academic institutions; and state associations and departments of transportation. APTA members serve the public interest by providing safe, efficient and economical public transportation service and products. APTA members serve more than 90 percent of persons using public transportation in the United States and Canada.
EXPO 2008: A Return to New Orleans

From the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)

June 1-6, 2008 the Community Transportation Association the Community Transportation EXPO returns to New Orleans. Nine years after we began building the Community Transportation Century in New Orleans at EXPO ’99, we return to a city very much in the middle of rebuilding itself, one in which mobility and community and public transportation are playing a vital role in that revitalization process.

The return to New Orleans features some of the most finely-tuned training opportunities ever developed. From certification programs to basic skills sessions, you’ll be able to kick off the EXPO week with just the type of intensive training you need. Professional development sessions, held later in the week, have been completely revamped to offer refresher courses, discussion forums and key transit topics.

The EXPO week will, as usual, be filled with the always expanding Trade Fair, a plenary session focusing on Politics 2008, fun events like the Big Night Out and numerous opportunities for you to network and catch up with your colleagues around the nation.

Detailed site visits have been conducted at each of the EXPO Hotels for this year’s conference, selecting safe and secure hotels with easy proximity to the Convention Center.

Join us for the Community Transportation EXPO 2008 June 1-6 in New Orleans, LA!

Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
900 Convention Center Blvd.
New Orleans, LA 70130

For additional information, please visit ctaa.org.

Wisconsin Rural and Paratransit Provider Spring Conference

The Wisconsin Rural and Paratransit Provider Spring Conference is April 29-30, 2008 at the Lodge at Cedar Creek, 805 Creske Avenue, Rothschild WI. For conference and registration details, please contact Rita Harmon at rharmon@co.grant.wi.gov.

Agenda At A Glance:

Tuesday, April 29

Noon-1 pm Lunch and Welcome
1-2:30 pm Learn how multiple counties have joined to provide more and better coordinated transportation services
2:30-2:45 pm Break with refreshments and sweets
2:45-4:45 pm Greg Seubert & Gary Goyke discuss Regional Transportation Associations

Enjoy the Wausau area on Tuesday evening!

Wednesday, April 30

7-8 am Breakfast Buffet
8-8:45 am CTED - Who they are and what trainings are available, how to customize a current training being offered or how to get a new training started
8:50-9:30 am DOT Updates
9:30-10:30 am CMO Coordination/Family Care Roundtable Discussion
10:30-noon How to Influence Legislators to get Volunteer Mileage changed with IRS
12-12:45 pm Open Mic with Beverage and Cookies
1 pm WRAPP Board meeting and lunch

Registration deadline is April 18.
Passenger Assistance Safety and Sensitivity Workshop

CTED at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee presents this curriculum to serve as a guide for training drivers in passenger assistance skills necessary for transporting people with disabilities. It is based on a program that evaluates driver skills using proficiency measures and is founded in adult learning principles and practices. This training package meets the requirements for passenger assistance training as identified in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Class includes:

- Brief introduction by instructor of training and philosophy of their organization
- Drivers introduce themselves and explain their interest in becoming specialized transit drivers
- Passenger Assistance Pretest
- Driver Training Manual and Workbook regarding appropriate terminology, the 10 commandments of etiquette, and myths and facts regarding people with disabilities
- Disability Awareness Training Module and Lesson Plan
- Guiding a Person Who is Blind or has Low Vision
- Disability Awareness and Passenger Assistance Issues
- Passenger Assistance Techniques with Wheelchairs
- Wheelchair Securement and Lift Operations - Discussion, Demonstrations and Driver Practice
- Wheelchair Securement and Lift Operations: In the vehicle demonstrations and testing using skill assessment sheets

2008 Transit Mutual Insurance (TMI) State Bus Roadeo Notice

Mark your calendars for May 17 and 18, 2008 for TMI's FINAL State Bus Roadeo to be held in Waukesha Wisconsin. Don't miss this opportunity to be part of this historical event. Contestant and judges information will be sent out in Spring. For more information please contact: Don Jans at don-tmi@new.rr.com or call 262-378-4223.

Wisconsin Association of Taxi Operations July Seminar Focuses on Safety Training

The Wisconsin Association of Taxi Operations hosts a one day Train-the-Trainer seminar July 9, 2008, located at the Howard Johnson Hotel and Conference Center, 655 N. Frontage Rd., Wisconsin Dells. The purpose of the seminar is to train supervisors in some areas that require documented training, a great safety need, or liability issue. They can take what they learn back to their own systems and train, update procedures, etc.

