

Votran

People Movers

Spring 2011

We drive a great bargain

Votran hosts statewide MegaRoadeo

Votran hosted the first Triple Crown Roadeo in Florida, a combination of three statewide competitions -- the Paratransit Roadeo, Fixed Route Roadeo and Mechanics Competition. The events were combined to reduce costs and raise camaraderie.

"Roadeos offer a competitive and entertaining means to focus on safety training for our drivers and maintenance excellence for our technicians," said Votran General Manager Ken Fischer.

Employees from 11 urban bus systems and 20 rural paratransit systems took written, driving, personal appearance and vehicle maintenance tests. They also competed in events.

Roadeo events give transit agencies the opportunity to showcase their professional drivers and mechanics. It is a chance to demonstrate their skill and take advantage of training offered through these events. Contestants are judged on written

and driving tests, wheelchair securement and pre-trip vehicle inspection. Mechanics are tested by troubleshooting seven modules, such as engine, A/C and air brake problems.

"This has never been done before in Florida," said Fischer. "More than 240 contestants from all over Florida and more than 100 vendors converged on Votran's headquarters in South Daytona. We had the highest attendance in the history of any roadeo. The triple crown Roadeo's estimated economic impact on the area is \$103,000."

There was no cost to the event for Votran other than staff time in preparing the course and helping during the competition. This event was sponsored by the Florida Department of Transportation's Rural Transit Assistance Program, the Florida Public Transportation Association and private vendor contributions.



A message from the General Manager

In these days of constrained public resources, it becomes increasingly difficult to make ends meet. Being a part of Volusia County Government, Votran like all county services, for the last three years has tried to hold the line on operating costs. This is in spite of increased expenses. Take fuel, for example. We all know what's been happening to fuel prices. As we approach the last quarter of our fiscal year, Votran is projecting our fuel costs will be about \$400,000 over budget at the end of the year (September 30). We'll deal with this problem by dipping into reserves.

But I mention this because we face other cost increases besides fuel. Last year, the county council resisted making budget-driven Votran service reductions because public transportation is a core need in our community. Rather, the county council opted to increase the taxpayer subsidy to Votran. But we're back again facing the same fiscal dilemma.

On page 2 you will note a story about a partnership with the City of Daytona Beach to extend trolley service to downtown Beach Street. The city is paying Votran for this service enhancement. Without this partnership, and one we're working on with the Daytona Beach chamber for additional trolley service funding, there would be no trolley service. It's this kind of cooperation that will get us through these tough times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Fischer".

Kenneth Fischer
Interim General Manager



LOCAL NEWS REPORTERS AND COUNTY OFFICIALS EXPERIENCE BUS DRIVING
County Council member Josh Wagner, right, competes in the roadeo course

Beach Street trolley service off to a good start

Votran, city and county officials celebrated the start of downtown trolley service with a kickoff event Feb. 21. Officials celebrated the partnership between the City of Daytona Beach and Volusia County's transit system in support of the seasonal trolley service.

"Votran needed to find a way to split the costs with other partners," said Volusia County Chair Frank Bruno. "This is a positive first step in bringing partners to the table to fund this service that we all value. We're also working with the Daytona Regional Chamber of Commerce on a proposed partnership to secure additional funding."

This Beach Street service is an enhancement to the seasonal trolley service that runs along S.R. AIA (Atlantic Avenue), which began in January and runs through Labor Day. The seasonal trolley route was adjusted to loop onto Beach Street between Orange Avenue and International Speedway Boulevard. The cost of adding trolley service to Beach Street is being funded with a \$33,000 contribution by the Daytona Beach Community Redevelopment Agency.

"We hope the changes in this route will encourage visitors to experience Beach Street and all it has to offer," said Votran General Manager Ken Fischer. "We also hope it will make it that much more convenient for our residents to use."

City and county staff and members of



COUNTY AND DAYTONA BEACH OFFICIALS CELEBRATE
Trolley service returns to downtown Daytona Beach

the Daytona Beach Partnership Association are working together to market the new route.

"The Beach Street route is an important link from beachside to downtown," said Kelly White, Daytona Beach city commissioner. "Beach Street has so much to offer our tourists and residents, and the trolley is a great transportation option. It's fun."

The cost to ride the trolley or the regu-

lar Votran buses one way is \$1.25 for adults and 60 cents for the elderly, disabled or youths under 18. A \$3 one-day pass allows a rider unlimited trips for 24 hours including transfers to regular Votran routes. Value passes are available for one, three, seven and 31 days. All buses and trolleys are wheelchair accessible.

For more information, visit votran.org.



Votran
We drive a great bargain

A service of Volusia County Government

Hop on.

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.

VanPool – You could qualify for a van for your group

Go Green. Go Votran.
866.610.RIDE
votran.org



Rider spotlight



Name: John Benak

Residence: Daytona Beach

Profile: John has been using Votran for three years and uses the service for his transportation to work, shopping, doctor visits, etc.

Quote: I'm satisfied with the service of Votran but would like to see additional bus stops/ frequency and extended Sunday service.

