

Votran

People Movers

December 2009

We drive a great bargain

Votran drivers earn top safety awards

Three of Votran's most experienced drivers have been recognized nationally for their dedication and safety records. Representing nearly 97 years of safe driving, Votran driver Bernard Huggins has received the National Safety Council Southeast Regional Best Safe Driver of the Year. In addition, Huggins and drivers Evett "Doc" Wilson and Nathaniel Flynt received the National Safety Council's Safe Driver of the Year Award of Honor for the South Atlantic region.

"We are so proud of our mobility team and these drivers," said Ken Fischer, Votran general manager. "The National Safety Council Southeast Regional Best Safe Driver of the Year is the highest individual award earned by anyone in Votran's history. Votran has multiple individuals with state awards, and in 1993, Votran won the national American Public Transit Association system award."

Wilson is the first Votran driver to accomplish the achievement of driving 2 million safe miles. Huggins and Flynt also have driven more than 2 million safe miles. Huggins also was nominated for the National Safety Council National Driver of the Year.

Votran has 30 drivers that have reached the 1 million safety milestone, and four drivers with 2 million accident-free miles. It takes a Votran fixed-route driver about 12 years to drive 1 million miles.

"I'm so honored to receive this," said Huggins as he recently accepted his award. "Most of my family were truck drivers, but I like people, I like to talk to people, see friendly faces and see them smile. So I became a bus driver for Votran, and I have been working here since 1975, 34 years! One of my primary concerns, above all others, is safety: I follow safety regulations and guidelines and use common sense. The passengers of Votran need to know they can feel safe on my bus."

Huggins, Flynt and Wilson have received numerous commendations and awards for perfect attendance, safe driving and excellent customer service.

Said Fischer: "Safety is a top concern. Votran's mission is to identify and safely meet the mobility needs of Volusia County. These drivers are evidence of the extreme quality of our service."

The National Safety Council has been the nation's leading safety and health membership organization for more than 90 years.



A message from the General Manager

As noted in this edition of People Movers, Votran operator Bernard Huggins has received the National Safety Council's South Atlantic Region Best Safe Driver of the Year Award, that encompasses all commercial drivers, this prestigious recognition is the highest individual honor received by anyone on the Votran staff. Fellow drivers Nathaniel Flynt and Evett "Doc" Wilson are right behind Bernie. These drivers have 30 years with us and they, have driven two million safe miles.

In our business, passenger safety is our top priority and these three drivers are testimony to how seriously we take our responsibility to meet the travel needs of our passengers. Day in and day out, rain or shine, Votran buses roll along the streets of Volusia County meeting the public's mobility needs. It goes without saying that I am extremely proud of these three operators and the rest of our front line staff.

I'd also like to note that our director maintenance, Rick Kazawitch, deserves the recognition he is receiving for his carefully planned design of a hybrid-electric paratransit vehicle which has become a model for transit agencies across Florida.

Although I single out by name these four employees because of their stellar achievements, it takes an entire team to make Votran the quality transit agency it is. I'd like to wish all our employees and the customers we serve Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for 2010.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Fischer
General Manager



LONGTIME VOTRAN DRIVERS EARN HIGHEST SAFETY AWARD

From left, Evett "Doc" Wilson, Nathaniel Flynt and Bernard Huggins have driven a collective six-plus million safe miles over nearly 97 years of service



VOTRAN RIDERSHIP HITS 3.5 MILLION BOARDINGS

Robert Fikes, Daytona Beach, a regular Votran rider, disembarks from a fixed route bus

Votran ridership up 4 percent

In a tough economy, residents and visitors apparently have recognized the value of public transportation. As gas prices continue to fluctuate and economic conditions take a toll on employment, the number of people riding Votran has increased. During the county's last fiscal year, which ended Sept. 30, Votran recorded 3.5 million boardings.

"Every day we are seeing more people who want affordable transportation," said Ken Fischer, Votran general manager. "We also are seeing the number of disabled riders increasing significantly. Wheelchair boardings increased by about 2,400 boardings in the last year."

