

The Voice and Vision for Pupil Transportation in Virginia



August

2017

Happy Anniversary, VAPT!

Inside this issue:

Best Tech Competition	2
Scholarship Recipients	3
Driver Shortages	4
VAPT Special Needs Rodeo Winner	5
Wellness Corner	5
Hall of Fame Inductees	6
VAPT PHOTOS	7
2017 Poster Winners	8
2018 Poster Information	9

For four decades, the Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation has been serving the state of Virginia to encourage safe transport of every passenger in school transportation. Every year, the VAPT has been strong through issues that affect pupil transportation—world, national, state and local changes have occurred and our association has not wavered in the mission and vision which is to promote safety, professionalism, and excellence within our industry in the state of Virginia. Thanks to all those individuals who pioneered and set the precedent toward this endeavor and create an organization for our public and private transportation industry to be proud of.

June 2017's Annual Conference was held at the Marriott Waterside Hotel in Norfolk, Virginia. A large amount of sessions were held to engage every member in areas to take back to their respective counties. Classes that were held:

- * Critical Issues in Human Resources
- * Changes in new Physical Form for Virginia
- * Bus Evacuations
- * Changes in Foster Care, McKinney-Vento, ESSA
- * Managing Behaviors of Students
- * Preparing Protocol for Service Animals

During the opening session, Brett Leake one of the nation's top sitdown standup comics, works as a corporate comedian and funny motivational speaker providing a humorous keynote speech exhorting our members to work hard, play hard, enjoy life and use the "Power of a Yes in Little Moments of Daily Life".

Several sponsored events by vendors and the Trade Show Displays were informative and engaging. The banquet food, music, and decorations were outstanding and the 40th Anniversary Celebration was a memorable and celebratory evening.

Our staff and membership are certainly appreciative of all the efforts to make this conference one of the best yet. Thank you to the presenters, staff, behind-the-scenes planners, vendors, and all the membership who gave of their time and efforts to make this year full of excitement and great information!

Make plans now to attend the 2018 Annual VAPT Conference.

VAPT Board Members

President: James Lash, York County

Vice President: Cheryl Fisher, Fauquier Co.

Secretary: Donna Carter, Franklin Co.

Treasurer: Floyd Miles, Richmond City

Past President: Lonnie Reavis, Loudoun Co.

Region 1: Edward Tucker, Dinwiddie Co.

Region 2: Steve Pappas, Poquoson Co.

Region 3: Heather Handschin, Spotsylvania Co.

Region 4: John Grubbs, Frederick Co.

Region 5: Jason Ferguson, Lynchburg City

Region 6: Mike Stovall, Roanoke Co.

Region 7: Gary Adams, Scott County

Region 8: Tony Holmes, Prince Edward Co.



James Lash, President
Photo by **Daily Press**

Winner named BEST School Tech

Hanover County takes home 2017 Virginia's "Best" School Bus Technician Win!

On June 19th, the Eighth Virginia's "Best" School Bus Technician Competition was hosted by Sonny Merryman, Inc. at their Chesapeake Bus Facility. Kingmor Supply, Inc. provided trophies for each winner. There were eighteen competitors and the winners were:

1st Place-Timothy Hammock, Hanover County

2nd Place-Scott Rasmussen, Williamsburg/James City County Public Schools

3rd Place-Donald Ertel, Virginia Beach City Public School

The purpose of this annual skills competition is to determine the "BEST" School Bus Technician in the Commonwealth of Virginia to represent at the National Pupil Transportation Competition. Those eligible to participate were individuals employed as School Bus Technicians for school bus maintenance in full time capacities. A written exam and a Hands-On Exercise encompassed knowledge of all areas of school bus maintenance/repair and individuals had to be able to demonstrate proficiency based on technical knowledge. The 45 minute written exam tested the technician's knowledge as well as their ability to read, comprehend, and respond. The written exam consisted of 50 questions and covered various technical topics relative to school bus applications which included electrical systems, brakes, engines, suspensions, drive trains, and body systems. Diagnostics Hands-On: Technicians had to be capable of diagnosing, troubleshooting, and repairing various mechanical components found on school buses. This requires not only mechanical knowledge, but the ability to use troubleshooting techniques and equipment. The diagnostics hands-on exercise will test the technician's hands on ability of working on various components/systems. Thanks to Robert Clinedell for organizing the event. **Congratulations to all the winners!**



