



Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation

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The Voice and Vision for Pupil Transportation in Virginia July 2010 Newsletter Editor - Bill Carr

A Message from our President, Michael Ashby...

The 2009-2010 VAPT/VDOE Pupil Transportation Conference took place on June 21-24, 2010 at the Koger Center in Richmond and from the stand point of registrations it was a success. The golf tournament, various informative classes, school bus road-e-o and lunch, the family night dinner on Tuesday night, the banquet and dance on Wednesday night and the breakfast prior to the conclusion of the conference all contributed to the success of the conference. It was a great time and we could not have done all that we did without our supporting vendors. The trade show was also a highlight of the conference and next year we will have cash prizes that delegates can win by turning in sheets that show they spoke with each vendor. This was done at the Southeastern Conference in South Carolina and was a huge success.

There were several states that cancelled their conferences this year due to the economy. I feel we are very fortunate to have been able to continue with our conference and I hope next year we will have the same participation we did this year.

John Hazelette did a superb job negotiating rates with the Marriott Waterside in Norfolk where next year's conference will be held. I hope all VAPT members will help in some way to make the 2010-2011 conference another success.

This was an opportune time for members to get together and share ideas that are working in their school division.

I sincerely appreciate everyone who helped to make our annual conference an enjoyable and learning event.

Michael Ashby

Anger and fines follow school bus passings!!!



Albemarle County school bus drivers and parents of students are on a mission to stop drivers from passing stopped school buses.

Albemarle school bus drivers and parents are fed up with drivers passing buses while students are boarding, and they're on a mission to fight back.

Using advanced global positioning system technology on buses, administrators and police are able to detect precisely when and where buses stop and whether the buses' red lights and stop signs were used — crucial evidence in court trials.

“To me, it's just such a safety issue,” said Jennifer Kincaid, who says a Budweiser truck recently passed a school bus that her fifth-grade daughter was boarding. “There have been so many times, especially recently when vehicles have just driven right by the bus.”

When the weather gets warm, the number of drivers who pass stopped school buses tends to increase, said Albemarle schools Director of Transportation Josh Davis.

The school division has sent Albemarle police 37 reports during the 2009-10 school year from bus drivers whose stopped school buses were passed illegally, Davis said.

March and April have been peak months, with seven violations reported each month.

Albemarle police Cpl. Sean C. Hackney says he has caught numerous drivers passing stopped school buses and sometimes hears explanations along the lines of: “Well, I didn't know what to do. It happened too fast.”

Some of the violators are multi-tasking and say they don't see “something as big as a school bus with flashing lights on it,” Hackney said.

“That's kind of disturbing. ... Unfortunately, if they're not careful, they're going to end up hitting a kid,” Hackney said. “We would just tell people that, not only are you responsible for how fast a car goes, you're also responsible for how fast a car stops. Especially when you live out on those rural roads or areas where you know there are children, you need to be prepared to come to a full stop at any time.”

In one recent case, a speeding Western Albemarle High School student slammed his vehicle into a car that was behind a stopped school bus — causing his vehicle to ricochet into the school bus and end up in a driveway, Davis said. Had the child getting off of the bus departed seconds later, the child could have died, Davis said.

School bus drivers are trained to deploy yellow flashing lights while slowing. Then, red flashing lights and a stop sign are deployed as the school bus halts.

County school bus driver Jim Grace said drivers should treat the yellow flashing lights the same way they would treat a yellow traffic light.

Grace said he'd like school buses to eventually be armed with cameras on the bus stop signs. But the tough economy could keep that type of equipment out of reach for many school divisions, at least for now.

The school division bought the GPS equipment last summer for about \$213,000, which officials said would also help the school division ensure efficient use of the buses and allow administrators to keep tabs on the whereabouts of school buses, for safety reasons.

As an additional precaution, many Albemarle County school bus drivers — who check for oncoming traffic — train students not to cross roads until signaled by the school bus driver.

Grace said he cannot figure out how anyone would be able to justify running a school bus stop sign and “putting a young person in that danger.”

