



Spring '07
Quarterly Newsletter



Bus stops as public art

What do bus stops and sculpture have in common? Not much, usually. But the City of Kettering doesn't see it that way. Kettering is working with the Greater Dayton RTA and a Dayton architect to turn its bus stops into public art that accommodates bus riders.

The city installed three newly designed bus stops in April 2007 and plans to integrate the same sculptural design into more of its stops and shelters throughout Kettering, according to Connie Campbell, Cultural Arts Superintendent.

"The next one will be installed on the corner of Far Hills and Dorothy Lane and there is funding for that from RTA," Campbell said.

The venture is a partnership between Kettering's Art in Public Places Committee, the city's Capital Improvements Program and the RTA. Money for the design came from the city's public art program. Fabrication and installation of the stops is funded by RTA's community grants program.

"This is what our community grants program is all about," said RTA Executive Director Mark Donaghy. He praised the project for combining a practical purpose with art.

Dayton artist and architect Mary Rogero, of Rogero Buckman Architecture, answered a call to Ohio artists in 2005 to submit designs. Rogero's design of welded red steel constructed forms was selected as the final choice for Kettering's signature bus

stop design.

"She has a degree in sculpture but also a degree in architecture. She had the knowledge we needed to design something that is modular, that could be toned down or toned up," Campbell said.

Feedback from the public has been "really positive," according to Campbell who was not aware of any negative responses to the new designs.

Rogero believes her background in sculpture and her design concept suited the project. "The shelter had to adapt to a lot of conditions. So it had to be a design that worked for two people, or four, or six. And it had many criteria, so I decided to do the design in a series of component parts that could be added to or subtracted from, depending upon the site," she said.

The components include overhead shelters, benches, and trash receptacles and each stop contains some or all of the components as needed. While the components may differ from site to site, the overall design with its ruby red color was meant to become a consistent identity throughout Kettering. Fabrication was completed by Budde Sheet Metal of Dayton under Rogero's supervision. She is pleased with the results so far.

"They look really great. I like the color – they stand out," she added.



Diversity program inspires

Diversity means many things at the RTA. “Sharing a culture.” “Learning.” “Different perspectives.” “Respect for a variety of people.” And simply, “working at RTA.” Those were some of the definitions from employees who attended the Diversity luncheon held in February.

“Just look at what we have here right now – office workers, maintenance people, drivers – all one big RTA family,” declared John Thomas. He took a moment to honor Dorothy Gilliam as the backbone of RTA’s formal diversity program. Gilliam has been the driving force behind each yearly program for several years.

“Dorothy really pushes the concept of diversity at RTA and she doesn’t get the recognition she deserves,” Thomas said.

Participants were welcomed by Executive Director Mark Donaghy and heard a heart-felt discourse by the Rev. Jerome McCorry, president of Dayton SCLC. McCorry recalled his long involvement in the freedom movement going back to the days of Martin Luther King-inspired marches.

“I believe in commemorating the marches – the marches changed things. But, we’ve got to do more than march. We need to give back to our communities,” he said. “If we fail to give back to our communities, we fail as a society.”

He noted that youths getting into trouble today lack the involvement of parents, neighbors and other extended family members who make it their business to notice the behavior of young people in their community. “Back in those days, if I got into the slightest bit of trouble, everybody’s mama was waiting for me to come home. I was scared of my mama. Young folks aren’t scared anymore.”

His advice was to forget about differences and focus on character building through involvement in churches or community organizations like PTA and Urban League.

Diners were entertained with music from employees Carlene Logan, Michael Valentine, Kelvin Gross, Janet Moore, and Tom Brady. They also heard original poetry from Mary Brooks (a member of Gilliam’s church) and operator Clarence Norton.

The committee honored Latricia Campbell, Keith Richards, Vivian Kensley (an RTA volunteer), Tom Brady, and Donna Johnson for their contributions to diversity at RTA.



RTA Partners in 'Drive Less' campaign

RTA became a partner in a first-ever Dayton event that took place during spring and early summer – the Drive Less Live More initiative. Drive Less Live More was jointly sponsored by RTA with the Miami Conservancy District, the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, and Five Rivers MetroParks and is designed to encourage Dayton residents to use their cars less by walking, biking, ridesharing, or using the bus.

