

From the Transit Director's Desk

Happy New Year!

First of all, I would like to wish everyone a happy new year. I hope that all of your holiday celebrations were safe and enjoyable and that you are ready for a productive and exciting year at RTS. This year we look forward to progress on projects that have been in the works for a long time, including the next stage of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, the purchase of property for the new maintenance facility and receiving several new buses to reduce the fleet age.

Thank You for Supporting GLO

I would like to thank everyone who was able to contribute to the GLO holiday campaign this year. Combined, we were able to spend more than \$500 on a PlayStation 2 and video games for a 16-year-old boy from our community. Also, a special thanks goes out to Nancy Wininger for shopping for his gifts and to Tammy McCants for driving all the way to Miami to buy some designer clothes for him as well. Even if you could not contribute monetarily, it is important that everyone at RTS supported this program. Thanks to you all, RTS was able to make this a special Christmas for someone in Gainesville.

2011 Budget Cuts

Due to expected shortfalls in the city's 2011 budget, each city department has been asked to cut 15% of its budget, which for RTS translated into \$300,000. Unlike other departments in the city, RTS is not projecting any layoffs to accommodate the budget deficit. Instead, RTS will propose to eliminate service on the day after Thanksgiving and the day before Christmas. Other plans include savings from improving bus fuel efficiency with the new buses that we will receive in May, reducing the ADA budget and increasing advertising revenue. We are proud to be able to retain our employees even as the city is tightening its budgetary belt.



Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP)

In November, I traveled to South America for two weeks as part of a TCRP international study mission with the goal of learning how mass transit agencies in South America have used limited resources to adapt to the challenge of rapidly increasing ridership. I traveled to Guayaquil, Ecuador, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Santiago, Chile and Porto Alegre, Brazil. There I had the opportunity to observe different methods of overcoming the challenge of a growing ridership with limited revenue.

Some popular trends in these systems include BRT systems, which consist of the use of rechargeable payment cards, multiple transit modes and prioritized traffic signal systems. I look forward to applying some of the lessons that I learned on the trip to our system here in Gainesville to fulfill our vision of being the transportation mode of choice in our community.

>>> *Continued on page 2*

New Maintenance Facility

On Jan. 7, the City Commission approved RTS to purchase a new parcel of land to build a new maintenance facility east of Main Street off of Southwest 13th Avenue, just down the street from the compound. Although this purchase has been approved, construction will probably not begin this year. The plan is to develop the property in stages, and to eventually be able to park, maintain and repair up to 230 buses at this location by the year 2025. The next step in this process will be to meet with residents who live near the new location and discuss these plans with them.

Upcoming Construction and Detours

I appreciate your patience and cooperation with all of the detours we had to deal with in the last few months, but unfortunately 2010

will bring more construction and detours. In February, contractor Semper Fi Services began work on the new roundabout at SW 23rd Terrace and SW 35th Street. This will mostly affect routes 9, 34, 35, 36 and 403, although the only route that needed to be detoured was the 403. Be on the lookout for more detour information in the upcoming months, and keep up the good work.

- Jesus Gomez, RTS Director

Planning Corner

Doug Robinson, Chief Transit Planner

New Route 38

Many of you have probably noticed that we launched a new route this semester. Route 38 has been implemented to create a safer ride and walk home for students living on Old Archer Road. This route also supports the ridership on the new Route 22, which went into effect last semester. If you drive the Route 34 or Route 36 and you notice that students are getting off the bus and running across Archer Road to get home, please spread the word about these new, safer routes. We need you to help us get the word out to the students, so thank you for your help!

RTS Planning Interns

The RTS planning team does a lot more than plan routes and track ridership. A lot of behind-the-scenes work goes on to make sure not only that RTS runs smoothly today and tomorrow, but that RTS continues to serve the Gainesville community in the future. RTS planning has two hard-working interns, Cristina Barone and Jessica Alvarez, who help us with things like creating and organizing databases, updating bus stop inventories for more efficient operations and maintenance procedures and securing grant money from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for a new maintenance facility. Without them, we wouldn't be able to accomplish so many goals and work on so many projects simultaneously.

