

## *Our Vision*

To be a recognized leader and innovator in the provision of support services to ensure efficient, effective, safe and coordinated use of mass transit resources (for public benefit).

## *Our Mission*

To assist in meeting the mass transportation needs of South Carolina's citizens by providing statewide transportation planning and research; administration of state and federal funds and assistance programs; evaluation of existing and proposed programs and of coordination of mass transit programs.



### **Clemson Area Transit officially opens new bus facility and headquarters**

Clemson Area Transit, which is now known by its new acronym, CATBUS, celebrated the opening of its brand new state-of-the-art facility on November 14 with a ribbon cutting ceremony in Clemson, SC. Not only is this facility state-of-the-art in terms of the latest technological features but it is the state's first environmentally sustainable intermodal bus facility and headquarters.

It is environmentally sustainable because of the many environmentally-friendly features it contains such as the 140 solar panels on the roof to capture energy for heating, cooling and lighting the 7,000 square feet of office and working space. There is also special tinting on the office windows to reflect heat to the outside in warmer months and to hold heat in during colder periods, thereby reducing energy consumption. Inside the offices and working spaces, sensors turn lights on and off as occupants enter and leave the rooms. They also adjust the amount of light provided to the rooms based on the amount of light provided by natural sources, i.e. sunlight.

In recognition of these features and innovations, CATBUS was presented with the Oconee County Chamber of Commerce's Green Business Award in August, 2011.

Office equipment inside the building is made from recycled materials, for example, a copier made from recycled printer cartridges and a conference table from a recycled solar panel.

Other environmental as well as technological features include an advanced bus washing facility that uses water heated by the same solar panels that heat water for use throughout the building. After the water is used for washing buses, it is captured in a tank and recycled by having the dirt and oil removed from it and then stored where it will be used again.

The new CATBUS facility has a parking lot which is constructed of permeable concrete which allows rainwater to re-enter the ground. The property surrounding the facility is landscaped using all native plants.

An additional feature on the property is an electric vehicle charging station located in the parking lot near the main entrance of the office building. Use of this station is free to all users who operate electric and electric-hybrid vehicles.

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The CATBUS facility also provides a kiosk for travel information and ticketing services for both Amtrak and Greyhound Bus making this an intermodal center for travelers wanting to make arrangements for bus and rail travel anywhere in the country.

Construction on the new CATBUS facility began on April 27, 2010, and was completed in early June, 2011. CATBUS staff and riders have been enjoying the use of the facility since that time. The ribbon-cutting, which took place on November 14, saw many dignitaries and officials in attendance. Among these were South Carolina Secretary of Transportation Robert St. Onge; Transportation Commissioners Eddie Adams and Sarah Nuckles; Interim Deputy Secretary for Intermodal and Freight Programs Doug Frate; Mayor Larry Abernathy of Clemson; CATBUS General Manager and CEO Al Babinicz; FTA Region IV Administrator Dr. Yvette Taylor; other representatives from local area organizations; the media; the SCDOT's Office of Public Transit and many others.

All attendees were treated to a tour of the facility after the ribbon-cutting and to refreshments in the conference room. Funding for this very unique installation was made possible through several sources and particularly \$2.5 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds from the U.S. Department of Transportation.



(l. to r.): SCDOT Secretary of Transportation Robert St. Onge; SCDOT Commissioner Eddie Adams; CATBUS Executive Director Al Babinicz; SCDOT Commissioner Sarah Nuckles; Interim Deputy Secretary for Intermodal and Freight Programs Doug Frate cut the ceremonial ribbon opening the CATBUS facility



Al Babinicz, Executive Director of CATBUS, addresses the audience gathered for the opening of the new CATBUS facility



Mayor Larry Abernathy of Clemson, SC speaks to the attendees at the grand opening of CATBUS' new state-of-the-art facility

## *SWRTA's Ann August selected to serve on the Transit Research Analysis Committee (TRAC)*

Ann August, executive director of the Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority in Sumter, South Carolina, was recently selected to serve on the Transit Research Analysis Committee (TRAC). TRAC is one of several committees that are part of the Transportation Research Board (TRB) of The National Academies and the National Research Council (NRC). This particular project committee provides independent reviews and assessments of the needs within the public transportation industry that could be met through future investment in national research and technology programs. The committee advises the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regarding the appropriate federal role in transit research and stakeholder involvement in the federal research program and responds to proposals made by the FTA for high-priority federal research.

