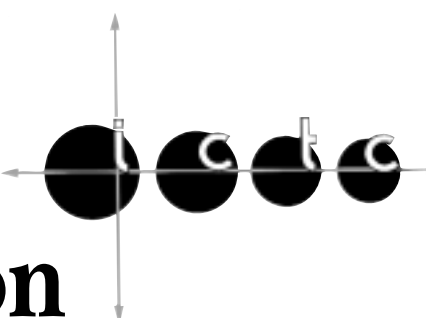


Transit Times

isabella county transportation commission

SEPTEMBER 2007

QUARTERLY REPORT



New Program Succeeds

JARC funds increase adult ridership in rural areas

Job Access/Reverse Commute (JARC) is a federally funded program aimed at providing funding for transportation services directed at bringing people into the workforce. Through a program administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), JARC money is made available to communities across the country for services that target the unemployed. The program attempts to eliminate transportation barriers for those trying to enter or reenter the workforce.

Local transit agencies were asked to identify new services that would help those in need to re-enter the workforce. In coordination with Michigan Works, the Department of Human Services and other human service agencies in Isabella County, ICTC identified the out county area as the

most in need of increased service development.

This need for increased services was two fold. Increased housing costs had forced those in need of lower cost housing into the more rural areas of the county, thus further from the main job market in Mt. Pleasant. Secondly, most entry-level positions in the area were in the service industries and at times generally considered

from an in-town location to work.

Last year ICTC instituted additional out-county bus service at approximately 6PM, 8PM and 10PM. This allows for better access to job sites at appropriate times and saved those with no alternative the additional expense of a second ride. Since its inception last fall ICTC has seen an 80% increase in the adult regular ridership in the out-county

areas. Although not entirely work related trips, as all ICTC services are open door and available to anyone who requests service, this level of use is significantly enhanced by the availability of bus service to those using it to get to and from work.

ICTC is currently waiting for reauthorization of this funding from MDOT for the next fiscal year, beginning October 1, 2007.

New FTA Operator Training Program Inaugurated

Safety and responsibility keys to new program

With the hiring of several new employees this summer, the Isabella County Transportation Commission began a new drivers training and passenger assistance program. Under the direction of ICTC Transportation Coordinator Deb Liscomb, the program was used to train the newest drivers coming into the ICTC workforce and to retrain all ICTC drivers in changes that have occurred in driving law, safe practices and information involving passenger assistance.

Prout, attended University of Wisconsin Milwaukee training for Passenger Assistance. This program emphasizes the techniques and procedures used to provide services to persons with disabilities and special needs. The new training at ICTC then incorporated the Passenger Assistance Training along with the TSI driver training material. ICTC driver

procedures requires a careful and coordinated approach so that safety and customer service are fresh in the drivers mind.

Both Deb and Jackie will attend a national training on restraint systems in November. Q'Straint, Inc., the nations leader in mobility restraint systems, will hold the training. Both will become certified trainers through this program, and will be capable of training others in proper safety in using restraints to secure mobility devices.

ICTC would like to thank some of our patrons who came to the training to assist with providing real-life circumstances to the trainees. Linda Grable and Mary Roberts, ICTC customers using



Deb Liscomb and Jackie Henry

Jacklyn Henry was also involved as an assistant to Deb in the training classes.

Each new driver went through the new program for three weeks. The program included classroom training and testing, as well as, on the road training and instruction in ICTC vehicles. After training the new drivers, all current ICTC



Liscomb addresses training group

wheelchairs, provided hands-on experience to drivers in determining the best practices for safely securing their mobility devices. Richard Boyce, a blind ICTC customer with a guide dog, worked with the group in learning the proper techniques in assisting blind and visually impaired patrons. Jerry Wilcox, an ICTC regular with both a wheelchair and communications challenges, came in to assist in the training with the approach and difficulties associated with providing services to those with impaired communication abilities.



Jen Prout shows trainees how to secure a mobility device.

mobility devices come into use on a regular basis. Each of these new devices and

Deb attended a national training in April through the Transportation Safety Institute (TSI) to become a certified trainer. The class focused on how to teach relevant information on driving safety and law to transit operators. Upon completion of the course she returned to ICTC and began developing the data pertinent to ICTC in regards to our work rules and procedures, as well as, state and federal regulations governing transit services.

In May, Deb, and ICTC driver Jen

Employees Reach Twenty-Year Status

Housner and Burch join the club

Louise Housner has reached the goal of twenty years at the Isabella County Transportation Commission. Louise started as an ICTC driver in August of 1987. Louise drove for more than ten years before becoming a salaried employee as a transportation coordinator.

