



**VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION
FOR
PUPIL TRANSPORTATION**

January 2006 Newsletter

Editor: Bill Carr

The Voice and Vision for Pupil Transportation



VAPT WEB SITE: WWW.VAPT.ORG

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



It is hard to believe we are in 2006! I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and will have a Happy New Year. I pray for wonderful things to take place in your life during the New Year.

As we reflect back on the year 2005, we remember many good things happened, but we also think about the tragedies that also occurred in pupil transportation. The deaths of several students and the severity of other school bus accidents caused us all great concern. I know we all thought, “What can we do to make a difference?”

As we face the New Year, let’s make a New Year’s Resolution to be constantly aware of the things happening around us. Let’s strive to improve our communications with school bus drivers, students, the parents, and the general public on school bus safety issues. Let’s work together with a common endeavor to make pupil transportation in Virginia one of the safest in the United States.

Preparation for the June Conference is in process. Keep your eyes open for information that will be sent out soon. I hope to see you in Roanoke.



West Virginia is cracking down on motorist passing stopped school buses

Several school buses in Wood County, West Virginia have been equipped with external digital cameras that can take photographs of vehicles that pass school buses when they are making a passenger stop. Additional buses are being equipped with the camera system.

In West Virginia as in Virginia a school bus driver who observes a violation of the school bus stop law is able to obtain the offending vehicle's license plate numbers, to file charges personally in a magistrate court without requiring involvement by law enforcement personnel. The use of digital cameras is a way of capturing the information necessary to identify violators, officials note. The camera records a video of the incident, and takes a picture of the vehicle's license plate. The camera cost about \$300.

For more information contact Todd Bloss, Transportation Director, Wood County Schools, 304-420-9636

A Little Bit of VAPT History



1986

- President: Thomas Sine**
Frederick County
- President-Elect: Frank Dixon**
Fairfax County
- Secretary: Rebecca Taylor**
Culpeper County
(now Rebecca Mummau in Montgomery)
- Treasurer: Tim Parker**
Albemarle County
(now Fairfax County)
- Directors: Don Hammond**
Newport News
(now Norfolk)
- Ray Mulvaney**
Henrico County
- Pauline Griffith**
Manassas City

The tenth annual VAPT Conference was held October 19-21, 1986 at the Lee Jackson Motor Inn in Winchester. The Keynote speaker for the opening session was Dr. John Rader, Director of Valley Wellness Center in Harrisonburg. Al Ambrosini of Navistar International Corporation spoke about, "changes coming in the use of diesel power for school

buses.” Frank Dixon, Supervisor of Transportation for Fairfax County presided over “The Debate Continues; Seatbelts vs. Child Sensors on School Buses.”

The afternoon session began with Douglas A. Stader, Transportation Safety Coordinator with the Division of Motor Vehicles. Mr. Stader spoke on “Safety innovations.” Breakout sessions followed with James DePoy of Interstate Battery speaking on “New ideas for batteries,” Paul Boney and Warren Jerdegen of Navistar International spoke on “Starting Problems,” and a session on “Service and Care of Allison Automatic Transmissions and Detroit Diesels.”

The Tuesday session began with, “New areas and concerns for diesel use in school bus operations” sponsored by Detroit Diesel Allison. The staff of Fairfax County presented, “Safety devices in use on school buses.” Thomas Sine from Frederick County presided over the “Problems with school bus physical examination changes.”

NOTICE

House Education just killed both bills, January 18, 2006, pertaining to seat belts on school buses. Del Carrico is an expert in this subject, having been in State Police for many years.

A grudge is a heavy thing to carry.

Transportation Security Administration's mission is to protect the Nation's transportation systems to ensure freedom of movement for people and commerce. The organization provides free of charge brochures covering the subject security in Transportation, highwaysecurity@dhs.gov.



Security starts with YOU!

Hijackings

- + Do not attempt to confront the hijacker(s).

