

Nebraska Transit Trends

Rail And Public Transit Division

State Fair time is almost here and the rural public transportation systems are beginning to ask if transportation to the fair is considered charter service. The simple answer is - If you go to Grand Island (Dr. Apts., shopping, etc.) as part of your regular service, you can provide transportation service to the fair during your regular operating hours. You may not advertise exclusive service to the fair (that is charter).

NDOR has been asked to

provide a list of items (information, reports, etc.) that are required of all rural public transit systems (or managers) on a regular basis, whether it be daily, weekly, monthly, or annually. A special communication will be coming from NDOR in the near future with those details.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind managers of a couple of things. First, all requests for RTAP reimbursement must be received by NDOR no later

Jerry Wray
NDOR Transit Liaison Manager

than 30 days after the end of the event for which reimbursement is being requested. Secondly, we have received a few reports of problems with air conditioners on your transit vehicles. If you have problems with your vehicles, NDOR needs to know about them. Please take the time to either call or write to us so that we know if there are issues with the vehicles we are procuring through the state bidding process.



Region VII Federal Transit Administrator, Mohktee Ahmad; Joni Roeseler, FTA Team Leader; Charles McGraw RYDE TRANSIT Manager accepting the FTA Nebraska Transit Award for FY2011, Daniel Nguyen, FTA Staff, and Jerry Wray, DOR Transit Liaison Manager

From Georgia's Desk

All NATP Managers should have received the information for the September 20th & 21st NATP Drivers Training and Rodeo. Tuesday has a full agenda for the all day training. Dr. Jo will be back for all of us with an attitude adjustment for healthy living. And then off to the Nebraska Safety Center for skills and thrills!

I sincerely believe especially all new managers should attend this drivers' training and the Rodeo. I wish I could make this a mandatory training for all, just because you deserve the personal growth, the

networking, and sheer delight of inter working with your transit family.

I have ordered the RTAP guide to Emergency Procedures for Rural Transit Drivers. The role of a transit driver in an emergency can be critical to saving lives and protecting property. Because of the nature of the job, drivers are often the first on the scene of accidents and incidents. Your experience and expertise will help you remain calm, clearheaded and able to respond effectively during emergencies.

Georgia Janssen
NATP Executive Director

I will retire the end of the year. Yes, I will miss seeing so many of you. But, never did I work one day of this job that I didn't love the people I worked with and the experiences we shared! The first NATP Rodeo I was truly terrified! This is my favorite NATP event and always will be. Join us in Keamey, any guesses what the weather will be this year? I'm hoping for fall!

See you in Keamey!
Moving Nebraskans to the
Good Life

NATP President

Carol Maxson
NATP President

Greetings all-

I was so sorry to miss the Manager's Workshop in June, but things happen, right? Our first obligation is to the passengers and the entities that employ us.

Apparently, there are still a few steps that need to be taken before the agreement with RouteMatch as the State's preferred software provider can be finalized. We are

all hoping there will be the ability to interface with AMR/A2C to make the reporting and receiving of information less cumbersome.

This month (August) I will be traveling to Omaha to meet with the NEMO Advisory Council and then to Lincoln for the Vision 2032 Stakeholders Summit. I feel we need to have a transit presence there.

Roadeo is fast approaching, and we will be saying good-bye to our very good friend Georgia during that time as that will be her last big function as our NATP Executive Director before she rides (public transit, of course) off into the sunset.

See everyone in Keamey in September for the Roadeo.



Deb Benner, Ogallala Transit Driver: A local hero to her passengers



At first Stacy Murphy just thought her baby was fussy missing his Grandmother after a move to a new home. But, she also had been in and out of the local ER twice during the weekend with severe headaches.

On March 28th, Murphy, still feeling ill, boarded the Ogallala Public Transit, which would transport herself and baby Keagen, first to daycare and then to Murphy's job. While on many busses conversation would be nil, the Ogallala bus drivers always visit with Murphy and the other riders.

"Those girls are so amazing. And they all love Keagen so much," said Murphy. Murphy told driver Deb Benner about the headaches she experienced during the weekend and her suspicions that it may be carbon monoxide. Benner, for more than a decade was an emergency medical technician with the Ogallala Volunteer Fire Department.

She told Murphy this was nothing to mess around with and she needed to call the gas company. Later that afternoon, Benner picked up Murphy from her job, Benner made sure to get in touch with Zoning Director Ken Knoepfel. He then called Dell Simmerman, a fellow firefighter, who works for the Source Gas Company. Simmerman arrived and the high reading of carbon monoxide was escaping from a gas water heater vent pipe. "Thank God for Deb, she is our hero," a grateful Murphy said. Benner said the lesson here is to act, "don't put things off. If something feels wrong, check it out."

Congratulations Deb on your local hero award!



Public Rural Transit Keeps Sisters Close

When Pearl Wevers needs someone to thread her needle, there's no one she'd rather have by her side than her sister, Myrtle Ahrens.

Though only about 25 miles separate Lincoln from Firth, that distance is a challenging stretch of road for either Pearl, 101, or Myrtle, 100, to navigate.

Luckily, Pearl's pants stay hemmed thanks to a little help from Lancaster County Public Rural Transit. For only \$2 each way, the transit service makes it easy for the sisters to travel safely between one another's homes.

"Rural Transit gives us the opportunity to get out," Pearl said. "We get together as often as we can."

Pearl, who has lived in Firth since 1965, hasn't driven in more than a year, and Myrtle hasn't operated a vehicle since moving to Lincoln more than 30 years ago.

