

OTD announces new staff

Lisa Coats

Lisa Coats joined the Office of Transportation Delivery on as a Project Manager on July 3, 2006. Lisa graduated from Henry Clay High School, and received her Associate Degree in Accounting from Sullivan University.

She is now pursuing her Bachelor's Degree in Management with future plans for an MBA. Lisa is also a licensed cosmetologist graduating from the Lexington Academy of Beauty.

Lisa worked as an Accounting Assistant for the Lexington Fayette Urban County Housing Authority for five years, and then began working for the Office of Inspector General in January 2005, in the Division of Audits and Detection as an Auditor.

Lisa is a welcomed addition to the Office of Transportation Delivery.



Lisa Coats

Eric Perez

Eric Perez joined the Office of Transportation Delivery on May 16, 2006, as a Project Manager.

Eric grew up in Harrodsburg, KY and graduated from Mercer County High School. He then moved to Richmond, KY and enrolled in Eastern Kentucky University graduating third in his class, Magna Cum Laude, with a BBA in Finance. Eric was the President Elect in Rho Epsilon, a professional real estate fraternity at ECU, and received several scholarships including the Appraisal Institute Scholarship, Institute of Real Estate Management Scholarship, and Eastern Kentucky University Academic Scholarship. While in college, Eric was an Assistant Property Manager at Apex Realty in Lexington, and also acquired his Real Estate License. Eric continues to do real estate on a part-time basis with Milestone Realty Consultants.

Eric is a member and Treasurer of Bohon Road Independent Baptist Church and resides in Harrodsburg with his wife, Monica. They are expecting their first child in November.

Eric is a welcomed addition to the Office of Transportation Delivery.



Eric Perez

Jeffers retires after 22 years from BUS

Sue Jeffers has retired as Transportation Director from Blue Grass Community Action Partnership as of August 1, 2006 after 22 years and nine months of service.

She began her career with Blue Grass as a bookkeeper for the agency in 1983. In April 1983 she became Blue Grass Ultra Transit (BUS) Manager. In May 1984 Transportation Coordinator and in June 23, 1997 she was promoted to Director of Transportation.



Sue Jeffers during her retirement party from BUS.

Jeffers has guided the BUS program over the years into one of the leading transit systems in the state by increasing her fleet and employees.

She has been and intricate part of the Kentucky Public Transit Association as past president and vice president of the organization over the years. She has been a Community Transportation Association of America delegate from Kentucky, worked for many years with the CTAA national rodeo and

has received her Certified Community Transit Manager Certification. She is continuing her reign as FTSB's board chair.

During Jeffers tenure her agency has been awarded the Central Kentucky 5311 Grantee award in 1986, 1995, 2001 and 2003, in 1989 and 2005 BUS received the Statewide Section 18 award and she has received the transit manager of the year. Jeffers has also been inducted into the Kentucky Transit Hall of Fame.

Jeffers also, was presented a crystal vase from KPTA at her last board meeting.



Debbie Wallace (BUS), Jodi Alford (TACK), Barbara Chaney (SSNK), Sue Jeffers, and Vickie Bourne (OTD) during Jeffers retirement party.

Trimble promoted to BUS Transit Director

Wanda Trimble has been promoted from Operations Manager at Blue Grass Community Action Partnership (BUS) to Transit Director replacing retired Director Sue Jeffers as of July 31, 2006.

Previously, she held the positions of Assistant Operations Manager and Transportation Assistant. She has been with BUS since 1996. She also received her Certified Community Transit Manager Certification from CTAA.

Steve Stivers, Blue Grass Community Action Partnership Executive Director said, "Her experience will assure a smooth transition period for the program".

Trimble has also replaced Jeffers on the KPTA Board of Directors.



Wanda Trimble

**Call FTSB
if you have
KPTA Newsletter Items.
859/233-0066 or email:
pshepherd@ftsb.org**

Thought for the Day

“Be nice to people on your way up because you meet them on your way down.”

- Jimmy Durante

The KPTA newsletter is published for the Kentucky Public Transit Association by Federated Transportation Services of the Bluegrass with the financial support of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet's Office of Transportation Delivery and Rural Transit Assistance Program. Any comments or suggestions should be addressed to Pam Shepherd, FTSB, 1460 Newtown Pike, Suite 209, Lexington, KY 40511.