Awareness

Look for:

- + Unattended boxes, packages, and/or cases;

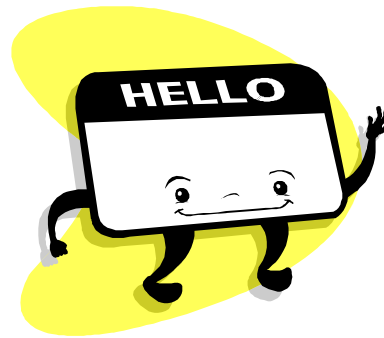
- # Possible container of chemicals, (i.e.; Any tanks, bottles);
- # Messages attached to suspicious item;
- # Suspicious mist, gas, vapor or odor;
- # Seeping or leakage from suspicious item;
- # Location of unattended item(s) and any movement of unattended item;
- # Description of suspect who abandoned item(s);
- # Visible dangerous weapons; and
- # Scan the engine compartment and/or baggage bay area for anything that may seem unusual.

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Notice:

This notice concerns a Natural Gas Vehicle CNG Cylinder Safety, Training and Inspection Awareness Program being implemented by CVEF with underwriting support from the U.S. Department of Energy. If you have questions about this announcement or would like further information, please visit the following link:

<http://www.cleanvehicle.org/technology/cylinder.shtml>



School Bus Drivers and School Administrators – Need to be a Partnership

One of the most important things school bus drivers and school administrators can do to help one another is to have a mutual respect and trust for one another. As we look at the driver and the administrator it is important to look at both and see how each think about their respective jobs.

The school bus driver absolutely must feel he/she has the support of the school administration. It is very important for the driver to understand that administrators have a global view of the school. They do not see a school bus or driver in isolation, but rather the school as a whole. This gives the administrator a better understanding of why some students behave the way they do. The perspective of the administrator is extremely important. Usually a student who is a problem on the bus is also a problem at the school.

The bus driver needs to quickly establish a good rapport with the

school administration. He/she needs to form a professional relationship with the administrator. This will enable the administrator to know their track record in working with students.

The driver who deals with students in a calm rational manner, one who makes good decisions will more than likely get better support from the school. Drivers should not just dump a problem in the principal's lap but should take the time to meet with the principal and the students when problems arise. Bus drivers need to make sure they report incidents in a way in which the principal will know the driver has already tried to handle the problem on their own.

School Bus drivers need to establish clear rules and enforce the rules evenly to all students. Students will be very resentful of drivers who show favoritism when it comes to discipline. Drivers should try to deal with problems themselves unless that is not possible due to a severe incident. Principals can alert drivers as to what would be considered an immediate disciplinary referral incident. Drivers should try and get help from parents if at all possible. Many parents are more than willing to help if they know about a problem. Drivers should always seek the school's help before things get out of hand. Administrators can help school bus drivers by helping them set

fair and reasonable expectations. They must be willing to follow through when a driver comes to them with a problem. The administrator should be willing to take time to meet with the driver and the student in order to help resolve conflicts. Administrators must be willing to call parents and enlist their help with problems.

Administrators have to be willing and able to let students know that school bus drivers must be treated with the same respect afforded to any other school employee, whether it is a teacher, principal, or other support person.

School bus drivers and school administrators must work together as a team! With mutual respect and understanding they can help the entire operation run smoothly. While there will most certainly be problems, the rapport established early in the year will insure prompt action to a problem and hopefully a satisfactory resolution for the school bus driver and school principal



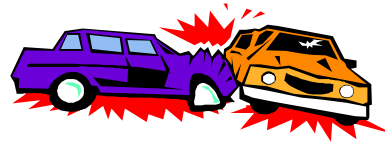


WHO IS HE?

Well, he is Mr. Adrian B. Frierson, the new VDOE Supervisor of Pupil Transportation. Adrian was born on March 23rd in Perquimans County, North Carolina. He graduated in May 1999 from Elizabeth City State University in Elizabeth City where he received his Bachelors of Science degree in Business Administration. On June 2003 Adrian completed training at the Virginia State Police Academy specializing in Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement. As a Virginia State Police officer he was recognized for completion of training in Highway Interdiction (D.E.A.), Traffic Stop Work shop (V.S.P.), Field Training Officer Basic Training (V.S.P.), and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (U.S.D.O.T.). Adrian joined the Virginia

Department of Education in November 2005 and currently holds a position within Pupil Transportation Services as Transportation Specialists.

