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## Bill Osborne Honored at Retirement Celebration

A retirement celebration was held on December 5 for William “Bill” Osborne at the Vance Vineyards & Winery in Fredericktown. Bill retired after 41 years of service to Southeast Missouri Transit System (SMTS) as the executive director. Bill was honored by friends and family as well as several from the transportation industry. Missouri RTAP wishes to congratulate Bill on his retirement.

*Bill visits with guests during the reception held in his honor.*



*Steve Billings, MoDOT Administrator of Transit, shares his thoughts on Bill’s years of service and the difference Bill made within the state of Missouri.*

*Michelle Teel, MoDOT Director of Multimodal Operations Division, presents Bill with a certificate of appreciation from the Missouri Department of Transportation.*



*Bill shares his thoughts and reflects on his career with SMTS.*



*Mokhtee Ahmad, FTA Regional Administrator for Region 7, presents Bill with a plaque in recognition from the Federal Transit Administration for his service to the transit industry.*



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Federal Transit Administration



# LETTER FROM THE MANAGER

Dear Transit Friends,

Hello everyone and happy holidays from the entire Missouri RTAP staff. As another year draws to a close, we reflect on another successful year of managing the RTAP program. One of the things I remember most from the past year is our effort to expand the program services. In effort to gather input and ideas on what transit agencies would like to see offered beyond driver training, Steve Billings and I met with a number of agencies during the first half of the year. Back on January 24, we met with SMTS at their headquarters in Fredericktown. On March 19, we met with OATS in Columbia. Then on June 18 we attended the SEMO Transit Operators Association meeting in Dexter. All of these meetings provided an excellent opportunity for transit agencies to share their thoughts and ideas on how we can expand the Missouri RTAP program services. We plan to hold these meetings again next year. This will allow Dion Knipp, the new MoDOT Transit Administrator, an opportunity to travel with me and meet all of the wonderful people involved in transit throughout Missouri. I look forward to working with Dion. If you have not had the opportunity of meeting him, I know you will enjoy working with him. I have known Dion for several years when he served as our Missouri Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) MoDOT central district ambassador.



One of the suggestions that came out of the meetings earlier in the year was to offer QuickBooks training. I am pleased to report that we were able to host a QuickBooks Pro 2014 class on November 8 at the Gape Girardeau at the Career Center. Please see the training recap on page 3 for details and thoughts from a couple of the attendees. We appreciate everyone who was able to attend and recognize it was not ideal being held on a Saturday. Another suggestion was to offer more lift maintenance training. We coordinated with the OATS regional facilities on lift maintenance trainings they were hosting. We appreciate them allowing a few of the small transit agencies to send their lift maintenance providers. A final suggestion was to offer training on dealing with difficult passengers/conflict resolution. We are planning to hold a few of these and are in the process of coordinating the delivering of this training and hope to offer something early next year.

This fall has been a busy a time. I attended the Rural & Intercity Bus Conference in Monterey, CA in October. Several Missouri transit agencies had the opportunity to attend. It was in a great location with a lot of sessions to choose from that were very relevant to rural transit operations. This conference is offered every other year. I would encourage everyone to keep it on their radar for 2016. I also recently attended the retirement celebration for Bill Osborne with SMTS. An event in his honor was held on December 5 in Fredericktown. Please see the related story on page 1 for pictures and a recap of the celebration.

Please keep in mind that there are numerous training opportunities available as we start the New Year. We started promoting the Operation Lifesaver training this past year. It is a half-hour module that can be added to another class, and John Rice is qualified to teach it. We will again be offering it next year. In addition, National Training Institute (NTI) courses and Transportation Safety Institute (TSI) related courses are available.

If you have anything exciting planned for 2015 in your agency or anything from the past year you would like to share, please pass this along to us. John is also now teaching a one-hour pre- and post-trip inspection training. See the related article on page 5. We would love to include it in the first quarter eNewsletter for 2015. As always, if you know someone who is not receiving the eNewsletter, please forward it and have them contact the MO-RTAP office to be added to the list. In closing, I would like to wish everyone a very safe and happy holidays from everyone here at Missouri RTAP.