Votran recorded more than 3 million fixed route boardings throughout Volusia County for the last fiscal year, a 4-percent increase over the previous year. Wheelchair boardings increased by 14 percent. The busiest route for Votran continues to be

route 1 A/B, which serves S.R. A1A and Granada Boulevard in the Ormond Beach area. Last fiscal year, Votran recorded 442,892 boardings on route 1 A/B. On the county's southwest side, routes 20, 21, 22 and 23 in the DeLand and Deltona area had 280,160 boardings, a very slight increase over the prior year.

The commuter van pool program operated at capacity in 2008-2009 with 27 vans in service. It's estimated these vans saved participants 160,447 gallons of fuel over the course of a year. Commuter van boardings increased by more than 29 percent in the past year.

Votran's Gold service paratransit vans transported 245,403 people, down 10 percent from the previous year. Votran eliminated Medicaid trips in February 2008. Americans with Disabilities Act trips were down 1 percent.

Votran changes routes to serve new hospital

Changes to five bus routes and the creation of two new routes are under way. The changes will provide riders service to the new Florida Hospital Memorial Medical Center in Daytona Beach (off Williamson Boulevard).

Additionally, proposed service adjustments will affect routes 1B, 6, 9, 10, 11 and the new routes 18/19. The route 1B and route 9 will be combined to form the new routes 18/19. Route 19 will be a loop that starts at the Votran Transfer Plaza, travels to S.R. A1A north to Granada, west along Granada to the Walmart, then south along Williamson Boulevard to the Volusia Mall, and returns along International Speedway Boulevard to the Transfer Plaza. Route 18 will travel in the reverse direction.

Votran conducted a public meeting recently at its headquarters to discuss the proposed changes. Votran seeks public input before making significant route changes.

"The input received so far has been positive," said Fischer. "We try very hard to make sure we serve as many people as efficiently as possible. We don't take making changes lightly since so many of our riders don't have other transportation alternatives."

Information on the proposed changes can be viewed at Votran's website at www.votran.org.



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Save precious fuel, money and headaches with Votran, Volusia County's public transportation system.

AROUND TOWN
Ride all day for only \$3.
Discounts for kids and seniors...bike racks for everybody!

COMMUTERS

I-4 Express Bus – gets you to work and back painlessly.
RideShare – We help you create your own car pool.
VanPool – You could qualify for a van for your group



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votran.org



Rider spotlight



Name: Mike Cripavuk, DeLand
Profile: He has been using Votran since 2000 to get to work, shopping, running errands, and visiting friends. He recently acquired a bicycle and is thrilled that Votran buses have the bike racks.
Quote: I like the service and the drivers are courteous. I would like to see longer service hours in DeLand.

Hybrid buses nearly route-ready; Votran to monitor efficiency

Hybrid fixed route buses and paratransit mid-size buses soon will hit Volusia County roads. The environmentally friendly vehicles are funded by the \$8.4 million Votran received from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

In addition to increasing accessibility for passengers and making its facilities greener, Votran is using \$5.9 million in stimulus money to purchase hybrid buses. The purchase includes nine 35-foot low-floor Gillig hybrid diesel buses and 10 hybrid paratransit vehicles. The fixed route buses, with an anticipated 20 - 40 percent reduction in fuel consumption, according to the manufacturer, are expected to be delivered next July.

"We won't know the full savings of the hybrids until they are put in use on our routes," said Rick Kazawitch, Votran director of maintenance. "We will put them to work across a rotation serving all our rural and city routes."

The paratransit vehicles include five hybrid-gas, 22-foot cutaways from TurtleTop which are expected in January. Another five 25-foot paratransit vehicles are being built to Florida Department of Transportation specifications for a hybrid-diesel model and hybrid-gas model, and are expected to be in use early in 2010.



PARATRANSIT HYBRID, UNDER CONSTRUCTION, IS EXPECTED IN EARLY 2010. The hybrid, developed by TurtleTop and Azure Dynamics, features a gasoline/electric hybrid power plant on a Chevy chassis.

Hybrid vehicles are more efficient and cleaner than traditional diesel vehicles. The Gillig model Votran plans to purchase offers a fuel savings of 20 - 40 percent and decreased emissions by 25 - 35 percent. The Gillig hybrid engine is smaller and quieter than the conventional diesel engine.

The hybrid vehicle has a minimum life of 12 years/500,000 miles, according to the manufacturer. It offers a payback of about nine years through savings on brake life, fuel costs and mid-life engine rebuilds.

