

# TRANSIT EXPRESS

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## The Newsletter of the Wyoming Public Transit Association

### 2006 WYTRANS AWARDS

WYTRANS honored outstanding transit professionals June 24 at the annual awards banquet, held in conjunction with the **18th Annual Conference and Bus Roadeo**. Awards for *WYTRANS Agency of the Year, Transit Administrator of the Year, Dispatcher, Driver, Trainer and Volunteer of the Year*, and an *Outstanding Service Award* were selected by WYTRANS members. The 2006 winners are highlighted in this edition of *The Transit Express*.

#### 2006 WYTRANS Agency of the Year CATC/*The Bus*

*Nomination by Marge Cole, Director*

After many years of fits and starts, **CATC/*The Bus*** is finally providing fixed-route deviation as well as dial-a-ride service to the Casper area. Thanks to generous SLIB and 5309 grants through WYDOT, we took delivery of three very attractive buses embossed with the new *The Bus* logo in March of 2005. With the drivers in place, we began the extensive training program in preparation for our grand opening.

The buses hit the road on April 18, 2005, and what a year it has been. *The Bus* has provided over 66,000 rides on four routes and another 65,000 on CATC's dial-a-ride service. Bus benches are going in place, and currently four shelters have been completed at strategic locations. Much to our delight, the communities of Mills and Evansville will be joining *The Bus*. They hope to begin providing fixed-route deviation in mid-2007. This truly has been, and continues to be, a wonderful team effort. CATC and *The Bus* drivers, dispatchers, bus aides, and office staff have all gone way above and beyond the call of duty to make this work. We have very dedicated individuals providing transit service in our community. Without their dedication, none of this would be possible.

In addition, *The Bus* would not have been possible or successful without the generous support of the City of Casper and the community at large. *The Bus* and

CATC passengers express their gratitude on a daily basis. We are so proud to be part of meeting such a vital need in our community and look forward to continuing to grow and improve for many years to come. 🚌



*The Bus at the transfer station, in downtown Casper.*

#### 2006 Driver of the Year—Kevin Trimmer

*Nomination by Joe Dougherty, Director of Transit*

**Kevin Trimmer** has been one of **Cheyenne Transit Program's (CTP)** best employees for over 13 years, dispatching the first six years of his career and driving a bus the past seven. With his kind demeanor and years of experience, he has come to be known as a number-one problem solver for drivers, passengers, and CTP administrators. In fact, he is so proficient at problem solving that he also serves as our driver scheduler and has earned the title "Doc" for Driver Outreach Coordinator.

Kevin keeps the lines of communication flowing both ways from the drivers to the office. He is so devoted to problem solving that he keeps the CTP radio channel tuned in to his personal vehicle. He is often called upon at home to put a spare bus into service or to help a driver with a personal problem find a solution. Kevin is always there to help with a smile on his face and a happy heart.

Kevin has earned an accident-free award in every single year of his driving career but one. In addition, he willingly helps out in dispatch, at the bus barn, in the administrative offices, at the transfer station, or

*Continued on page 2 . . .*



*WYTRANS Driver of the Year Kevin Trimmer, right, and Cheyenne Transit Program Director of Transit Joe Dougherty, left.*

*Driver of the Year Continued . . .*

wherever he is needed. Although called upon for other services, he tries to devote his time to full-time driving two or three days each week.

Kevin is one of those people who always keeps a cool head and help others stay focused on human service. To his credit, he underwent life-changing gastric-bypass surgery two years ago and has lost over 260 pounds. Kevin spends much of his free time volunteering with the Salvation Army Church and working with the youth group. 🚗

**2006 Transit Administrator of the Year  
Joe Dougherty, Manager**

*Nomination by Jackie C. Smith, Public Works Director*

**Joseph Dougherty** is an outstanding, self-motivated employee and a terrific leader. An avid public transportation advocate, he's advanced **Cheyenne Transit Program (CTP)** in numerous ways. Joe has worked tirelessly to improve service and increase usage.



*Joe Dougherty*

In 2005, CTP ridership increased 32 percent over 2004. Joe restructured the transit route program to reach more customers and relocated

the bus transfer location, which placed bus service closer to citizens, and made it possible for customers to travel downtown without a transfer. Joe relocated transfer division offices to the downtown parking structure near the transfer station, which improved the work environment and made the administrative staff more accessible.