The three seminar presenters are:

- Mike Laidlaw, Q-Straint, on Wheel Chair securement and passenger safety
- David Burkart, Burkart-Heisdorf Insurance, on safe and defensive driving
- Bill Kerkas, Energetix, on Reasonable Suspicion Training for DOT Supervisors

For more info, please contact Richard Running at richard@runninginc.net or call 608-637-2599
Advanced Defensive Driving Skills Workshop

Keep Wisconsin rural and specialized transportation drivers skilled and trained to proficiency. Drivers attend a classroom presentation prepared by the National Safety Council. The curriculum emphasizes decision-making, uncontrollable driving factors and other defensive driving strategies.

Class includes:

- Defensive driving video
- Review of conditions of driving to increase awareness of risks and hazards in adverse driving conditions and provide defensive driving techniques
- Identify common unsafe driving behaviors that result in crashes and violations; explain how specific conditions may increase the hazards and risks of these unsafe behaviors; describe defensive driving techniques to reduce the incidence of these unsafe driving behaviors.
- Recognize aggressive driver behaviors that result in crashes and violations; identify causes of aggressive driving actions; increase awareness of personal aggressive driving behaviors; learn ways to maintain self-control behind the wheel; learn defensive driving techniques to avoid confrontations with aggressive drivers; create a personal plan to maintain control in stressful driving situations.

Both workshops are largely funded by the Wisconsin Rural Transportation Assistance Program. Your portion of the cost is $25. Even though the course is already largely subsidized by RTAP, each driver can still use an RTAP Scholarship to cover 80% of the $25 fee. Either workshop can be customized for your agency. For information on scheduling a workshop, please call Ken Woodall at 888-560-3382 or at 414-227-3332.

Bus and Paratransit Conference & International Bus Rodeo

American Public Transportation Association (APTA)

Join us for North America’s largest and most comprehensive learning experience for the bus and paratransit industry May 3-7, 2008 in Austin, Texas.

This must-attend event will enhance your technical skills while increasing the effectiveness of today’s workforce. Learn timely information with practical, immediate relevance.

- Top-notch technical sessions
- Specialized training
- State of the art vehicles, products and services
- Technical tours
- Networking events

Visit www.apta.com to register or for more information

Blinding Snow Takes Transit Off Midwest Roads

The blinding snowstorm that struck the Midwestern U.S. and Canada in early February, brought snow and winds that created drifts six feet high. In some areas this was accompanied by ice and freezing rain. The strongest testament to the storm’s severity was that snowplow crews in Wisconsin’s Green County were ordered off the road. The “once-in-a-decade” crippling blast of winter weather also forced public transportation agencies, reluctantly, to shut down.

To read the complete text, please visit: apta.com/passenger_transport/thisweek/080222_1.cfm

The Wisconsin Urban and Rural Transportation Association announces:

WURTA Annual State Legislative Day

May 21, 2008
Inn on the Park, 22 S. Carroll St., Madison, WI
Fee: $95

For further information, please contact
Gary Goyke at Gary@wcblind.org
Safety! Emergencies! Oh, my!

Someone has just pulled out in front of your vehicle. You bumped into them, and now light smoke is coming from your dashboard area. You look in the rearview mirror and one passenger has blood on her face.

OK, relax a minute. You have already attended a UWM Safety and Emergencies class. You know what to do to take care of your passengers, avoid a common “second crash” and control the situation.

What’s that? You have NOT attended the UWM Safety and Emergencies class? Even though an RTAP scholarship is available to pay for it? Well, you should discuss that with your agency.

Review Section 37.173 of the American’s With Disabilities Act, which states: “Each operator of a public or private entity which operates a fixed route or demand responsive system shall ensure that personnel are trained to proficiency...”

In this training the instructor takes you through a pre-trip inspection, checks over safety equipment including fire extinguisher, triangles, first aid kit, etc. Additional topics include what to do in case of passenger illness or injury, vehicle breakdown, hazardous driving conditions, accidents, and any additional concerns.

Class includes:

- Pre-trip inspection; Safety equipment
- Handling Passenger Illness or Injury
- Responding to a Vehicle Breakdown
- Facing Hazardous Driving Conditions
- Reacting to an Accident
- Evacuating a Vehicle

If your agency provides passenger transportation in rural or small urban areas of Wisconsin, you are eligible to take advantage of services funded by the Wisconsin Rural Transportation Assistance Program. Courses are presented by CTED and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

This program can be brought to your location. To find out more, contact Ken Woodall at 414-227-3332.