

The Voice and Vision for Pupil Transportation in Virginia



May

2013

Stafford Bus Driver 'In a Class by Herself'

Source: Free Lance Star

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The SpongeBob backpack bounces up and down as the young boy leaps off the school bus and runs down the driveway to his father.

The elementary schooler never glances back. But his dad looks at Bus 88 and waves to the familiar face in the window. Once upon a time, Judith Sullivan also drove him to and from school.

Sullivan drives quite a few children whose parents also were passengers on her bus. Thinking about it, Sullivan is pretty sure that she's driven the grandchildren of former passengers—although discussing that "would be telling my age," she said with a smile.

Sullivan is coy about her actual digits, but she'll say that she was 25 when she got behind the wheel of her first Stafford County school bus in 1966. And she'll let you do the math.

Sullivan started driving 47 years ago, thinking that with her children in school, driving a bus would be a good way to pick up some extra money—\$8.00 a day.

Since that time, Stafford County has changed a lot. But on Sullivan's afternoon route driving children home from Grafton Village Elementary School, the scenery seems untouched by the county's rapid growth.

Sullivan winds the bus through curvy roads, passing emerald fields, gleaming domes atop silos and clusters of trees bursting with spring green leaves.

As trucks race by, she slows the bus to a crawl to let them pass on the narrow roads.

"There wasn't as much traffic back then," Sullivan says, remembering her early days as a driver.

The children were much quieter, too. In 1966, the bus would have been mostly silent. And Sullivan wouldn't be reminding anyone to stay out of the aisle. The kids would have been crammed in the bus' center and along its edges. Her first bus



seated 56 passengers. Sullivan ferried 86 students from first grade through 12th on a single route.

The job took just two hours each day. But it took a bigger toll physically.

There was no power steering. Sullivan had to turn a wheel that was nearly bigger than she was to navigate the bus. In the beginning, she went to her doctor with aching muscles in her chest and back. In the winter, she had to wake up early and scrape the bus windows. There was no defrost button.

These days, the bus has power steering, automatic transmission and its own stop sign.

Sullivan doesn't know that she'll be around for many more changes. She might retire in another year. Then she could spend more time with her husband of 55 years and her three children and eight grandchildren, who all live in the area.

Over the past 47 years, she's driven thousands of children. And she's been a role model to those students, said Carey Roessel, supervisor of transportation services. "She cares about them, cares about their safety," he said. "They feel comfortable and safe when they're with her."

"Judy's in a class by herself," Roessel said.

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Proposed Amendment to Homeless Education Act Would Funnel Federal Funds to Transportation

Source: School Transportation News

The Educational Success for Children and Youth Without Homes Act of 2013 re-introduced last week in the U.S. Senate would make transportation services for low-income students to the school of origin and related child services allowable uses of Title I, Part A funds.

Sen. Patty Murray's legislation, originally introduced last March but never made it out of committee, would for the first time make homeless transportation services eligible for these funds, which are to be used for "academic enrichment services." The Act would also increase the funding level for Title I, Part A to assist with the costs of transporting students to their school of origin, as is required under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, subtitle B of title VII.

Murray said the latest bill "will make a strong law even more effective" by

expanding school stability, enrollment and support for classroom achievement."

The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth supports the legislation, while at the same time recognizing that Murray's solution is not "the complete solution to homeless transportation funding," said Barbara Duffield, the D.C. based organization's policy director. The true complete solution, she said, is an across-the-board funding increase to McKinney-Vento. But she added that Murray's legislation would increase the flexibility schools need to meet one of the greatest needs of homeless student: transportation.

"This Title I provision is a critical step that would allow school districts to use their required Title I homeless reservation to help keep homeless children and youth stable in school, getting the

education that will allow them to avoid homelessness as adults," she said.

Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides financial assistance to local educational agencies and school districts that have at least 5 percent of its students from low-income families. Grant funding is available to help these students in public or private schools who are failing or at risk of failing to meet challenging state academic standards. Schools that have these low-income students make up at least 40 percent of enrollment eligible for Title I funds.

For more information go to:

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/s833>

Training for Directors/Supervisors of Pupil Transportation

Per the Regulations Governing Pupil Transportation (8VAC20-70-350.3) new directors/supervisors employed by school divisions shall complete the "Train the Trainer" class conducted by the Department of Education within a year after being employed in this position since September 28, 2012.

The curriculum has been completed, and the first class is scheduled for August 5 - 6, 2013 at the Hanover County Transportation Facility. The class will run from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day.

You may sign up for this class by going to the following

web site:

<https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/sbdic/home.do>

Click on "Maintain Classes" on the right hand side of the screen. You can then enroll in the class.

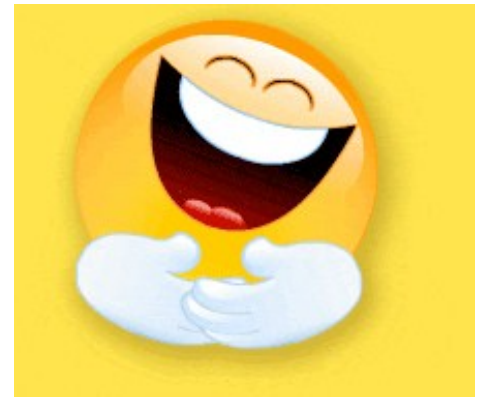
Because this is the first class of this type, we are opening it to any director/supervisor who wishes to attend. Based on the sign-ups, an additional class may need to be schedule in the future.

Laugh Often!

I got stopped for speeding the other day.