As for the beer truck driver who allegedly passed a school bus less than two weeks ago, Hackney said a traffic officer is investigating the incident.

“We do probably 30 or 40 of those per year that we receive from [the transportation department],” Hackney said. “That doesn't account for the ones the officers actually witness themselves and write the summonses on.”

Scott Wawner, vice president of sales at Virginia Eagle Distributing LLC, said last week that he didn't know anything about a Budweiser truck passing a school bus and called the claim “very unsubstantiated.” Since then, Wawner called Kincaid and was “apologetic,” the mother said.

Grace said school bus drivers are very concerned about drivers illegally passing but they often are not able to get violators' license plate numbers fast enough in the heat of the moment.

“I think the frustration is it happens and we just feel powerless to do anything about it,” Grace said.

Witnesses of a violation should write the driver's license plate number and a description of both the vehicle and the driver. Witnesses should also make a record of as many details as possible, including the specifics of the violation, as well as the time, date and location. The information can be reported to Josh Davis or one of the transportation department's supervisors at 973-5716.

“Not only do we need the vehicle license plate number, we need someone that can help us positively identify the driver,” Hackney said.

Davis said the easiest solution to avoid getting caught behind a school bus and being late for a destination is leaving a few minutes earlier.

“There's no reason to get the blood boiling if you can leave five minutes earlier,” he said.

In one of the most recent cases, a Scottsville woman was convicted of a misdemeanor in May for passing a stopped school bus, according to court records. She was fined \$50, plus court fees. The maximum penalty, in some cases, is one year in jail and a \$2,500 fine.

Source: Daily Progress Newspaper Article

By Brandon Shulleeta, Published: May 31, 2010 - Updated: June 1, 2010



Cell phone myths and little-known facts

What if you could tap a special code into your cell phone to unlock a reserve of battery power for those desperate moments when you need to make just one more call before your phone dies?

"Total nonsense," said Richard Windsor, an analyst with Nomura in London, who specializes in cell phones and cell phone equipment.

"Pure science fiction," said Marcus Dacombe, Nokia's head of product marketing and sales for Europe.

Too bad, because if you read Internet blogs you might almost convince yourself that the function does exist, as implausible as it might sound. A wealth of mythology has grown up around cell phones and little-known functions that make them tick. The potential of extra battery power is perhaps the function that seems most immediately useful, but it is not the only one.

"It would be great if the story about the reserve battery power was true," Dacombe said. "I would be fascinated to know where the idea that it exists came from."

Nobody is exactly sure where these ideas about special cell phone features come from, but they are out there and most are nothing more than myths that have endured over many years.

There is the one that says that if you lock your keys in the car and you have a remote keyless entry system, you can unlock the car by having somebody beep your spare remote over a cell phone if you hold the phone near the car door.

That is surely another trick the phone makers should have invented - except that the remote opening systems for cars work on radio waves, which cannot be transmitted over a cell phone.

These myths have managed to dupe the gullible probably in part because most cell phones do indeed have some little-known functions that are not explained in owner's manuals.

For example, on many phones, punching in `*#06#` will get you the serial number of the phone, a number that is particular to that handset and can be used to block the phone if it is stolen.

That number is also written on a white label on the inside of all phones, usually underneath the battery.

Dialing *#0000# on Nokia phones will display a screen with details on the version of the software the phone is using. Similar codes will work on other types of phones, usually the more advanced models.

These so-called short codes are used by engineers and those in research and development to access information quickly while they are developing the phone.

"The only reason to know what software version your phone has is if you have trouble with the phone, but an operator would be able to tell the end user what to do," Dacombe said. "That information out of context doesn't give any real benefit, so it's not something we really advertise. There are some things that just aren't appropriate for the end users and are meant for the engineers."

Yet some cell phone users thrive on being versed in the little-known special codes and functions. Other short codes that exist on some cell phones let you fiddle with your Bluetooth and Wi-Fi settings, or show you how many hours the phone has been used, even if it has been reset to its initial factory settings. On some handsets, the fast UMTS Internet connection can be disabled to allow the users to surf at slower - and sometimes cheaper - speeds.

