

# The Voice and Vision for Pupil Transportation in Virginia



## JANUARY 2010 NEWSLETTER Bill Carr

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## A Message from our President, Michael Ashby...

Dear VAPT Members:

I hope that everyone has been able to enjoy the holidays with family and friends and is ready to get back to work. For many of us, the winter months has us looking to the weather channel for the snow word. I was able to enjoy this past snowstorm because I didn't have to get up at the awful hour of three o'clock to look for it. I found myself saying let it snow, let it snow. For those of us in transportation, this is just one of the many duties of transportation that students, parents and teachers don't think about, going out in inclement weather. When the snow word is mentioned, it means increased hours on the job above and beyond what is normal. We take it in stride because it is what we do as professionals to ensure that our students get to school safely and on time.

Planning for the June 2010 conference is in full swing and promises to be a great one. We plan to get the registration information out to you as soon as we can and again, registration will be done on line with NAPT. On behalf of the VAPT Board of Directors, I hope that everyone has a safe and successful 2010.

## CONGRATULATIONS

### David L. Pace



Our own David Pace, Director of Transportation for the Virginia Beach City Public Schools and Past President (several times) of VAPT, received the **School Bus Fleet Administrator Award** at the NAPT Conference. A well deserved award for a great leader and friend.

### Region VIII November 2009 Meeting Held in Mecklenburg County

Attending the meeting were 8 Directors and 7 technicians from Region 8.

DOE Report: Michael Brown reported on updates from the Department of Education including the status of the new regulations and specifications of school buses. Michael also emphasized the importance of communicating with parents the dangers of students chasing school buses.

VAPT Report: Bill Mayhew, Regional Director, reported on topics discussed at the VAPT meeting that was held on October 15, 2009. The topics were VAPT membership, VAPT Conference dates and location, ideas for the conference agenda and the possibility of a technician competition.

The local issues included a discussion on H1N1 prevention and the actions being taken on sanitizing the school buses.

Commonwealth Bus Sales' Ralph Moore and Claude Reid along with Cummins Atlantic's Russ Spangler gave a presentation on the 2010 emissions and the effect they will have on new school buses. After the presentation everyone was treated to lunch at a local restaurant. The next meeting will be held on January 12, 2009 in Buckingham.

**NEEDED:** For all regions to send information regarding their regional meeting to [feb945@yahoo.com](mailto:feb945@yahoo.com) to be shared in future newsletters. Thanks Regional VIII for supporting the VAPT newsletter.



## News Release Pupil Transportation Scholarships Available at Virginia Tech

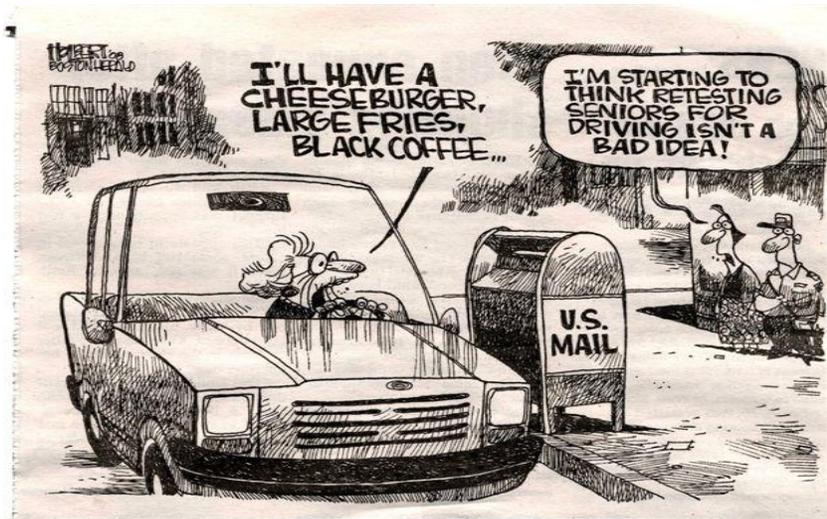
Lynchburg, VA .....Sonny Merryman, Inc. – *Virginia's Bus Company* is pleased to announce five \$2500 Pupil Transportation Scholarships at Virginia Tech will be awarded for the 2010-2011 academic year. Eligible students must be the child or grandchild of an individual who is a current or retired employee within Virginia's pupil transportation community – school bus drivers, technicians, administrative or support staff, etc.

The scholarships are available to both current Virginia Tech students and incoming freshmen or transfer students who will be enrolled as full time students for Fall semester 2010. Scholarship applicants must complete both the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)* form and the *General Scholarship Form* at Virginia Tech. Both forms may be completed on-line by accessing the web sites noted below:

**FAFSA:** [www.fasfa.edu.gov/](http://www.fasfa.edu.gov/)

**Virginia Tech:** [www.finaid.vt.edu](http://www.finaid.vt.edu)

Note the deadline to complete both forms is **March 11, 2010**. All current Tech students and all students who have applied for admission to the university and are children or grandchildren of pupil transportation employees are strongly encouraged to complete the forms. The scholarship recipients will be recognized at the Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation Annual Banquet this June in Richmond.



## **Big Yellow Goes Green**

### *Virginia's First Hybrid School Bus Arrives in Commonwealth*

Lynchburg, VA – Virginia's first eco-friendly electric/regenerative diesel powered school bus arrived in the Commonwealth recently. The 2010 Thomas Built Buses SAF-T-LINER C2e conventional bus reduces emissions and improves fuel economy by up to 30%. **The new bus was unveiled to the media and school officials from across the state earlier today at Sonny Merryman, Inc. near Lynchburg. Sonny Merryman, Inc – Virginia's Bus Company is the state's exclusive dealer for Thomas Built Buses.** The inaugural hybrid unit will begin operations in early 2010 in Loudoun County.