VAPT 2017 Scholarship Recipients

2017 Clyde W. Morris Memorial Scholarship Recipient

This year's recipient, Cole Reeves, has been interested in agricultural education for several years—learning about science, business and technology of plant and animal production and about environmental and natural resource systems. Mr. Reeves was active in his high school FFA and served as their Chapter President. He involved himself in livestock judging activities in which he won in various national and state competitions. A member of the National Honor Society, he is a firm believer that "Knowledge is Powerful" and feels that furthering his education in the agricultural field will benefit others as well as himself. He works part-time for an agricultural based construction company and a farm specializing in poultry, beef, and lamb production. Cole does raise, show, and sell his own cattle; in fact, he owns a herd of thirty. His goal is to attend Casper College, in Casper, Wyoming this fall where he will study Animal Science and compete on the collegiate livestock judging team.



MR. COLE REEVES
AUGUSTA COUNTY, VA



PAMELA NOEL MULVANEY
HANOVER COUNTY, VA

2017 Sonny Merryman Memorial Scholarship Recipient

With a career goal of becoming a doctor specializing in obstetrics and gynecology, Pamela will be attending the University of Richmond this fall. Her passion is to begin her journey to maternal-fetal medicine and working with high risk pregnancies. As a recent graduate of Lee Davis High School she was a member of the National Honor Society, Senior Class Council President, BETA Club Secretary, DECA Community Service Vice President and Captain in SODA. She was a member of her high school swim and tennis team. She was a recipient of the Emperor Science Award which she collaborated with Duke University School of Medicine on cancer research; and she was a recipient of the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Seminar to focus on leadership, service, and youth empowerment. She completed 156 hours of community service and earned the Bronze Level Service Award.



JUSTIN MICHAEL TAYLOR
GALAX CITY, VA

Virginia's 2017 Buster Bynum Education Scholarship Recipient

A recent Galax High School grad, Justin spent two years enrolled in dual credit classes through the local community college. He was a member of the National Honor Society and the Yearbook staff as well as a three-year player for the Galax High School Baseball Team. He participates in his local church youth group performing volunteer work on several community projects. He plans to apply his scholarship award towards his tuition and books while continuing his education at Wytheville Community College.

Driver Shortage

Do a search on any internet search engine on “Driver Shortage” and find millions of articles on this topic. How in the world did our nation get to this point? The criteria has become more difficult and many are not willing or able to successfully pass complete the programs. What can Directors do in this desperate time to pull their jurisdictions out of driver shortage?

First of all, is there really a driver shortage? Author Sonia Mastros published in January 2017 stated that “all jurisdictions except 6% reported driver percentage” in her article regarding school divisions experiencing driver shortage. Strict requirements hinder individuals from following through—you know the drill... Medical physical, drug/alcohol testing, passing the written CDL test, driving test and background checks not to mention the low wages hinder individuals from becoming school bus drivers. A news article from District Administration stated that St. Cloud, Minnesota District Supervisor Scott Dahlin stated that they “see about 5 percent turnover during the summer; this year was more like 10 to 15 percent turnover and we haven’t had replacement drivers to fill in. [And], a negative public perception of driving buses—such as news videos showing rowdy students on a bus—has likely contributed to the shortage, Dahlin says. An increase in the minimum wage in other jobs may also have kept potential applicants away.”

The Wall Street Journal states in an April 2017 article entitled, “Schools Rack Their Brains as Bus Driver Jobs Go Begging” because Wake County, NC cut one in five routes, bumped children off the bus who live within a mile of their school and is considering starting some schools earlier in the morning” due to their lack of quality and qualified staff.

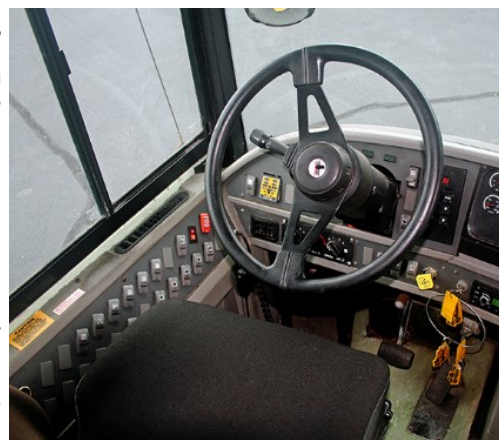
Because Tennessee has risen the driving age from 21 to 25, they too have driver shortage—in one county there are six routes that need drivers. Hawkins County Transportation Director C. Bunch reports it takes his applicants four weeks to get through the program which hinders individuals from completion. “Pat Whorley, Bedford County, VA transportation director, said the division is seeking seven drivers. In Campbell County there are 12 openings. Websites for Amherst, Appomattox and Nelson counties all show openings for drivers” says author Josh Moody.

