

Not just another ride for driver dad

When Operator Kevin Davis started out on his regular afternoon shift recently, he anticipated his usual Route 8 drive. An RTA operator for 20 years, Davis expects the need to display plenty of patience, but rarely heroics. This July day would be different.

At around 2:30 p.m. he noticed two little girls on the curb of Salem Avenue near Harvard Blvd. They were very young, completely alone, and not a single adult was in sight. One child was about 9 months old and the other about 20 months old.

When it appeared the younger toddler was about to step down off the curb into the street, Davis halted his bus.

"I didn't see any parents, so I immediately pulled the bus over and grabbed the two kids and put them on the bus," Davis said.

He phoned a dispatcher who called Dayton police. Dispatch told him to wait for the police to arrive and to ask his customers to catch the next bus, a Route 14 that was close behind. Davis said his passengers, who were mostly women, were as upset as he was and were eager to help. Both children, who were too young to talk, seemed fine and were eating peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, Davis said.

"It was real sad because everybody on the bus asked how anyone could leave these kids outside alone like that," he said.

Dayton police arrived in less than 15 minutes and told Davis the kids would be transported to Montgomery County Children Services Division. Phone calls to the agency yielded no further information about what later happened to the children.

"I was real relieved when the police came," Davis said. "I just couldn't understand the logic of someone leaving them out like that."

Street Supervisor Tom Allen described Davis's behavior as "very much a random act of kindness."

Davis said he couldn't leave the two kids there by themselves because he has kids of his own, which is no understatement. He is the father of nine, ranging in age from two to 23.

Executive Director Mark Donaghy said, "His customers applauded him for his efforts and we, too, believe his heroic actions may have saved two innocent children."



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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EditorSharon Balderson
Photos & LayoutSteve Kobrin
Graphics Supervisor..... Sue Kadel
Director of Community & Government RelationsAnthony Whitmore

Summer Fun

The annual Summer Bash at the Wright Stop Plaza gave vacationing kids a chance to snack, play games, and visit with Ronald McDonald.



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Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority

600 Longworth Street • P.O. Box 1301
Dayton, OH 45401



Summer '07
Quarterly Newsletter



RTA helps 'Special Wish' come true

RTA again made it possible for many special needs families to see a preview of the 2007 Dayton Air Show by providing free shuttle service the day before the show began.

About 650 family members attended a pre-show rehearsal by the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds on Friday, July 27, according to Sarah Sonner, Fund Raising Coordinator for Dayton's A Special Wish Foundation, Inc. After going through a full-scale, narrated preview of their aerial spectacle, the Thunderbird pilots met with the families and signed autographs.

"It's an experience of a lifetime for the kids to come out and see the air show and get to meet with the pilots," said Cheyenne Nipp, the mother of a Special Wish child.

She said it had been ten years since her family had been to the air show. "We live here in Vandalia and usually every year we hear the planes flying by and we get so excited, but I never have the money to come out to the show," she added.

The Evans family also found the show "a pretty cool experience," according to Mrs. Evans.

"I liked it when the jets flew upside down," Ryan Evans said.

"This is our first time here and we thank RTA for helping. It was a very nice thing. It really meant a lot getting everybody together and getting us here," Vicki Slater said. Her son, Daniel, was most excited about getting an autograph

from one of the pilots.

A Special Wish Foundation grants the wishes of children, age birth through 20, who have been diagnosed with life-threatening disorders. Because of their illnesses many of the children are physically unable to attend the main show. RTA partners with such agencies each year to provide transportation to the event.

Shuttle service was also provided on that Friday for participants in the Students Open to Aviation Research (SOAR) program. The SOAR program offers several hundred elementary through high school students the opportunity to explore career and educational activities in math, science, and engineering while experiencing special air show related exhibits at the Dayton Air Show Exposition Center.

Transit Services Director Jim Napier called the partnership between RTA and the organizations "quite a community resource."

"I'm glad we're able to contribute and that they are benefiting from our services. You can't put a price tag on that," he said.



Meet Allison Ledford



RTA's newest director, Allison Ledford, didn't set out to work in transportation. A Zanesville, Ohio native, she once dreamed of being a writer, a lawyer, or a social worker. She has a degree from Kent State University in consumer family studies, a somewhat oddball major, she explained. Due to an enrollment decline in clinical social work, Kent State broadened the major to include "diverse courses in the social area."

"You had a really good background because you were required to take courses in gerontology, in family life, psych classes, and even interior design," Ledford said.

She happened to get her first job at South East Area Transit in Zanesville as a dispatcher-scheduler. She spent four years there and was promoted to risk manager. She left to work for First Transit, a large Cincinnati-based transit management company. At First Transit, she was placed in a manager training program at Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK).

"I was able to gain experience in many

aspects of the transit business ranging from operations to finance and even a little maintenance," she said.

After finishing the program, she was promoted to TANK's Director of Finance and Administration. Her primary responsibility was human resources, but the job encompassed overseeing the finance and information technology and computer systems areas.

