

Volume 7, Issue 2

November 2010

## Dates To Remember

11 November  
Veteran's Day  
(No School)  
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24-26 November  
Thanksgiving Break  
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23 Dec - 7 Jan  
Winter Break  
-----

17 January  
Dr. King Holiday  
(No School)  
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# THE TRANSIT TRIBUNE

## Pasco District Schools Transportation

### August Inservice



Oliver DaRoad (swoon)

entertainment value. Please congratulate Barbara, Cheri, and Diego on a job well done.

The morning began with a visit from Superintendent Fiorentino who expressed her deep appreciation for the difficult task that falls to Transportation. She clearly understands the vital nature of our role within the community.

Next came Joan Lettany from Employee Benefits and Karen Patterson from USEP. Their discussion of health and wellness always strikes a resonant chord, despite the fact that the Lunch and Learn activities are experiencing dwindling participation. What is needed is an SRP from each compound to help with organizing the Lunch and Learn events.

Following the presentation on Transportation Wellness, came even more health information presented by Master Dennis Kelly, author, martial arts instructor, and health and fitness trainer. Master Kelly's main message, "There isn't any free lunch." Certainly this is a familiar adage, but that simple statement carries so much import. There are trade-offs for our every behavior.



Master Dennis Kelly

Master Kelly stressed four main points that

are so important to longevity and continued good health. First of all, he mentioned movement. In this day and age, people are inclined to a sedentary existence. We sit at our desks, we sit in our vehicles, we sit at the computer or in front of the TV. Whatever we can do to increase our movement will likely result in increased health benefits. Also important; breathing, music, and passion.

Continuing the theme of wellness, Dr. John Mann, Director of Communications and Leadership Development, spoke about how to manage stress in the workplace. A veteran of hundreds, if not thousands, of hours in the classroom, Dr. Mann's interesting and enjoyable talk provided many good points on dealing with stress. His information was the perfect complement to Master Kelly's presentation.



Dr. John Mann

With Joan and Karen, Master Kelly, and Dr. Mann all speaking on health and wellness, it should be clear the importance placed by Pasco District Schools and the Transportation department on the health of our employees. Consider what you heard, and make a conscious effort to incorporate some of what you learned into your own behaviors.



### Defensive Driving

While general health is certainly a concern, in our domain, the safe operation of our buses is also of momentous importance. To that end, the majority of the time at our August inservice was devoted to driving, and specifically to Defensive Driving.

The practice of defensive driving is some-

(Please see *Defensive*, p.3)

## Staff Recognition

More than 100 people were recognized at the August 12 class for their years of service to the District. These individuals represent 840 years of service to and caring for the children of Pasco County. Those recognized were, of course, only those who had reached a milestone. When the experience and caring of all the other Transportation staff are added, it's no wonder our staff receive so many compliments. What follows are some of those.

**Gary, John, Jack & Lynn,**

**Chasco Elementary sends a huge THANK YOU for rerouting our buses to a single run. We really appreciated your quick turn around and the communication. Two days in and it has already made a positive impact for our students and staff.**

**Hilda Martin and CHES staff**

Congratulations go out to **Bonnie McGinnis** from Northwest and **Digna Mascorro** from Operations who both received customer service nominations last school year. Please keep up the good work.



Also of note from last school year, the ESE students from Sunlake High School made coffee and cookies for their Operators and Assistants, calling the gathering the Bus Stop Cafe. This was an opportunity for the kids to say how much they appreciate all the hard work and thank them for, according to one student "driving us from here to there and getting up at the crack of dawn and dealing with us."



Finally, we cannot fail to recognize **Joseph Sentelik** who, along with two others, were identified as, "Definitely true heroes," by Dunedin Fire Rescue Division Chief, Bill McElligott. Mr. Sentelik and the others dove into the water to rescue an elderly couple whose car had plunged into the water at Dunedin Marina back in August. Heroes on and off the job.

**Bobby G,**

**Thank you for keeping everyone safe on the road. You are doing a great job.**

**M.G.**

Day in and day out, our Transportation maintenance staff take care of the fleet of buses to ensure that our students have a safe trip to and from school each day. On the surface, the activities of the Transportation department seem fairly obvious. If you dig a bit deeper, you'll discover that Transportation operates a 6th maintenance facility that you have likely never heard of.

While it is no "Area 51" or "black-op" maintenance facility, one Shop Coordinator, one Mechanic, and one Maintenance Assistant service and maintain more equipment than any of the other maintenance site in the department.

**Doug,**

**I just wanted to take a minute to thank you for taking care of our equipment needs so efficiently and promptly. Every time I request something from your department (The Small Engine Shop), the request is handled immediately. That effort means a lot to me as a plant manager.**

**I appreciate it that you were able to replace the bad batteries in my cart so quickly. It is our "work horse" and is used all the time. I also noticed that you repaired the brakes without being asked to do so. Thanks for going above and beyond. You and your crew always exceed my expectations.**

**Keep up the good work.**

**Regards,  
Dan Schmitz, Plant Manager  
Pasco Middle School**

Hidden in an unused auto mechanic's workspace at the rear of Pasco High School is the District's Small Engine Shop. The Small Engine Shop (SES) is responsible for all of the District turf equipment and golf cart fleet. The staff of three all work on the equipment as a team and manage over 700 pieces of equipment across the county.

This silent squad of carburetor commandos work with little praise or attention. The staff at Pasco Middle School dropped us a note to let us know they appreciate the hard work and dedication shown by Doug Lail, Rob Hanlon, and Rob Follick.