Questions to consider:

What can our Virginia counties do to develop interest to people to drive a school bus? What hinders applicants from withdrawing? What keeps drivers—is it pay? Or is it not being valued and appreciated? What is your division doing to recruit and retain? Anyone out there in Virginia have numbers to substantiate how much training cost per person? What does your pay scale for drivers look like? How many hours per day are they are required to work?

Conclusion:

Regardless of the driver shortage issues, one thing is for certain—to educate one student, he/she must be transported to school first. Let’s have good discussion on these topics by submitting your information to your Region Presidents to accumulate and report in a future article. See listing on the front page of this publication. Please send your comments to brownel@fcpsk12.net



Sources: <https://www.busboss.com/blog/is-there-really-a-school-bus-driver-shortage>
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/school-systems-grapple-with-bus-driver-shortage-1491307202>
<https://www.districtadministration.com/article/school-bus-driver-shortage-drives-new-incentives>
<http://wjhl.com/2017/08/01/two-area-school-systems-face-bus-driver-shortage-ahead-of-school-starting-back/>
http://www.newsadvance.com/news/local/local-school-divisions-struggle-with-hiring-retaining-bus-drivers/article_ccde2674-8136-11e7-9ef1-132dd3d0052b.html

VAPT Winners

Congratulations to
James Perkins and Robert Brutski
for winning the
2017 Virginia Association of Pupil Transportation
State Road-E-O Competition
in the
Special Needs category!



Wellness Corner

Let's face it, Virginia—our driver's need to be more healthy. Physicals are becoming more difficult and employees are becoming more unhealthy. High BMI's, elevated weights, sleep apnea and blood pressures are what employees are facing each year. Directors are basically holding their breath to ensure they have enough drivers each year and ones who can successfully meet the requirements fit for duty. The Federal Carrier Motor Safety Administration has many resources on their website regarding health and wellness. Sleep apnea is a big issue for drivers and the FCMSA has a great deal of information on it their website. See the risk factors at the right and learn a bit about this problem that individuals experience.

Risk Factors for Sleep Apnea

Sleep apnea occurs in all age groups and both sexes, but there are a number of factors that may put you at higher risk:

- A family history of sleep apnea
- Having a small upper airway
- Being overweight
- Having a recessed chin, small jaw, or a large overbite
- A large neck size (17 inches or greater for men, 16 inches or greater for women)
- Smoking and alcohol use
- Being age 40 or older
- Ethnicity

Symptoms of Sleep Apnea

- Loud snoring
- Morning headaches and nausea
- Gasping or choking while sleeping
- Loss of sex drive/impotence
- Excessive daytime sleepiness
- Irritability and/or feelings of depression
- Disturbed sleep
- Concentration and memory problems
- Frequent nighttime urination

Diagnosing Sleep Apnea

In order to diagnose sleep apnea, your doctor may send you to a sleep center for testing. You may be asked to spend a night at the center, where experts will monitor your sleep.

How Can Sleep Apnea Affect Your Driving?

Because sleep apnea affects your sleep, it also affects your daytime alertness and performance. Untreated sleep apnea can make it difficult for you to stay awake, focus your eyes, and react quickly while driving. In general, studies show that people with untreated sleep apnea have an increased risk of being involved in a fatigue-related motor vehicle crash.

Many sleep apnea patients say they never fall asleep while driving. That may be true. But remember, you don't have to fall asleep to have a crash. You simply have to be inattentive or less alert — and with untreated sleep apnea; you are not as sharp as you should be.

Two Named Hall of Fame Recipients

James Lash, VAPT President honored two individuals at the VAPT Conference in Norfolk. The speech honored Evangeline Ferguson and June Eanes. Here are several comments Mr. Lash offered in honor of these two pioneers in our State regarding Pupil Transportation:

“The VAPT Hall of Fame award represents the highest honor an individual can achieve in VAPT. Tonight I am honored to present to you two new inductees in this esteemed group.

