



VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

APRIL 2006 Newsletter

Editor: Bill Carr

The Voice and Vision for Pupil Transportation



VAPT WEB SITE: WWW.VAPT.ORG

**A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT,
June Eanes**



All of us in Transportation are watching this school year come quickly to a close. It's about that time if you have not already done so to start thinking about preparing to close out this school year and get ready for summer school and school year 2006-2007. Where does time go?

Please remember to thoroughly complete your State Report and review it for accuracy before sending it to VDOE.

Everybody is talking about the upcoming Virginia Pupil Transportation Conference being held in Roanoke on June 19-22, at the Wyndham Hotel Roanoke. The Conference Committee members have worked very hard to select speakers and topics they believe will be of interest to you.

The annual School Bus Road-e-o and golf tournament will be conducted as usual during the conference. There will be lots of knowledge shared during the many sessions as well as from members coming from the various school divisions in Virginia. You can plan on the usual delicious food and entertainment at the banquet and at the events sponsored by vendors.

VAPT WEBSITE: www.VAPT.org



VAPT HISTORY 1989

OFFICERS

President: Don Hammond
Newport News
President-Elect: Alvin Wilson
Surry County
Secretary: Linwood Horne
Virginia Overland
Treasurer: David Pace
Virginia Beach

DIRECTORS

Ralph Farmer
Roanoke County
Pauline Griffin
Manassas
Joseph Hawkins
Hampton
James Bettis
Prince William County

Committee Chairpersons

Constitution & By-Laws: Jules Jackson (Newport News)
Legislative: Nathan Young (Henrico County)
Nominating: Roy Hopkins (Louisa County)
Resolutions: Bill Carr (Virginia Beach)
Audit: Jewell Harris (Hanover County)
Membership: David Pace (Virginia Beach)
Road-e-o: Ralph Farmer (Roanoke County)
Poster Contest: Alvin Wilson (Surry County)

The thirteenth annual VAPT Conference convened at the Omni Hotel in Newport News on October 15-17, 1989. Keynote speaker for the opening

session was Dr. Paul Heine, Graduate Program Director for Old Dominion University. Dr. Heine spoke on “Stress Management – Managing Stress in Our Lives.” Following Dr. Heine’s presentation was Dr. Eddie Kolb, Director of Pupil Personnel Services and Special Education and Dr. Linda Bluth, Coordinator of the Office of Compliance, Baltimore City Public Schools. Together, they presented a program on “Trends in Special Education – Where Are We Headed?”

The afternoon session featured Mike Cale, Associate Superintendent for Financial & Support Services. Mr. Cale spoke on leasing – “Purchase Program for School Buses and New Regulations.”

The main topic for the fourth general session was the Commercial Driver’s License. The presenters for this topic were Rudy McCollum, Program Manager for DMV and William Ricks, Driver License Specialist for DMV.

The conference ended with a presentation by Ralph Shinn of Trans/Air Manufacturing. Mr. Shinn’s topic for the afternoon was “Air Conditioning in School Buses. Where Are We Headed?”



*This article was reprinted from
The Richmond Times-Dispatch newspaper.*

In late January, 2006, The Richmond Times-Dispatch Newspaper in Education program started a pilot program called, “Reading on the Bus” on Hanover County’s school bus #192. The bus transports students to Patrick Henry High School and Liberty Middle School. The newspapers are free for the pilot program. If the initiative is successful, The Times-Dispatch will sell papers to schools to place in school buses at the standard Newspaper in Education price of 8 cents per copy.

This pilot program gives students the opportunity to read the newspaper during their commute to school. The goal is to have students aware of what's going on in the world and in their community before they ever set foot in the school. It also offers the students the opportunity to have discussions at school and at home regarding issues that affect the world, the state, and the local community.

Several students were interviewed and over half of the students take advantage of the free newspapers. One student reported that the Flair section is the first thing she reads. Another student said he really enjoys the classifieds. Whatever the student are reading, the fact is..... they are reading!

Betty White of The Times-Dispatch, Pat Bossler with Instruction, and Mitzi Crosier, Director of Transportation worked together to bring this pilot program to the students. If all goes well, the program will expand to other school buses for the next school year.

[Thanks Mitzi for sharing this article.](#)

Alabama is Moving in the Right Direction..... A new law was recently passed in Alabama increasing the penalty for failure to stop for a school bus while making a passenger stop.