Then there are a host of functions that are explained in user manuals, which could be useful but are either too confusing or too time-consuming to learn for most people.

For example, almost all phones can be set to return to their factory settings, something that could be useful if the memory is full or if the user has changed the menu structure or other settings on the phone and cannot figure out how to reset them.

"The manuals for mobile phones tend to be very comprehensive, even though they are fairly incomprehensible," said Windsor, the Nomura analyst. "Many phones can do e-mail, for example, but most people don't bother because it's too complicated to set up.

"Many people know you can do certain things with a cell phone that they are not doing, but they don't think it's worth the trouble to learn."

SOURCE: The New York Times, Published, Sunday, April, 1, 2007, By Eric Sylvers

A lesson in human nature as applied to economics



As the late Adrian Rogers said, "you cannot multiply wealth by dividing it." This man is truly a genius!

An economics professor at a local college made a statement that he had never failed a single student before, but had once failed an entire class. That class had insisted that socialism worked and that no one would be poor and no one would be rich, a great equalizer.

The professor then said, "OK, we will have an experiment in this class on socialism". All grades would be averaged and everyone would receive the same grade so no one would fail and no one would receive an A.

After the first test, the grades were averaged and everyone got a B. The students who studied hard were upset and the students who studied little were happy. As the second test rolled around, the students who studied little had studied even less and the ones who studied hard decided they wanted a free ride too so they studied little.

The second test average was a D! No one was happy.

When the 3rd test rolled around, the average was an F.

As the tests proceeded, the scores never increased as bickering, blame and name-calling all resulted in hard feelings and no one would study for the benefit of anyone else.

All failed, to their great surprise, and the professor told them that socialism would also ultimately fail because when the reward is great, the effort to succeed is great but when government takes all the reward away, no one will try or want to succeed.

It could not be any simpler to understand than that.



The Transportation Department of Chesterfield County Public Schools held a school bus road-e-o in June, and Superintendent Marcus Newsome tried driving a school bus for the first time and drove it in the county's road-e-o. After negotiating the closed, half-mile course, the superintendent said, "My respect for the excellent job our school bus drivers do is at an all-time high."

Now who is that looking over the superintendent's shoulder? Look real hard and you'll see it's, of course, Barbara Goodman getting herself in another photograph. She is so photogenic.



Congratulations to Pam Youderian on her retirement as Director of Transportation for Manassas City...Tim Guill, formerly of Lancaster County, will replace her in Manassas and welcome to John Mann who will replace Tim in Lancaster County.

The Secret to a Long Marriage

At St. Peter's Catholic Church in Boston, they have weekly husband's marriage seminars.

At the session last week, the priest asked Giuseppe, who said he was approaching his 50th wedding anniversary, to take a few minutes and share some insight into how he had managed to stay married to the same woman all these years.

Giuseppe replied to the assembled husbands, 'Well, I have tried to treat her nicely, spend money on her, but best of all is I took her to Italy for our 50th anniversary!'

The priest responded, 'Giuseppe, you are an amazing inspiration to all the husbands here! Please tell us what you are planning for your wife for your 51st anniversary?'

Giuseppe proudly replied, "I'm gonna go pick her up."



TRENTON, N.J. — The state Senate Education Committee on Monday approved legislation that would expand background check requirements to school bus drivers who don't currently fall under the mandate.

Under current New Jersey law, it is optional for a nonpublic school to require its employees to undergo the criminal history record check. But the new bill, passed by the Education Committee in a 4-0 vote, would make the checks mandatory for those and other drivers.

Also covered under the bill would be school bus drivers who are employed by such agencies as the Department of Human Services, the Department of Children and Families, and the Department of Law and Public Safety.

Additionally, drivers for a school bus contractor holding a contract with one of those agencies or with a nonpublic school would fall under the background check mandate.

The check, conducted through the state Department of Education (DOE), includes input from the Division of State Police and the FBI. "Using information from both entities provides a comprehensive review that transcends state lines and jurisdictions," the Education Committee said in a statement.

