

Transit Times

isabella county transportation commission

APRIL 2008

QUARTERLY REPORT

ICTC hosts training event

Emergency evacuations – “Practice makes perfect”

The Isabella County Transportation Commission (ICTC) hosted an Emergency Evacuation Training at its facility on Saturday, April 12, 2008. Transit systems from around the state were invited, through the Michigan Transit Insurance Pool (MTIP), to attend this training to assist all its agencies, and their training staff, in developing adequate and standardized procedures for dealing with a number of emergency evacuation situations.

ICTC Trainer Deb Liscomb, with the assistance of the Mount Pleasant and Fremont Township fire departments and the Isabella County Emergency

Management organization, developed a program to simulate a number of bus emergency situations from fires to disruptive passengers.

In the letter inviting the pool member agencies, ICTC General Manager Rick Atkin writes, “It is our mission at ICTC to provide freedom of mobility to access jobs, recreation and services in our community as efficiently, effectively and safely as possible. Safety above all is our first priority. As much as we try, accidents still happen. When they do, we would like the knowledge that our staff has been properly trained to handle any situation that may arise.”

Simulations were set up to cover tire fires and evacuations, engine fires and evacuations, removing a person using a wheelchair from the bus, both in their chair and in a circumstance where they are removed from the chair. Additionally, using the emergency escape windows, a passenger to passenger altercation and proper use of fire extinguishers were demonstrated.

Approximately thirty people from six transit agencies were in attendance for this event. Further trainings are planned for additional agencies as the requests for trainings dictates.



ICTC Trainer Deb Liscomb addresses group at training exercise.



Bus tire fire evacuation simulation.



Mt Pleasant Fire Department officer Rick Beltinck prepares Kalamazoo Metro Transit trainer Lorraine Brown to use a common fire extinguisher found on transit vehicles.

Syrup Queen part of “ICTC family”

Rochelle Foote selected as 2008 Shepherd Maple Syrup Queen

Matt Foote has been the “morning man” at ICTC for more than decade and has been employed by ICTC for 25 years. His wife, Mary, has been employed at the Isabella Community Credit Union even longer. Matt and Mary Foote of Shepherd are the proud parents of this year’s Shepherd Maple Syrup Queen, Rochelle Foote, a senior at Shepherd High School. She has one older sibling, Anthony, who is employed as a City of Alma

police officer.

Rochelle’s interests include swimming, dancing, rollerblading, camping and pompon, which she has excelled in, participating in four years of varsity pompon at Shepherd High school. She earned Mid American Pompon All Star Team honors the last three years. Rochelle was also active in the Pep Club, the Prom Committee, Concert Band, Marching Band and also Jazz Band.

Her achievements and

honors include National Honor Society (two years), Honor Roll (four years), Captain of Varsity Pompon (two years), Mid American Pompon All Star Team (three years) and All Star Concert Band (three years). Rochelle is also a HUGE Detroit Red Wings and Detroit Tigers fan.

Congratulations to Matt, Mary, and especially Rochelle. We here at ICTC are all proud of this great recognition for such a deserving young woman.



Rochelle Foote, 2008 Shepherd Maple Syrup Queen

Crisis in funding looms for transportation

Gas tax no longer the answer for funding public transportation

The primary funding for public transportation in Michigan is through the collection of a tax on gasoline. With the increased cost of gas, the sales of gas have decreased, leaving the amount of money available to public transportation through the Comprehensive Transportation Fund (CTF) stagnant. Requests for service, however, have skyrocketed. Many systems seeing as much a 40% increase in ridership in the last several years. Funding for transit from the gas tax collected by the State of Michigan has steadily decreased from the original statutory 60% of eligible expenses to 36% this fiscal year. Customers and communities across the state have been asked to increase their commitment by increases in fares and local millages.

Local support for public transportation covers about half of the operational

expense, while the state and federal governments return transportation tax dollars to meet the balance of the need. The problem is two-fold. Insufficient funding pits large communities against smaller ones for limited resources. The ability to raise local funding in order to draw greater dollars from the CTF is easier for larger systems with a greater population to share the cost and larger administrations able to organize and implement revenue enhancement. Additionally, both the State of Michigan, and most rural communities, are donors in the area of transportation funding, sending more money to Washington than the State gets back to support public transportation and in the amount sent from local communities to the State of Michigan. The ability for every community to access their “fair share” for

transportation funding is lacking under current methodologies.

Efforts to look at the long term funding needs of transportation are underway, with an eye to finding new ways to adequately fund public transportation. Responsible legislation is needed to assure that those who currently depend on public transportation to maintain their independence and quality of life are met, while the future for those who are rapidly approaching the age of retirement, and those in the most rapidly growing segment of our society, those over 80 years of age, will have the resources available to them to maintain their active and self reliant lifestyles. Public transportation is the key to such independence for those using it today and for the growing numbers looking to use it in the near future. The future is indeed riding on us!

