



VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

February 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**



We recently lost a dear friend in pupil transportation. Margaret Rayner, the Transportation Director for Hopewell City Public Schools died. She was such a dedicated person who wanted to do what was right, especially for the children of Hopewell. She will be greatly missed by everyone.

I just want to thank you all for what you do in pupil transportation. It is a hard, tiring, and frustrating job at time, but the reward of knowing our students are transported safely in Virginia school buses are transported safely makes all the difference in the world.

I want to encourage each of you to find time for yourself. It is difficult in the fast-paced world we live in. There is always something that needs to be done and we seem to think we have to do it. Let some of these things go and make time for yourself and your family and friends.

Information on the June conference will be coming out within the next few weeks. I hope to see you all at the conference. It will be a great time to share and make new acquaintances.



VAPT HISTORY

1987

OFFICERS

**President: Frank Dixon
Fairfax Co**
**President-Elect: Tim Parker
Fairfax Co**
**Secretary: Don Hammond
Newport News**
**Treasurer: Ray Mulvany
Henrico Co**

DIRECTORS

**Pauline Griffin – Manassas
Linwood Horne – Virginia
Overland Transportation
Alvin Wilson – Surry Co
Ralph Hamilton – Wise Co**
**The 11th annual VAPT
Conference was held at the
Holiday Inn in Portsmouth on
November 4-6, 1987. The
conference opened with Terry
Ritter, Meteorologist for the
National Weather Service
presenting, “Difficulties
Forecasting Snow in Virginia.”
Clarence Bradbury, Division of
Motor Vehicles spoke concerning,
“Federal Change in Driver
licensing.**

**Jill Cartwright and Wolfgang
Jaobsbert, Vice-President of
PTSS, Inc. spoke on “Self
Training – A New Computer
Software for School Bus Driver
Training.” Karen Finkle,
Executive Director of National
School Transportation
Association, presented “Current
Transportation Issues.”**

**During the afternoon session,
supervisors heard a presentation
on, “Liability Issues in Accident
Investigations” by Captain Ron
Miner, Commander Traffic
Division Fairfax County Police
Department. Maintenance
personnel were treated to a
session on “School Bus Mechanic
Training Programs,” by Joe
Pemberton, Director of Industry
Training Division, Universal
Technical Institute.**

**Concurrent sessions continued
with Norman Grimm, Manager of
Traffic Safety AAA, Potomac
presenting, “School Safety Patrol
Programs and What AAA Can do
for you.” Bill Dempsey, Director
of Technical Services, National
Institute for Auto Services
Excellence spoke on
“Certification, Testing
Specifications, and
Construction.” Bill from Digital
Optics spoke on “Identification
Innovations.”**

**Tim Parker, Fairfax County,
presided over a round-table
discussion with school bus body
manufactures. Representatives
from Amtran, Bluebird,**

Carpenter, Thomas, and Wayne participated in the discussion.

The final general session included a presentation on “Transmission Output Retarders,” presented by John Harzer, Account Manager for Allison Transmissions. The final session was presented by Tom Farcosky from Fleetpro, Incorporated.



10 TIPS for HANDLING A TOUGH CUSTOMER

1. Show respect and courtesy, no matter what your customer’s attitude.
2. Keep things in perspective: remember that your customer is upset with a situation, not with you.
3. Listen with patience. Don’t interrupt.
4. Remain calm and avoid arguing.
5. Apologize for the problem and empathize with your customer’s feelings.
6. Ask for details in order to steer the conversation away from emotions.

7. Use positive language to promote cooperation: “Let’s see what we can do.”
8. Involve your customer in finding a solution. Ask, “What do you think would be fair?”
9. If you get frustrated or angry, take a deep breath – and stay committed to resolving the situation.
10. Establish trust by keeping your word. Do what you say you are going to do.

Procrastination

A painfully shy man fell in love with a young woman. He sensed that she felt the same way, but he couldn’t find the courage to ask her out.

Finally he decided he would mail her a love letter every day for one year, and then ask her for a date.

Faithfully, he followed his plan and at year’s end he was courageous enough to call her – only to discover she had married the letter carrier.

HAPPINESS

“Happiness is not in our circumstances, but in ourselves. It is not something we see, like a rainbow, or feel, like the heat of a fire. Happiness is something we are.”

--- John B. Sheerin

Inclement Weather:

Snow, Fog, Ice, even Rain means hazardous driving conditions!

(Submitted by Alvin Hampton, Loudoun County)



Winter officially began on December 21, 2005 and will end on March 19, 2006. We need to be prepared as school bus drivers and supervisors for all types of inclement weather whenever it begins or ends. Listed below are a few winter driving reminders:

- Allow your engine to warm up during your complete pre-trip (keeping in mind your division's policy on the idling of your bus engine - if applicable).
- Starting school buses in cold weather requires the driver to turn the ignition to "run" and wait until the "wait to start" light (when equipped) goes out before starting the engine. This allows the glow plugs and intake heaters to warm up and shortens starting time.
- Fueling school buses after the afternoon run ensures the fuel tank is full overnight. This helps keep condensation in the tank to a minimum. The condensation of water in the tank causes "no starts" in cold weather because it freezes in the fuel system.
- Be sure to check the bus tires tread, tire pressure, and windshield wipers.
- Arrive early to your school bus to avoid delays and prevent your students from sanding outside in the cold longer than usual.
- Limit your radio traffic for emergency traffic (usually on inclement weather days radio traffic is usually increased.)
- Be certain your headlights and clearance lights are "ON" - your school bus needs to be seen (46.2-1030)
- Make certain your strobe light is "ON." (46.2-1090.1)
- Be sure ice, snow or other moisture is removed from the windows, windshield and mirrors before moving the school bus. You must be able to see and be seen!
- Drives very slowly keeping in mind you're stopping distance increases dramaticall (46.2-880.) Put the transmission in a low gear to allow more control at slower speeds.

- Stopping distance on snow and ice can be 10 times what it is on dry pavement.
- Increase your following distance while driving in adverse weather conditions.
- Keep at least one set of tires moving in fresh, not traveled on snow, when possible. The traction is better.
- With anti-lock brakes, apply and hold. Apply a firm, steady pressure.
- To go up a hill, wait for other vehicles to clear a long stretch of road so you should be able to continue moving. Stopping on the road for another vehicle that is spinning its wheels will make it difficult to regain forward motion. Stay Back!
- Adjust your speed for driving conditions. Do not overestimate your own capabilities or the capabilities of your school bus. Drive slowly and cautiously and always be prepared to safely stop even in an emergency. Reducing your speed will give you an extra margin of safety by giving you more time to react and safely stop.

Five Wise Rules



Perhaps your life and your relationships with people about you will be more satisfying, and your appreciation greater of the truly worthwhile values, if these five wise rules become your guide:

1. Sit quietly for a little while, and you will realize that you have been running about needlessly, even foolishly.
2. Learn to speak only of the good in others, and you will realize that you have been talking too much.
3. Avoid getting involved in too many things, and you will realize that you have been wasting your time in trivial and unnecessary matters.
4. Be charitable and kind and you will realize that you have been too critical of your fellowmen.
5. Limit your desires, and you will realize the joy and peace of contentment.

- Adapted from Chen Chiju