



Texas Transit Association

TTA Newsletter

September 2015

“Our mission is to support the needs of Texas’ public transportation systems through statewide advocacy and education.”



Welcome Meredith Greene!!!



“I cannot say enough how very excited I am to be the new Executive Director of the Texas Transit Association. Many of you who know me will agree that my passion is working with transit providers, large and small, and to be able to do that in my home state of Texas is truly like being amongst my family. I care very much about the state of public transit in Texas, and it is a huge honor to represent all of you as the face of TTA. I recognize that we have much work ahead of us, but the board and I are committed to making the association the best in the nation.

My biggest near-term priority will be communication. We will be providing you frequent communication with information that is delivered in a timely fashion. The main objective will be to allow you as transit providers to understand the issues, make decisions, and take action on a number of matters that impact our industry both statewide and nationally.

Part of my communication strategy will include a concentrated emphasis on transparency. Being transparent will be critical to achieve clear communication, building trust, and creating new partnerships. You can expect to see more information on the TTA website to help with this, and we are planning for more ways to ensure that the association is open and transparent.

For the association to be strong and healthy, we need to grow. I want to ensure that TTA offers something for everyone, including a wide variety of training and networking opportunities that are tailored to all agency sizes and all agency positions. We can't do it alone though—all of you are important partners as we move forward, and we will need involvement at a variety of levels in order to make TTA a success. As I've been talking to a number of providers the first week, the one thing I remind everyone is that it's not my association, it's YOUR association. We're here to support you.

Come join us!

-Meredith

APTA's 2015 "best of the best" awards in public transportation

The winners of APTA's 2015 "best of the best" awards will be recognized for their achievements at an October 6th luncheon during the APTA Annual Meeting in San Francisco.

The following public transportation agencies will receive the Outstanding Public Transportation System Achievement Award: Connect Transit, Normal, IL, in the category of agencies with fewer than four million annual passenger trips, and **Metrolopolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO)**, Houston, in the category of 20 million or more annual passenger trips. Metro has implemented numerous initiatives to ensure that its workforce is prepared for the future. This includes creating an organizational development division charged with providing training and development programs. As a result, Metro now has a comprehensive learning curriculum. Classes focus on the communications, interpersonal behaviors, management and supervisory techniques, computer applications and federally mandated /compliances.

Information taken from July issue of Passenger Transport.

VIA'S CELEBRATION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE A.D.A.

SAN ANTONIO (Aug. 21, 2015) — VIA Metropolitan Transit commemorated the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act by displaying “The Color of Blind” Art Exhibit in the lobby of the agency’s executive offices at The Grand.

“The Color of Blind” was an interactive, multi-sensory art show designed to provide fuller sensory experiences for visually impaired individuals and others with special sensory needs or challenges. The exhibit at VIA was free, and it was open to the public from July 28 through August 21, 2015.

“The Color of Blind” was conceived by local artist and teacher Trina Bacon as an opportunity to share art in a manner that differs from the traditional museum visit. “Everyone should be able to fully experience art,” said Bacon, who is also the curator of the exhibit. “Through our transformative efforts, we strive to say, ‘Yes, please touch the art!’”

“Innovative efforts such as The Color of Blind allow our community to be more inclusive,” said VIA President/CEO Jeffrey Arndt. “VIA is proud to celebrate 25 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act by hosting this special exhibit and partnering with the arts community in a non-traditional way to call attention to the importance of inclusiveness in San Antonio and beyond.”



VIA plays a major role in providing connections to the community it serves, including passengers with disabilities. In 2014, VIA provided 44.4 passenger trips throughout its 13-city service area and more than one million rides on VIAtrans, its paratransit service. VIA's mission is to enhance the community's quality of life by providing regional and customer-oriented public transportation that is dependable, cost-effective and enticing to more riders. VIA's AAA bond rating reflects the organization's sound management and financial practices. Visit www.viainfo.net for more information.



DART puts the Zip in Transit

DART has teamed up with Zipcar to provide a “last mile” solution connecting the car-sharing service to DART Rail. Billed as “wheels when you want them,” the service allows members to reserve vehicles by the hour or the day with a mobile app, online or by phone.

In February, the buzz-generating company initially leased two parking spots at Mockingbird Station, one of DART Rail’s highest-profile stops. In July, Zipcar added a third vehicle in response to growing DART customer demand.

“It’s the perfect location for car-sharing, especially with SMU located nearby,” said Nevin Grinnell, DART vice president of marketing and communications. “We thought it had the right demographic to make the partnership a success.”

Local Zipcar officials said they consistently monitor usage and add vehicles as needed. In addition to adding a vehicle at one location, the Boston-based company has also expanded to a second location – DART’s Inwood/Love Field Station. This spot was chosen based on the numerous apartment communities and other development in the area, as well as easy access to both the Southwestern Medical District and Dallas Love Field airport.