Ms. August recently served as chair for the Transit Cooperative Research Program Oversight and Project

Selection (TOPS) Committee. She served on that committee for six years until her term as chair was completed in June, 2011.

The NRC is a private, non-profit institution that is the principal operating agency of the National Academy of Science and the National Academy of Engineering. Under a Congressional charter, granted to the National Academy of Science, the NRC provides scientific and technical advice to the government, the public, and the scientific and engineering communities. Members of the NRC committees serve not as representatives of the organizations or agencies by which they are employed, but as individual engineers, scientists, researchers, and administrators who make available their personal knowledge and expertise in the national interest.

— From a news release entitled "Transit News" by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) on July 6, 2011.

## Seven new buses join Greenlink fleet

In late July, the City of Greenville, South Carolina took delivery of seven new buses to supplement its Greenlink fleet. The 35-foot, heavy-duty Gillig buses can each carry up to 30 passengers with three wheelchair positions and were purchased at a cost of \$371,651 each. All seven buses were funded at 100% with an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant from the Federal Transit Administration. The new buses have a low-floor design, which allows riders to step onto the bus at curb level. They are also equipped with wheelchair ramps that make boarding the vehicle much easier for disabled passengers.

“Greenlink transit service has improved exponentially over the past three years and the community is noticing our new buses, shelters and signage,” said David Mitchell, chairman of the Greenville Transit Authority, which operates as Greenlink. “In keeping with our commitment to sustainability, the new buses can be powered by biodiesel fuel.”

According to Public Transportation Director Carl Jackson, Greenlink’s on-time performance now exceeds 90% and ridership and revenue have increased by an average of 7% over the past two years. “Adding seven new buses will go a long way to further the quality of transit services delivered to the community,” said Jackson.

For more information about Greenlink, visit <http://www.greenvillesc.gov/RideGreenlink/default.aspx>

— From a News Release by the City of Greenville, SC on July 22, 2011.



Seven new 35-foot Gillig buses like this one have joined Greenlink’s fleet

## Local program wins national excellence award

An assisted rides program begun at the grass roots level by a consortium of community organizations in the Santee-Lynches region of South Carolina has won national recognition this past summer. Called the **2011 Excellence in Regional Transportation Award**, the Santee-Lynches Aging and Disability Resource Center’s (ADRC) Assisted Rides Program received the award from the National Association for Development Organizations (NADO).

Designed to provide transportation services to elderly persons and individuals with disabilities, the volunteer transportation program uses volunteer drivers to furnish the rides for medical appointments and other essential trips to help people maintain their mobility. (See ‘Assisted Rides Program begins in Santee-Lynches Region’, TRANSITLINES, Spring, 2011, page 6).

While it was a challenge to get the program up and running, according to O.J. Papucci, regional transportation coordinator with the Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments in Sumter, SC, it has been well worth it. Initially sponsored by the state chapters of the League of Women Voters and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the program found additional sponsorship from the Lieutenant Governor’s Office on Aging. Numerous other regional partners and individuals have given and continue to give their support. The program was also funded, in part, by a New Freedom (FTA Section 5317) grant that was administered through the SCDOT’s Office of Public Transit.

Undergirded by the Shepherd Center, which serves as the non-profit “umbrella agency”, the ADRC at Santee-Lynches COG implements their assisted rides program using the web-based automated services of Assistedrides (<http://assistedrides.com>) which is a product of The AlterNetWays Company in California.