I thought I could talk my way out of it until the cop looked at my dog in the back seat and then he said:

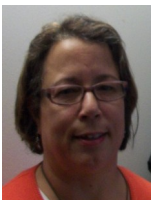
Lady, you are driving way to fast.....



Happenings

The National Association for Pupil Transportation announced its 51st recipient of the Special Needs Transportation (SNT) Training Endorsement.

Darlene Marshall, the special services transportation supervisor at Fauquier County Public Schools recently completed coursework at the 2011 NAPT Summit in Cincinnati and at training sessions in Virginia. The NAPT SNT Training program provides numerous opportunities for transportation personnel serving students with disabilities to access educational opportunities at both local and national conferences



and to gain national recognition for their efforts.

Region 6 held their meeting on April 11, 2013 which also included a tour of the Wood Brothers Museum in Stuart, VA.

The Wood Brothers, Glen and Leonard, are a 3rd generation Nascar racing team and were inducted into the Nascar Hall of Fame last year.

Mr. Trevor Bayne is the driver of car #21 and Mike Brown, DOE, was also on hand for the fun!



Love The Bus

Hanover County Public Schools Communications Specialist

The Virginia Association of Pupil Transportation (VAPT) in cooperation with its business partners held the second annual statewide LOVE THE BUS celebration. The rally took place in downtown Richmond at the historic Bell Tower in Capitol Square. The event served to highlight the vital contributions pupil transportation plays in Virginia's public education mission.

"In coordinating an event to recognize the importance of the yellow school bus in the lives of children, it is heart-warming to have so many willing partners to support the event. Our vendors, Sonny Merryman, Inc., and Kingmor Supply know just how important that yellow school bus is to children and they always lend a hand when we gather together to honor our school bus drivers and to salute our school buses, the safest form of ground transportation in the country," according to David L. Pace, Director of Transportation Services for Virginia Beach City Public Schools. Pace has coordinated the Richmond event since its inaugural debut last year.

The American School Bus Council (ASBC) based in Alexandria, Virginia developed the "Love the Bus" campaign in 2007. Representatives from the organization were on hand to share in the Commonwealth's festivities. "I have fond memories of riding the bus to and from school as a kid. At the time, it was just a place to hang out with friends while getting from point A to point B. But today, I'm really drawn to the environmental, safety and educational benefits of the iconic yellow school bus," Markus Videnieks with the American School Bus Council (ASBC) said. Videnieks was recently hired by the ABSC to coordinate the execution of council priorities and lead various outreach efforts, such as the Love the Bus program.

During the event, Kermit Shaffer, Director of Transportation for Spotsylvania County Public Schools and president of the Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation (VAPT) discussed the importance of raising public awareness about the safety, economic, and educational benefits of pupil transportation. A Senate Joint Resolution (see below) that was introduced during the 2013 General Assembly session last month to designate February as Love the Bus Month was presented by Michael Ashby,

Director of Transportation for Hanover County Public Schools.

A reception followed at the Darden Memorial Garden where students and pupil transportation officials from across the Commonwealth gathered to celebrate the iconic yellow school bus. The celebration included LOVE THE BUS themed artwork and musical performances.

For the second year, students from Waller Mill Elementary Fine Arts Magnet School, led by music teacher Terri Lensenmayer, performed several musical selections that were written and choreographed to complement the school bus theme.

A talented high school drama troupe under the direction of Jeff McCoy traveled from Pulaski County to entertain the crowd of bus lovers with a skit depicting the Wizard of Oz characters as they learned the "rules of the road" when riding a school bus. The state was well represented as school bus artwork created by students from Tallwood Elementary, Kemps Landing Magnet and the Old Donation Center Magnet School in Virginia Beach colorfully enhanced the reception tent.



VAPT 2013 Conference Registration

The link and registration process is now available for your use on the VAPT website at WWW.VAPT.org

The 2013 conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Koger Center, June 17 - 20, 2013 in Richmond, Virginia. Hotel registration is separate from the conference registration. VAPT has reserved a block of rooms but they go quickly. Reserve yours early.

The conference program, VAPT Golf Tournament, Vendor Registration, Member Registration and Technicians Training registration are also available on the VAPT website.

Two NAPT professional development courses will be offered during the conference; Course SNT 106, course instructor Dr. Linda Bluth and PDS 702—Personal Skills for Managers, course instructor Cheryl Fisher.

These courses also fill up quickly and preregistration is required.

Along with a variety of break-out workshops the VAPT will also host the State Road-e-o Competition and the Technician's Training sessions. Key note speakers include Dr. Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction and Mr. Mike Martin, Executive Director, NAPT.

See you in Richmond!



Student Lobbies for School Bus WiFi

Source: WISH-TV

Could Virginia be next? What do you think?

Indianapolis - A North Central High School student is leading the charge to have WiFi installed on school district buses.

Student Council President and Junior Mason Garard helped raise more than \$6,000 to fund the pilot project.

The goal is to have WiFi units installed and operational in a handful of school buses when the fall semester begins later this year. The school district will then consider whether to expand the program based upon the success of

the pilot project

In a statement to 24-Hour News 8, the Metropolitan School District of Washington Township said the Superintendent is supportive of the idea. Administrators are currently working to develop guidelines and regulations for having WiFi installed on school buses.

Details on how to fund the program over the long term also need to be addressed. The school district has not set a timeline to make a final decision.

Kokomo Center Township Consolidated Schools expects to be the first school district in the state to have WiFi ready

school buses.

Vendors will begin installing the equipment in the coming weeks. The school district says adding WiFi on the buses will give students extra time to focus on classroom or extracurricular activities online.