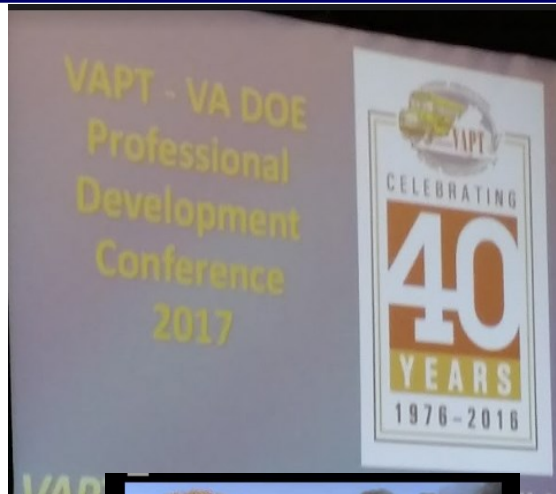
Without the efforts of the first inductee, we may not be here in Norfolk for the VAPT Conference. In 1976, a group of school business leaders met at the Virginia Association of School Business Officials Annual Conference and discussed the need for statewide organization of like minded people who could share information to improve pupil transportation safety and efficiency. In July 1976, she, along with Nathan Young from Henrico County, VA, started what is now known as the Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation. She served as one of the original officers of the organization as President. The first Hall of Fame Award named was Ms. Evangeline Ferguson. She served as the Transportation Supervisor for York County Public Schools from September 1968 to February 1977. At the time, she was the only female supervisor in the entire Commonwealth of Virginia; she was also a bus driver and secretary to the Director of Instruction. Also, she has the distinction of initiating the first special needs bus route in York County, VA.

The second recipient named was June Eanes. She gave forty-four and a half years of service to the Virginia Department of Education. In 1970, she was hired as a Clerk Stenographer and since that time has held many positions in the Budget Office including the Director of Budget and, thankfully for all of us in this room, the Director of Support Services.

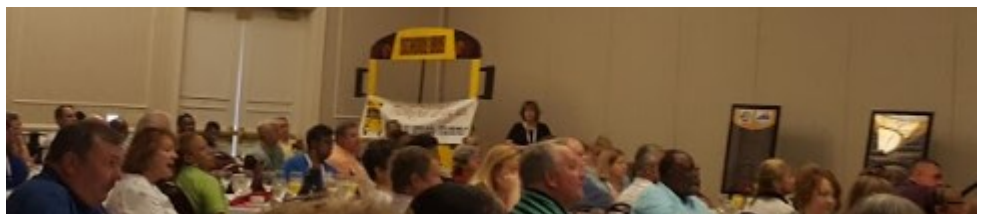
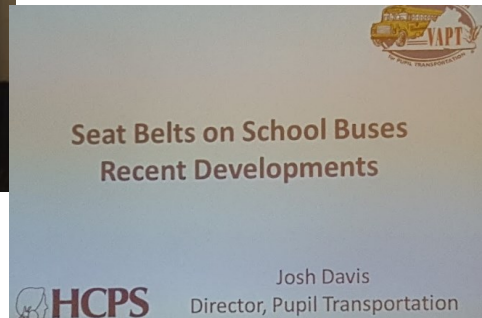
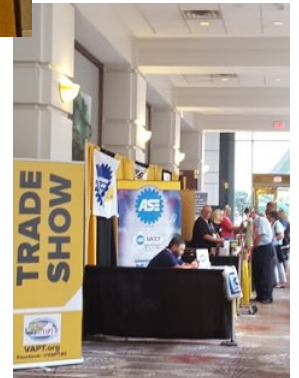
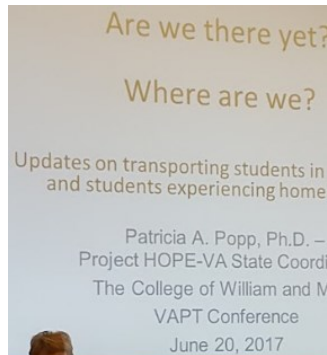
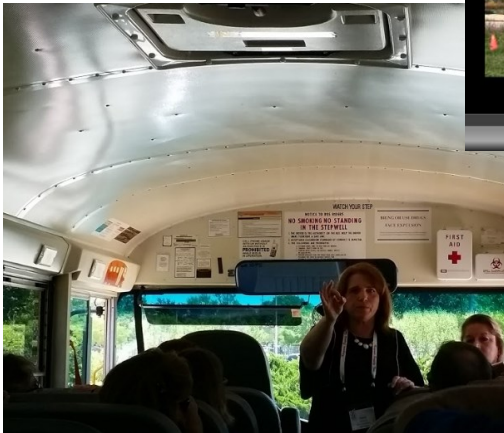
She served from 2005—2007 as the President of VAPT and served from 2010—2011 and 2013—2014 as the President of Southeastern States Pupil Transportation Conference. Currently, she is serving as the Interim Executive coordinator for the VAPT So, even in retirement, she is working hard to ensure that VAPT continues to serve school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. She has extensive federal and state regulation knowledge pertaining to pupil transportation and can answer questions about the dreaded “State Report” at the drop of a dime.”