For more information about the Santee-Lynches ADRC Assisted Rides Program, contact O.J. Papucci at (803) 775-7381, ext. 379 or e-mail at [sltransit@slcog.org](mailto:sltransit@slcog.org). If you live in the Santee-Lynches Region and you would like to volunteer to be a driver or if you need a ride, contact Ms. Sharon Madhlangobe, Mobility Manager, at the Santee-Lynches Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) at 1-800-948-1042.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE!

On September 27, 2010, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) published an interim final rule (IFR) in the Federal Register authorizing the use of the new Federal Drug Testing Custody and Control Form (CCF) for use in DOT-regulated testing. The new form's use was authorized to begin October 1, 2010 **but its use is now required beginning October 1, 2011.**

The new CCF can be found at <http://transit-safety.fta.dot.gov/DrugandAlcohol/Regulations/CCF/CCF.pdf>

.....and more news you can use!

South Carolina's award-winning video\* "Public Transportation Takes Us There", is still available simply for the asking. The video was jointly produced and debuted last year by TASC and the SCDOT's Office of Public Transit. In the last issue of TRANSITLINES readers were notified that the video was available as a DVD free of charge from this office by contacting **Terecia Wilson**, safety and training manager. She still has plenty of copies left and is eager to send one to you. Contact her at (803) 737-1129 or e-mail at [wilsontw@scdot.org](mailto:wilsontw@scdot.org). The upcoming National Transportation Week in May would be an excellent opportunity to use this video to promote public transportation in South Carolina to citizens and various groups.

\* The video was a winning entry at the 34th Annual Conference of the National Transportation Public Affairs Workshop in Iowa in August 2011.

### *New transit center construction begins in Orangeburg*

With an official groundbreaking on July 12, 2011, construction began on a \$3.5 million facility for the Cross County Connection, a public transit service serving Orangeburg and Calhoun Counties. Since the two-county system began in September, 2009, it has handled more than 19,000 passenger trips. This facility is much needed as a

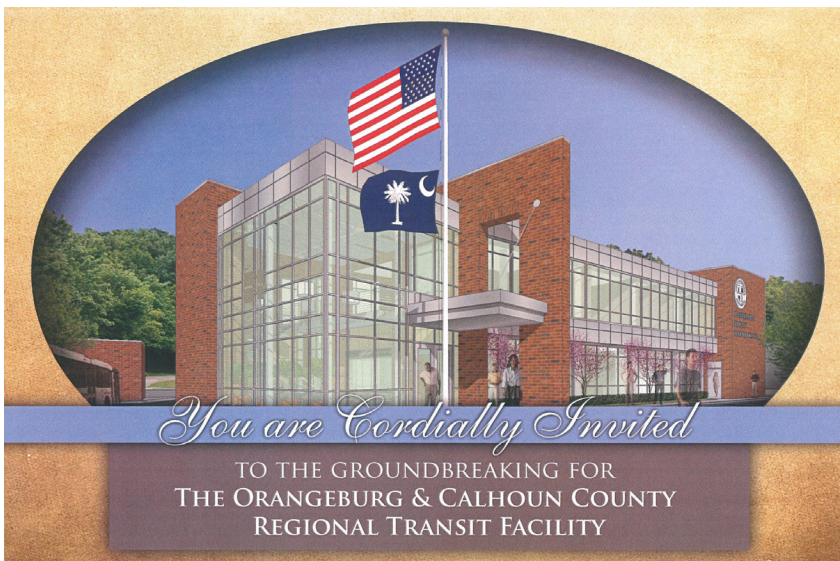
transfer point where riders can buy tickets, wait for the bus in a secure place and talk to staff persons who can provide information on routes and schedules.

The two-story, 9,150 square foot structure is being funded with federal dollars from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The monies are administered through the Federal Transit Administration and the South Carolina Department of Transportation. Construction is expected to be completed by July, 2012. It is being built on Carolina Avenue in Orangeburg, SC.

While the Cross County Connection service is continuing to grow, there are already plans to start pilot routes for Claflin University and South Carolina State University and determine rider interest in service for nearby communities such as Bowman.