Happy Holidays,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heath Pickerill". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Heath Pickerill  
Missouri RTAP Manager

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## Publication Information

Missouri University of  
Science and Technology,  
Missouri RTAP Office

## The Fine Print

Missouri RTAP quarterly eNewsletter is published by the Missouri RTAP office located on the campus of Missouri University of Science and Technology. The opinions, findings and recommendations expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Missouri S&T, MoDOT or the Federal Transit Administration.



## About RTAP

National RTAP is a program of the Federal Transit Administration dedicated to creating rural transit solutions through technical assistance, partner collaboration and FREE training.

## QuickBooks Training Held in the Southeast

Missouri RTAP recently hosted a class on QuickBooks 2014 Pro class on November 8 at the Cape Girardeau Career & Technology Center. Three transit agencies took advantage of the training opportunity. Kelley Watson with Gape Girardeau County Transit Authority shared her thoughts, “I thought the instructor was pleasant and knowledgeable.” Kelley added that the class could have been tailored more



toward the transit industry; however, she was able walk away with some useful tips. Laura Oldham with Ripley County Transit felt the location was excellent, the presenter was very knowledgeable, and the hands-on instruction was wonderful. Laura stated, “The presenter took time to find out individual needs from each person in attendance, and I really appreciated receiving the 2014 QuickBooks manual to take home with me.” We appreciate everyone who was able to attend but understand it being held on a Saturday was an issue for some. We hope to hold the class again in the future and will do our best to hold it during the week.

## Rural Transit Fact Book 2014

This document serves as a notional resource for statistics and information on rural transit in America. It includes state-by-state data on travel behavior as well as rural demographic information.

### Introduction

Public transportation plays a fundamental role in the livability of all communities. The Rural Transit Fact Book provides information on transit service availability and cost to help the transit industry in the United States provide efficient and effective service to meet rural community mobility needs. Financial and operating statistics can be used by agency managers, local decision makers, state directors, the

Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and lawmakers to assist in policy making, planning, managing operations, and evaluating performance.

The Rural Transit Fact Book serves as a national resource for statistics and information on rural transit in America. This publication includes rural demographic and travel behavior data as well as financial and operating statistics for agencies receiving section 5311 funding. In addition to national level data, statistics are presented by state, FTA region, tribe, and mode, as well as other agency characteristics.

The rural transit data presented in this report were obtained from the Rural National Transit Database (NTD). The 2011 edition of the Rural Transit Fact Book was the first pub-

lished by SURTC and included Rural NTD data for 2007-2009. Since 2011, annual updates have been made to the Fact Book to provide updated data. The 2014 edition includes 2012 data from the Rural NTD as well as additional data from the American Community Survey, American Housing Survey, and National Household Travel Survey.

SURTC is not responsible for the accuracy of the data reported to the Rural NTD. Over time, it is expected that the quality of data contained in the Rural NTD will improve in terms of completeness and accuracy as the FTA raises data concerns with states who in turn receive better data from subrecipients.

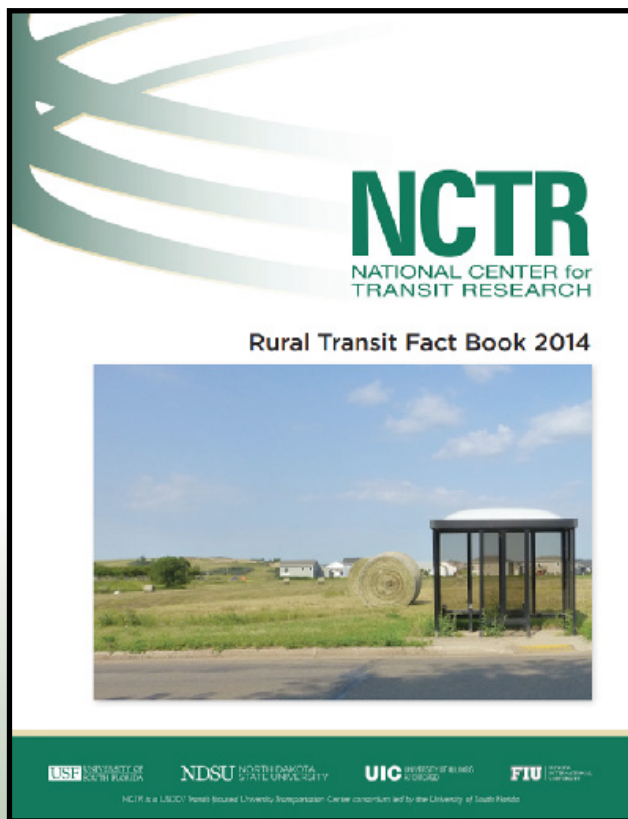
As noted, this publication presents data for transit providers receiving section 5311 Non-Urbanized Area Formula Program funding. This program provides funding to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000. A number of rural transit providers also receive funding under the section 5310, Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities, program. However, nationwide data for 5310 services are not available, as providers are not required to report such data to the NTD. Therefore, rural transit providers not funded by the 5311 program but receiving funding from section 5310 are not included in this report. Also excluded from the report are providers that receive both section 5311 funds and section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program funding and report their data in the urban NTD.



