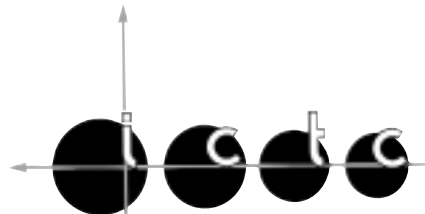


# Transit Times

## isabella county transportation commission

AUGUST 2008

QUARTERLY REPORT



### ICTC Millage on Tuesday's Ballot

## ICTC millage renewal request before primary voters

The Isabella County Transportation Commission (ICTC) has its request for renewal of its millage proposal before the voters in Tuesday's primary election. The proposal seeks approval to continue funding levels for ICTC at the current rate for the next four years. ICTC goes before the voters of Isabella County every four years to seek support through its local millage to continue providing public transportation services to the residents of Isabella County.

ICTC continues to be in the forefront of rural public transportation in Michigan. Through its seven day a week, county-wide transit services, ICTC provides nearly a half a million rides annually to residents of Isabella County.

The current economic crisis in Michigan, and around the country, finds the support for, and request of, services from public transit operators up sharply over previous years. With its expansion of evening county service in the last year and a half, ICTC has seen a forty percent increase in county ridership. More and more residents are turning to public transit services to get them to and from work, appointments and to get children to school, practices and lessons. Seniors and persons with disabilities, who live on fixed incomes, depend more and more on public transportation to maintain their independence in the increasingly costly

world in which we live.

ICTC has had a millage supporting its services in Isabella County since 1976. Its language has always stated that it is requesting up to a certain amount, with the county board of commissioners annually reviewing the request from ICTC for its allocation. This methodology has maintained ICTC services while serving the community in assuring them that no more than necessary to operate its system is requested from the county.

The current "up to one mil" millage has been in effect since 2004, when ICTC was granted, its first millage increase since its inception, and came in the wake of the continuing loss of revenue from the State of Michigan. In the last ten years the support from the state has decreased by nearly 35%, while expenses, especially for fuel, have skyrocketed.

Continued efficient operations and coordination with the community to provide services for those both dependent on public transportation, such as the elderly, young and those with disabilities, as well as those "riders of choice" who seek a shared ride to relieve the pressures of increased costs of transportation are the driving force behind ICTC and its mission to serve those in need of quality public transportation services in our community.

Please exercise your right to vote in tomorrow's primary election, it's your right and your responsibility. Join us in celebrating the great American tradition of our democracy by casting your ballot and making your voice heard.

row's primary election, it's your right and your responsibility. Join us in celebrating the great American tradition of our democracy by casting your ballot and making your voice heard.

### ICTC Gets Fifth Commissioner

## Roy Ranck selected as county representative to ICTC

The Isabella County Transportation Commission (ICTC) welcomed its latest commissioner Roy Ranck, appointed by the Isabella County Board of Commissioners, to its June 2008 meeting.

Mr. Ranck, and his wife Kathy, are residents of rural northeast Isabella County, Wise Township, where Roy was born and raised. They have one adult son, Daniel "Gus" Ranck who lives and works in Kalamazoo. Roy is a retired operating engineer, and proud union member, having worked most of his career as a heavy equipment operator on pipelines all over the United States.

As a third generation farm family from the Coleman area of Isabella County, Roy attended both Coleman and Mt. Pleasant High



ICTC Commissioner Roy Ranck

Schools graduating from the latter in 1963. He then served in the U.S. Navy for two years, before returning to the area.

Roy has served previously on the Isabella County DBA Board and on the Wise Township Planning and Zoning Commission.

ICTC is pleased to have Roy join the commission to bring it to its new capacity of five commissioners. This is the first time ICTC has had a board of five since concurring with the county board two years ago that a three member board was not sufficient for oversight purposes.

Welcome aboard Commissioner Ranck. We at ICTC look forward to working with you to continue to provide quality public transportation services to the residents of our county.

### Michigan's Transit Future at Stake

## Legislature seeks to find new way to fund transportation needs

Since last April the Michigan legislature has sought industry, business and individual input to finding a long-term solution to funding transportation needs in our state. With the formation of the Transportation Funding

Task Force (TF2), and its subsidiary the Citizens Advisory Committee, input from across the state has been sought to determine a way to replace Michigan's gas tax for transportation funding with something more viable for the

future. With the cost of gas increasing at an unprecedented rate, the consumption of fuel has dropped precipitously, reducing the amount of money flowing in to the Comprehensive Transportation Fund (CTF), which provides funding for public transportation.