The Cross County Connection service is being provided by the Santee-Wateree Regional Transportation Authority (SWRTA) and with the technical support of the Lower Savannah Council of Governments.

— Information from "Work begins on \$3.5M transit system building", by Phil Sarata, (Orangeburg) Times and Democrat, July 13, 2011.



Artist's rendering of new Orangeburg & Calhoun County Regional Transit Facility.



## *Updates on Ongoing Projects*

### **Statewide Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan**

The consultant team has completed a draft final report of the plan and released it to the members of the Technical Working Group via e-mail. Members were asked to submit comments on the draft to the project manager, Mr. Charles Glover of RLS Associates, on or before January 12, 2012.

The projected timeline for the final report and the completion of the project is February 16, 2012 on which date it will be presented to the SCDOT Commission for their approval. Other important dates are as follows: January 9th – Technical Working Group conference call/webinar (if needed) to discuss the draft final report and address/clarify any questions or comments; January 25th – February 9th – Commence 15-day public comment period for the final report; and after February 9th – Review by SCDOT and RLS Associates to address any public comments.

The purpose of this plan is to determine how the SCDOT, local and regional public transit providers and private carriers could work together to develop a financially sustainable network of intercity and regional bus service in South Carolina. The study effort will identify a strategic intercity and regional bus network; the capital and operating needs and costs; and a service implementation plan that can successfully sustain the network. One of the most significant findings contained in the report is that "SCDOT should not submit a governor's certification, either full or partial, signifying that intercity bus needs are being met in the state and should commit to the full utilization of its (FTA) Section 531 I (f) allocation to support the intercity bus network."

### **Asset Management and Tracking System (AMTS)**

After an initial testing phase ending in November, 2011, an Asset Management and Tracking System (AMTS) was presented to Office of Public Transit staff for feedback. Jose Valdivieso and John Richardson of SCDOT's IT Services, presented the information on the system.

In order to accomplish the goals of the system, there will be tools to manage equipment (e.g. vehicles and other capital equipment); transit providers (e.g. information on operations, services provided, service area, contact persons); and documents (e.g. grant applications, contracts, invoices). At the conclusion of the resolution of all issues identified by the testing phase and after a production mode or phase, all pertinent data (such as vehicle information) will be uploaded by staff into the system. The AMTS is part of a larger electronic management system to include grants management; training; and OPSTATS (The Office of Public Transit's operating statistics reporting system) with a projected "go live" date by June 30, 2012.

## *City of Seneca first in S. C. to operate all-electric buses*

The upstate town of Seneca, South Carolina has been notified by the U.S. Department of Transportation that they have been a successful applicant for \$4.1 million in TIGGER III funds. TIGGER stands for Transit Investments for Greenhouse Gas and Energy Reduction. This is a discretionary capital assistance program funded through the Federal Transit Administration. It is designed to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions across the nation.

The City of Seneca will use the award to purchase three battery-powered all-electric buses, charging stations for the buses and to fund the city's administration of the project. The Southern Company, an energy provider based in Atlanta, Georgia, has committed to providing the required matching funds for the capital portion of the project. SCDOT's Office of Public Transit applied for the funds on behalf of the City of Seneca.

Clemson Area Transit (CATBUS) is the contract operator for the City of Seneca's transit service and will operate the all-electric buses on the city's routes. Buses will run five days a week, twelve hours a day, through Seneca and unincorporated portions of Oconee County. Residential routes will serve the hospital, grocery stores, and retail shops and other businesses for goods, services and employment. Express service will run between Seneca and Clemson and connect with other routes there.

The buses will be ordered in the first quarter of 2012 and will take a minimum of 12 months to build. The purchase will replace all the diesel buses that now operate in the city and that will make Seneca the first community in South Carolina and the nation to have an entire transit fleet of all-electric-powered buses. Several other cities in the country are already operating electric buses but no other city or community currently has an entire fleet of all-electric buses. The funding period designated for the City of Seneca's TIGGER III project is from October, 2011 to the end of December, 2014.