## Rural Transit Fact Book 2014 *(continued)*

### Rural America

Geography influences the type and level of transit service that best serves a community. About 60 million Americans, or close to one fifth of the country's population, live in rural areas, according to data from the American Community Survey (ACS). Table 1 shows select demographic data from the 2010- 2012 ACS 3-year estimates for the United States and for urban and rural areas. As defined by the Census, "urban" includes urban areas and urban clusters. Urbanized areas have 50,000 or more people and urban clusters have at least 2,500 people but less than 50,000 people, and both areas have a core area with a density of at least 1,000 people per square mile. All other areas are defined as rural.



Data from the 2009-2011 ACS 3-year estimates, as reported in the previous edition of the Rural Transit Fact Book, showed that the rural population was 75 million. The decrease to 60 million was not due to an actual decline in rural population but a change in classifications. The boundaries for urban and rural areas are determined by the decennial census. Previous estimates used boundaries determined by the 2000 census, while the most recent data is based on the

2010 census. As a result, areas that were previously defined as rural are now recognized as urban.

Rural populations tend to be slightly older. The median age is 43 in rural areas and 36 in urban areas. Approximately 16% of residents in rural areas are 65 or older, compared to 13% of those in urban areas. The percentage of residents 85 or older, on the other hand, is approximately the same in urban and rural areas. The percentage of people with disabilities is slightly higher in rural areas (15%) than in urban areas (12%).

Rural areas tend to be less ethnically diverse. Urban residents are more likely than their rural counterparts to be non-white or Hispanic, and the foreign-born population is much higher in urban areas (15%) than in rural areas (3%).

Education levels vary somewhat between urban and rural communities. The percentage of individuals that have completed high school in rural areas is about the same as that for urban areas, but urban areas tend to have a higher percentage of residents with a bachelor's or advanced degree.

Median household income is slightly higher in urban areas, but a higher percentage of urban residents live below the poverty line.

Urban residents are more likely to move than those in rural areas (see Table 2). About 16% of urban residents have moved during the last year, compared to 10% of rural residents. Rural residents are more likely than those in urban areas to live in the state in which they were born.

### Acknowledgments

The funds for this study were provided by the United States Department of Transportation through the National Center for Transit Research within the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida. The Small Urban and Rural Transit Center within the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute at North Dakota State University conducted the research.

**Report Link:** <http://www.surtc.org/transitfactbook/downloads/2014-rural-transit-fact-book.pdf>

## How Do You Know Your Drivers Are Doing Proper Inspections?

By: Deborah Lockridge, *HDT Editor in Chief*

A key strategy that has emerged for fleets to help improve their scores under FMCSA's new Compliance, Safety, Accountability enforcement regime - more commonly known as CSA - is a proper pre-trip inspection.

If a driver catches small problems before he hits the road and gets them addressed, that's something that won't get caught in a roadside inspection and result in points against a company's CSA score.

This was an active discussion on this topic recently on the LinkedIn Transportation Professionals group. Here are some of the suggestions:

Train every driver on how you want the pre-/post-trip inspection to be conducted. Consider having a DOT officer come in and do an inspection for the drivers to see.