“Zipcar is excited to serve our members with a more expansive reach throughout the city of Dallas through our partnership with DART, said Nathan Huber, Zipcar Dallas market manager. “Zipcar’s growth coupled with DART’s ever-expanding service is allowing Dallas residents to explore new and less expensive ways to navigate the city.”



“Zipsters,” as they’re sometimes known, can rent either a sedan or pickup truck, depending on their needs. It’s a convenient option for transit riders whose destination is not easily reached by other means. If the partnership continues to be successful, DART would like to add car-sharing to more of its facilities.

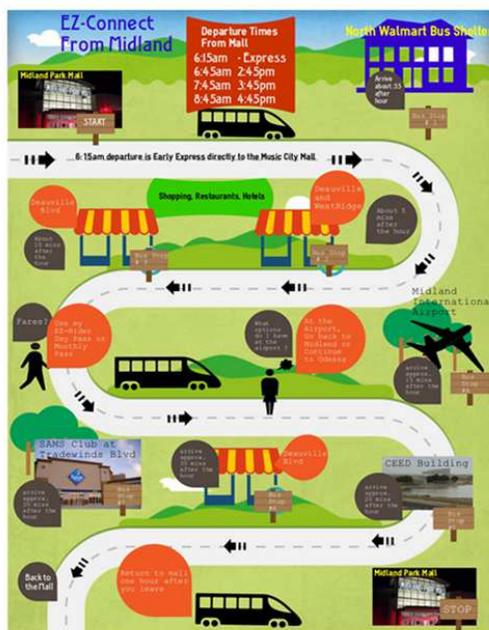
Jesse Quintero Jr.: Five Decades of Safe Driving

After 50 years of driving buses in San Antonio, Jesse Quintero Jr. has one very significant claim to fame: he is the longest-serving bus operator behind the wheel at VIA Metropolitan Transit, and he is among the safest in the nation. Quintero has been driving buses since he was first hired by the San Antonio Transit System (SATS) in 1965. When VIA took over public transportation operations from SATS in 1978, Quintero continued driving full-time until he retired in 2001. Immediately after retiring, though, Quintero began driving part-time for VIA, and in August 2015, he completed 50 years in his distinguished career. Quintero's five decades of driving is a significant achievement in itself, but that milestone is even more commendable because Quintero has driven all those years and has never had a preventable accident while on the job. "Jesse represents the ideal VIA professional operator, serving his customers with care and brightening their day," said VIA President/CEO Jeffrey Arndt. "His half-century of exemplary service to our community goes beyond outstanding." Quintero's safety record has earned him memberships in VIA's Million Mile Clubs, which are part of a program sponsored by the National Safety Council to reward bus and van operators for safe vehicle operations. VIA organized the One Million Mile Club in 1998 and started the Two Million Mile Club the following year. In 2004, VIA also instituted a Three Million Mile Club to honor the one bus operator who had completed three 12-and-a-half-year periods or 75,000 vehicle hours without a preventable accident. That operator is Jesse Quintero, and he remains the only member of this very exclusive club. Quintero's stellar safety record has also drawn the attention of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). In May 2014, APTA highlighted 100 years of safety awards in the transportation industry by honoring three bus operators from across the nation who had completed over 40 years of safe driving, and one of those three operators was Quintero. Quintero's safe driving skills are exceeded only by his excellent customer service skills. He has transported 2.7 million passengers throughout his career, and he makes it a point to always greet riders and make them feel welcome aboard. His career at VIA is also a family affair. Quintero is a second generation employee at VIA, and his son, Jesse Quintero III, also works at VIA as a foreman in bus operations. In addition to driving buses, Quintero has also enjoyed a long career as a mariachi musician, performing with groups of different sizes for many years. Quintero has played the guitar and sung for local and national elected officials and has performed at various functions for VIA throughout the years. Quintero has even starred in a VIA television commercial. VIA congratulates Jesse Quintero on his outstanding accomplishment and thanks him for his five decades of service and his continuing commitment to excellence.



Nanette Stephens will present MOUTD EZ-Rider's submission during the Spotlight Award breakfast, Tuesday, September 16, 2015 in Breckenridge, Colorado at the SWTA Marketing Workshop.

The print submission was developed to advertise and promote a new EZ-Connect Route between the cities of Midland and Odessa. The new route makes connections to the Newly FAA approved Midland International Air and Spaceport and new business developments between the growing cities. "Pictures sometimes speak louder than words and I developed pictographs to illustrate the new route with explanatory graphics," says Nanette Stephens Director of Service Development.



The EZ-Connect service began June 6, 2015 and was restructured from an existing express service that ran from downtown Midland to downtown Odessa. The new connect service has doubled the daily passengers per hour and growing.

