



REGIONAL REVIEW

Volume 1, Issue 2

**Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson
Metropolitan Planning Commission**

Spring 2005

SVRTA NEEDS YOU!!!!

The impact that Steel Valley Regional Transit Authority has made in the area is much more than you may realize.

The SVRTA began operations on January 1, 1996 and since that time has provided public transportation services to the City of Steubenville and the Village of Mingo Junction. In 2004, SVRTA had approximately 80,000 passenger trips. Adults made up 39% of those passengers, 39% were senior citizens or handicapped and 22% were students.

What is the alternative for these riders? Many of the adults taking advantage of the SVRTA are fixed and lower income people who can't afford their own transportation and rely on the bus to get to work. Their alternative is to find someone willing to give them a ride or simply quit working.

Senior citizens and handicapped

depend on the bus to get to doctor appointments and attend to their shopping needs. Who do they turn to for their transportation needs if not SVRTA?

Many parents depend on SVRTA. Work schedules may prohibit them from transporting their children to and from school. SVRTA provides a safe and inexpensive solution to ensuring their children arrive at school on time.

Where else can you get so much for so little? Fares are just \$1 for an adult, 75 cents for students and 50 cents for seniors. With the cost of gasoline, it's surprising that more people don't take advantage of this low-cost form of transportation.

There's the economic impact to consider. SVRTA collects \$2 in federal and state grants for every \$1 in local taxes. If passed, the levy will generate \$491,000 annually. On a smaller scale, SVRTA provides employment for 12 of our fellow citizens.

For the second time since November, the residents of Steubenville and Mingo Junction will be asked to vote for "Issue 6" which is actually a replacement for a 1-mill levy that was originally approved in 1995. Frank Bovina,

SVRTA's transit manager, said the increase is necessary because 1-mill is no longer sufficient to support the transit authority without a significant roll back of services.

The BHJ Full Commission recognizes the value and importance of SVRTA. At its March 16, 2005 meeting, the BHJ Full Commission passed a resolution supporting the passage of the Steel Valley Regional Transit Authority 1.5 mill 10-year operating levy on May 3.

Keep SVRTA on the move. Vote YES on May 3 for Issue 6.

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VOTE "YES" on ISSUE # 6

**STEEL VALLEY REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY - SVRTA
OPERATING LEVY**

**PROVIDING SAFE, RELIABLE, AFFORDABLE TRANSPORTATION
FOR STEUBENVILLE AND MINGO JUNCTION CITIZENS**

**COMMUNITY RESIDENTS FOR WORK, HEALTH CARE, BANKING, SHOPPING,
JCC, FRANCISCAN UNIVERSITY AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
PARATRANSIT SERVICES
COMPLETELY HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE**

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION - IT'S THE WAY TO GO!

The 10-year 1.5 mill levy will become effective in 2005. The current levy has expired. There will be no overlap of funds.

Paid for by SVRTA Levy Committee - Frank Bovina, Treasurer

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The entrance to our office on Fourth Street in Steubenville is not that different from most professional offices. We're on the second floor above National City Bank, and most visitors access our facility by means of the elevator. When the doors to the elevator open, our welcome area has the trappings of many regional planning commissions. The prominent rear wall has a turn of the century lithograph of the City of Toronto. If you look closely, you can see the old race track on Euclid Street. Other decorative hangings include a 1940 photo of the Old Chester Tea Pot in front of a hot dog stand. Our letters of agreement and incorporation from 1969 are framed and take a front position on the adjacent wall.



The key wall position, however, is occupied by our mission statement. Suzann (Gad) Rhodes, BHJ's Executive Director in the mid-1990's, felt our members and staff should be constantly reminded that BHJ's strength, as noted in the mission statement, is its ability to communicate and seek regional cooperation and consensus.

With 27 incorporated communities and three communities, there is strength in our numbers. On an economic basis, we live in an increasingly competitive environment. Local, state and federal dollars are flat. The axiom "doing less with more" rings true. Unfortunately, our regional infrastructure and redevelopment needs are ever increasing. We have the oldest infrastructure in Ohio. Many of our key redevelopment sites are occupied as industrial dinosaurs. If the lead factor for redevelopment is "location, location, location" then these sites need to be returned to their rightful and productive position.

In sum, next time you walk into our office, look around and find our framed mission statement. Think about our regional challenges. Picture the ability of a consensus community to capture its fair share of needed infrastructure investment.