William Branter, a Motor Carrier Specialist at California Highway Patrol Motor Carrier Safety Unit in the San Francisco area, says his unit offers the industry free training at the fleet's location. "When a carrier is inspected for compliance, a very high emphasis is on driver daily vehicle inspection reports, and the timely turnaround from defect notification to repair/correction," he notes.



Don't take things for granted. "A company I worked for had smaller delivery vehicles, but we had them do a pre-post trip inspection, and one driver didn't know how to check his tire pressure," recalls Kaelynne Aldrich, an experienced safety instructor in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area. "I told him with a tire gauge like he did on his car. This person had never owned a car and took a bus to work. I am guessing his

manager just assumed he knew how to check the oil, etc."

"I think that maybe many drivers have at one time been trained, however, no one checked to see if they really absorbed the training through a practical evaluation," says Mike Kroetsch, owner of Transportation Safety & Compliance Solutions in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.



"It does not hurt to do ongoing training as well. Repetition is one proven way to learn. At each safety talk, touch on the vehicle inspection. Direct the talk to what you are having problems with. That can come from your roadside inspection reports, driver inspection reports or from your shop."

Hold them accountable, but also reward them for a job well done.

Lew Snearly, an Albany, N.Y., consultant and owner of Truck & Bus Compliance, suggests tying a red tag around a dipstick, wheel stud, or other area you require the driver to check.

"If they do not turn in the tag before they leave, then they did not check the areas that you require," Snearly says. He also suggests a few random spot checks before trucks leave the yard.

"My policy is that if you did not find something during your pre-trip, such as vehicle damage, then the driver is responsible for the damage as he/she did not write it up before leaving," Snearly says.

CMAC Transportation, a logistics and transportation com-

## How Do You Know Your Drivers Are Doing Proper Inspections? *(continued)*

pany in the greater Detroit area, recently started giving monetary rewards for zero-defect DOT roadside inspections.



“Make sure they are fully trained on CSA and everything that goes with it as well; including their PSP scores,” says Mike Holke, director of safety. “This really opens their eyes when they find out they are accountable for their actions.”

Turn to technology. Many providers are now offering electronic inspection aids, or e-DVIRs. Qualcomm, PeopleNet and Zonar are among the providers.

Ann Marie Tamrowski, a representative for Sprint in the Buffalo/Niagara, N.Y., area, works with many partners that

provide e-DVIR options that she recommends to customers. “Not only does it provide the ability to manage driver safety behavior but can also provide criteria for driver scorecards that can be used for incentive-based purposes.”

For smaller fleets looking for an affordable solution, she suggests Xata Turnpike, whose RouteTracker is not only a GPS tracking and electronic logging device, but it also works with various “smart” devices that can go along on an inspection walk-around.

Make sure the shop is fixing the problems. Many a driver over the years has complained, “Why should I bother with a pre-trip when the shop’s not going to fix it, anyway?” Make sure you have a system in place to get problems on pre-trips repaired (there are e-DVIRs that can help keep these from falling through the cracks) and that the system is working properly.

“The people who repair the trucks are not all on the same page when it comes to road safety,” Kroetsch observes. When trucks aren’t repaired speedily, he says, “It is sending the message to the drivers that safety is not a priority from the top down.”

**Resource:** March 2012 issue of Heavy Duty Trucking Magazine (HDT) - *Used with Permission*

## *Safety First ...*

*OATS now has on-board tablets computers on many of their vehicles as part of their ITS paratransit dispatch project. They are being used to guide drivers through pre- and post-trip inspections as well as to document daily vehicle inspections.*





# THE SAFETY ZONE

## Steps to Take in Deciding to Evacuate Your Vehicle

By: Anne Lowder & Pat Weaver

Making the decision to evacuate a vehicle is something you hope you never have to do as a rural transit driver. However, planning in advance about when, where and how you would do it is important to operating a safe transit system. Here are some of the basics for transit drivers to use in making a decision to evacuate in an emergency.

### It's not just about walking off the bus

There are some important decisions to be made before evacuating, but all those decisions must be made in just a few seconds. Discuss these potential circumstances with agency staff in advance, and then practice the necessary steps. Every situation is different, so ultimately it's up to the driver to quickly make the best possible decisions, and then act.