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF AN ACCIDENT. (Floyd County)



MAJOR CRASHES:

- + Your first responsibility is to those passengers you are transporting and their safety.
- + Should there be injuries to a motorist or pedestrian, do whatever possible for their safety and comfort.
- + In order to expedite service, radio the Transportation Department, who in turn will notify the State Police, rescue squad and fire department.
- + Stay calm and courteous. Accusations will not help in any way. Always be considerate. Do not try the case at the scene, leave that to the courts.

- + Do not make rash statements or accusations nor admit guilt for the accident nor blame the other person(s). Assure the other person(s) a standard accident report reflecting the accident will be completed and filed with the school division's insurance company.
- + Cooperate completely with the police and furnish all information they request.
- + Do not talk with the media nor discuss the accident. All media questions are to be referred to the Floyd County Schools Public Relations or the Division Superintendent.

MINOR CRASHES:

- + Contact the Transportation Department before moving the school bus any time there is damage to property.
- + Make sure all passengers on the school bus involved in the accident sign the appropriate form and they are to indicate if they were or were not injured.
- + Report any damage to the inside or outside of

the school bus; i.e. windows, body, seats, etc. to the Transportation Department Supervisor for repairs.

- + DO NOT MOVE the school bus until instructed to do so by the police, a representative of Transportation or for safety.

News from the National Highway Transportation Safety Association



They are evaluating these issues and need some input. Reported leaking M30 Bendix air valve on Bluebird/Int chassis:

Although when mounted on the bus it's very hard to see, it should be checked for cracks and the air escaping. If allowed to progress, in theory the crack would eventually get so bad that the air compressor would start to have a hard time keeping up – but long before that, the valve will be replaced.

The complaints are on 1998-2001 models – they are probably failing beyond warranty; they are used on multiply

applications so looking at parts sales may not get us anywhere. So the question becomes, what are the fleets experiencing?

If I could get some input from any fleet having this issue, I need the VIN, mileage, maybe a picture of the cracked valve. The crack starts around the mounting holes.

International chassis with a Bluebird body. But the same valve and mounting location was also used on International 4000 series trucks during the 1998-2001 time frame.

We have also been notified by two fleets of the Ricon wheel chair lift "K": series with some arms breaking at a weld, anyone seeing this please contact me. 2006 model.

This just in...Has anyone had issues with the Blue Bird 2006 Vision bus air brake warning lamp becoming inoperative? If so, please advise NHTSA.

Sonny Murianka
Senior Investigator
USDAOT NHTSA
Office of Defects Investigation
400 7th Streets, SW
Washington, D.C. 20590
Phone: 202-366-5196
FAX: 202-366-2332

WOOD COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA has added external digital cameras on several school buses in an effort to cut down on

the number of motorists that violate the school bus stop law.



If you would like to contact the Wood County Schools, Director of Transportation, his name and telephone number are listed below:

Todd Bloss
(340) 420-9636

The information included in this article was found in the November 23, 2005 edition of the School Transportation Director publication, titled, "Wood County, West Virginia Cracks Down on Passers-By."

***SOUTHEASTERN STATES
PUPIL TRANSPORTATION
CONFERENCE (SESPTC)
Student Scholarship
Award Program
Announced***

Over the last few years, with the support of industry vendors, the Southeastern State Pupil Transportation Conference (SESPTC) has accumulated funds, which the SESPTC Board of Directors has decided to disburse in the form of student education scholarships. This year the SESPTC Board has

approved the award of one \$1,000 scholarship to a deserving student in each of the fourteen member states. Virginia is one of the fourteen southern states.

The scholarship award would be used to cover education expenses at a post-secondary education institution in support of a student's 2006-2007 school year expenses, to include tuition, books, or fees.

This scholarship will be awarded to a student whose parent/guardian has been active in public school transportation during the past five years (defined as the period since January 1, 2001). This may include school bus drivers, aides, monitors, mechanics, parts clerks, foremen, managers, trainers, supervisors, directors, and inspectors that work in public education.

In the second semester of their senior year, Virginia public school students, interested in the scholarship and meeting the general criteria for the award, will complete the required SESPTC scholarship application and submit together with a type-written essay of not more than 500 words which explains why the student has applied and how the student would use the scholarship if names the recipient.