When the weather is nice, the sisters plan monthly visits. Often,

these visits are extended stays when the sisters stay at one another's homes for weeks at a time. Pearl and Myrtle plan their visits around the transit service's route, which makes stops in Firth each Tuesday and Thursday.

Expanded Destinations

For more than 30 years, Lancaster County Public Rural Transit has offered affordable transportation options from rural communities to Lincoln. However, it wasn't until July 1, 2010, that the transit service offered transportation for riders residing within Lincoln city limits to destinations in rural Lancaster County.

Pearl had been utilizing the transit service to visit Myrtle in Lincoln for almost a year. But for Myrtle, the expanded service opened the opportunity for her to visit her sister in Firth.



The transit service allows Pearl, left, and Myrtle the opportunity to enjoy the fresh country air and good conversation with one another on Pearl's front porch swing.

Helpful and Friendly Drivers

Though the transit service put two new buses into service last year (funded by the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act), it's not the 12-passenger seating, wheelchair access or ample headroom the sisters rave about; it's their driver, Bonnie.

"The drivers are so helpful, especially Bonnie," Pearl said. "I just love her."

Myrtle appreciates Bonnie's willingness to go above and beyond to help her, recalling a time she left a package behind at her apartment. Though the bus was already a block from home, Bonnie turned around without blinking an eye.

"She goes out of her way," Myrtle said. "She always helps me to my door with my luggage."

For more information on Lancaster County Public Rural Transit, call 402-441-7031. [lw](#)



From left, sisters Pearl and Myrtle appreciate safe, affordable transportation between Lincoln and Firth provided by Lancaster County Public Rural Transit.

The three competing drivers present their reports following attending the National Rodeo in Indianapolis. Carol Graham, Blue Rivers AAA; Brenda Guilliams and Mike Frederick, Richardson County Transit.





Scott Bartels, Saline County Area Transit Manager, accepts the NATP 2011 Manager of the Year Award.



Accepting awards for the 2011 NATP "Rookie" Co-Managers of the Year are Denny Carr and Jeffrey Baker, Seward County Transit.



Hall County Executive Director, Theresa Engelhardt welcoming the group to Grand Island for the NATP Manager's Workshop.



Many of the NATP Managers enjoy the entertainment "Illusion Confusion", a magic act from Aurora. The entertainment followed the Awards Banquet.



All photos are courtesy of Charles McGraw

NATP Executive Director Job Description

Position: Executive Director of Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers

Location: Eastern Nebraska

Hours: Part-time, Flexible hours

Salary range: \$25,000 - \$30,000

Applications will be accepted until October 10, 2011

The Executive Director for NATP is responsible for public relations activities that promote transit and create awareness of the public transportation systems in the State. He/She acts as an advocate on behalf of the transit systems. The Executive Director has responsibility for the day to day operations of NATP. Ongoing communications with the membership, board members and officers of NATP is essential.

The Executive Director shall:

1. Develop and maintain working relationships with those federal and state governmental agencies involved in transit activities, including the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the Nebraska Department of Roads (DOR).
2. Maintain membership in Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) and be involved in other transit organizations as necessary.

The Executive Director shall:

1. Implement the current work plan.
2. Develop future work plans and submit to Board of Directors and NDOR for approval.
3. Develop and present regional driver trainings.
4. Organize and coordinate the annual transit Rodeo.
5. Attend the CTAA Expo and other national conferences, representing the State of Nebraska.
6. Plan, organize, and coordinate the annual transit managers' workshop.

He/She shall:

- Arrange to meet with the Board of Directors at least 2 times per year according to NATP bylaws and more frequently as necessary.
- Act as legislative liaison, informing membership of important legislation that can or will affect transit. This includes both state and federal issues.
- Represent NATP at the NACO (Nebraska Association of County Officials) trade show.
- Publish the NATP Newsletter, 3 to 4 issues per year.
- Develop methods to expand membership.
- Be responsible for the fiscal management of NATP funds.
- And other duties as assigned or designated.

Qualifications:

1. At least 2-5 years experience in the transit industry.
2. A college degree is not required, but is considered a plus.
3. Computer experience in Microsoft Office, i.e. Word, Excel and PowerPoint is required.
4. Must be able to furnish office space and equipment.
5. Must have flexibility in determining working hours (some days longer than others).
6. Must be a self-starter and have the ability to work independently.
7. Must have a genuine desire to serve and enhance transit in Nebraska.
8. Must have good oral and written communication skills.
9. Must be willing to travel. Some out of state travel is required to represent NATP at National Conferences.
10. Must have the ability to lift up to 50 lbs.

Please attach your resume here!!

Include a statement of why you are applying for this position.

Resumes can be mailed to:

Carol Maxson
411 East 2nd St.
Ogallala NE 69153

or emailed to:

carol.maxson@ogallala-ne.gov

or FAXed to:

308-284-6565

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NATP Calendar Of Events 2011 & 2012

August 22	Rodeo Committee Meeting , North Platte
September 20-21	NATP Drivers' Training and Statewide Rodeo Kearney, Holiday Inn/NE Safety Center
October	Reminder: 4 Scholarships will be offered to attend the 2012 Rural Conference hosted by Utah. Please include this Conference in your 2013 budget if you are interested in attending.
December	NACO hosted in Kearney
January 2012	Legislative Day
March/April	6 Driver Trainings held across the state
May	CTAA EXPO/Rodeo to be held in Baltimore
June 12,13 & 14	Managers' Workshop hosted in Kearney Hampton Inn and Younes Conference Center
September 17-18	Drivers' Training/Rodeo , Kearney
October	Rural Bus and Intercity Conference , Salt Lake, Utah

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