Planning Intern Cristina Barone Accepts Job Offer

Cristina, a UF graduate with a master's degree in urban and regional planning, has accepted a job offer at Tampa's Tindale-Oliver and Associates planning and engineering consulting firm. After working at RTS for almost two years Cristina began her



new career on Feb. 16. She has worked on several projects for us, including the bus stop guidelines document and several grants requesting funds for RTS projects. She has been a huge asset to RTS over the last few years and she will be greatly missed. We wish her the best of luck in all of her endeavors and we hope to see her again soon!

FTA Grants

Most recently, Cristina has been working on two FTA grant applications. Since December 2009, she has been composing requests for funds for both the new maintenance facility and for an urban circulator project, which would consist of phase I of a BRT system.

If RTS is awarded the maintenance facility grant money, the grant would provide funds to at least complete the first two phases of construction. The urban circulator grant would potentially fund phase I of a BRT system in Gainesville, which would consist of an East-to-West corridor running from the Oaks Mall to Waldo Road. This would improve East Side service while fostering growth of business and activity centers in our community.

Operations Opinion

Eustache Mine, Operations Manager

New Gym Creates Exercise Opportunities

After years of employee requests for a fitness center, the RTS gym is now open. Because of additional space made available after the construction of the new RTS administration building, we have been able to convert the old conference room at the operations building into a fitness area. Exercise is important for a healthy lifestyle, and now it will be easier to incorporate workouts into your weekly routine. The gym will be equipped with a TV, fitness bike, treadmill and possibly free weights as well. We hope that employees will take advantage of this facility and use the on-site gym to stay healthy during the new year and beyond.



E-mail addresses

Lately we have noticed an increase in the number of employees with internet access. As more employees have e-mail addresses, RTS would like to use this opportunity as another way to communicate urgent and important information to employees, including e-mail alerts regarding emergency situations, major service changes, Bus Rapid Transit workshop notifications and other important events. If you are interested in submitting your e-mail address to RTS for strictly notification purposes, please contact your supervisor. RTS will never distribute your personal information to anyone if you choose to share it with us.

Maintenance News

Paul Starling, Maintenance Manager

Buses

Great news for 2010! We had previously placed orders with Gillig for 15 new buses. As a result of additional stimulus funding made available, RTS just increased the bus order to 17--this order will go into production on May 17, 2010 with delivery of all the buses by the week of June 28. These new buses will help us to continue to lower the fleet age, which means more energy efficient operations and a more updated fleet.

Training

Good luck to Art Watson and Fred Jaekel who have both entered the Certified Transit Technician Training Program!

Facility Update

The City Commission approved the purchase of the land for the maintenance facility expansion. We are currently working with consultants to update a master plan for this project. The first neighborhood meeting was held February 10 at 6 p.m. RTS is

New Call Center

To ensure that we are providing excellent customer service, we are now recording all incoming and outgoing phone calls to the dispatch office and the transfer station. We hope that this process will clear our employees of accusations of providing poor customer service. Please remember that when we talk about customers, you are included as our internal customers and we want to make sure that you, too, are receiving the best service when you call any of these lines. As part of this effort, management has been listening to your concerns about the main line to dispatch always being busy and as a result we have added two lines to dispatch. One of these lines is an employee-only line to contact dispatch and the other is an emergency line that employees may distribute to those who may need to contact them in case of an emergency. This should help operators to comply with the new cell phone policy, as dispatch will now be able to field emergency calls for operators instead of operators answering their personal cell phones. However, it is extremely important that these numbers remain private and not be given to the public under any circumstances. We appreciate your help in this matter and hope these two lines are helpful to you. Please contact dispatch with any questions about the new phone lines.

looking forward to working with the community on this project. Work is underway in the project development for renovations to the existing maintenance facility as well. We intend to complete this project this fiscal year. I will share more details as they become available.

Upcoming Projects in 2010

In addition to bus and facility updates this year, we are working on several other projects during 2010. This year we aim to purchase new asset management software, as well as upgrade our farebox equipment. We also hope to add 16 more buses to the TransLoc Automatic Vehicle Location system by the end of 2010. This year will be full of changes and growth for RTS.

