

Votran's

People Movers

July 2009

We drive a great bargain

Votran 'goes green' on Earth Day, encouraging riders to wear their fare

Ridership on Volusia's public transit system increased 24 percent April 22 when Votran participated in Earth Day activities. Votran officials encouraged riders to save some green by going green and "wear their fare" on a Votran bus. Anyone wearing a green shirt was allowed to ride free the entire day.

The event was organized to raise awareness about the benefits of public transportation, an environmentally friendly alternative to driving, and to encourage everyone to save money by trying public transit. Votran recorded 10,637 riders on Earth Day this year compared to 8,597 on the same date last year.

"This was in support of Earth Day," said Ken Fischer, Votran's interim general manager. "We wanted to reward loyal riders with a free day plus encourage those who don't normally use public transit to try it. The green benefits of public transit are significant. While there have been increases in ridership overall, the increase in boardings on Earth Day means we had great public participation."

According to the American Public Transportation Association, if an individual

switches a 20-mile, round-trip commute to public transportation his or her annual carbon dioxide emissions will fall by 4,800 pounds per year, equal to a 10-percent reduction in a two-car household's carbon footprint. Each year, public transportation use in the U.S. saves 1.4 billion gallons of gasoline. This represents almost four million gallons of gasoline per day.

With rising fuel prices and a tightening economy, and as residents look to Volusia County's public transit as a way to ease their transportation expenses, they can be assured Votran vehicles not only are allowing them to keep a little more money in their wallets, but also striving to be more green in their day-to-day operations.

Votran mechanics have found ways to enhance their services, while at the same time minimizing their environmental impact. Thanks to new technology and tailpipe modifications being made to the buses, Votran is hoping to reduce emission levels by 90 percent in 2010. The purchase of new hybrid vehicles with federal stimulus grant funding will also "green up" Votran's operations.



A message from the General Manager

In these days of rising fuel prices and the difficult economy, we all need to do our part to think and act economically. Going green helps to do just that.

Among the central messages of this issue of *People Movers* is the fact that Votran is becoming more environmentally friendly. I am very proud of the fact that Rick Kazawitch, our director of maintenance, has plowed new green ground with the development of a hybrid paratransit vehicle. Rick's ingenuity not only is helping Votran to go green, but also is benefitting transit systems across Florida reduce their carbon footprint.

We are acquiring more hybrid vehicles as we constantly seek to be good stewards of the environment. Votran is a big part of the county's green initiatives.

You'll also notice a story about our route analysis study. Votran continually analyzes its routes and services. The goal is to be as efficient as possible in meeting the needs of riders, it should be noted that the more efficient our routes are the more fuel we can save. Through our proactive vehicle maintenance program, Votran strives to keep the fleet at peak performance levels, thereby saving fuel and helping our bottom line.

Sincerely,

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

Kenneth Fischer
Interim General Manager



VOTRAN RIDERS "WEAR THEIR FARE" ON EARTH DAY
Ridership increased 24 percent April 22

Dump the Pump!
June 18th!
866-610-RIDE
www.votran.org

Votran joins other transit systems to observe 'Dump the Pump Day' June 18

With environmental concerns on everyone's mind, Votran joined other public transportation systems nationwide in the fourth Annual National Dump the Pump Day June 18. Sponsored by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the National Dump The Pump Day encourages people to ride public transportation to help improve the environment and to conserve motor fuel.

"Public transportation plays an important role in improving our environment," said Volusia County Chair Frank Bruno. "People can make a difference by riding public transportation and encouraging their friends and family to do so. Dump The Pump Day was a reminder for people to try public transportation."

U.S. public transportation systems help to create a healthier environment by reducing smog-producing pollutants and greenhouses gases. When compared to private vehicles, public transportation reduces by half carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide per passenger mile.

"Participation in National Dump The Pump Day means reaching out to new riders and thanking our current riders," said Votran Interim General Manager Ken Fischer.

It's estimated U.S. public transportation systems save 1.4 billion gallons of motor fuel every year, the equivalent of 108 million vehicles filling up in a year.

To learn about Votran service in your area, call (386) 761-7700 in the greater Daytona Beach area, (386) 424-6820 in Southeast Volusia, or (386) 943-7033 in West Volusia.

If public transit systems had never existed in American cities and their effects on our urban landscapes were completely erased, American households would drive 102.2 billion more miles per year.

Votran studies eastside service

To keep pace with new developments, changing cultures and economies, Votran conducts a series of major studies to assess service. A recent analysis of Votran service on the Volusia County's eastside found the frequency of service along U.S. 1 needs to increase.