**Federated Transportation Services of the Bluegrass
1460 Newtown Pike, Suite 209
Lexington, KY 40511**

**KPTA/KYTC Fall Mini Conference
October 18-20 in Frankfort**

The first KPTA/KYTC Fall Mini Conference has been planned for October 18-20, 2006 at the Capital Plaza Hotel in Frankfort.

The preliminary program schedule is an opening reception Wednesday, October 18 at 6 p.m. with music provided by Rick Hannon with Complete Music of Kentucky.

The official conference will open on Thursday, October 19 with a continental breakfast at 7:30 a.m.

The sessions will be begin at 8:30 a.m. under the direction of Vickie Bourne, Executive Director of the Office of Transportation Delivery with a workshop entitled "Developing a Coordinated Plan". This session will go throughout the day with breakout sessions for individuals to put together their own plan.

Other session ideas for the remainder of the day will consist of FTA Vehicle Maintenance, writing a suc-

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PATS Simulator Grand Opening

Paducah Area Transit System (PATS) celebrated the grand opening of the driver simulator with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

PATS bought the mobile simulator and equipment with help of PATS Board and Sen. Mitch McConnell who earmarked \$1.46 million through the FTA and Vickie Bourne with the Office of Transportation Delivery. The joint venture with Kentucky Association of Counties, which insures most of the state's transit agencies across the state of Kentucky. PATS will provide

simulator driver training to transit providers and other emergency vehicle



Pictured from left to right: McCracken Judge Executive Danny Orazine, Kim Adair (PATS), Sen. Mitch McConnell, Gary Kitchin and Chuck Simpson (PATS) in front of the driver simulator during the grand opening.

operators. The program has been shown in Frankfort to city, county and state officials.

FAAC Inc., of Ann Arbor Michigan, developed the system, installed in a trailer provided by Michigan based Kentucky Trailers. Inside are three custom-designed simulators utilizes state-of-the-art technology to simulator limitless bus and auto driving conditions.

Components include a simulator fixed route bus, cutaway bus and cab with all bus controls, instrument panels, gauges and bus mirrors.



PATS celebrates grand opening of simulator. Pictured from left to right: PATS Board Chair William Chip Cox, Sen. Mitch McConnell, McCracken Judge Executive Danny Orazine, and Paducah Mayor Bill Paxton.

From the Desk of the President

Dear KPTA Members:

Summer is almost over and soon the leaves will be turning brown and fall will be here before we know it.

For the first time this fall the KPTA and KYTC will be hosting a fall Mini Conference. The Conference will be held October 18-20, 2006, at the Capital Plaza Hotel in Frankfort, Kentucky. Vickie Bourne and her staff will lead workshops in discussing SAFETEA-LU and the changes to the 5310 program (Elderly and Persons with Disabilities, 5316 program (Job Access Reverse Commute) and the 5317 program (New Freedom). Secretary of Transportation Bill Neightbert will be our luncheon speaker on Thursday, October 19 and FTA's James Garland will also be there. Make your reservations now at the hotel and call Shirley Cummins at RTEC to find out more about the conference. By the way, Registration is free. Go on line at the KPTA website to register at <http://www.kypublictransit.org>. I want to thank Shirley Cummins, Pam Shepherd, Paula Cissell, Mona Whitaker, and Jodi Alford for putting this conference together.



As always, thanks for your ongoing support of the KPTA.

Sincerely,
Beecher Hudson
KPTA President
Director of WHEELS Transportation Louisville Red Cross

KYTC Deputy Secretary returns to private sector

Frankfort, Kentucky (August 18, 2006)- Deputy Secretary of the Transportation Cabinet, Jim Adams, has resigned his post effective August 31. Adams is leaving state government to return to the private sector.

"It has been a tremendous honor to serve in Governor Fletcher's administration and to work for Bill Nighbert," Adams said. "By carefully investing tax payers' dollars, this team has accelerated Kentucky's economic growth, improved highway safety, and enhanced the Commonwealth's quality of life."

Adams joined the Transportation cabinet in January of last year and has served as Deputy Secretary since March of 2005.

