



**The Voice and Vision for Pupil Transportation in Virginia
MAY 2010 NEWSLETTER
Editor: Bill Carr**

A Message from our President, Michael Ashby...

Dear VAPT Members:

We are approaching the end of another school year and many of us are probably saying “is it June yet”. With the end of the year and the beginning of the last month the VAPT Conference is not far away. I am looking forward to the conference in Norfolk. It appears from the registrations that we are off to a good start; I do hope that those of you that have not yet signed up for the conference, plan on joining us.

This has been a trying year for many school divisions because of the economy. It appears that there may be a light at the end of the tunnel. As always, transportation must be vigilant whether with child safety or watching our pennies. With the rise in fuel prices, this will be one more challenge that we must contend with. Hopefully, the bubble will burst and prices will return to more manageable levels.

If you have not already signed up for the conference, please do as soon as possible. See you in June.

Michael

VAPT Conference Update -- Room Availability

Some members were told earlier that no rooms were available at the conference rate...That is because we filled our block of rooms....Our leadership acted quickly to increase the block of rooms available to meet the growing demand.....HOWEVER...if you want rooms at the conference rate and in the same facility, you should book them ASAP.

We are also looking at a possible overflow hotel to meet any additional demand.

REGION IV News

The Region IV directors held their spring meeting on March 24, 2011. The meeting was hosted by Fairfax County Public Schools. Summary notes from the meeting follow:

- Gregg Sutton from Arlington county Public Schools gave a presentation on his district's implementation of the Edulog automated bus routing system and lessons learned. Arlington County Public Schools will host a regional Edulog Users Conference in April.
- Justin Sarver from Orange County Public Schools gave a presentation on the GPS implementation and lessons learned. Following his presentation there was a general discussion on the use and cost of high band radio systems.
- There were several round table discussions on topics of general interest. Nancy Hendrickson led a discussion on coping with recent Egyptian immigration influx into the Falls Church Public School District. Barry Sudduth, Stafford County Public Schools led a discussion on available training for dispatchers and solicited participation in a joint contracted training venue. Marty Quigley, Shenandoah County Public Schools led a discussion on techniques for projected future fuel expenditures in light of recent dramatic increases in oil prices. Chuck Puglisi, Frederick County Public Schools led a very lively discussion on the pros and cons of joint county/school division maintenance operations.
- Ms. Cheryl Fisher, Fauquier County Public Schools, was unanimously selected by the Region IV directors as our nominee for the Region IV representative on the VAPT Executive Committee for the term beginning July 1, 2011.

Submitted by Ed Bishop

Note: Following the VAPT Regional Director elections at the June conference, I would like to publish a short bio with picture of all of the newly elected representatives and committee chair persons. Please, ASAP, send me a picture of you and a short bio. Thanks.

Bill Carr, Editor

VAPT Conference Update -- Room Availability

Some members were told earlier that no rooms were available at the conference rate...That is because we filled our block of rooms....Our leadership acted quickly to increase the block of rooms available to meet the growing demand.....HOWEVER...if you want rooms at the conference rate and in the same facility, you should book them ASAP.

We are also looking at a possible overflow hotel to meet any additional demand.

Wheelchairs

The Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America is developing Volume 4 of its Wheelchairs and Transportation standards, which, when completed, will contain all U.S. voluntary industry standards for the equipment as seats in motor vehicles.

Dr. Larry Schneider, chair of Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Wheelchair Transportation Safety (RERC/WTS) and head of the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, said pupil transporters will soon need to learn the acronyms WC18 and WC 20 to go along with WC19, which was first completed in 2002.



Per the new RESNA standards, this symbol must also be included on permanent labels affixed to primary sub-assemblies of wheelchair tie-down and occupant restraint devices.

The biggest changes come to Section 19 of the RESNA standards, or WC19. Limitations on size and mass of wheelchairs will be removed, but manufacturers will also be required to warn customers that not all sizes and masses of wheelchairs are compatible with travel in public vehicles. WC19 is also being expanded to include wheelchairs designed for children under 50 pounds. These wheelchairs must provide a "sufficiently high back support/headrest to provide rearward support for the child's head" and provide "a crashworthy wheelchair-integrated five-point harness comparable to that used in child safety seats."

The WC19 update changes the test for properly positioning belt restraints with vehicle-anchored pelvic belts to a strictly pass/fail criteria from the previous ratings of poor to excellent in pre-sale literature. Also required is a rating for ease of properly positioning a lap/shoulder belt on the wheelchair occupant and another rating for the degree to which proper belt fit is maintained.

