

ISSUE

52

January
2016

DTA
Dakota Transit
Association

Transit Tidbits



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DTA Fall Conference

Our Fall DTA Conference is in the planning stages and looks very interesting.

The dates are September 9th through the 14th, 2016.

The location is the Holiday Inn, Spearfish Convention Center, Spearfish, SD.

Their phone number is 800.999.3541.

Please put these dates on your calendars.

Parade of Lights

Barb Ballensky, Director

Vermillion Public Transit - Vermillion, SD

December 4th was the 7th annual parade of lights in Vermillion, SD. Vermillion Public Transit (VPT) has had an entry for the last two parades with hopes of placing in the event. The first year, we had lights that twinkled and flashed and that wasn't enough to catch the judges eye. The next parade, we added some LED lights with bigger bulbs that were much brighter and still no luck!

See **PARADE**, Page 3



Benson County Transportation

Susan Fossen, Director
Benson County Transportation -
Maddock, ND



Happy New Year! Greetings to all from Benson County Transportation.

Benson County Transportation is based out of Maddock, ND, which is located in what is considered to be a highly rural county of North Dakota.

As such, our population is not high, but our miles are! Based in Maddock, ND, we have one satellite clinic located in town, otherwise it is a minimum 30 mile drive to the closest Doctor or Dentist.

Our main transit users, as expected, are in the 65+ age category with mainly medical needs. Because of this, and as we know, those that are in the upper years of their life, for the main part, live on modest incomes. That is why in 2015 we did a fundraiser by contacting local county businesses and raised money to be able to offer those Benson County Residents, 65+, with free rides to a medical appointment. It was well received.

Our service is provided to destinations statewide, with main scheduled destinations within 60 miles, and the further reaches are Minot, Bismarck, Fargo, Jamestown and Grand Forks. We operate 4 minivans and one 11 passenger cutaway bus.

Our current driver count is 4, with the director bringing it up to 5 when needed. And little though we are, we keep these drivers busy every day. We would like to add a couple more part time relief drivers, to accommodate needed requests for days off.

Our newest expansion to our transportation service is free medical transportation to Veterans. Learning about a grant available to highly rural counties to provide Veterans free transportation to medical care, was exciting and something we felt was worth looking into. So in collaboration with Robert Tovsrud VFW Post 757 as the sponsor, a grant was applied for and awarded.

Beginning in Sept of 2014 Veterans in Benson County had the opportunity for this service. A minivan was purchased and is used solely for Veterans. A few months into this grant we felt we could expand our services, and we now offer this service to Veterans in Benson, Eddy and Wells Counties. In Oct 2015 our grant was renewed for another year.

See VETERANS, Page 3

PARADE

Continued from Page 1

This year, we added disco lights that flashed out onto the crowd and buildings of Main St and of course, Charlie coyote (the mascot for USD) had to drop in for the event. With these additions, we were pretty sure this was the year! Our hopes sank a little when the decorated combine came barreling down the street, even though people kept telling me throughout the night that the bus looked great. The next day when the announcement came, we found out that VPT had taken 2nd place and the combine had taken 3rd!

We joke about winning and it is all in good fun, but actually we are very committed to participating in this annual event. It advertises the service and resonates that transit is for the whole community. This year we partnered with United Way to sponsor the bus in the parade. Their director, Kelsey Collier-Wise, was a big help with the decorating. Earlier the same evening, is the annual Tour of Homes, which is a fund raiser for the local historical society. Transit donates service for this as well. This evening of events kicks off the holiday season in Vermillion and we work to be a part of it all.

Oh, and in case you're wondering if we can top the disco lights, we already have our plans for next year!!

VETERANS

Continued from Page 2

Our plans in the coming months, (years ?) is to try and accomplish building a parking garage for our vehicles. We were generously gifted lots within the city to build on.



Currently two are housed in half of a county highway department shop, the rest are out in the elements. We were able to obtain winter housing this year for 3 more of the vehicles, leaving only a backup vehicle outside. But having our own garage will be best.

To that end, never having proceeded with such a task, anyone with good tips, or ideas for \$\$\$, please contact us. Our phone number is 701-438-2192 and our email is bc_transit@yahoo.com. We are excited to share a little about ourselves with all of you.

If you're ever in the area, stop in for a visit.



2016 Membership Dues

Your 2016 Membership letter will be sent out to you the end of January.

Let's see which state gets their memberships paid first.

I will keep a tally as the Membership Forms come in to my office.

I will keep you all informed of who is ahead.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!
From your Board of Directors
and Executive Director!!!

DTA Website

Works continues on the DTA website.

I would appreciate it if each one of you would go on the website and check the Current Membership link.

Check out your information box to make sure all correct information is there.

Also check on your website tab.

We want to make sure we have all the correct information in place.

Please let me know if you have any changes.

Thank you.

Training Update - Linda Freeman, PASS Coordinator

A big "THANKS" to Mike and Jay in Brookings for doing the late December PASS Class in Watertown and a second big "THANKS" to Darrel in Minot for doing the three day sessions in early January in Bismarck.

Your dedication to quality transit is deeply appreciated!

Also thanks so much to the sponsoring agencies!

As of now, we have no further classes scheduled so please contact me if you would like to host a session.

Happy 2016 to all!

*Thought for the Month of
January..*

*“If you have the power to make
someone happy do it. The world need
more of that!”*

**Remember my new e-mail
address is:
jacquelinersenger@gondtc.com**



**Jacque Senger
DTA Executive Director**

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Thanks to all!

- Jacque

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