- A first offense results in a fine of \$150 to \$300.
- A second offense results in a fine of \$300 to \$500, 30-day suspension of the violator's driver license and 100 hours of community service.
- A third offense results in a fine of \$500 to \$1,000, 90-day license suspension and 200 hours of community service.
- A fourth offense is prosecuted as a Class C felony, with a conviction punishable by a \$1,000 to \$3,000 fine and a one-year license suspension.

(The complete article may be found in the most recent edition of



School Bus Fleet magazine)

REFLECTIONS



You know, time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years.

It seems just yesterday that I was a young girl/boy, just married and embarking on my new life with my mate. And yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all...

And I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams... But, here it is... the winter of my life and it catches me by surprise...

How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my babies go? And where did my youth go?

I remember well... seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me and that winter was so far off that I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like...

But, here it is... husband retired and he's really getting gray...he moves slower and I see an older man now. He's in much better shape than me in some ways... but, I see the great change... Not the one I married who was blond and young and strong... but, like me, his age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd be.

Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day! And taking a nap is not a treat anymore... it's mandatory! Cause if I don't on my own free will... I just fall asleep where I sit!

And so, now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things.

But, at least I know, that though the winter has come, and I'm not sure how long it will last... This I know, that when it's over... it's over... Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done – things I should have done. But indeed, there are many things I'm happy to have done... It's all in a lifetime...

So, if you're not in your winter yet... let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think. So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life please do it quickly!

Life goes by quickly so, do what you can today, because you can never be sure whether this is your winter or not!

You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life...so, live for good today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember...

“Life is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who came after. Make it a fantastic one.”

LIVE IT WELL!!!

...author unknown ...

VAPT/DOE PUPIL TRANSPORTATION CONFERENCE



The Key to more Knowledge of Pupil Transportation

WHEN: June 19-22, 2006
WHERE: WYNDHAM HOTEL ROANOKE
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: www.VAPT.org.

VAPT shirts come in different sizes and colors and will be on sale at the conference. You may want to consider purchasing one to support the Scholarship Fund since all proceeds go to that fund. Be proud of wearing a VAPT shirt letting everyone know you belong to this great professional organization.

Shirts will be on display and available for buying in the lobby where registration will be conducted.

IN THE NEWS...

Word Has It that proposed changes to Section 46.2-871 of the Code of Virginia has been approved by Governor Tim Kaine and will become effective on July 1, 2006. This amendment reads as follows:

"The maximum speed limit for school buses shall now be 45 miles per hour or the minimum speed allowable, whichever is greater, on any highway where the maximum speed limit is 55 miles per hour or less, and 55 miles per hour on all interstate highways and on other highways where the maximum speed limit is more than 55 miles per hour."

IBS-D Causes Bus Driver Her Job in Michigan

Source: About.com - Monday April 3, 2006

A school bus driver left as many as 19 elementary children on a school bus when she had to leave the bus to use the bathroom.

Tamie Crawford, who drives a bus for the Grand Blanc School District in Grand Blanc Township, MI, has irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

Crawford parked her bus at the elementary school approximately 10 minutes before the first bell of the day rang. She needed to leave the bus to use the restroom, and asked an older child to supervise the younger

children. When she returned to her bus within 3 or 4 minutes, her supervisor had arrived. She was fired 5 days after the incident.

Crawford's situation brings a significant problem to light. How should medical problems such as IBS be dealt with on the job? How does an employee do what's expected of her by her employer, and still take proper care of herself and protect her privacy and dignity?

Dealing with symptoms from IBS on the job is difficult, not to mention embarrassing. The decision to disclose a medical problem is never an easy one. In every workplace there will be some people who will be receptive and understanding, and some who will not.

What do you think? Should she have been fired for leaving the children on the bus?

UPDATE ARLINGTON COURT CASE

Charges against the driver of a trash truck that ripped open the side of an Arlington County School bus and caused the death of children were dismissed. Reckless Driving evidence was ruled to be weak.

Citing testimony from a Virginia State Police trooper who said earlier in the afternoon that the collision would have been nothing more than a sideswipe had it occurred between smaller vehicles, Circuit Court Judge William T. Newman Jr. ruled that the case against James Wallace could not go forward.

Two students from Hoffman-Boston Elementary School in Arlington were killed in the April 18 crash at the intersection of South Courthouse Road and Columbia Pike. An Arlington County jury acquitted the bus driver, Pamela Sims, of similar reckless driving charges earlier this year.

At the time of the collision, the trash truck was traveling east on Columbia Pike, and the school bus was traveling west. The bus was in the left-turn lane, waiting to turn.

Neither driver was charged in the deaths of the children, Lilibeth Gomez, 9, and Harrison Orosco, 7. Instead, a grand jury indicted them on one count of reckless driving apiece and other driving infractions.