Completed application packages should be submitted to the local school division

Supervisor/Director of Transportation. A selection committee established in each division shall select from all local applicants a finalist whose application package will then be submitted to the SESPTC/VAPT Scholarship Committee Chairman, Linwood Horne, Assistant Director of Transportation, Hanover County Public Schools. Finalist application deadline is April 30th and may be mailed to Linwood at 11375 North Lakeridge Parkway, Ashland, VA 23005-8043 or faxed at (804) 365-6529.

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) will be mailing additional information on the SESPTC scholarship program to each school division sometime in March 2006. Local Transportation Supervisors/Directors are encouraged to get the word out to your local high schools on this scholarship program quickly.

*Blue Bird Selects
Cummins as
Preferred Partner*

Cummins has been selected as a preferred partner by Blue Bird Corporation, with the popular ISB engine available in all Blue Bird school buses beginning in early 2006.

FRIED CABBAGE

4 bacon slices, 1 large head fresh cabbage, coarsely chopped, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon pepper
Cook bacon in a large skillet 10 minutes or until crisp. Remove bacon, and drain on paper towels, reserving 1 tablespoon drippings in skillet. Crumble bacon.

ADD cabbage to hot drippings in skillet; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Saute' cabbage over medium-high heat 10 to 12 minutes or until tender. Sprinkle with bacon.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Prep: 10 min., Cook: 22 min.



Ideas you may want to consider for monitoring your school bus drivers performance:

- *Establish written policies* regarding the action Transportation will take concerning valid complaints issued against a driver regarding the way the school bus was driven.

Infraction A:

Two valid complaints based on Transportation's investigation received within a 10 month period against the same driver operating a school bus unsafely; i.e. drove through a red traffic light or stop sign, failed to wait for all children to clear the roadway before putting the school in motion, school bus driver withdrew the stop arm and cancelled the red traffic warning lights before the passenger stop was safely completed, speeding, tailgating, etc.

Transportation's Response

All complaints against a school bus driver should be documented when the office is notified, but not filed in the driver's folder until that driver has been contacted and is given the opportunity to provide a rebuttal to the complaint. The driver should be notified in person or by telephone or email whenever a complaint is made against a driver.

- Schedule a driver/supervisor

conference to discuss the two complaints that were investigated and proven to be true.

- Schedule classroom and/or behind-the-wheel training.
- One or two day's driver suspension without pay depending on the severity of the infraction(s).
- Place driver on probation for a 10 month period from the date of driver/supervisor conference.
- Dismissal, depending on driver's overall performance.

Infraction B:

- a) *Three or more valid complaints – Ref. Infraction A*

Transportation Response:

- Schedule a driver/supervisor conference to discuss the numerous valid complaints that were investigated and proven true.
- Schedule classroom and behind-the-wheel training.
- Three to five days driver suspension without pay depending on the severity of the infractions. Place driver on probation for a 10 month period from date

of driver/supervisor conference.

- Dismissal, depending on driver's overall performance



Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

1. Ask the individual to Smile.
2. Ask him or her to Raise Both Arms.
3. Ask the person to Speak A Simple Sentence Coherently, i.e. It is sunny out today. If he or she has trouble with any of these tasks, call 9-1-1 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher

After discovering that a group of non-medical volunteers could identify facial weakness, arm weakness and speech problems, researchers urged the general public to learn the three questions. They presented their

conclusions at the American Stroke Association's annual meeting. Widespread use of this test could result in prompt diagnosis and treatment of the stroke and prevent brain damage.

REGION VIII REPORT



On January 10, 2006, Region VIII held its first Regional Technicians' Meeting. Mecklenburg County School Bus Garage hosted the meeting where twenty-eight technicians and directors attended. Kingmor Supply gave a great presentation.

ADVICE TO MILLIONS WHO RUSH THROUGH LIFE

Take time to think
- thoughts are the source of power.

Take time to play -
play is the secret of perpetual youth.

Take time to read -
reading is the fountain of wisdom.

Take time to pray -
prayer can be a rock of strength in time of trouble.

Take time to love -
loving is what makes living worthwhile.

Take time to be friendly - friendships give life a delicious flavor.

Take time to laugh
- laughter is the music of the soul.

Take time to give -
any day of the year is too short for selfishness.

Take time to do your work well - pride in your work, no matter what it is, nourishes the ego and the spirit.

Take time to show appreciation - thanks is the icing on the cake of life.

Author unknown