Annual Employee Award Banquet 2009

The end of 2009 brought another festive annual employee award banquet. Everyone who attended was dressed to the nines and enjoyed good food and better company. The night was a great event with lots of award winners, more than 100 prizes handed out and even a best dressed couple award! Thanks to everyone who attended and to those who made the banquet a success. Congratulations to our 2009 award winners!

Perfect Attendance

John Detwiler	Ellis Ferrer	Lawrence Pahman	Robert Buckholt	Julian Lauzan
Willie Doby	Tammy McCants	Chandrably Persad	George Feliciano	Eustache Mine
James Stopa	Logan McCone	William Petrak	Pat Howell	Doug Robinson
James Allen	John McNally	Gary Sauls	Larry Lefstead	Patti Wiggs
Timothy Barre	Kanjiram "Mo"	Garry Welles	Jeff Powell	Nancy Wininger
Jonathan Brammer	Mohanan	Raymond Wright	Eugene Nelson	

Safety Awards

5 Years

Julian Scott
Luis Duran

6 Years

Betsy Miller
Gary Sauls
James McElwain
Jason Chandler
Johnny Boswell
Kathy Dale
Logan McCone
Lori Grima
Ollie Gregory
Rafael Vazquez

7 Years

Dorothy Anderson
Kathy Holmes

8 Years

Alice Foreman
Jonathan Brammer
Leroy Corbett, Jr.
Nicole Robinson
Richard Wright

9 Years

Areatha Aycox
Julius Bodison
Raymond Alequin

10 Years

Eric Williams
George Walker
Kutanya Sander

11 Years

John Jenkins
Kanjiram "Mo"
Mohanan
Leonard Mack
Robert Womack
Ronald Parker

12 Years

Antonio Cruz
Elmore Reynolds

13 Years

Garry Welles
Theodore Taylor

15 Years

Willie Scott

17 Years

Arthur Gordon

21 Years

Doug Nephew
Greg Cunningham

22 Years

William Petrak

28 Years

Andrew Berney

30 Years

Larry Warren

34 Years

Claude Whitford





Maintenance Worker of the Year
Patrick Batie



Maintenance Rookie of the Year
Larry Roe



Mechanic of the Year
James "Chip" Rowell



Transit Operator of the Year
Kathy Cudjo



Operations Rookie of the Year
Olanrewaju Adelekan



Employee Morale Winners
Cheryl Moore
Judy Roberts



Director's Award Winner
Patti Wiggs

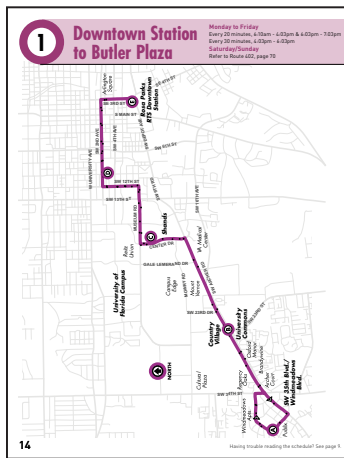


Special Events Committee Award Winners
Theresa "T" Harrison
Patrick Batie

Operations Employee of the Year
Larry Bigby (no photo available)

Marketing Drive

Chip Skinner, Marketing and Communications Supervisor & "T" Harrison, Marketing and Communications Specialist



Launch of New Web site

Now www.go-rt.com is even better! On Dec. 22 we launched our new and improved Web site design. Be sure to check the new site out at home, on your laptop or on the computer in the lounge while you're on break. Become a fan of RTS on Facebook and track what's going on at RTS through status updates.

New Bus Schedule Format

If you have picked up a schedule this semester, you have probably noticed that we made some big changes. After receiving positive feedback on the bus route map survey that we distributed in last semester's schedule, we changed the format of the route maps in the new schedule booklet. This new schedule booklet includes more detailed streets, more landmarks and more accurately scaled maps. We hope that this change will improve efficiency and customer satisfaction, which makes everyone's job easier and more pleasant!