Joe also improved service by implementing a free downtown shuttle route, as well as expanding services to Friday nights and Saturdays. Under Joe's direction and supervision, a new bus facility is being designed and will be constructed in 2006. The new building will provide a heated facility for buses as well as office and training space for drivers.

Joe is innovative, energetic, and an expert in customer relations. Results have been dramatic—greatly expanded and improved service, high morale, new equipment, an improved work environment, and a new transit facility on the horizon.

**Second Nomination for Joe Dougherty**

*by Sean Solan, WRTA Transportation Manager*

Joe Dougherty is a tireless, dedicated public transit administrator, and his commitment to public service is immeasurable. Joe has taken CTP to new heights. Joe

also spent considerable time and effort in the passage of the sales tax exemption for public transit, and he exemplifies the initiative it takes to succeed. He testified on several occasions before Wyoming legislators this year and is knowledgeable on important issues. There is no greater individual achievement award that could be bestowed on him by his peers and colleagues than this one. 🚗

**2006 Trainer of the Year—Cindy Wardell**

*Nomination by Susan Park, Adult Program Manager*

**Cindy Wardell, Lincoln Self Reliance, Inc. (LSR)** has taught PASS and Safe Driver for three years. She continually strives to make the training interesting and adds different aspects to her presentation, always keeping in mind that she has to follow the WYTRANS guidelines. Cindy not only trains the LSR staff every year, but also provides training for the staff at the Kemmerer Senior Center. She has also provided training to the Afton Senior Center when asked.

Cindy takes her role as a trainer seriously. The staff knows that when questions involving driving are presented to her, she will provide the right answer. She reminds staff when they are not following safe driving practices or if they are not using the tie-down systems correctly. LSR serves three individuals who use wheelchairs. Cindy's diligence is very important to our company and our safety concerns.

At a Chamber of Commerce meeting, Cindy, a strong advocate against drinking and driving, gave a presentation about the dangers of drinking and driving. Cindy is a conscientious and dedicated trainer. We feel extremely fortunate to have her in our organization. 🚗



*WYTRANS President Sean Solan, left, and Trainer of the Year Cindy Wardell, right, at the 2006 WYTRANS Awards Banquet in Riverton.*

**2006 Dispatcher of the Year—Elizabeth Whitt**

*Nomination by Greg Jordan, Manager*

**Elizabeth Anne Whitt** has done a phenomenal job in organizing and consolidating the para-transit dispatch duties for UW's **Transit and Parking Services**. She has worked to develop a personal relationship with each

*Dispatcher of the Year Continued . . .*

passenger and the drivers. Together they work to make the Para-Transit service more efficient while the number of rides increases every month. She works with drivers and passengers to provide a new set of Para-Transit rider guidelines that will help make the department even more efficient. She provides cheerful guidance and positive feedback to encourage her coworkers. She sometimes writes a pink sticky note to thank coworkers and others in the office when they handle a particular situation well.



*Elizabeth Whitt*

In other instances, she has made up a poster congratulating a person on a particular accomplishment, which immediately inspired that person and his/her coworkers. She sends personal "Thank You" cards to her customers, which she sends out for particular situations. Her acts of kindness, appreciation, and recognition inspire others.

She handles stressful situations so well that they are often diffused before they get out of hand. Her cheerful attitude and helpful nature helps to calm those who are upset. She works with them with genuine concern to find an appropriate solution. Her care for customers is evident in everything she does. Her work ethic is above reproach. She serves as a constant reminder to others of how an employee should behave by her positive attitude, professional demeanor, and fantastic organizational skills. She constantly seeks to improve the department's processes and make them more effective and efficient. Elizabeth is a great person to work with, and I am honored to have her as an employee. 🚐

**2006 Volunteer of the Year—Marge Williams**

*Nomination by Andrea Kern, Co-Director*

**Marge Williams**, valued by everyone at **Eppson Center for Seniors**, offers herself and her resources to others without reservation. Two years ago, Marge saw a need for a car to transport clients to out-of-town medical appointments and single handedly raised funds to purchase a 2003 Buick Century. She has also taken charge of the yearly fund-raiser, a pancake breakfast. She rounds up volunteers to help, sells tickets, and fills in wherever she is needed. She also put together an instruction book for the breakfast. Marge goes to the center every day and helps pack the home-delivered meals and then delivers any route the regular drivers are unable to deliver.