The bill also requires that the Motor Vehicle Commission and the DOE compare data files on a regular basis to ensure that any school bus driver disqualified by the DOE also has the "S" endorsement on his or her CDL revoked by the Motor Vehicle Commission.

"Comparing files will also assist in identifying school bus drivers who have had their special license ['S' endorsement] revoked or suspended but who are still employed as school bus drivers," the Education Committee said. "The Motor Vehicle Commission will notify the Department of Education of these cases, and their employment will be terminated."

Source: School Bus Fleet magazine Newsline, June 22, 2010 edition



Rick forgot his wedding anniversary, and his wife was really angry. She told him, 'Tomorrow morning, I expect to find something in the driveway that goes from 0 to 200 in less than 6 seconds, AND IT BETTER BE THERE!!' The next morning Rick got up early and left for work. When his wife woke up she looked out the window and sure enough there was a small box gift-wrapped in the middle of the driveway. Confused, the wife ran out to the driveway. She opened it and found a brand new bathroom scale. Rick is still missing!

NAPT NEWS

There is Someone in Your District

Someone who works with or for you is deserving of the NAPT Continuing Education Award, sponsored by Thomas Built Buses. Please take a moment to consider who would benefit most from this professional development opportunity. The recipient will receive a grant of up to \$1,000 for pre-approved tuition, travel, lodging and meal expenses at an NAPT-approved workshop. Grants must be used within 12 months.

An eligible candidate must be a continuous NAPT member for three (3) years or more and may not have been the recipient of the award the four (4) preceding years. Not sure if they are an NAPT member? Please give us a call at 800-989-6278 and we'd be happy to let you know.

Applications are available on the NAPT website at www.naptonline.org

Applications must be postmarked no later than September 1st and mailed to:

NAPT
1840 Western Ave
Albany NY 12203
ATTN: Thomas Continuing Education Award Committee

NAPT Has A New Website!

The National Association for Pupil Transportation is pleased to announce the launch of its re-designed website. The new homepage provides uncluttered, one-click access to a wide variety of information, including all of NAPT's communication, leadership, education, advocacy and resource projects. The new site also features enhanced registration tools for NAPT events, including the 2010 NAPT Summit, the association's 36th Annual Conference & Trade Show set for October 30 through November 4 in Portland, Ore.

"This is the most comprehensive communication system we have ever had," said NAPT President Linda F. Bluth, Ed.D. "It provides the connection we need to keep members

informed and involved in the current activities of the association."

Current NAPT Members receive exclusive and unrestricted access to the entire site via the Members Only portal. Log-in is easy - go to www.naptonline.org and enter your primary email address (the address where you currently receive email from us) as your user name and the password "napt3614". You will be required change your password upon log-in, so please remember to store it in a safe, easy to remember place. To facilitate a smooth transition, the old website www.napt.org will remain in use until August 1. You will be able to log in and get information from both sources, but only naptonline.org will be updated. After that date napt.org and naptonline.org will be identical and you will be able to use either to access our new website.

Questions and feedback should be directed to Brianne Peck, NAPT Member Services Specialist, at brianne.peck@napt.org, Josh Bresett, NAPT Education and IT Specialist at josh.bresett@napt.org, or Lynn Martin, NAPT Marketing and Communication Specialist at lynn.martin@napt.org.



We encourage you to subscribe directly to

*National Transportation Safety Board notifications if you do not already do so by going to <http://www.nts.gov/registration/registration.htm>. NTSB Media Contact: Peter Knudson

peter.knudson@nts.gov. Telephone: 202-314-6100

Charlie Hood, President, National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS) and Director, School Transportation, Florida Department of Education, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400, (850) 245-9795. Charlie.Hood@fldoe.org

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[Helpful National Organizations](#)

[National Association for Pupil Transportation \(NAPT\)](#)

An organization of pupil transportation professionals dedicated to promoting safety and enhancing efficiency in pupil transportation. Individuals in the transportation industry can find information about pupil transportation at this website. This is also a good resource to contact if you have school bus related questions. You can find out the latest pupil transportation news by visiting the week's top school bus

stories posted on the NAPT webpage.
1840 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12203-0647
Phone: 800-989-NAPT or 518-452-3611
Fax: 518-218-0867
Website: www.napt.org

National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives (NAGHSR)

The governors' highway safety representatives manage each state's highway safety program and serve as liaisons between their governors and the highway safety community. They also work closely with NHTSA in the administration of federal highway safety grant programs. NAGHSR's website is an excellent source of information providing countless links to highway safety-related online resources. The site also lists all State Highway Safety Offices. Contact your state office to find out about transportation safety programs in your state.