Bus Ads and Operations and Maintenance Staff: Driving RTS to Success

One of the only ways RTS can reduce its budget deficit is by generating revenue through bus advertising. Each semester, the marketing department acquires advertising, posts it on the buses, removes the ads once contracts are up, and then seeks out new clients to advertise. This is a whirlwind process and because of the fast-paced turn around it would be impossible without the help of some special people.

Maintenance team members **John Finkell** and **Terry Ivory** as well as other transit operators have helped with installs, and **Larry Coyne** and **Logan McCone** have coordinated and overseen the entire install process several times. Not to be overlooked is the operations support needed to hold or rotate in buses for exterior ad installs. This could not be done without the help of the dispatch team of **Tange Palmer**, **Tammy McCants**, **Judy Roberts** and **Mary Frances Folz-Donahue** and our scheduling supervisory team of **Robert Buckholt**, **George Feliciano**, **Jeff Powell**, **Esau Pernell**, **Larry "Alan" Lefstead**, **Stephen Langlois**, **Eugene Nelson**, **Jerry Walker** and **David Smith**. Add in all the stand-by drivers who have helped rotate in and return the buses to and from their runs for a bus ad install and you have an amazing list of transit professionals.

The maintenance team does its part to support the marketing program in several ways. **Ray Bristow** and **Barbara Bigelow** receive and often deliver advertising graphics to us. **Willie Doby**, **Michael Glidden** and **John Detwiler** keep us informed about a bus's downtime and if there is a problem with an exterior ad, and provide us with a bus bay for installation whenever possible. The entire operations and maintenance teams have been an integral part of this process, and we would like to thank them for helping RTS to meet, and even increase, its advertising goals this year.

By understanding the sales cycle itself, one can more easily understand how essential these individuals are to the marketing department. The cycle begins each semester with a surge of installations of ads sold at the end of the previous semester. Interior cards and exterior ads are installed and at the end of the contracted time period, the ads are replaced with new ads. This is when the help from everyone is particularly appreciated. At the end of each semester, the focus turns to selling ad space to a variety of advertisers including UF, McDonald's, local bookstores, Paradigm Properties and other apartment complexes. This is why it would be impossible for the marketing department to succeed without the help of operations and maintenance staff. Thanks again to everyone who helps marketing accomplish and exceed its goals.



Rosa Parks Downtown Station Murals

As part of the City of Gainesville's Art in Public Places project, artist Alan Pearsall was selected to design murals for the columns at the Rosa Parks Downtown Transfer Station. His art will focus on the Civil Rights Movement in America and how Mother Rosa Parks contributed to its success. Keep an eye out for his artwork arriving in Gainesville soon.

ADA Avenue

Millie Crawford, ADA Specialist



Happy new year to everyone! Because we want to start 2010 off right, here are some updates that will help you to better serve our ADA clients in the future.

ADA Area Expanded

Recently, we have expanded the ADA service area to now include all ADA passengers that have a Gainesville address. This means that we can provide trips to residents living in outlying areas like Haile Plantation, Mentone and the area to the west of Newnans Lake. We are excited about this new improvement because we are better able to serve our ADA clients, thus improving the lives of members of our community.

New Wheelchair Scale

Occasionally, drivers run into the tricky challenge of questioning whether or not a passenger in a wheelchair exceeds the legal weight limit for the wheelchair lift on a bus. When this issue arises from now on, we have the ability to transport passengers to a facility where we can weigh them to ensure their safety while protecting the lift equipment. If the person does exceed 600 pounds, arrangements can be made to transport the individual using paratransit service.

If you notice that a passenger is straining the wheelchair lift on your bus, or if you suspect that the passenger may exceed 600 pounds, please contact dispatch and inform them of the 1073, then contact a supervisor to make arrangements to have that person weighed. We do not want to violate the ADA by turning anyone away that meets the lift standards, however, it is very important that we do not transport passengers weighing more than the lift's maximum capacity, because if we do so the lift could malfunction and cause serious injury to the passenger. Please help us to keep the members of our community safe and healthy by complying with this standard.

RTS Contributes to Haiti Relief Effort



In response to the catastrophic earthquake that struck Haiti in January, we have seen several relief efforts organized in the Gainesville community. Food drives, monetary donations and collections of a variety of items have been organized throughout the area to assist this nation in need. In the midst of this relief effort RTS Transit Supervisor Eugene Nelson saw a need that was not being met and in turn decided to extend Delta Airline's shoe drive to RTS.