The food service manager had a knee replacement recently, and Marge found volunteers to man the telephone in case drivers had problems. Marge took charge of the volunteers, finding replacements when needed. She runs errands, fills in at the reception desk, and supervises those who clean the buses every Saturday, including buying them donuts.

Marge convinces her former business associates to help our causes. When they see her coming, they pull out their wallets. She also donates numerous needed items. (See Marge's photo on Page 4.) 🚐

**2006 Outstanding Service Award—Kathy Hill**

*Nomination by Marge Cole, Director*

It is a great pleasure to have this opportunity to nominate CATC's own **Kathy Hill** for the WYTRANS 2006 *Outstanding Service Award*. Kathy has been with CATC for 18 years. Her position is Administrative Assistant, which is really a catch-all term. She is one of the hundreds of people who make transit work from behind the scenes in our state. Without her, CATC and *The Bus* would not be providing transit service to the large numbers of transportation disadvantaged individuals in our community. Kathy is our accounting wizard. Due to her talent, we remain solvent at the end of every year and able to meet all of our obligations. This is no small feat.



*Kathy Hill*

Kathy is always willing to take on whatever task is asked of her. She manages our subsidized ticket program that provides "free" tickets/tokens to low to moderate-income passengers. She works diligently to get the tickets/tokens into the hands of those who are less fortunate. Whether it involves covering in dispatch, managing our complicated accounting system, or explaining the budget to the powerful decision-makers, Kathy is always ready—more than able, and willing to tackle and complete the job.

Kathy's most impressive attribute is her ability to overcome adversity. In the past few years, Kathy has experienced some very serious health challenges. In spite of these challenges, she was always available to answer questions and provide whatever support she could. And she always returned to work well ahead of schedule.

Her loyalty, hard work, and willingness to always go above and beyond the call of duty are just a few of the many reasons she received WYTRANS 2006 *Outstanding Service Award*. 🚐

## 2006 Conference Highlights

The 18th Annual WYTRANS Conference and Bus Roadeo, held June 21-24 at the Holiday Inn in Riverton, offered several workshop opportunities for drivers, managers, and dispatchers. Most of the conference participants went home with a door prize thanks to several generous businesses, and the work of the 2006 Conference Committee. Conference committee members were **Sean Solan** and **Bert King** of WRTA; **Linda Burt**, Riverton Senior Center; **Emily Howery**, Community Entry Services; **Gloria Bulow**, Child Development Services; and **Faye Nash**, NTTC.

Conference classes included CTAA's Passenger Service and Safety Certification (PASS), both beginning and recertification classes, and the WYTRANS **Safe Driver** course. The two-day PASS course covers driver sensitivity, as well as teaching drivers to be more in tune with passenger needs. The Safe Driver course was designed by WYTRANS trainers and is geared for the public transit driver.

**Marge Cole** and **Sean Solan** reviewed the latest Drug and Alcohol Requirements. Marge handed out a hard copy of her updated drug and alcohol policy and said she will e-mail a copy to directors who request it. Participants were given a CD of the FTA Office of Safety and Security Drug and Alcohol Compliance Program. If you would like a copy of the CD, contact **Debbie Ehlers** at 307-266-2524.

Thursday afternoon, **Faye Nash**, Nash Transportation Training and Consulting, and **Johnna Nunez**, Fremont Counseling gave participants some good tips when dealing with difficult clients or those with mental disabilities.

On Friday, **David Goldsmith** presented *Customer Service for the Transit Professional*. Goldsmith explained four redefining steps, through a hands-on exercise, which drivers and managers can use daily to make decisions and process information. Goldsmith also recommended that managers should listen to their employees and give them empowerment tools.

WRTA rider **Rick Gordon** was the luncheon speaker on Friday. He is a regular WRTA rider and said that WRTA has been taking him to work for the past several years. Because of Rick's disability, he relies on WRTA for many of his transportation needs.