Ledford has worked in various professional organizations including the Society for Human Resource Management, Business Leadership Network, and the Disabilities Coalition of Northern Kentucky.

She was tapped by RTA last February to become Director of Paratransit Services and feels the position ties back to earlier career goals.

"Now I am kind of doing social work in a way and this role is where my passion is. I like to see people (who have disabilities) enriched in life. That could be just a ride. A simple ride in a simple bus can make a big difference."

Nonriders try RTA on 'Dump the Pump' Day

On a sunny late Thursday morning, three Dayton workers took a Route 14 bus from Far Hills Avenue to Main Street to help celebrate the second annual 'Dump the Pump' day on Courthouse Square.

It had been almost 20 years since she bused to work, but Janet Bly, general manager of Miami Conservancy District, enjoyed the ride. "The bus was full, which kind of surprised me being midday. I was impressed with how nice everybody was to each other, moving over to make room for new people coming on," she said.

Miami Valley Council Boy Scout Leader Ken Wade found the trip nostalgic. "It took me back to growing up as a boy when I used the transportation system to

go everywhere. I loved it. It was very comfortable," Wade said.

Dayton City Commissioner Nan Whaley last took a bus to the Dayton Mall six years ago and was reminded how much she enjoys using public transportation. "I'm going to commit month to month to ride; that would be fun," she said.

The annual celebration was conceived by the American Public Transportation Association to encourage transit use to conserve energy and help the environment. Dayton joined transit agencies from seven states participating in the national event. RTA received three

proclamations from the city, county and state declaring June 21, 2007, Dayton's 'Dump the Pump' Day.

The bus riders joined RTA officials, Debbie Lieberman and Judy Dodge, Montgomery County commissioners, Bob Butz, Five Rivers MetroParks education director, and Dave Brown, from the local Sierra Club chapter on stage at the event. The boy scouts presented a color guard and "Lucky" the Ladybug, from Montgomery County Solid Waste District, appeared.

Sierra Club, Five Rivers MetroParks, Miami Conservancy District, All Aboard Ohio, the



RTA receives ACIL partnership award

Dayton's Access Center for Independent Living honored the RTA during its annual celebration of the 17th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26.

RTA received the Access Center's Partnership Award, which recognizes local organizations for a relationship with the center that shows "exceptional dedication to the substance of our organization's mission – to ensure that people with disabilities have complete access to the community in which they choose to reside," said Alan Cochrun, executive director.

Begun in 2006, the award goes to

businesses that demonstrate a "caliber of passion for the organization's guiding principles."

Cochrun credited the management staff, particularly Executive Director Mark Donaghy, for RTA's improved response to the problems of persons with disabilities. He also praised RTA for a day-long, two-session ADA forum held in 2006 to give residents a chance to air concerns about accessibility issues involving transit.

"The RTA addressed every single complaint expressed that day," Cochrun said.

A similar forum was held on August 15, 2007, in which all who had questions

were again promised an answer. Donaghy said more can be done to be fully accessible in the community and pledged RTA's commitment to the process.

Management staff, safety committee members, and all new bus operators participate in sensitivity training at the Access Center. The trainees go through four-hour sessions designed to acquaint them with mobility, cognition, visual, speech, and hearing issues, said Harris Fry, RTA training supervisor.

In one exercise, trainees are blindfolded, given a cane, and told to walk a given path. In another, tube socks

are placed over their hands and they must pick up items or try to write with a pencil. A wheelchair obstacle course helps them experience what it is like to navigate sidewalks, streets, and get on board an RTA bus.

Fry said the training is particularly valuable for new paratransit service operators, giving them a chance to compare the exercises with customers' experiences by "putting it into practice on the street."



Employee Information

New Faces

Finance Manager
Lydell Samples

PMOB Operators
Sobra Buchanan
Maurice Carter
Steven Crane
Anthony Fletcher
Regina Frierson
Derrick Gunn
Jerome Gunn

Andre Hawkins
Jack Lawson
Stephan Moore
LeRoy Porter
Bridgette Raye
Pamela Shepherd
Charles Williams

Paratransit Trip Dispatcher
Cindy Morrow

Service & Repair Mechanics
John Papie
Justin Zizert

Marketing Intern
Zachary Kincade

Part-time Customer Service Representative
Rhonda Townsend

Dayton with RTA" contest.

RTA shared Courthouse Square with the African American Chamber of Commerce during its 'Square Biz' event, which also featured live music. RTA also thanked its riders by giving away refreshments at all five Dayton transit hubs.



RTA's two grand prize winners from the Drive Less Live More initiative that ended June 15 were each presented a \$150 Meijer gift card and a dinner-theater package. Azia Troutman of Huber Heights and Sherry Liles of Kettering each completed a challenge to take a bus to four different locales in Dayton and log the trips for the "Explore



Changing Places

Transportation Supervisor
Richard Love

Inventory Supervisor
Victor Roberts

Combination Operators
Angie Fleming
James Rippey
Brigitte Simonson