When stopping or decelerating, vehicle energy is converted to electrical energy and stored.

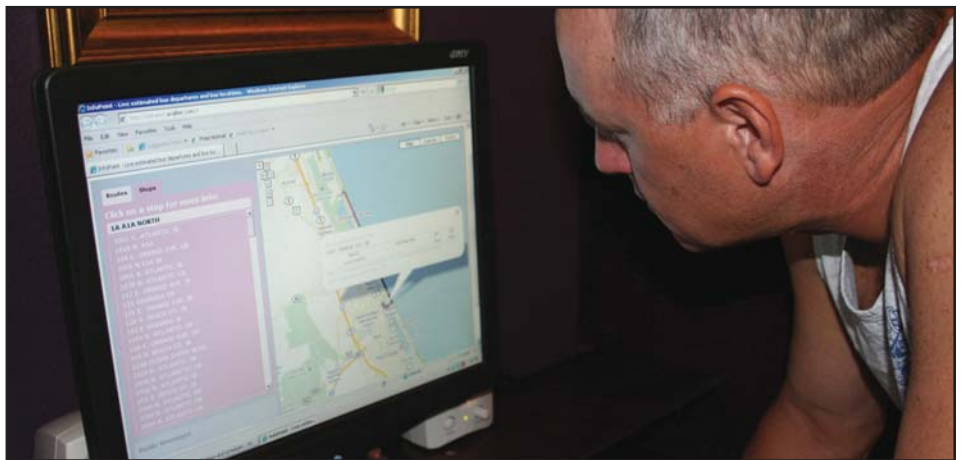
"Now is the time to invest in infrastructure for the 21st century that will have the triple benefit of boosting the economy, reducing our dependence on foreign oil and decreasing carbon emissions," said Kazawitch. "The stimulus funding advanced the planned purchase of these vehicles and enabled Votran to get the hybrid models."

New technologies make trip planning easier than ever

Volusia County public transit is traveling on the information superhighway. Votran's new technology tools are helping transit users plan their trips faster and more accurately online, while transit system tools such as mobile data terminals, automatic passenger counters, and automatic vehicle locators enable Votran to serve passengers with real time information on bus locations.

Customers can get instant, real-time information at votran.org by clicking the "Route Tracker" application box at the bottom of the page. The application presents a map and a table on the left side with the route numbers. Visitors can click on the route number and the map will present the route with stops marked. Users can zoom the map, overlay the satellite image like a Google map, or hover the computer mouse over the stop bubble where a hand will show a pointed finger icon. An icon clicks to a dialogue box showing the next three departure times from that stop.

"These free online tools will help us reach more residents who use public transit or are considering it," said Ken Fischer, Votran general manager. "Plus, our area's



CUSTOMERS CAN GET INSTANT, REAL-TIME INFORMATION. Riders should click on votran.org and access the "Route Tracker"

many visitors can research public transit options while making plans. The potential reach of these web applications is unlimited."

Votran's implementation of several technology improvements, known as Intelligent Transportation Systems, repre-

sents a \$4.1-million package that includes systems that track vehicle location, coordinate transfers between routes, collect real-time service and operational information and provide information to help customers and management.

Commuters can save on taxes, help the environment

When people hear “taxes,” they rarely think good thoughts. But commuters who take advantage of the IRS rules may be pleasantly surprised. A little known tax benefit created in 1993 can add up to significant savings for commuters and their employers, plus offer longterm benefits to the environment.

The Emergency Economic Recovery Act, which was signed into law in late 2009, provides a significant increase in commuter expense allowances for employees from \$120 to \$230 per month. Parking expense allowances are \$230 a month.

The IRS code and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) allow employers to offer workers the opportunity to set aside earnings to pay for certain transportation expenses, such as van pool costs, bus passes and tokens. Employees will not be taxed on amounts set aside and used for qualified expenses.



LAST YEAR, VOTRAN VAN POOLS SAVED COMMUTERS 160,447 GALLONS OF FUEL
Commuters can save on taxes too

Votran's Mission

Votran's mission is to identify and safely meet the mobility needs of Volusia County. This mission will be accomplished through a courteous, dependable and an environmentally sound team commitment to quality service.

www.Votran.org



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