"Jim has done a tremendous job as Deputy Secretary," said Transportation Cabinet Secretary Bill Nighbert. "He is a strong leader who understands how different transportation systems work together building our economy. I will miss his service, but I appreciate his decision to return to private enterprise."

Prior to accepting an appointment within the Transportation Cabinet Adams was Commissioner of the Department of Public Protection in the Kentucky Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet and served on the Governor's Transition Team.

"Jim has been a trusted advisor and respected member of our team," said Governor Fletcher. "I appreciate his dedication and wish him all the best." Before entering state government, Jim Adams was Resident Vice-President for CSX Transportation in Louisville, from 2002 to 2004. He also was an assistant Vice-President for Public for American Commercial Lines from 1995 to 2002.

Adams served as a commissioned officer in the United States Coast Guard from 1986 to 1992 and a legislative assistant for the U.S. House of Representatives from 1992 to 1995. Adams lives in Louisville with his wife, Julie, and their two sons, James and Joseph.

New and expanded service under way for LexTran

Bluegrass Airport and Keeneland Race Course routes have been added

Less than two short years ago, Lexington's Transit Authority stood on the brink of collapse. LexTran was over-budget to the tune of \$1.6 million. Service was deteriorating. Morale was low. Employees were laid off. There was no real strategy for the future. Image was poor. And then the community came to the rescue, approving a tax referendum in November, 2004, breathing new life into LexTran and real hope for the future.

Today, LexTran has grown by 50% in a period of 18 months, a statistic by industry standards that is nothing less of astonishing. "My colleagues around the country tell me this sort of growth in such a short period of time is phenomenal," said LexTran general manager Terry Garcia Crews. "Organizationally, the system is growing as well. When fully staffed, the number of operators will increase from 56-95; there will be 11 mechanics, up from seven; service workers will go from 7 to 12; in operations, the number of supervisors will double, from 4 to 8," Garcia Crews added.

A four-phase, \$7.5 million capital construction project is expected to get underway this fall, including renovation of the transit center on Vine Street.

Beginning August 21, 2006, LexTran introduced several new routes and services, including LexConnects for seniors, jobs and neighborhoods. LexConnects is a subscription, personalized service. Senior citizens can use LexConnects during special week-day times to shop, dine, or go anywhere they want in Lexington-Fayette County. A special telephone number for the service has been established (225-CONX).

A new late night and early morning service will be available to employees who work for businesses along the Nicholasville Road corridor. Registration for this service is provided by the employer and relayed to LexTran. The other component of LexConnects provides neighborhood circulators in the north and south ends of Lexington.

LexTran will go to the intersection nearest a rider's home (within the areas identified for dedicated service) and transport the passenger to a connecting route.

Another important and exciting addition to LexTran's services is an express route providing service to Keeneland Race Course and Blue Grass Airport. "This new service will provide travelers, employees and members of the local community with an invaluable mode of transportation to and from the airport," said Michael Gobb, executive director at Blue Grass Airport. "We are pleased to partner with LexTran and look forward to the benefits this convenient service will bring to our customers and the community," Gobb added. Also being added to service is a new route that includes the Masterson Station residential area and park.

This year alone, LexTran has purchased nine new buses and plans to acquire 10 additional buses in the next year. LexTran is taking advantage of new, customer-friendly technology to improve the way employees do business and interact with customers.

New ride guides including the new services are now available, free of charge, at the transit center, 200 Vine Street, and the administrative building/garage center, 109 West Loudon Avenue. For detailed information, call customer service at 253-INFO, or visit the web-site: www.lextran.com.

KPTA/KYTC Mini

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successful KY-RTAP Grant.

Secretary Bill Neightbert will be the luncheon speaker on Thursday, October 19. Also, James Garland with FTA will speak at the conference on Friday, October 20.

Submit your registration forms to Shirley Cummins at RTEC. The conference fee will be at no charge, because KPTA has received an RTAP grant from the Office of Transportation for the conference fees.

Make sure you make your hotel arrangements at the Capital Plaza Hotel at 502-227-5100.

For additional and updated information go the KPTA website to register at <http://www.kypublictransit.org>.