## People in TRANSITION

**Howard R. Chapman**, the longtime director of the City of Charleston's Parking and Transportation Department, retired on June 30, 2011. During his tenure he had also served for 14 years as the executive director of the Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA). On June 30, **Christine N. Wilkinson** was named by the CARTA board of directors to succeed Mr. Chapman as the interim executive director. Then, on December 21, the CARTA board of directors voted unanimously to name her as the next executive director. Christine is a long-time employee of CARTA having been the transit administrator since the authority's inception in 1997. Prior to this, she served the City of Charleston in the same capacity since October, 1995.

-- Information from TASC News, 'CARTA Names Executive Director', Jan. 9, 2012.

Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority's (PDRTA) executive director, **Janice Baroody**, retired in October, 2011 and was replaced by **Charles M. (Chuck) MacNeil**. He was selected as the new executive director after a national search conducted last year. Chuck came to PDRTA from the previous position of deputy executive director of operations at Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) in Albany, NY. During his 36-year career in public transportation, Chuck was also administrator of the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) in Massachusetts, serving as its CEO; director of transportation for Kit Clark Senior Services near Boston; operations and services development manager for the Plymouth & Brockton Street Railway Company in Plymouth, MA. He also filled management roles at Western Mass. Bus Lines in Northampton, MA, Nashua Transit Management in Nashua, NH, and the Centre Area Transportation Authority in State College, PA. Chuck has a bachelor's degree in biology from

the University of Massachusetts where he also trained for and was hired as a bus driver for the UMass Transit System. He now lives in the Florence, SC area.

**Robert (Bob) Schneider** is the new executive director at Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA) and Veolia contract general manager. **Mitzi Javers**, the former executive director, who had served CMRTA since its creation, retired in 2010. Bob is employed by Veolia Transportation (now known as Veolia TransDev) which is the contract operator for CMRTA. Bob was formerly the Veolia general manager for transit in Boise, Idaho for five years. He started his public transportation career with Knoxville Area Transit and helped expand transit services on the University of Tennessee campus in Knoxville. Bob is a graduate of Western Carolina University and earned a master's degree in public administration and a PhD in political science from the University of Tennessee. His PhD dissertation researched the relationship between transit CEOs and board members in public transportation authorities.

Congratulations are in order to Office of Public Transit staffers **Diane Lackey**, statewide programs manager - planning and development; **Scott Donahue**, regional program manager; **Ken Silvers**, vehicle coordinator; **Awanda Livingston**, grants and contracts coordinator; **Brenda Perryman**, regional program manager; **Terecia Wilson**, training, safety and security program manager; and **Jim Frierson**, regional planning manager, on earning the professional designation 'Certified Transit Program Administrator' (CTPA) by successfully completing the certification requirements including passing a 3-hour exam. CTPA certification is awarded by the Community Transportation Association of America's National Certification Council.

## FTJ

FEBRUARY 21 & 24, 2012

NTD SAFETY AND SECURITY REPORTING – BASIC SET-UP/NON-MAJOR INCIDENT REPORTING AND NTD SAFETY AND SECURITY REPORTING – MAJOR INCIDENT REPORTING

ON-LINE WEBINARS

The National Transit Institute (NTI), in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), is offering a webinar series to discuss the National Transit Database (NTD) Safety and Security Module. The series is comprised of two webinars: Basic Set-up/Non-Major Incident Reporting and Major Incident Reporting. Each webinar will begin at 2:00 p.m. ET and each is two hours in length. Participation in both webinars is recommended. These webinars are intended for transit professionals with the responsibility of submitting the monthly Safety and Security Module Reports to the NTD, as well as transit professionals that support data collection or data reporting of safety and security information to the NTD. There is no charge for either of the webinars. It is strongly recommended that you have Adobe Flash version 10.1 or higher for these webinars to avoid problems. For more information, contact **Barbara Van Dyke** at (732) 932-1700, ext. 211 or e-mail at [bvandyke@rutgers.edu](mailto:bvandyke@rutgers.edu).