### Steps to an evacuation decision

Let's look at the following steps of an emergency evacuation of a transit vehicle and consider some details:

**Step One: Assess the risk.** In this first step, the driver is quickly assessing the situation to determine whether evacuation is the best choice, or whether it's safer to stay on the vehicle. Factors such as smoke, fire or water submersion are going to require evacuation; you and your passengers probably are going to be safer off the bus. In circumstances like a crash in which there is no fire, you might determine that it is safest to keep everyone on the bus until help arrives, particularly if evacuating would put passengers in danger from other traffic. Please note that in the case of fire or smoke, rapid evacuation should occur before calling for help.

**Step Two: Call for help.** The driver next determines whether to call to 911 or call dispatch. When in doubt, call 911 first to get help on its way as quickly as possible.

Of course, there may be circumstances (like a vehicle breakdown) that do not require emergency response, but do require a response from your agency. Practice scenarios with your drivers so that they are absolutely clear about who they should call in each type of emergency, and ensure that they have the tools to do so. (Does everyone have a phone? How about radios?)

Incidentally, if you are a driver making a 911 call, always

start by giving your name and location. Then provide a description of the problem and additional details as you have time. In a role-playing exercise as part of our RTAP emergency evacuation workshop, most drivers start reporting the problem (crash and injuries) and then state the location. The problem is, you could be halfway through your description and lose contact with 911/dispatch, having never given your location.

Consider working with your local emergency response agencies in advance to provide them with a contact name and number for your agency to alert if an emergency call comes in from a driver. Phone numbers on the side of your vehicle (including area code) can also help first responders connect with your agency.

**Step Three: Rapidly evacuate.** If the decision is to evacuate, it is essential to do so as quickly as possible, without panicking. Rural transit drivers, we find, generally know their passengers, and know some of them need more assistance than others. Some passengers may be able to assist others. The driver, while assisting passengers to evacuate, also needs to direct those who are ambulatory to help with the evacuation and to assist others.

What if the driver and helpers cannot evacuate everyone? You, as a driver, need to stay as calm as possible and give clear, firm instructions as you're assisting to help get as many people off as you can, including yourself. You've made the call for help, and first responders are on the way; they may need to finish the evacuation.

**Step Four: Stay together.** The driver's announcement to evacuate the vehicle needs to include the path for evacuation (which door, hatch or window) and then where to rally after the evacuation. For example: "Folks, we need to evacuate this vehicle because I suspect a fire. We will be using the rear exit. John and Sue, I need your assistance in helping people out the back door. Please stay together, and move as far away from the vehicle and the road as possible."

Passengers should be moved a significant distance away and upwind from the vehicle to avoid the heat and/or smoke from the fire.

(continued on page 10)

# AVAILABLE TRAINING PROGRAMS

The following is a list of the training programs and a course description of each that are currently available to rural transit providers through Missouri RTAP. Requests for training can be made by contacting Doreen Harkins, MO-RTAP Program Specialist, at [harkinsd@mst.edu](mailto:harkinsd@mst.edu) or 573-341-6155.

## Defensive Driving

Makes sure all your drivers know how to develop safe, defensive driving habits and attitudes. This program covers essential defensive driving techniques that can reduce collision-related injuries and fatalities and can help

you reduce insurance claims, lost work time and vehicle repairs by decreasing the number of collisions. This program also includes student course guides with a certificate of completion.



## Passenger Assistance/Mobility Aid Securement

Provides classroom and hands-on training to demonstrate proper assistance techniques and mobility aid securement.

## Emergency Procedures

Discusses how transit drivers should handle emergency situations such as breakdowns, collisions and transit passenger vehicle evacuations.

## Drug Abuse Awareness in Rural Transit

Educates transit drivers about the hazards of both illegal and legal drugs and alcohol. Various drug-testing regulations are also discussed.

## Blood Borne Pathogens

Covers various problems that may be encountered when having to deal with a body fluid spill on the bus and stresses protection for the driver and other passengers.

## Operation Lifesaver – Highway-Rail Crossing Safety

Covers the importance of safety when utilizing a highway rail crossing. Laws and regulations for commercial drivers are emphasized.