LKLP Driver Goes the Extra Mile for passenger

On his morning run, Letcher County driver Jim Amburgey possibly helped the passenger's home, as he helped her into the van she mentioned that she was not feeling well.

About a mile from the passenger's home, noticed she was slumped over in her seat. Amburgey immediately pulled off the highway to check on her. Noticing that she looked quite ill, he asked if she wanted him to return her home. The passenger requested that she be taken to the emergency room. The closest hospital was Jenkins where he drove her straight to the emergency entrance and made sure she made it into the hospital safely to get the medical attention she needed.

Later that afternoon while picking up his returning passengers, he asked about her

condition. He was told that his passenger had a massive heart attack and that they had flown her to Central Baptist in Lexington.

If not for Amburgey's awareness of his passengers and his quick thinking, she may not have survived. Taking care of our passengers is what it's all about.

By Tammy Whitaker Letcher County Office Manager



Jim Amburgey LKLP Driver

Lee represented KPTA at the CTAA Rodeo

Kenny Lee participated in CTAA Rodeo in Orlando Florida in June. Lee is a driver with Blue Grass Ultra Transit in Frankfort and was the winner of the KPTA Rodeo in 2005. He received an all expense paid trip to the CTAA Rodeo on behalf of KPTA.

The CTAA Rodeo competition consisted of a written test, driving course, performing a pre-trip inspection and using the four point tie down wheelchair securements.



Kenny Lee

Braun Lift Training in three transit areas

Rick Jacobs with Braun and David Clawson with National Bus provided Braun Lift Training at three locations in Kentucky in June. The training was very informative and helpful to maintenance personnel, managers, mechanics, and drivers in attendance. The new FTA regulations on lifts changed its functions. The trainings were held at RTEC's Training Center in Mt. Vernon, Blue Grass Community Action Partnership in Frankfort and Owensboro Transit in Owensboro.

The following persons participated in the training session at RTEC: Shirley Lewis (CVADD), Valerie Hurst, James Gray, Eugene Henson, Diana Spurlock and Debbie Lunsford with Daniel Boone Transit, Dale Shelton, Gary Reppert, Linda Proctor, David Sowder, Freda Parsons, Rita Smith, Sherry Vaughn and Donald Singleton with RTEC Michael Woods and J. Payne with LKLP.

Training session at BUS: Terry Ladd and Mike Williams (ARC-Louisville), Greg Rogers (Frankfort Transit), Taylor Veatch and Joe Collings (BUS), Pam Shepherd, Petra

Espinosa, Leonard Chang, Steve Dotson (FTSB) and Ronnie Thomas (TACK).

Training session held at OTS: Sammy Riley and Jake Wilson (OTS), Dan Lantham and Michael Hughes (GRITS), Marvin Russell (CASK), and Brandon Nunn (HART).

All who participated wish to thank David Clawson and Rick Jacobs for the training, which they provided.



Rick Jacobs with Braun demonstrates the usage of the new braun lifts at Blue Grass Community Action



Rick Jacobs with Braun describes the problems which may be incurred by touching the yellow lines on the new braun lift platform at Blue Grass Community Action



Several individuals from RTEC, LKLP, CVADD and Daniel Boone attended the Braun training at RTEC.

Transit Executives say gas price only one of the many factors behind ridership increase

Paducah, Kentucky, may be considered a smaller city but public transportation is thriving. Paducah Area Transit System (PATS) operates 24 hours-a-day a week and provided 561,192 rides over 1,709,332 miles in 2005.

We have 62 paratransit vehicles that operate Medicaid service in an eight county area. Gary Kitchin, general manager, said. "Since we began operating 24 hours-a-day in 2003, we have seen an increase in ridership of 20-25 percent each year, and we expect to provide over 600,000 rides in 2006."

One key for PATS success during Kitchin's tenure has been the system's commitment to providing excellent service.

"Customer service, it means everything. We have nice, friendly drivers, who wear nice, clean uniforms and work hard to be on time for both fixed routes and paratransit trips."

Keeping customers happy means, delivering on-time service. Kitchin said that especially when operating a 24-hour-a-day service like PATS, delivering on-time means having the latest in automatic scheduling and dispatching.