Green is a way of life for Votran operations

Using public transit is good for the environment. Not only are people being green when they use public transit, but also Volusia County's Votran has found ways to be green in its daily operations. On any given day, Votran's operations include more than 100 buses and paratransit vehicles that travel more than 10,000 miles in Volusia County. With the responsibility of overseeing the safe boarding of 3.5 million passengers annually, Votran has found ways to enhance transportation services while minimizing environmental impact. For example, hybrid buses have given Votran a head start on sustainable business practices.

Another example of innovation at Votran is reclaiming water from its bus wash operations. Nearly 100 Votran vehicles are serviced daily by a state-of-the-art bus wash that recycles wash water in the process – saving nearly 550,000 gallons per year. The system filters out oils, fuels, sand and other contaminants and sends the reclaimed water back through the machine. Votran estimates the investment saves \$2,900 annually.

Votran's water-based degreaser and a filtration system will reduce the byproducts of its parts washer, a necessary component of vehicle maintenance. By simply switching to aqueous-based parts washers, Votran removes a large component of its waste stream.

"This new parts washer works very much like a dishwasher," said Rick Kazawitch, Votran Director of Maintenance. "It eliminates parts washing contracts and switches to a water-based parts washing system. The new

green solution uses a water-based degreaser and filtration system. The filtering technology means the material is collected and can be handled in the same manner as the disposal of oil filters."

The wheels on the bus go round and round as the 22-hour-a-day operations on the Votran buses and paratransit vehicles that operate in Volusia County on any given day. With the responsibility of ensuring the more than 3 million people who board annually arrive safely at their destination, Votran staff has found ways to enhance services while minimizing environmental impact. From fuel conservation practices and the introduction of hybrid buses to water recycling and alternative energy sources, Votran has a head start on sustainable business practices.

"The first components of the new equipment have been delivered, and the remaining components are expected in late spring," said Rick Kazawitch, Votran Director of Maintenance. "The parts washer, a \$24,000 capital improvement expenditure, was purchased with the federal funds.

As higher fuel prices and a tightening economy drive residents to look to Volusia County's public transit as a way to ease their transportation expenses, they can rest assured these machines not only are allowing them to keep a little more green in their wallets, but also striving

continually to be more green in their day-to-day operations.



VOTRAN MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS GO GREEN

The bus washer and new parts washer are two green maintenance elements

Flex service in New Smyrna Beach off and running

Votran's newest service, Votran Flex, hit the roads last October and has been received enthusiastically by riders.

Votran Flex picks up passengers within the designated Flex Service area at the curb and takes the rider to any destination within the service area or to the bus stop that connects with Votran's fixed route bus system. Travel reservations are required for each trip. Riders must call at least two hours in advance of the time they wish to travel. Flex Service fares are the same as the fixed route service. Regular Votran passes are accepted on Flex Service trips, too.

For more information, please call 386-424-6810. Flex Service is open to the general public and has no eligibility requirements. Anyone within the flex service area can use this service.



*FLEX SERVICE ROLLS ON IN SOUTHEAST VOLUSIA
Votran rider Butch Bryant loads his bike on a Flex Service bus*

Votran works to develop long-range strategic plan

While serving the citizens of today, the county continuously looks to future needs. It's with this in mind that Votran has embarked on a focused, strategic planning process with lots of citizen involvement. In coordination with the Volusia Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), Votran is working to develop the 2012/2021 Transit Development Plan (TDP) update and the 2012 Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) update. The 10-year TDP is a strategic guide for public transportation in the community. The plan represents the transit agency's vision for public transportation in its service area during the 10-year period. The TDSP identifies the transportation needs of the elderly and individuals with lower incomes and/or disabilities. Votran's plan will be developed by the specialized firm of Tindale-Oliver and Associates, Winter Park. The long-range plans are required by the state and come at a time of severe funding constraints.

"Several activities are scheduled to ensure that the members of the community are involved in the process," said Votran General Manager Ken Fischer. "Public involvement activities include coordination with the TDP review committee, stakeholder interviews, an on-board survey, discussion group workshops, and public workshops."

Written comments may be submitted to Patricia Whitton at Tindale-Oliver & Associates, Inc, 1595 S. Semoran Blvd., Suite 1540, Winter Park, FL 32792.

Votran assists with emergency preparedness and evacuations

Hurricane season began June 1. Do you have an evacuation plan that includes your transportation alternatives? Votran can help. All Votran bus stops in Volusia County are evacuation collection points during a declared emergency evacuation. No bus fares are charged during an evacuation or for return trips home. Evacuees will be taken to a transfer point, where they will board school buses for transportation to a shelter.

When an evacuation order has been given, Votran fixed routes continue normal routing. Votran Gold buses are dispatched to pick up people with special needs, and take them to the special needs shelters, and return them home when the emergency is over.

"During a state of emergency, Votran is placed under the direct control of Volusia County Emergency Management and follows the directions of the established emergency management plan," explained Ken Fischer, Votran's general manager.

For more emergency preparedness information, please visit Volusia.org.

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.



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386-756-7496

Votran.org