The bus drivetrain consists of two separate components - a Cummins ISB diesel engine and an electric power plant developed by the Eaton Corporation. In addition to reduced fuel consumption, additional savings will also be realized through reduced brake wear and component maintenance.

The carbon footprint of the vehicle is quite substantially minimized from that of a traditional school bus. At first glance, the hybrid bus looks like any other yellow school bus however it represents a significant advancement in clean energy technology. Upon close inspection, one will quickly notice the hybrid bus runs much quieter – another environmental benefit.

“Our community is very interested in promoting earth friendly initiatives”, says Loudoun County Director of Pupil Transportation, Al Hampton. “School Superintendent, Dr. Edgar Hatrick has been a long time advocate of exploring alternative fuel options for our bus fleet.”

Loudoun County Public Schools currently operates 700 buses transporting more than 45,000 students 50,000 miles daily. On a typical Loudoun County school bus route, it is anticipated the new hybrid bus will use 920 gallons less in diesel fuel and emit 9.5 metric tons fewer carbon expenditures annually as compared to a traditional diesel powered bus.

“The new bus will also help our students understand the importance of minimizing human impact on the environment”, adds Hampton. “We encourage our students to be good stewards of the earth and its resources and think green as they go about their daily routines.”

Nationwide interest in new green technology for school buses is growing. “Every week I receive phone calls from school districts eager to learn more about hybrid buses”, says Sonny Merryman, Inc President, Floyd Merryman. “I expect dozens of hybrid school buses to be transporting Virginia students to and from school in the next few years”.

For More Information contact Dean Farmer (434) 485-8602, [dean@sonnymerryman.com](mailto:dean@sonnymerryman.com), or [sonnymerryman.com](http://sonnymerryman.com)



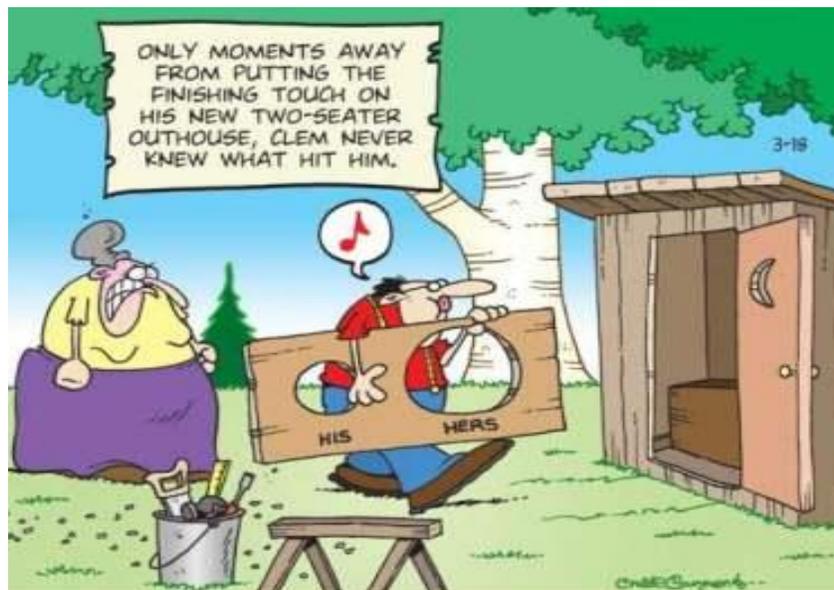
**Does this look familiar? Hopefully Spring will come early this year!**



## A NOTE FROM "SAFETY SAM" TO SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

School Bus safety doesn't just happen, it takes excellent driving skills, a knowledge of all school bus driving rules and regulations a person who realizes the importance of obeying them (an example: activate the amber school bus traffic warning lights at least 100 feet prior to making a passenger stop if the posted speed limit is less than 35 mph and at least 200 feet if posted at 35 mph or greater. Keep red warning lights on and the stop arm extended until everyone has cleared the roadway. Always check all mirrors to help determine if it is safe to proceed. Watch for children running to meet the bus and also watch for motorists who may not stop. Obeying traffic laws is another indication of a person who takes his or her driving seriously. School bus drivers must be mature and have a safety conscience attitude. They should consider themselves to be a good example to other by showing they are careful, courteous, cautious, and are law abiding drivers. No one is perfect, but we do not have to be perfect to follow rules and practice good safety procedures, especially those pertaining to a school bus!

People don't wake up every morning and wonder where they are going to have an accident. Accidents are not planned yet, they happen every day. Most accidents are preventable and it's up to every motorist to drive defensively so they will not happen!



## THREE THINGS IN LIFE!



- THREE THINGS IN LIFE THAT, ONCE GONE, NEVER COME BACK

1. Time 2. Words 3. Opportunity

- THREE THINGS IN LIFE THAT CAN DESTROY A PERSON

1. Anger 2. Pride 3. Unforgiving

- THREE THINGS IN LIFE THAT YOU SHOULD NEVER LOSE

1. Hope 2. Peace 3. Honesty

- THREE THINGS IN LIFE THAT ARE MOST VALUABLE

1. Love 2. Family 3. Kindness

- THREE THINGS IN LIFE THAT ARE NEVER CERTAIN

1. Fortune 2. Success 3. Dreams

- THREE THINGS THAT MAKE A PERSON

1. Commitment 2. Sincerity 3. Hard Work

## SCHOOL BUS SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY.



**What is your city or county doing to promote school bus safety?**  
**Please send information regarding what your school division does to**  
**[feb945@yahoo.com](mailto:feb945@yahoo.com).**