"I took it upon myself to solicit RTS employees to donate shoes, because everybody has been donating clothes and dry goods and no one had considered shoes as an issue," Eugene said. Eugene felt especially called to extend aid to Haiti because of his previous visits to the island nation during his 26 years of service in the U.S. Navy. "Having visited Haiti at least five times in my life I felt that it was important," he said.

So far, Eugene has collected around 200 pairs of shoes of all sizes and styles from the box he set up in the operations lobby. He says that this drive has been a learning experience to see how blessed we as Americans are, and that he was surprised and grateful for all of the participation from RTS employees. "I most definitely want to thank all the RTS employees for their help in a much needed drive for a deserving cause," he said.

We still want to hear from you!

We are always looking for employee news for upcoming newsletters! We are working to make the RTS Express for you—the employees. We want you to look forward to every newsletter, and what better way to do that than to include more of you in it? If you would like to contribute to the next newsletter by writing a guest article, sending in photos of recent events or letting us know about recent births, anniversaries, retirements etc., please contact Sarah Jones, RTS Marketing and Communications intern, at jonessa@cityofgainesville.org. We can't wait to hear about what is happening with you!

		4	9	5		1		3
1		8			4	5		6
				1			4	
4						3	7	
	8	3	4		5	9	1	
	5	1						4
	6			3				
3		5	2			7		1
9		7		4	6	2		

www.websudoku.com



Welcome, New RTS Employees!

Jonathan Warren	Transit Operator
Gary Clause	Transit Operator
Jove Malcolm	Transit Operator
Ty Hayes	Transit Operator
James Doyle	Transit Operator
Emani Delaney	Transit Operator
Rosa Walker	Transit Operator
James Williams	Transit Operator
Paul Davis	Vehicle Service Attendant
Edward Ash	Vehicle Service Attendant

RTS Birthdays February - May 2010

February

2-01	Rebecca Barger
2-02	Bobby Ross
2-05	Jove Malcolm
2-05	Raymond Alequin
2-06	Alphonza Taylor
2-06	James Williams
2-11	Charles Darbyshire
2-12	Andrea Wright
2-13	Maryanne Maas
2-14	Patricia Wiggs
2-14	Larry Lefstead
2-15	Richard Betancourt
2-16	Gregory Mack
2-16	Nancy Winger
2-17	Leonard Mack
2-18	Frederick Harvie
2-19	Richard McCree
2-22	Pam Harrelson

2-23	Shirley Williams
2-26	Ernest Williams
2-26	Kendra Taylor

March

3-02	Michael Glidden
3-03	Cheryl Moore
3-05	Yvette Jones
3-06	Edward Hines
3-07	Theodore Taylor
3-07	Kathy Cudjo
3-09	Colleen Anthony
3-12	John Brown
3-14	James Allen
3-14	Woody Smith
3-16	Olivia Livingston
3-19	Jonathan Brammer
3-21	Barbara Phillips
3-24	Douglas Robinson
3-24	Zefnia Durham III

3-25	Dorothy Anderson
3-25	Kathy Dale
3-28	Mauniter Robinson
3-28	Nicole Marshall
3-30	Barbara Bigelow
3-31	Michelle Hanley

April

4-02	Jerry Walker
4-02	Terrance Dix
4-02	Sharon Walsh
4-06	Tyrone Baker
4-08	Alfred Richardson
4-08	Gary Sauls
4-16	Paul Davis
4-17	Aqualia Curtis
4-18	Garry Welles
4-18	Tim Hoskins
4-18	David Bogatay
4-21	Robert Womack

4-24	Arthur Wilson
4-25	Robert Buckholt
4-28	Valarie Jenkins
4-28	Roy Darnold

May

5-03	Kutanya Sander
5-04	Tange Palmer
5-06	Olanrewaju Adelekan
5-09	James Raley
5-11	Chandrably Persad
5-13	Richard Wright
5-14	Isaiah Smith
5-25	Shameka Anderson
5-27	Artell Stewart