This ruling came after an afternoon of testimony from the trooper and three drivers who witnessed the crash. None of the motorists said they saw the truck driving recklessly, only that it swerved slightly as it was about to strike the bus.

Sgt. Matt Hanley, supervisor of the state police department's crash reconstruction team, testified that the severity of any crash is determined by the size of the vehicles involved. Had smaller cars been involved, the damage probably would have been minor.

Using a precise measuring system and the evidence left behind on Columbia Pike, the crash team was able to determine the positions of the trash truck and the school bus. Hanley testified that the vehicles were both slightly straddling the double yellow line.

Johns-Hopkins Study Released - Obesity Epidemic Hits Child Safety Seats

Many young children may be too heavy for standard car-safety seats, and manufacturers are starting to make heftier models to accommodate them, according to research on the obesity epidemic's widening impact.

More than a quarter of a million U.S. children ages 1 to 6 are heavier than the weight limits for standard car seats, and most are 3-year-olds who weigh more than 40 pounds, the study found.

Unless exceptionally tall, a 3-year-old weighing more than 40 pounds would generally be considered overweight.

Lead author Lara Trifiletti said researchers at a safety center at Johns Hopkins Hospital became interested in the topic because they saw children "who were very obese and our car-seat technicians were having a hard time finding car seats to fit them."

She did the research at Johns Hopkins but now works at Ohio State University's Children's Research Institute.

Using inadequate car seats for heavy children could put them at increased risk for injury in a car accident, the researchers said.

"We don't recommend that a parent use a restraint system for a child that has outgrown that system," said Eric Bolton, a spokesman for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. "It is risky."

Based on national growth charts and the 2000 Census, at least 283,305 children ages 1 to 6 are too heavy for standard safety seats. That includes nearly 190,000, or almost 5 percent, of U.S. 3-year-olds, the researchers said.

Their study appears in the April edition of Pediatrics, being released Monday.

Trifiletti said the phenomenon mostly affects youngsters whose weight exceeds the limits of standard seats with built-in safety harnesses, which are designed for 1-to-3-year-olds weighing up to 40 pounds. These heavier young children are not mature enough or tall enough for "booster" safety seats, which are recommended for ages 4 and up and typically use the car's safety belts for restraints, she said.

More than 23 percent of U.S. children aged 2 to 5 were overweight and more than 10 percent were obese in 2001-02, government data show. New data out later this week are

expected to show that the upward trend has continued.

Jenny Riggs of Tillamook, Ore., said she had difficulty finding a harnessed seat for her almost-5-year-old daughter, Hayley, who is heavier and taller than many kids her age 46 inches and 46 pounds and already weighed 40 pounds when she was 3.

The \$250 Britax "Husky" seat Riggs bought is about 10 pounds heavier and four inches wider than standard harness-style seats.

"It's like a Lazy-Boy recliner," Riggs said. "It was a little difficult getting it in the back seat but my daughter loves it."

Hayley can use the seat for a while; it handles up to 80 pounds.

Britax introduced two harness seats with 65-pound weight limits last year. The obesity epidemic "is something that we do keep in mind when designing our seats to make sure our seats are versatile in accommodating all sizes of children," said company spokeswoman Joyce Kara.

Dorel Juvenile Group, maker of Cosco brand car-seats, also introduced a harness seat last year for kids up to 65 pounds.

Trifiletti said she did the study before last year's hefty models were introduced, when only four harness seats were available for 1-to-3-year-olds weighing more than 40 lbs.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration last year proposed new requirements for manufacturers that choose to make seats for older and/or heavier children. Those who do would be required to build seats to protect kids up to 10 years old and/or weighing up to 80 pounds in 30 mph crashes. The agency also would create an 80-pound crash-test dummy for testing child safety seats, 25 pounds heavier than the existing simulators, Bolton said.

The agency is collecting public comments on the proposal and a decision on whether to adopt the rule is expected soon, he said.

On the Net:

American Academy of Pediatrics: <http://www.aap.org/>

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/>

<u>VOLUNTEER NEEDED:</u>

EDITOR OF THE VAPT NEWSLETTER, effective this July 1. If interested please contact President June Eanes, june.eanes@doe.virginia.gov, ASAP

I will no longer be the editor after June 2006. Actually, the newsletter is a quarterly publication; summer, fall, winter, and spring but, I tried to publish it as frequently as possible.

It has been a pleasure serving as your editor and I sincerely appreciate the support many of our members showed me over the 20+ years I was editor.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve VAPT.

Bill Carr, Editor