"One of the most important things any transit system can do to increase ridership and image is to have an efficient system for dispatching and scheduling buses. We implemented our automated scheduling and dispatching system in 2003. We have an AVL/GPS system from Mentor Engineering and the Route Match Software's automatic scheduling and dispatching system. These upgrades have greatly increased our ability to provide on-time delivery and cut down on waste. When we improved our ability to run on time, it also made it easier for riders to use our service."

PATS has also applied for a grant to implement an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system for its call center. Kitchin said that an IVR system would be a great tool in conjunction with the automated scheduling and dispatching system for paratransit.

"With an IVR, our phone system would call a client the day before any scheduled on-demand or paratransit trip. This would help ensure that the client was still planning on using our service, and greatly cut back on no-shows. Reducing the number of wasted trips."

Kitchin said that PATS has been blessed with a very pro-transit state transportation cabinet as well as protransit congressional representatives and senators.

"The concept in Kentucky, and pretty much throughout the country is, increase ridership and the state will increase funding. I have taken this to heart and so has Vickie Bourne, the head of the Office of Transportation Delivery (a department within the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet). She

buys ridership," Kitchin said, "If our ridership goes down, our state funding is going to decrease, and if our ridership goes up, she rewards us with more state dollars. It is that simple. Bourne and her staff are dedicated to mass transit, and they are always looking for ways to help districts in the state.

"This is exactly what a transit system needs, leaders who are committed to seeing it succeed. Kentucky has been blessed with representatives and senators who believe in the benefits of mass transit. They are constantly working to get federal earmarks and grant, that the state finds a way to match those funds."

Kitchin said, despite PATS' success, however, funding is always an issue.

"We constantly contact our government officials to ensure that we will get the money we need to upgrade our fleet and stay ahead of the technology curve in terms of AVL or fare boxes. However, we still would like to get more operating capital funding so that we could pay better wages to our drivers and staff. I think funding is always the central issue when a transit district talks about challenges," Kitchin said. Funding is at the core of the challenge of finding and keeping good drivers. It is at the core of making sure that we have a marketing and advertising budget, and it is an issue as fuel prices increase.

Fuel prices have been a double edged sword for PATS". Kitchin said that he has seen an increase in discretionary riders and the number of people using PATS' park-and-ride lots, but that the increase in ridership and fares collected has not made up for the increase in fuel costs.

PATS has multiple ways to overcome these various challenges. Kitchin said that advertising in and on PATS buses generates anywhere between \$27,000 and \$40,000 a year for the transit system, which is used to generate match dollars from the government. PATS also employs a human resources department to assist in the challenge of finding and keeping good drivers and staff.

On the whole, Kitchin believes there is a bright future for public transit and for PATS. Steps still need to be taken, and Kitchin and his staff are working hard to take them.

"I think that with the increase in fuel prices, we will continue to see more people becoming interested in using mass transit. As Congress becomes more aware of the need for reliable public transportation, it will continue to work to fund successful systems. There will continue to be a chicken and the egg struggle for mass transit," he said. "However, we know that if we get more buses and vans, then more people will use us. The government asks to see increases in ridership before they increase our funding. It is up to public transportation agencies to motivate ridership. We have to educate the public on how to use us, and the ease and benefits of using public transportation."

2006 CTAA Conference in Orlando



Barbara Chaney (SCNK) and Helen Tucker (BUS)

KPTA members were judges and competitor at the CTAA Rodeo in Orlando. Pictured from left to right, front row: Petra Espinosa and Pam Shepherd not pictured (FTSB), Helen Tucker, Wanda Trimble, and Joe Collins (BUS), back row: Sue Jeffers, Vernon Tucker, Francis Tileston, and Joe Collins (BUS)



Kim Adair and Gary Kitchin (PATS) and Louis Lindsay (OTS).

Kentucky Transit Providers attend activities at the 2006 CTAA Conference in Orlando



Michael Hughes and Dan Lanham (GRITS) and Petra Espinosa (FTSB) at the CTAA Vendor Expo.



Beecher Hudson (ARC-Lou.) Betty Burris (Frankfort Transit), Jodi Alford (TACK) Pam Whitter (HART) and Greg Rogers (Frankfort Transit).