

April 2007

CATALOG

A Publication of the Centre Area Transportation Authority

From the General Manager...

Governor Rendell Promotes State Funding Solution

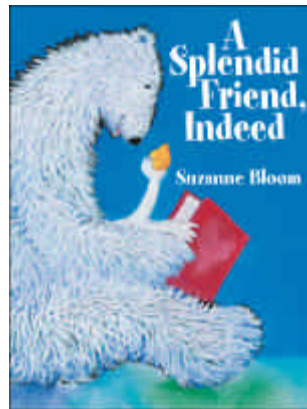
Governor Ed Rendell, at a recent transportation funding forum at the Nittany Lion Inn, shared with the audience four different comprehensive plans to address the long-standing funding crisis facing the state's transportation infrastructure. The Governor's preferred plan of those presented outlined the potential leasing of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, which would raise an estimated \$900 million a year for PENNDOT and \$65 million a year for municipal governments to use for local streets and bridges, and the implementation of a tax on oil company profits, which would generate an estimated \$760 million a year to provide a dedicated source of funding for public transportation.

The Governor stated that, while he was promoting his preferred approach, he would consider other options. However, he was adamant that doing nothing is not an option.

In my opinion, the Governor is right in saying that 'doing nothing is not an option.' If a solution is not found, CATA will be forced to implement service cuts and fare increases as early as next year. Nonetheless, I am optimistic that when the General Assembly does act, the result will be a new, dedicated funding program, adequate to meet the current needs for public transportation in Centre County, and robust enough to grow along with the community.

To raise awareness of the transit funding issue, CATA also recently initiated discussion of the creation of a "transit coalition." In mid-March the CATA Board of Directors and staff held an exploratory meeting, during which nearly two dozen community leaders discussed the challenges and the *(continued)*

CATA and Schlow Centre Region Library - Splendid Friends, Indeed!



CATA is currently working jointly with Schlow Library to promote their "PA One Book" program, which encourages area families to read the same book, "A Splendid Friend Indeed" by Suzanne Bloom, over the course of the year.

With the kick-off of the program taking place in April, the Library will hold readings (of "A Splendid Friend," plus two similar books about buses) on the WHITE LOOP buses from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 7th and Saturday, April 14th. (Participants are encouraged to meet at Schlow Library).

Be on the lookout for additional information on this and other special events fostering early literacy to be held at the Schlow Library and libraries in outlying areas, including a visit to Schlow Centre Region Library on Wednesday, April 11th by author Suzanne Bloom!

CATA Customer Satisfaction Survey

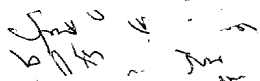
Every three years, transit entities of CATA's size are required by Act 3 of 1997 to conduct a Customer Satisfaction Survey. This survey, which will be taking place now through the end of May, is designed to provide transit riders with an opportunity to offer feedback on how CATA is doing in terms of service, fares, customer service and other aspects. Surveys will be conducted on-board selected routes and are also available at both of CATA's offices (108 E. Beaver Avenue and 2081 W. Whitehall Road) and on the CATA website at www.catabus.com.

Of the survey respondents who choose to sign up to receive CATA's email newsletter, *TRANSITions*, one will be chosen randomly to receive a \$50.00 Nittany Mall gift certificate, to be awarded Thursday, May 31.

From the General Manager... Rendell Promotes Solution (cont.)

possibilities. As a result of the positive response, a steering committee will be engaged to develop a framework for a formal organization. If such a coalition does arise from this effort, it will initially focus on the state funding crisis. Longer-term, however, it is expected to provide a collective voice on behalf of public transportation throughout Centre County, advocating for public policies and funding choices that support alternatives to solo driving.

For additional background on the current state transit funding crisis, please visit www.catabus.com or the Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association website at www.ppta.net.



Hugh A. Mose
CATA General Manager

Have Questions About Using CATA's Services?

Bus route, schedule and pass information is available by calling CATA's offices at (814) 238-CATA(2282), through the Spring/Summer 2007 Ride Guide available on all CATA buses and throughout the community, or by visiting the CATA website at www.catabus.com.

Additionally, anyone with questions about using CATA's services is encouraged to view CATA's Real® streaming videos available on its website. The videos cover seven travel training topics: "Identifying Services," "Introduction to Bus 101," "Reading Your CATA Schedules," "Bus Riding Fundamentals," "Riding Etiquette," "Accessibility for the Disabled," and "Use of Bike Racks."

Additionally, CATA staff will accommodate requests for presentations to groups who are interested in learning more about its services, how to ride the bus, how to read the schedules, and more. If your group is interested in requesting a presentation, please contact Jacqueline Sheader, CATA Marketing Manager, at (814) 238-2282 ext. 141.

Americans Take 10.1 Billion Trips on Public Transportation in 2006

If you thought you were seeing more riders during your daily public transit trips, it's not your imagination. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) announced recently that Americans took over 10 billion trips on local public transportation in 2006 – the first time in 49 years. Over the last decade, public transportation's growth rate outpaced the growth rate of the population and the growth rate of vehicle miles traveled on our nation's highways!

Public transit use is up 30 percent since 1995. That is more than double the growth rate of the population (12 percent) and higher than the growth rate for the vehicle miles traveled on our roads (24 percent) during that same period. In 2006, public transit ridership grew 2.9 percent over 2005. To put the 10.1 billion public transportation trips in perspective, transit trips outnumber domestic airline trips by 15 to one.

"This significant ridership milestone is part of a multi-year trend as more and more Americans ride public transit to get to destinations important to them, while realizing the benefits of saving money and avoiding congestion," said William W. Millar, president of APTA. "Public transit ridership helps reduce America's dependence on foreign oil and decreases our contribution to global warming; but ultimately, this milestone represents 10 billion reasons to increase local and federal investment in public transportation."

Light rail (modern streetcars, trolleys, and heritage trolleys) had the highest percentage increase among all modes, with 5.6 percent increase in 2006. Ridership on heavy rail posted the second largest increase at 4.1 percent. Commuter rail posted the third largest increase at 3.2 percent. Demand response (paratransit) ridership increased by 2.9 percent and the transit bus increased by 2.3 percent.



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