Similar annual programs have been offered in other cities such as Madison, Wisconsin, and Denver, Colorado. Each is unique to the area, but most urge drivers to register for a "One Less Trip" contest during which people pledge to drive their cars less than usual for a few weeks. The non-car trips are logged (usually on websites) and participants become eligible for grand prizes. Top winners in the Dayton Drive Less Live More contest won a trip to Mackinac Island, Michigan. Other events featured smaller prizes.

Dayton's campaign offered several events, including special speakers at a Regional Issues Forum, a River bike

ride, several Bike-to-Work Days, and RTA's special four-week contest called, "Explore Dayton with the RTA," which was planned to encourage those who don't usually ride the bus to navigate the system while sightseeing.

RTA contest participants traveled by bus to four regional attractions (among several on RTA routes) using complimentary tokens and filled out a "passport" with information they could only find at the various attractions. When they had visited four, they turned in their passport on the bus ride home. Winning participants had their names drawn from those who turned in the passports. Two winners received \$150 Meijer gift cards and dinner-theater packages. Others won gift certificate baskets in weekly drawings just for participating.

The agencies that organized Drive Less Live More in 2007 plan to sponsor the campaign annually in the future. Further details are available at DriveLessLiveMore.org.



Former driver provides Bright spot at WSP

Throughout his life, Richard Bright, 83, has paid little attention to barriers. He just did what he wanted to do. That includes a long history of being a military enlistee, a long-time member of the Army reserves, a musician, a military base civilian employee, an auto factory worker, and the second black transit driver in Dayton's history.

He drove for City Railway in 1955 and, though he held the job for only about nine months between assignments at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, he remembers it well. He also remembers that when he and other black transit drivers were hired, it was announced on a local radio program.

"When the news got out, people wanted to see for themselves. My first day after training I pulled up in front of the Arcade, opened the door, and a flood of people got on that bus," Bright said.

Some riders had to be won over. "There was an older lady who paused on the steps of the bus when she saw me. I said, 'Are you coming on this bus?' She said, 'Why?' And I said, 'Because the drivers behind me are blacker than me.'

"Well she sat close to the front and watched every move I made all the way up Third Street... At her stop, I helped her off the bus and walked her across the street. That night she called the radio station and asked why the bus company didn't have more drivers like that new black man."

One early Sunday morning Bright's bus held several ladies on their way to church. As he pulled onto a one-way street, a car full of drunken men approached going the wrong direction. They refused to back out and demanded that Bright back up the bus. Wanting to avoid a fight, he decided to scare them a little. He grabbed a pole with attached ropes that drivers used to tend overhead trolley wires, draped the ropes over the wires, and let the pole inch toward the hood of their car. Though

Bright knew the wires wouldn't conduct electricity, the men weren't so sure. They quickly backed out of the way.

During Bright's time, fares were 10 cents and transfers were a penny. And though he scared those menacing drunks, he made few enemies as a transit employee. "I loved my riders. You really don't know how a person feels when they get on the bus, so I always tried to say something nice... I'd ask how they were doing or tell someone they were looking nice that day."

Some 40 years later, Bright continues to make a positive impact at the RTA. He regularly entertains Wright Stop Plaza lunchtime customers playing the organ in the concourse. He noticed that some young people used to make noise while he played, but many now pay attention. "Some kids don't have respect for others. It starts at home. When I came up, we learned to respect our parents. When that happens, you have respect for yourself."

on the move

On the Move is a publication of the Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority Marketing Department. Its purpose is to inform employees, retirees and the community of activities, events, commendations and changes in policies.

If you have any comments, suggestions or contributions, please forward them to the RTA Marketing Department.

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2006 Employees of the Year



Jim Steele
Combo Operator



Craig Lewis
Transit Services
Operator



Tom Dineen
PMOB Operator



Al Rousseau
Maintenance



Tom Hodge
Salary Employee

Spring Fling Celebration

A chilly Spring Fling attracted kids who didn't let a little cold weather keep them from finding the Easter eggs hidden behind Wright Stop Plaza.

Donyea Robinson, 11, holds still while getting her face painted. Donyea is the daughter of Donna Johnson, planning department



With warm jackets over their spring outfits, a happy group gathered to pose with the Easter bunny.

A mom introduces her reluctant little one to the Easter bunny.



www.GreaterDaytonRTA.org



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