750 First Street, NW, Suite 720
Washington, DC 20002-4241
Phone: 202-789-0942
Website: www.naghsr.org

National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS)

NASDPTS provides leadership, assistance, and motivation to the nation's school transportation industry to provide high quality, safe, and efficient transportation for pupils. The association works with many organizations at the federal, state, and national levels that have an interest in pupil transportation. Each State Director is responsible for state policies concerning pupil transportation and can provide information about their state's pupil transportation program.

116 Howe Drive
Dover, DE 19901
Phone: 800-585-0340
Website: www.nasdpts.org

Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation's
2010 CLYDE W. MORRIS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
RECIPIENT:

DAKOTA DAYLE BRIGHTSTAR WILLIAMSON

Hanover County

Dakota will be attending The University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill this fall with career aspirations of becoming a physician specializing in obstetrics and gynecology.

Dakota graduated from Patrick Henry High School where she was a member of the National Art Honor Society. Active in school activities, she served as President of both the Spanish Club and the National Art Honor Society during her senior year. Learning the meaning of responsibility on a school bus, Dakota says "I grew up on the school bus that my mom drove and helped her to sweep the bus". Dakota also remembers reminding other students of important bus rules for insuring a safe ride to and from school.

Southeastern States Pupil Transportation Conference's

2010 BUSTER BYNUM VIRGINIA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS:

JOSHUA CHARLES SAUNDERS

Franklin County

Joshua has been accepted into Longwood University where he plans to major in Criminal Justice.

A graduate of Franklin County High School where he is known as “a personable, self-confident and charming young man”, Joshua was an active member of the Future Business Leaders of America and International Club in high school. A varsity letterman in soccer, Joshua has turned his passion for the sport into helping others by coaching and referring community soccer games. He is serious about his community service work – having volunteered in a soup kitchen and serving on two separate mission trips.

AND

ALISON G. RIFE

Buchanan County

Alison will be attending Pikeville College in Pikeville, Kentucky this fall with a goal of becoming an attorney.

Alison graduated from Twin Valley High School in Pilgrims Knob which, according to Alison, “is one of the smallest towns in Southwest Virginia.” Active in the Beta Club, 4-H Club, and Future Business Leaders of America, she also performed in school plays and variety shows and was voted Homecoming Queen. Interested in athletics, Alison played volleyball and tennis and ran track. Spending her free time scrap-booking old family photos as a way of preserving her family history, Allison considers herself “a very strong competitor in any field of endeavor with a good head on her shoulders”.

TO FIND MORE INFORMATION ON –

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS GO TO THE VAPT WEB SITE AND SELECT SCHOLARSHIPS

POSTER CONTEST WINNERS TO GO THE VAPT WEB SITE AND SELECT POSTER CONTEST

SCHOOL BUS ROAD-E-O WINNERS GO TO THE VAPT WEB SITE AND SELECT BUS SAFETY ROAD-E-O

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS GO TO THE VAPT WEB SITE AND SELECT CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

THE 2010-2011 VAPT/VDOE PUPIL TRANSPORTATION CONFERENCE

The annual conference will be held next year in Norfolk at the Downtown Marriott. We were able to negotiate excellent rates and are looking for this to be another successful conference. There will be a slight change in days...we have typically gone from Monday through Thursday...next year the conference will start on Wednesday, June 22, 2011 and end on Saturday morning, June 25, 2011. The hotel will hold the conference room rate of \$89/night for 3 days before and 3 days after for those wishing to bring their families and make a mini-vacation of it.