WC19 will also include a provision for keeping the zones near the paths of typical vehicle-anchored pelvic belts free of sharp edges and stronger emphasis on the current requirement to provide pin-bushing anchorages for attaching the lower end of the shoulder belt on both halves of the pelvic belt. In addition, the size of the crash-test dummy will be specified based on user weight capacity of the wheelchair and design specifications, and dimensions for universal docking interface geometry (UDIG) will be established that, if established on wheelchairs and wheelchair securement adaptors, will allow for auto-docking securement in public transportation.

WC18 centers on lap/shoulder belts that have vehicle-anchored pelvic/lap belts and how they must disconnect the diagonal shoulder portion of the belt restraint from the pelvic portion of the belt by using the standard connector-to-pin-bushing anchorage. Or, the belts must include anchorage ends of the pelvic belt that can be easily inserted through openings in the wheelchairs. WC 18 also will require the shoulder portion of the belt restraint to connect to the standard pin-cushing anchorage on either half of the wheelchair-anchored pelvic belt required by WC19.

WC 20 will include two primary seating-system performance requirements and associated test methods, namely a frontal-impact crashworthiness of seating systems independent of production wheelchair frames via the 30-mph sled test in WC 19 with the seating system installed on a surrogate wheelchair frame (SWCF). The new standard also evaluates a seating system's accommodation of vehicle-anchored lap/shoulder belts similar to WC19 for complete wheelchairs, including a rating for the ease of achieving proper belt positioning and a second for the degree to which proper belt positioning can be achieved.

Source: School Transportation magazine

REQUEST FOR INFO -- Fit for Duty

From: Barry Sudduth [mailto:sudduthbr@staffordschools.net]

We are proceeding forward with our Fit for Duty program and need to put this in policy. Does anyone out there have school board policy and/or regulations already in effect regarding this?

If anyone out there does have this may we please have a sample of the policy?

Barry Sudduth, MPA, CDPT
Assistant Director of Transportation
Stafford County Public Schools



Threatening Email Mentions School Buses

An e-mail sent to certain members of the media and New York state officials threatened violence against state office buildings, the state legislature and school buses.

A warning was sent out by the New York State Education Department.

The Huntington School District and the Syosset Central School District posted the notification on their websites Tuesday, calling the terror threat an "important safety announcement."

The threatening email was received April 1. It was posted on the Huntington Patch website, with the subject "Time to Kill."

It reads in part, "It is obvious to me that the wealthy in this country are so well insulated that nothing will pull them off task and that, in order to deal with them; I need to incite people to violence."

The e-mail goes on to say, "At first I thought I might pull out a gun at my State office and kill a bunch of these dummies that I work with. But I doubt that would provide me with the satisfaction I am looking for. Understand with whom you are dealing. I am not crazy. I am a terrorist. I stand for all of the people who don't have a voice.... If we attack a school bus full of kids, it may have no effect on the hardened criminals who rule Albany, but it will put the public in an uproar. Our goal is to create anarchy. You'll have to kill us to stop us."

The New York State Police, the State Office of Counter Terrorism, Federal Bureau of Investigation and other officials are investigating the e-mail, according to the New York State Education Department notification.

Bus drivers have been directed to conduct pre-and post-trip inspections, and be vigilant of strangers approaching school buses.

Source: School Transportation News Clips

[Material you may want to use in your local School Bus Driver Newsletter -----](#)

**A Mother was Struck and Killed by a School Bus
Driven by Her Son, February 23, 2011**

**ALWAYS USE EXTRA CAUTION
WHEN BACKING AND
KNOW WHAT'S BEHIND
BEFORE YOU BACK**

TANEYTOWN, Md. (AP) -- Maryland State Police say an 84-year-old woman was struck and killed when a school bus operated by her son hit her while it was

backing into his driveway. The woman (mother) was flown to Shock Trauma in Baltimore after Wednesday morning's accident, where she died.



SCHOOL BUS driver fined for 'ignoring another SCHOOL BUS ' flashing lights' in Ontario, Canada —

The driver has six months to pay \$250 for a fine and costs for an incident last year wherein she ignored the flashing lights of another school bus.

On Jan. 5, 2010, a school bus was stopped on a highway with its red lights flashing. The person driving the school bus that passed approached the bus from behind and passed it.

Police at the time said that Ontario law requires drivers to stop when approaching a stopped school bus with its upper red lights flashing.

The driver was initially charged with failing to stop for a school bus — a violation punishable by a fine of up to \$2,000 and six demerit points. However, ahead of her trial, a plea was entered on her behalf to the lesser charge of disobeying a traffic control signal in her lane.

Comments Received:

1. What is wrong with that person! Everyone makes mistakes. Yet, for a motorist, especially a school bus driver, to pass a stopped school bus with red lights flashing and the stop arm extended must be blind or deliberately disobeyed the law. I remember a Virginia school bus driver told me years ago that a motorist started to pass her from the opposite direction and she "laid on the bus horn" and the motorist stopped beside the school bus driver's window and said; "she was sorry." The school bus driver replied; "an apology could not put life back into a child if you had hit and killed the child or children." So True! Why was this school bus driver's punishment reduced??? Interesting! She should have been dismissed because of her poor judgment, stupidity, impatience, and carelessness attitude.