A combined effort of road builders, businesses and municipalities have been trying to address this need with their "Drive Michigan" campaign. This proposal would increase the current gas tax by three cents a year, for three years, totaling nine cents over this time period. The legislature, as well as the Governor, has steadfastly refused to consider "raising taxes", although this proposal could be moonlighted to end after the three year period. On the plus side of this proposal are two significant points. First is that with

the continuing increases in fuel cost, this modest proposal for a gas tax increase would hardly put a burden on citizens who routinely see cost increases of 10 to 25 cents a gallon on any day. Secondly, this proposal would immediately put additional money in place to deal with crumbling roads and infrastructure and give the legislature a more realistic timeframe to find a solution to long term funding of transportation needs.

The Governor has asked that the TF2 report by October on its findings and on any new methods by which the gas tax could be replaced as a funding mechanism for transportation. Such a recommendation would then have to be brought forth to the legislature as a bill and be discussed and voted on by both the House and Senate before going to the governor for

approval. With recent ongoing budget issues taking the State of Michigan to the brink of shutdown, and consuming more than a year and a half of legislative time and effort, the future of any new proposal coming out of the TF2 would not appear to be on a fast track to becoming law.

The question of how any new funds would be distributed also presents its own difficulties. Since the last increase in funding for transportation was enacted by the legislature in 1998, which also removed the growth cap from the way the Michigan Department of Transportation was directed to distribute funds, the transportation systems in Michigan have been able to grow by the amount of local funds they have been able to generate without consideration of where such additional funds would come

from. This has pitted rural transit and urban transit in competition for the same transit dollars, with the large systems enjoying a significant advantage in the speed with which they can approach and receive approval from their constituents for increased local funds. Nearly 87% of the increased funds in 1998 went to the eight urban transit systems in Michigan. The remaining 13% of the funding was then split among the remaining 70+ rural and small urban systems in the state. A distribution formula reform that would preserve the smaller transit properties the right to access their equitable share of transportation dollars is being promoted by the Michigan Association of Transportation Systems (MASSTrans) of which the ICTC is a member and holds a seat on the board of directors.

## Free Rides To The Polls

Call the ICTC ride line at 772-9441 and reserve your ride to exercise your right as a citizen to direct the democracy in which we live.

### 33rd Annual Michigan Small Bus Rodeo Held in Mt. Pleasant

## Skills competition tests drivers from around the state

The 33rd Annual Michigan Small Bus Rodeo was held July 9, 2008 at the Comfort Inn Conference Center in Mt. Pleasant hosted by the Isabella County Transportation Commission and coordinated through the Michigan Association of Transportation Systems (MASSTrans). This annual training and skills test competition draws drivers from around the state to test their knowledge of driving law and the operation of their vehicles on an obstacle course. Also included in the competition are tests involving a vehicle safety check-out and procedures for loading passengers using mobility devices, such as wheelchairs.

This annual event is also used to determine which drivers will represent the state of Michigan at the annual national competition held in conjunction with the Community Transportation Association of America's annual expo. The top three individual finishers at the Michigan event are eligible to represent the state at this national event.

The Michigan Small Bus Rodeo issues awards in several categories including individual and team competition, rookie competition and best in categories of the competition such as a highest written exam. This year Q'Straint, Inc., a manufacturer of wheel-

chair restraint systems and a sponsor of the event, added an additional award, the Securement Team of the Year. This award will be presented annually to the best team score in the securement portion of the competition. The inaugural winner of this award was the driver team from Gladwin City/County Transit.

The winners in the overall team completion were, in third place ICTC, second place went to Roscommon County Transportation Authority and the winning team was from Clinton Area Transportation Authority. Each of these systems received a trophy and a small stipend for their efforts.

In the individual competition, third place went to Angela Lyon from Gladwin City/County Transportation, second place went to Dave Putman of the Roscommon County Transportation Authority and the first place winner, the 2008 Transit Driver of the Year, body-on-chassis division, went to Ken Zelenka of the Clinton Area Transportation Authority in St. Johns, MI. Congratulations to all that excelled in this skills competition and especially to the top three individual finishers who are eligible to represent Michigan at the National Small Bus Rodeo to be held next June in Providence, Rhode Island.



Obstacle Driving Course for the 2008 Michigan Small Bus Rodeo at the parking area south of the CMU football stadium.



The 2008 Michigan Transit Driver of the Year (Body On Chassis Division) is Ken Zelenka from Clinton Area Transit in St. Johns. He finished in first place in the individual competition in this bus drivers skills testing event.



Chokwe Pitchford from Twin Cities Transportation Authority in Benton Harbor receives instruction on securing a wheelchair from Q'Straint, Inc. regional representative Mike Laidlaw.

### 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**

*Ave 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.*

**paid advertisement**