Both received standing ovations by the members and each gave their thanks. The Hall of Fame is designed to recognize those individuals contributing a significant service to the State of Virginia. Congratulations to Ms. Ferguson and Ms. Eanes!

Pictures from the VAPT Conference



Time Is Ticking



Winners named to VAPT Poster Contest My Safety Hero!

Division ONE	Kindergarten – 2 nd Grade	Location:
1 st Place	Madison Roberts	Discovery STEM Academy, Newport News, VA
2 nd Place	Rebekah Owens	Garland Quarles Elem, Winchester, VA
3 rd Place	Courtney Turner	McIntosh Elem, Newport News, VA

Division Two	3 rd to 5 th Grade	Location:
1 st Place	Maris Weber	Corporate Landing Elem, VA Beach City Schools
2 nd Place	Katelyn Holloway	LP Jackson Middle, Surry County
3 rd Place	Kaitlyn Spainhour	Cluster Springs Elem, Halifax County

Division Three	6 th – 8 th Grade	Location:
1 st Place	Sophie Thomas	Dan River Middle, Pittsylvania City
2 nd Place	Amariasia Johnson	Huntington Middle, Newport News
3 rd Place	Kambri Meadows	Marian Middle, Smyth County

Division 4	Exceptional Needs	Location:
1 st Place	Anthony Birchette	Surry County High, Surry County
2 nd Place	Kai Baltimore	Surry County High, Surry County
3 rd Place	Grayson Sypott	McIntosh Elem, Newport News



VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION POSTER CONTEST

WHO MAY ENTER

Anyone enrolled in a public school. Five winning divisions that include: Division #1-Grades K-2; Division #2-Grades 3-5; Division #3-Grades 6-8; Division #4-Special Education; and Division #5-Computer Aided Drawing (CAD). The first place winner from each division will be entered in the national poster contest.

DEADLINE DATE

Completed poster designs must be post marked by **April 30, 2018**. All entries become the property of the State School Bus Safety Committee, and will not be returned.

POSTER SPECIFICATIONS

Completed poster size must be 12" by 18" ONLY, with a one-inch (1") blank border completely across the bottom of the poster. **This space must be available due to printing requirements.** If not provided, poster will be disqualified. Poster may be illustrated on the vertical or horizontal axis.

Please type or print all information required on entry blank **clearly** and securely glue to the **lower left hand corner** of the poster and on the **backside in the center**.

Designs should be submitted on quality tag, poster illustration board or heavy paper. Construction paper may be used but must be mounted on quality tag poster board. Lamination is not permitted, and will disqualify the poster.

Cut paper/stencils (freehand or pre-drawn stick-on stencils) are not permitted and will disqualify the poster.

There is no limitation on the use and number of colors. At least a part of a yellow school bus must be present in the poster.

There is no limitation on the type of media-such as print, crayon, and felt pen, etc., - used on the poster design; however, wood, plastic, glass, metal or collage materials should not be part of the poster. Glued on or 3 dimensional pieces will eliminate the poster.

Poster designs may not incorporate any copyrighted characters such as comic and/or television characters, or photographs, magazine or newspaper illustrations.

POSTER THEME:

Every poster and slogan must harmonize with the 2018 poster contest theme:

My School Bus, The Safest Form of Pupil Transportation!

Contestants must illustrate above theme only and the theme must be written **exactly** as shown above on the poster.

Drawings must be original, correct in safety concept and exclusive work of the student entering the contest in idea, design and execution. Artwork should be positive in approach, demonstrating only proper school bus safety behaviors

Instructors should supervise all work created. Completion of art should be done in school.

Send posters to the following address:

Ms. Diane Stewart
c/o VAPT
Virginia Beach City Public Schools
1677 Harpers Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23454

1st Place Winner of each division \$100.00 Check and Blue Ribbon
2nd Place Winner of each division \$ 75.00 Check and Red Ribbon
3rd Place Winner of each division \$ 50.00 Check and White Ribbon

**See the VAPT website for ALL forms & information for the
2018 Poster Contest!**