FEBRUARY 21-24, 2012

**INSTRUCTOR'S COURSE IN BUS OPERATOR TRAINING/PARATRANSIT OPERATOR TRAINING COURSE**

**COLUMBIA, SC**

SCDOT'S Office of Public Transit, in coordination with TASC and the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority, are jointly hosting the Transportation Safety Institute's (TSI) four-day Instructor's Course in Bus Operator Training and concurrently, the Paratransit Operator Training Course. For the instructor's course, attendees will be qualified to train other bus operator trainers in vehicle operation; emergency management; and customer relations. All bus operators trained by these instructors will receive USDOT certificates from TSI upon receipt of a written request from the instructor and submittal of the course evaluations and roster. For the paratransit operator's course, instructors will be qualified to train paratransit operators by USDOT. All paratransit operators trained by these instructors will receive USDOT certificates from TSI. Course materials will consist of an introduction to paratransit; vehicle operations; emergency management; and customer relations. Registration for the two combined courses, which will be taught consecutively, is limited to the first 16 participants. Registration will be on a first come, first served basis. RTAP scholarships will be available to cover the cost of lodging, meals, and registration for qualified individuals. Courses are open to driver trainers, bus operator trainers, safety managers, training managers, and safety supervisors. Those who attend must agree to serve as a bus operator trainer/ paratransit operator trainer for their agency. For more information and/or to register, contact **Terecia Wilson** at (803) 737-1129 or e-mail at [wilsontw@scdot.org](mailto:wilsontw@scdot.org)

**MARCH 5-6, 2012**

**QUALITY ASSURANCE AND QUALITY CONTROL IN TRANSIT**

**TAMPA, FL**

Two-day course sponsored by NTI to provide an overview of the essential components of quality assurance and quality control in transit agencies. The course will also review and expand upon the FTA's *Quality Assurance and Quality Control Guidelines: February 2002* and address the various perspectives for quality relative to capital development, transit operations, maintenance or vehicle acquisition. The course is for current and new transit professionals that engage in federally funded activities. It will be particularly beneficial for grantees, FTA staff,

consultants, contractors and vendors. Registration fee is \$300.00 for contractors, consultants, and non-governmental agencies that provide transportation. All other agencies may attend at no cost. For registration and further information, contact **Myrna Sirleaf**, program coordinator at NTI, at (732) 932-1700, ext. 228 or e-mail [mmoore@nti.rutgers.edu](mailto:mmoore@nti.rutgers.edu)

**MARCH 16-21, 2012**

**TASC 2012 ANNUAL TRAINING EVENT, BUS ROADEO & SUPPLIER EXHIBITION**

**MYRTLE BEACH, SC**

Annually TASC holds a conference for the purpose of training all its members, showcasing the latest in industry products and services available, and to provide opportunities for networking. TASC event attendees are transit service provider executive directors, and their staffs which includes the following areas of management: human resources, procurement, finance, maintenance, training, vehicle operators, and quality assurance. Local, state and federal officials are also in attendance each year. Included are the state's education officials, councils on aging, disabilities and special needs boards, private transportation services companies, and a variety of businesses that supply products and service to these organizations. The roadeo will take place on Saturday, March 17 followed by a roadeo banquet and awards ceremony that night. There will be board member training all day on Sunday, March 18, which is open to all agency board members, CEOs, GMs, and executive directors. General and special sessions will be conducted on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday morning after which the event will adjourn. Another highlight that will take place on Tuesday at noon is the annual TASC and SCDOT Awards Luncheon which will recognize the top drivers and systems and other individuals who have made notable contributions to the transit industry in South Carolina.

Hotel reservations for the event must be made prior to **February 17, 2012** to get the conference rate. The room rate for the Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort is \$94.00 per night, plus tax. You may register on-line at [www.go-tasc.org](http://www.go-tasc.org) or by phone at 1-800-876-0010 and use group code TAS. RTAP scholarships are available for assistance in attending the TASC training event. For more information, contact **Terecia Wilson** at (803) 737-1129 or e-mail at [wilsontw@scdot.org](mailto:wilsontw@scdot.org).