The SWTA Spotlight competition is both an awards program as well as an education/information program. SWTA encourages participants to share ideas with your peers.

Upcoming Events

2015 TTA Night Golf Classic

Date: October 21, 2015

Location: Waco, Texas

To register for this event go to:

<https://ttagolf.eventbrite.com>

2015 TTA Training Seminar

Date: October 22, 2015

Location: Hotel Indigo

211 Clay Avenue

Waco, Texas

Topics Included in Training:
EEO, Title VI, DBE

Register at:

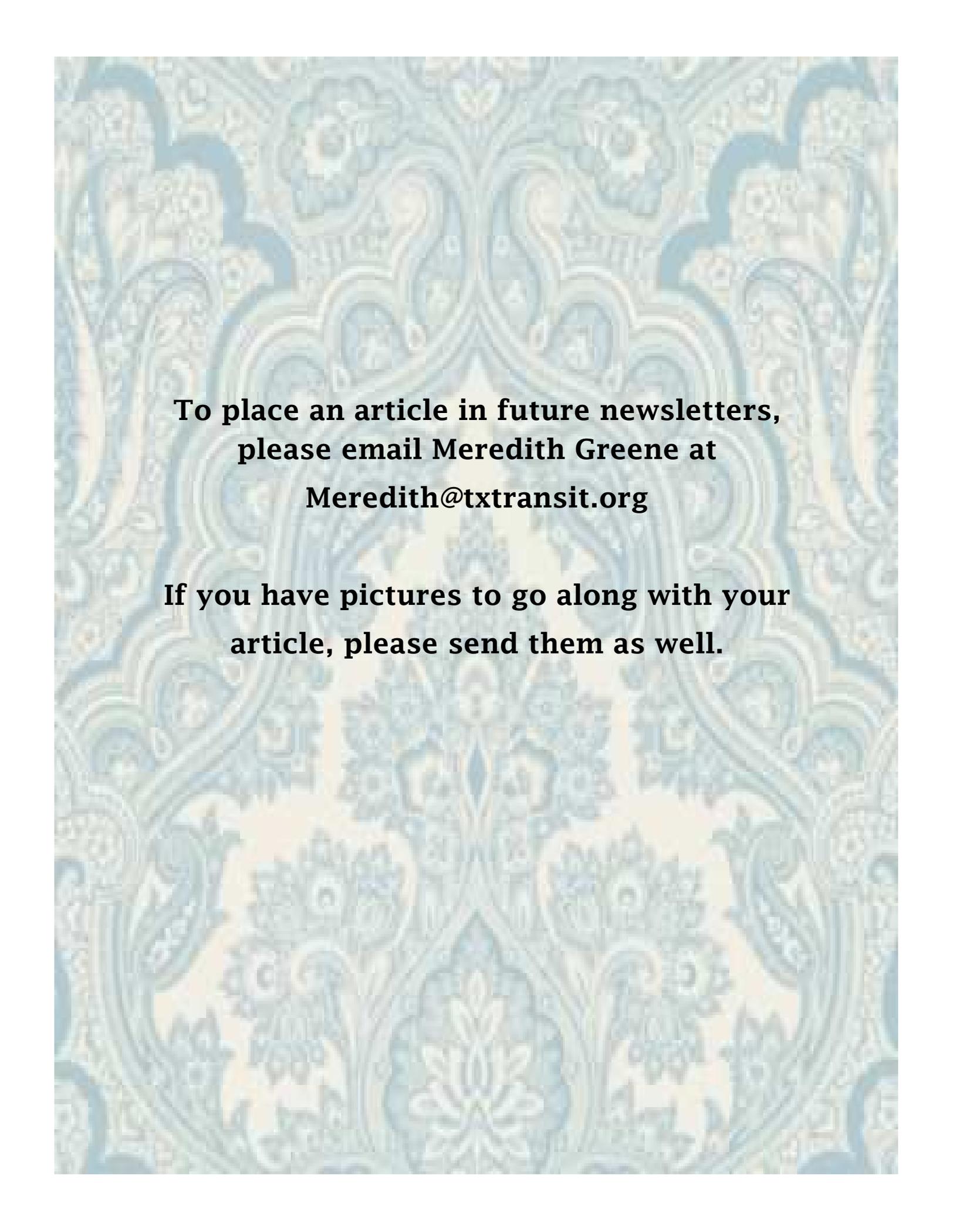
<https://2015falltraining.eventbrite.com>

2016 TTA State Rodeo and Conference

Date: April 22-26, 2016

Location:

Waco, Texas



**To place an article in future newsletters,
please email Meredith Greene at
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**If you have pictures to go along with your
article, please send them as well.**