(Defensive from, p.1)

times defined as, "driving to save lives, time, and money, in spite of the conditions around you and the actions of others." No matter what the situation, constantly employing the principles of defensive driving, will drastically decrease



The O Team

the likelihood of having an accident. As professionals, our School Bus Operators are the most visible role models of driving behaviors and habits on the road. Certainly other people watch bus drivers in order to "catch" them doing something wrong. But more than that, they look to you for examples of how to behave behind the wheel.



The O Team (part 2)

The morning speakers were informative and interesting, but the presentation on defensive driving not only contained a wealth of useful information, it really packed an entertainment punch as well. Master Kelly, earlier, had spoken of passion. Surely no one displayed more passion than the very debonair Oliver DaRoad as he put the audience-participant Operators from the various compounds through their paces. Surely no one inspired more passion than the lovely Taylor Swing as she put her namesake through its paces.



Oliver DaRoad and Taylor Swing

Let's review some of defensive driving practices that were covered in the inservice. Topics covered included the following:

- Look Ahead means that you should look 15 seconds ahead of where your bus is at any given moment in order to identify potential hazards in plenty of time to react appropriately.
- Look around in order to see everything that is going on around your bus. Changing your point of focus every two seconds helps you stay focused. This also includes checking all your mirrors at least every eight seconds.
- Leave room on all six sides of your bus. By leaving room all around you give yourself additional reaction time. Remember that the easiest place to leave room is in front. Tailgating is one of the leading causes of accidents.
- Communicate your intentions to the drivers around your bus. Remember that you are the professional, and your driving should be a good example to the other drivers on the road.



### From the Opening Bell

Thank you all for your tremendous effort to achieve a great opening for the new school year. Here are a few facts to give you perspective on just how many things had to go right to make it possible. It required enormous effort from all parties, mechanics, assistants, operators and administrative staff.

The first ten days of school are the most critical to keep the buses rolling and to pick up students at new stops, board them on the right buses to get them to schools on time, and drop them off at the right stops to get them home safely. The following numbers are from the first ten days.

- 395 Routes
- 1019 Runs
- 8,400 Stops
- 37,000 Students

(See Opening Bell, p.4)



(Opening Bell, from p.3)

We had one school bus accident of a nature that required reporting to the Department of Education while transporting almost 37,000 students to and from home and school daily, for 735,000 student transports. We did have approximately 15 mistakes which were quickly corrected, with all children safe. While zero mistakes is our goal, we must acknowledge all involved in these incidents are consensus and caring individuals, and acknowledge that your overall efforts to keep students safe were 99.998% effective.

The Student Identification Band (Wrist Band) program has reduced the number of students boarding the wrong bus at schools, and we thank the school personnel for their assistance. The biggest challenge remains in identifying new students at the proper stops and monitoring the students as they exit the bus and, if necessary, cross the road under the protection of the student lights.



## Let the Holiday Fun Begin

We held our first meeting today at Central Garage as the official "Christmas Decorating Committee." In attendance were Mr. Greene, Kathy Huntoon, Teri Daniel, Brenda Susick, Kathy Black, and Diane Morrill.

This year's theme is "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas." Acceptable ideas for decorations can include scenes from

- the old movie;
- the Jim Carey version;
- the book by Dr. Seuss.

There are only four rules.

1. Safety First!
2. Decorating must stay within your work site perimeter.
3. A judge you may not participate in decorating in any way, not even to donate items.

## The World's Safest Drivers Transporting the World's Most Precious Cargo

2010 - 2011  
ELECTION RESULTS  
CONGRATULATIONS  
TO

KEVIN SHEARER  
SAFE DRIVER  
REPRESENTATIVE  
CENTRAL

BONNIE ALVAREZ  
SAFE DRIVER  
REPRESENTATIVE  
EAST

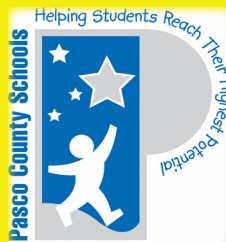
RICHARD STARK  
SAFE DRIVER  
REPRESENTATIVE  
NORTHWEST

LEE BEVILLE  
SAFE DRIVER  
REPRESENTATIVE  
SOUTHEAST

JEANNE MILLER  
SAFE DRIVER  
REPRESENTATIVE  
WEST

### Our School Board

Allen Altman - Chairman  
Joanne Hurley - Vice Chair  
Cathi Martin  
Frank Parker  
Kathryn Starkey



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4. No banned, unlawful, prohibited, or undesirable items or substances can be used, nor advertisement to that effect.

Judging will be conducted by dividing the county into two regions. Central, East, and Southeast will be judged on Dec. 14th, and West and Northwest will be judged on the Dec. 16th. These dates are tentative and subject to change.

Some of the things judges will be looking for are originality, imagination, employee involvement, and attention to details in keeping with the theme, just to name a few.

Judges will be The Big Elf – Jack, along with his Little Elves – Cheri, Carole, Bill, Diego, Digna, and possibly Dr. DuBose. Also Miss Julie and Miss Tina will rejoin us for the festivities if possible.

The representatives from each Compound are as follows:

Northwest – Kathy Huntoon

Central – Teri Daniel

East – Kathy Black

Southeast – Diane Morrill

So get out the hair gel, paint your faces green, and put on that Santa thinking cap. As you come up with ideas, be sure and see your representatives. It takes everyone's involvement to truly make the holiday fun a success by helping to build camaraderie among the members of the Transportation Team.

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