1. Bill Carr - Mar 17, 2011 07:15 AM

2. Over twenty years, no crashes, no bus stop injuries, no deaths, and every sort of driver have ran my lights, including police and other school bus drivers.

Distraction happens. That the reality what hedges are in place to cover mistakes other motorists make? Are the riders trained specific when crossing, escorted, or let to run at will? Are approaches timed to let the close-in drivers continue, or fast in to a stop with the lights activating when a motorist is too close? I see drivers that look distracted or in a daze and adjust the approach to compensate. I see school bus drivers in automatic mode. Share the road includes all of us, not just them. Regardless, to pass a stopped school bus from behind with the safety lights activated would seem not a driver distraction issue but deliberate involving an impatient school bus driver in a hurry and appropriate to let go before her driving resulted in injuries or a death.

2. Mar 16, 2011 09:49 PM

3. Should have been given the max fine and punishment plus CDL license taken away along with being fired

3. Mar 16, 2011 12:31 PM

4. I totally agree that driver should have been fired and had CDL pulled. Every day we bus drivers have to deal with people who run our stop arms and put our precious cargo at risk, but when it's one of our own, no excuse!!!!

4. Mar 16, 2011 10:32 AM

5. What a slap in the face to all bus drivers. Such an embarrassment. She should have been fired on the spot!

5. Mar 16, 2011 10:08 AM

6. Really? Talk about an epic failure! This woman has NO business driving a school bus again. That was just criminally negligent in the line of duty.

6. Mar 16, 2011 09:22 AM

7. If she had been working for me, she would be looking for a different job. How can a school bus driver NOT stop for another school bus?

7. Mar 16, 2011 08:16 AM

8. She should have been given the maximum fine. As a school bus driver she had to have known the law and how dangerous it can be to pass a school bus at a bus stop. I wouldn't want her driving my family anywhere.

8. Mar 16, 2011 07:30 AM

9. What? You mean she gets a lesser fine and presumably retains her job?
Guess things are different in Canada, eh?

9. Mar 16, 2011 07:10 AM

MORE DISGUSTING NEWS....

School bus drivers busted for fraudulent CDLs

Two school bus drivers in Queens, N.Y., were arrested for allegedly using fake CDLs. High-tech facial recognition technology reportedly was used to snare the men, who are accused of using fake names and Social Security numbers to obtain their CDLs. The arrests were part of a crackdown on bus operators in the wake of a fatal tour bus crash in the Bronx. Both had their licenses suspended years ago for not paying fines.



Break for a little Humor....



A social worker from a big City in Massachusetts recently transferred to the mountains of Arkansas and was on first tour of her new territory when she came upon the tiniest cabin she had ever seen in her life.

Intrigued, she went up and knocked on the door. "Anybody home?" she asked. "Yep," came a kid's voice through the door. "Is your father there?" Asked the social worker. "Pa? Nope, he left afore Ma came in," said the kid. "Well, is your mother there?" persisted the social worker. "Ma? Nope, she left just afore I got here," said the kid. "But," protested the social worker, "are you never together as a family?" "Sure, but not here," said the kid through the door. "This is the outhouse!"



THE FINAL EXAM

College students read carefully there is a lesson here...you decide what it is.

At Penn State University were four sophomores taking chemistry and all of them had an 'A' so far. These four friends were so confident that, the weekend before finals, they decided to visit some friends and have a big party. They had a great time but, after all the hearty partying they slept all day Sunday and didn't make it back to Penn State until early Monday morning.

Rather than taking the final then, they decided that after the final they would explain to their professor why they missed it. They said they had visited friends but, on the way back they had a flat tire. As a result, they missed the final.

The professor agreed they could make up the final the next day.

The guys were excited and relieved. They studied that night for the exam. The next day the professor placed them in separate rooms and gave them a test booklet. They quickly answered the first problem worth 5 points. Cool, they thought! Each one in separate rooms, thinking this was going to be easy.... then they turned the page. On the second page was written. For 95 points: Which tire?



My wife sat down on the couch next to me as I was flipping the channels. She asked, 'What's on TV?' I said, 'Dust.' And then the fight started.



One year, a husband decided to buy his mother-in-law a cemetery plot as a Christmas gift. The next year, he didn't buy her a gift. When she asked him why, he replied, "Well, you still haven't used the gift I bought you last year!" And that's how the fight started.



April Showers Bring May Flowers





Oh No, not Virginia Ham!!! Who didn't lock the door?



She did it Again. **LOCK THE DOOR!!!**