## Basic First Aid

Stresses the importance of calling 911. It is a program by the Red Cross that is a refresher course for CPR and rescue breathing.

## Backing Safety

Reduce the number of backing collisions. The program is designed by the National Safety Council.

## Reversing the Trend – Backing Safety

Emphasizes components of the Smith System Defensive Driving Institute defensive driving strategies to reduce backing collisions.

## Winter Driving Safety

Covers safety tips and techniques for handling the hazards of winter driving. Topics cover pre-season preparation, pre-trip procedures, and on-the-road issues such as anti-lock brakes and obstructed views.

## Fatigue Awareness for Drivers

This program covers: fatigue, signs and symptoms, factors that affect it, sleep, effect on family and social life and strategies and countermeasures.

## Driven to Extremes

Covers the myths and realities of aggressive driving.

## Entry Level CDL Driver Training

Meets DOT requirements for new CDL Drivers.

## Diversity & Awareness Training - Providing Quality Customer Service for Transportation Passengers who have Disabilities

Learn how to provide quality customer service and support for passengers with disabilities. As a result of this training you will have an enhanced understanding of disability and diversity, improved ability to communicate respectfully and effectively with people with disabilities and increased ability to provide needed transportation accommodations.



## Safe & Secure Proper Infant and Child Seat Installation

Provides information for safely installing and securing a car seat for children.



# THE SAFETY ZONE *(continued)*

## Step to Take in Deciding to Evacuate Your Vehicle *(continued)*

(continued from page 8)

**Step Five: Help the injured.** Helping the injured usually involves preventing or slowing shock symptoms. Symptoms of shock include rapid, shallow breathing, cold, clammy skin, rapid, weak pulse, dizziness, bluish lips/ fingernails and sweating. Treatment includes laying the person down (if possible) and elevating the feet about 12 inches above the head unless you suspect leg, hips, back or neck injury. Cover and keep them warm. Finally, be prepared to turn the person on their side if they vomit.

**Step Six: Re-assess the situation.** You have completed steps One through Five. Now re-assess. Let's say your current situation is that everyone is together, away from the vehicle. The most important thing is to remain calm and in control of the situation. You have let your passengers know that you called 911 and help is on the way. Continue to re-evaluate the condition of the injured and, if possible, call 911 again to get an update on estimated time of arrival for the first responders.

In summary, conducting emergency exercises is very important. The exercises increase skills and instill confidence in your drivers' ability to cope in an emergency. It has been shown that transit agencies that conduct emergency exercises are better prepared to respond to emergencies. Emergency exercises also enhance external and internal communication by developing best practices for your agency and community.

### Conclusion

Every emergency situation is different, and no one response fits all circumstances. The best way to prepare is to work out scenarios of possible risks, and then role-play and discuss a response for each scenario with your drivers. Emergency exercises are an activity that should be integrated into your drivers' training on a regular basis. Evacuation exercises need to be routinely created, practiced, evaluated, and revised.

**Resource:** Kansas TransReporter, October 2014

## RESOURCES

### Links

#### National RTAP – Rural Transit Assistance Program

<http://www.nationalrtap.org/>

#### National Transit Institute

<http://www.ntionline.com/>

#### Transportation Safety Institute – Transit Safety & Security Training Division

<https://www.tsi.dot.gov/Transit.aspx>

#### Federal Transit Administration – Rural Transit Assistance Program Page

[http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants\\_financing\\_3554.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_3554.html)

#### Kansas RTAP – Kansas University Transportation Center

<http://www.kutc.ku.edu/cgiwrap/kutc/rtap/index.php/index.html>

#### Transportation Research Board's (TRB) Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP)

<http://www.tcrponline.org/>

### Upcoming Events

#### APTA's National Stand Up for Transportation Day

April 9, 2015

#### MPTA 2015 Conference

April 28-29, 2015; Jefferson City, MO

#### FTA Drug & Alcohol Program National Conference

April 28-30, 2015; Atlanta, GA

#### CTAA Expo

May 31 - June 5, 2015; Tampa, FL

#### MPTA Conference

August 9-11, 2015; Lake Ozark, MO

#### APTA Bus & Paratransit Conference

May 3-6, 2014; Fort Worth, TX