Mason and Mackenzie are the pride of her life.

Currently Louise is a lead dispatcher at ICTC with responsibilities for scheduling both drivers and service. She is the primary dispatcher for the afternoon shift and takes great pride in providing quality service to all ICTC patrons, but especially seniors, those with disabilities and children.

Gayla Burch was hired in September of 1987 and has driven bus since beginning with ICTC. She has two sons, Craig, of Mt. Pleasant, and Bert, currently living in Alma with Gayla's only granddaughter, Sydney Sue.

Gayla lives in Mt. Pleasant and is one of the county ride specialists at ICTC. She stores a bus at home and starts every day bringing passengers into Mt.

Pleasant and Shepherd from the eastern area of the county. Employee home based buses is one way in which ICTC is able to be efficient, by avoiding having

to send an empty bus from the facility out into the county. Gayla has been one of the longest home based drivers for ICTC, helping ICTC to save thousands of dollars over the years by not having to drive what we call "dead head miles"

Congratulations to Louise and Gayla for jobs well done and for staying committed to public transportation all these years.



Louise Housner



Gayla Burch

Stryeski appointed as new ICTC commissioner

ICTC board expansion begins

Gerald Stryeski has been appointed by the Isabella County Commission as being one of two new commissioners to serve on the ICTC (Isabella County Transportation Commission). Stryeski has been a resident of Isabella County for over 29 years, residing in North East Isabella County.



Gerald Stryeski

Gerald retired from Daimler/Chrysler last year after more than 33 years at the Auburn Hills proto-type stock department. Born and raised in the Detroit area in Redford Township, he is a graduate of Thurston High School.

He also serves on the Wise Township zoning board here in Isabella County. His interest lies in keeping abreast of what is happening in the county and taking an active role in our participatory democracy.

His assessment of ICTC so far is that we are doing an excellent job as far as transportation goes in Isabella County. ICTC is doing well from the feedback he has received. "The more you hear, the more you learn," states Stryeski, "And knowledge is power."

Stryeski's appointment is good through December of 2008. The drivers and staff at ICTC would like to welcome Commissioner Stryeski to the world of rural public transportation.

Boyce selected as exemplary patron



Richard Boyce

The drivers and staff of Isabella County Transportation Commission have selected Richard Boyce as the fall Rider of the Quarter. This recognition is given out quarterly to the patron voted as exemplifying the qualities most appreciated by ICTC employees.

Richard was born in Lansing, and attended the School for the Blind in Lansing. His advanced education was at Central Michigan University, where he received two bachelor's degrees the first in sociology/psychology and the other in education. Richard also received a Master's Degree in secondary education

for all those years, Richard went into the ministry, and was a pastor from 1982 to 2004 in St. Louis, Michigan, and is currently trying to start a prayer fellowship.

He has lived in Mt. Pleasant off and on since he started college in 1964. Coming in and out of the Mt. Pleasant community, Richard has lived in Mt. Pleasant steadily since 1975, and has been at Winchester Towers for more than 20 years. Married for nearly 30 years, Richard's wife passed this summer. He and his wife had no children. Richard is blind and always accompanied by Felix his guide dog, and best friend.

"I think it's a great system," states Richard, "I like it because the drivers and everyone are so courteous." "I think it works best if everyone gives the dispatcher the time they need to be somewhere, or need to be picked up. If you know you have to be somewhere, calling 24 hours ahead is good idea," he observes, "I've never had any problems with that."

Richard would like to thank everyone for the kind words, and deeds, during the time of his wife's passing. ICTC would like to thank Richard for being such an exemplary patron. In recognition of this, and his selection as Rider of the Quarter, Richard will receive a 44-ride punch pass with our compliments. Congratulations Richard.

HOURS
 Note: phones are open one half hour before and after times indicated.
 Monday through Saturday.....6:30 a.m. until 12:00 midnight
 Sunday.....8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.
 Latest scheduled ride at 11:30 pm (4:30 pm Sun)
 Number of available rides at closing is limited. CALL EARLY!!

FARES
 Fare (one way) Pass (44 rides) 1/2 Pass (22 rides)
 Adult.....\$2.00\$65.00\$33.00
 Youth (Under 18)\$1.50\$50.00\$25.00
 Senior/Disabled.....\$1.00\$35.00\$18.00

772-9441 **ictcbus.org**
 Are there any questions or issues you'd like to have answered through the Transit Times? Contact Rick Atkin, ICTC General Manager at 2100 Transportation Drive, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 or call (989) 773-2913.
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