Jones Selected Rider of the Quarter

New user quick to recognize value in public transit

The drivers and staff of the Isabella County Transportation Commission have selected Bruce Jones as the Rider of the Quarter. This acknowledgment is done for every newsletter to recognize ICTC customers that are exemplary in their conduct and use of public transportation services.

Bruce Jones was born and raised in Rochester, Michigan where he attended Rochester High School. He then attended Michigan State University obtaining and undergraduate degree and Masters of Business Administration degree. He also attained a Masters of Education degree from Central Michigan University.

Bruce worked for General Motors, in the purchasing department in Pontiac, Mi, for nearly forty years before retiring and moving to Mt. Pleasant. He has three adult sons, all of whom work in the computer/software field. He arrived in Mt. Pleasant in 2002 and joined the Bowerman-Peake Agency selling real estate.

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1971, Bruce lost both legs to amputation in early 2007. He first used the ICTC when recuperating from surgery at Tendercare in Mt. Pleasant in June of 2007 and has been a regular customer ever since.

Bruce, and his significant other, June Davis, are both very appreciative of ICTC for the services they provide and for the



ICTC Rider of the Quarter Bruce Jones and ICTC driver Carey Barker, “Please make use of this system You’ll be amazed how easy it is to get around town.”

concern its employees have shown them. “I love the fact that drivers are well trained, and know the streets”, comments Bruce, “They are all such friendly and open people, and so helpful.”

“I’ve yet to meet a driver who’s not really friendly, it’s nice when they know your name, it’s like they’re an extension of your family.”

“In particular,” states Bruce, “I’d like to thank your driver Larry McDevitt who recognized I was having an insulin reaction the other day when he came to pick me up. He took me directly to the hospital. He absolutely saved my life! My doctor said that if they had called 9-1-1 for an ambulance I would have probably died waiting for it to arrive.”

When asked what he would like people in our community to know about ICTC services he stated, “Please make use of this system and support it with your vote and by being a passenger. You’ll be amazed how easy it is to get around town using ICTC.”

The ICTC wishes to thank Bruce for his kind words and to show our appreciation we are presenting him with a complementary 44-ride bus pass as a token of our appreciation for being such an exemplary customer.

ICTC gets new commissioner

Staples is new city representative to the Isabella County Transportation Commission

Local entrepreneur, Sam Staples, was appointed by the Mt. Pleasant City Commission as its new representative to the Isabella County Transportation Commission. Staples becomes the second representative of the city, joining two other county appointed commissioners and an anticipated third appointee from the county, to bring the ICTC to having five members on this policy setting board.

Staples has lived in Mt. Pleasant for 28 years with his wife and three children, and now five grandchildren. He is a retired business owner and also retired from the U.S. Navy after serving over 20 years. Sam’s experiences are broad, he is the former Director of Transportation for the Sea Cadets program in the area, and has served on a number of appointed government boards in the



ICTC Commissioner Sam Staples

past including the Airport Advisory Board, the Mt. Pleasant Zoning Board of Appeals and the city Board of Review.

Staples is a graduate of Purdue University, started the Purdue Club of Mid-Michigan, and has received honorary alumni status from Central Michigan University.

During his service in the Navy Sam found his background for serving on the transportation commission when he established a fixed-route bus service at Jacksonville Naval Air Station in 1973.

Welcome aboard Sam, the ICTC looks forward to your insight for maintaining and improving ICTC services for the future of Isabella County and the city of Mt. Pleasant.

Millage renewal request on August Primary ballot

Continuation of current funding requested for ICTC

It was the spring of 1974 and our community took full advantage of newly enacted federal and state legislation establishing the funds for developing rural public transportation. The City of Mt. Pleasant was the third rural small city to start a transit operation in Michigan. Isabella County was the first rural operation to start a county wide bus system. Established through the Commission on Aging, with the help of then county board chair Matt Engler, Van Tran became the first of its kind in Michigan. About a year and a half later the two systems merged becoming one, the Isabella County Transportation Commission.

It has been a successful development of a county wide transit service second to none. ICTC has gone from carrying 7100 passengers it first year to carrying nearly 500,000 passengers this year. Always in the forefront of rural public transportation, ICTC was one of the first systems to request a millage to support its service

to the community. The language has always read “up to” allowing for annual review of needs by the county board. In 2004 the ICTC asked for the first ever increase in the “up to...” rate, from 7/10ths of a mill to one mill. This request was approved overwhelmingly by a two to one margin.

This August voters will again be asked to support ICTC by renewing our community’s commitment to quality public transportation. The request is for simply renewing the language passed by voters in 2004. To date ICTC has yet to ask for the full 1 mil, keeping with its promise to only ask for what it needs to continue to provide the highest quality of public transportation in the most efficient manner.

ICTC encourages all residents of Isabella County to vote in the August primary. As always, the ICTC will provide a free ride to and from your polling place on Election Day. Vote! It’s both a right and a privilege.

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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