On Friday afternoon an Abuse Awareness Discussion was held with representatives from the



*David Goldsmith*

Riverton Police, Fremont County Sheriff's Department and senior advocate **Jamie Lookingbill**. Dinner Friday was at the Riverton Senior Citizens Center and about 20 people played bingo for some very nice prizes.

Saturday morning, a bus evacuation training was held. The evacuation exercises and the burning of the bus were videotaped by Central Wyoming College. WYTRANS hopes to have copies of the fire evacuation video available this fall.

The Central Wyoming College west parking lot was a perfect setting for the bus roadeo. In addition to the driving course, contestants had to complete a 25-question test, parallel park a 45-foot START bus, compete a pre-trip inspection, and load and secure a wheelchair passenger. *Please see Page 5 for roadeo results.* During the roadeo, a carnival was held with proceeds going to a young Riverton boy who needed a liver transplant.

An Escort Competition was also held in conjunction with the roadeo. Six teams of drivers paired off to load, secure, and unload a passenger. **Larissa Lawrence** and **Rebecca Murray** of Child Development Services in Riverton won the competition and each received \$50. **Cynthia Culver** from Carbon County Seniors and **Harold Shelley** from the Riverton Senior Citizens placed second in the Driver/Escort Competition.

The day concluded with the annual awards banquet at the Riverton Senior Center. WYTRANS would like to thank the WYTRANS Trainers, conference committee, presenters, bus vendors, and those who attended the conference, as well as all the bus roadeo volunteers and judges who helped make the Conference and Bus Roadeo a wonderful experience for everyone.

The 19th Annual WYTRANS Conference and Bus Roadeo will be held in Casper, June 21-23. Mark the date on your 2007 calendar now. 🚌



*Linda Burt, Riverton Senior Center Director, dressed up as a clown for the carnival held during the roadeo.*



*Eppson Center for Seniors Transportation Director Sharon Wade, left, presented the 2006 Volunteer of the Year plaque and certificate to Marge Williams, right. Marge was honored and surprised to receive the award.*

## 2006 WYTRANS BUS ROADEO WINNERS

The *18th Annual WYTRANS Bus Rodeo* was held Saturday, June 24, at the Central Wyoming College west parking lot in Riverton. Twenty-two contestants from transit and social service agencies around Wyoming competed for the first prize of \$1,000 and an all-expense paid trip to the 2007 National Bus Rodeo in Reno, Nevada. **Doug Schmidt** from WRTA won the competition, scoring 605 points out of a possible 700.

**Deb Lind** of START in Jackson placed second with 597 points. Third place went to **Billie Marie Schmidt** of Eppson who completed the competition with a score of 580 points. **Brenda Miller** of WRTA placed fourth with 574 points. **Henry Morrissette** of Cheyenne Transit placed fifth with 574 points. The fourth/fifth place tie was broken by the time it took each contestant to complete the course. Brenda drove the course in six minutes and Henry completed the course in 8:07 minutes.

WYTRANS would like to thank the Bus Rodeo Coordinators and the judges and volunteers who helped make the day a success. The rodeo competition could not be done without many volunteers! Mark your calendars now for the 2007 Bus Rodeo to be held in Casper, June 23, 2007. 🚗



*WRTA Driver Doug Schmidt, right, accepts the first place certificate from WYTRANS President and WRTA Manager Sean Solan at the Bus Rodeo Awards Banquet, June 24, in Riverton.*



*2006 WYTRANS Bus Rodeo judges and volunteers.*



*Deb Lind  
Second place*



*Billie-Marie Schmidt  
Third place*



*Brenda Miller  
Fourth place*



*Henry Morrissette  
Fifth place*

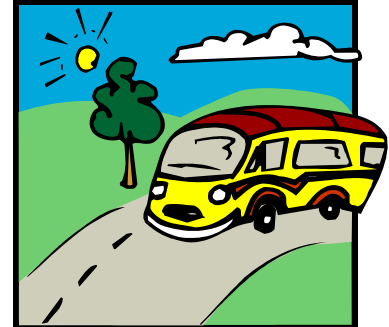


*2006 WYTRANS Bus Rodeo contestants.*

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**A Big Thank You to all of the 2006 Conference donors!**

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