"We have such an increase in demand that these buses are operating at capacity most of the day," said Ken Fischer, Votran interim general manager. "We constantly look at what we can do to increase efficiency and frequency of our service while staying within our budget. This research finding will have an effect on future planning and budgeting."

Conducted by the Center for Urban and Transportation Research (CUTR), the study evaluated route performance, developed service alternatives and improvement recommendations, and prepared improvement priorities that included a financial plan.

The study concluded there is a strong network of routes that can be improved. While some recommendations aim to accommodate new demands without generating additional costs, others require additional expenditures to improve service such as frequency on routes that have reached capacity. The research conclusions will benefit Volusia County as Votran continues to work through the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Florida Department of Transportation to maintain funding levels and find service development opportunities.

Hop on.

Save precious fuel, money and headaches with Votran, Volusia County's public transportation system.

AROUND TOWN
Ride the bus all over Volusia County – day or night.
Discounts for kids and seniors...bike racks for everybody!

COMMUTERS
I-4 Express Bus – gets you to work and back painlessly.
RideShare – We help you create your own car pool.
VanPool – You could qualify for a van for your group

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

Rider spotlight



Name: Fritz Perry, Ormond Beach

Profile: He started riding Votran buses at age 15 and continues to do so today (for about 32 years) off and on.

Quote: I use Votran mainly for transportation to and from work. I'm so glad to have the service. It means a lot to me.

Mid-size bus design to include hybrid-electric technology

When manufacturers changed the design of mid-size buses used by transit agencies across the state, Votran's Director of Maintenance Rick Kazawitch had some suggestions. Concerned with the profile of the bus, he went to work writing specifications for a mid-size bus on a smaller chassis with the features needed for paratransit service.

Paratransit buses must accommodate wheelchairs and be able to maneuver through neighborhoods with narrow streets. In keeping with the "green" movement in the nation, Kazawitch realized it was time for bus technology to move in that direction. Kazawitch went back to the design board and equipped his paratransit vehicle with hybrid-electric technology.

"My design accommodates the highest occupancy with the best safety designs," he said. "There is so much behind the scenes in regards to safety – from the wiring and wheelchair lifts to the straps and anchors that secure the medical equipment."

Fleet performance still needs to be assessed, but the manufacturer of the hybrid electric drive system indicates the new bus can offer: a 40-percent fuel economy improvement, a 30-percent reduction in maintenance costs, and a 30-percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Kazawitch's design has become a model for transit agencies across Florida. A prototype of the hybrid paratransit vehicle is making its way across the state for trial



*HOMEGROWN TECHNOLOGY BEING TESTED STATEWIDE
Votran's Rick Kazawitch leads the way with a new paratransit hybrid model*

runs at various agencies.

"We were able to develop the contract so other transit agencies in Florida can purchase this design from the same vendor," said Kazawitch. "Smaller agencies get better pricing by working together like this."

Votran plans to replace five paratransit vehicles with upgraded hybrid-electric powered buses (instead of standard diesel engines) with funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Transportation disadvantaged riders get their day in Tallahassee

Volusia County was well represented at the annual Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged event known as "TD Day". The event was held in Tallahassee in April. This year's theme, "Save my Ride," aimed to increase the awareness of issues faced by the transportation disadvantaged community. The Volusia contingent met with local area legislators to emphasize the value of transportation disadvantaged programs.

TD Day provides a platform for disabled advocates, system users and transportation agencies to highlight the value of transportation disadvantaged programs in preserving independence and quality of life for people with limited mobility options. While funding for transportation disadvantaged persons has been challenging with the state's fiscal challenges, advocates were pleased with a bill signed by Gov. Crist that requires an annual transfer of \$5 million from the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund to the Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund beginning in 2011.



ATTENDEES AT TD DAY VISIT WITH SENATOR BAKER. From left to right, Kurt Ottman, TDLCB citizen's advocate and Votran rider; Mary Ellen Ottman, TDLCB citizen's advocate and Votran rider; Heather Blanck, Votran; Carole Hinkley, Metropolitan Planning Organization; Senator Carey Baker, and Reggie Williams, TDLCB vice-chair.

Votran assists with emergency preparedness and evacuations

It's hurricane season. Do you have an evacuation plan that includes 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.

During emergencies when an evacuation order has been given, Votran fixed-routes continue normal routing. For people with special needs Votran Gold buses are dispatched to pick up passengers 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 interim general manager.



*BUSES ASSIST IN EVACUATIONS DURING RECENT FLOODING
Votran is a major player during emergencies requiring evacuations.*

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.

www.Votran.org



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VOTRAN



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STANDARD
US POSTAGE
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