John Brown, AICP
jbrown@bhjmpc.org

ODOT DISTRICT 11 WELCOMES NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR

*By Becky McCarty, Public Information Officer
ODOT District 11 Public Information Officer*

Effective April 4, 2005, ODOT Director Gordon Proctor appointed James Spain District Deputy Director of ODOT District 11.

Proctor asked District Deputy Director Myron Pakush to take over the reigns in District Five when their deputy director resigned in March to take a job in the private sector. Prior to serving as deputy director in District 11, Pakush was the Transportation Planning & Programs Administrator in District Five, so he is very familiar with the district.

“Jim is a veteran of state government and has been a valuable part of the department’s management team for more than eight years,” said Proctor. “He will provide the kind of leadership that will continue to make ODOT one of the finest transportation departments in the nation.”

Spain, 53, replaces Pakush, who served as the Deputy Director for District 11 since 1999. He is a resident of Harrison County and is very familiar with ODOT’s systems and processes. Most recently, he served the department as the Business & Human Resources Administrator for ODOT District 10.

Spain said, “This is a great challenge for me. I look forward to the opportunities that lie ahead of us and am very excited to be back home, working for the people of east-central Ohio.”

As the district’s chief executive, Spain is responsible for the planning, design, construction and maintenance of the transportation system in District 11’s seven counties, including Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson, and Tuscarawas counties. District 11 employs 344 people and oversees an annual construction program of approximately \$40



James Spain

million. The district is also in charge of all snow and ice removal operations on the state highway system in its region.

In addition to ODOT, Spain has 17 years of experi-

ence in state government, serving several Ohio state agencies, including the Ohio Reformatory for Women, the Department of Rehabilitation, the Belmont Correctional Institution, and the Cambridge Development Center MRDD.

Spain attended Ashland University. He and his wife, Patty, reside in Freeport, Ohio, where he owns and operates a 230-acre recreational property and tree farm.

2005 OFFICERS ELECTED FOR BHJ BOARD

In late January, at its annual organizational meeting, the BHJ Commission elected Danny Greathouse, Hancock County commissioner, as chairman for 2005. Other elected officers are Gary Folden (Vice Chairman), Norma Tarr (Treasurer) and Dave Fortunato (Secretary)

Outgoing Chairman Gary Folden was acknowledged for his financial stewardship and community leadership throughout 2004. Mr. Folden stated, “The revenue landscape for regional and local governments is changing. Through BHJ, we have an opportunity to do more with less.”



Dr. Brown presents outgoing chairman, Gary Folden, with a gift of appreciation.

EDWARDS AND KELCEY REGIONAL BRIDGE STUDY WINS ACEC/OHIO ENGINEERING HONOR AWARD

CINCINNATI, OH – A preliminary engineering and feasibility study that is expected to lead to the replacement of two Ohio River bridges between Ohio and West Virginia has earned Edwards and Kelcey an Honor Award in the 2005 Engineering Excellence Awards sponsored by the American Council of Engineering Companies of Ohio (ACEC/OH).



**Dr. John Brown, BHJ Executive Director
and Mr. Jack Pflum, Edwards and Kelcey**

Caroline Duffy and Jack Pflum, two vice presidents of Edwards and Kelcey, and John Brown, AICP, Executive Director, representing the Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson (BHJ) Metropolitan Planning Commission, the client for the study, received the Honor Award during a presentation February 23, 2005 in the State Capital Building in Columbus, Ohio. Jack Pflum is the project principal and manager for Edwards and Kelcey. The study was funded by the Ohio and West Virginia Departments of Transportation.

After being retained by the BHJ Metropolitan Planning Commission, Edwards and Kelcey, as prime consultant to the BHJ Study, helped to convene a special 31-member Bridge Advisory Committee that met more than 20 times, including holding 10 public meetings, to involve the community and educate the public-at-large.

"One of the first conclusions reached was that, with the three existing bridges residing close to each other, regional development was stunted both by bottlenecking and lack of roadway access to available land," ACEC/OH stated in a press release announcing the award. Throughout the study, Edwards and Kelcey encouraged rigorous public involvement in the highly technical process. The ACEC/OH judges used a point system; there were no written comments.

After evaluating, in a series of public forums, seven alternative conceptual bridge location plans, including a "no-build" option, the working committee recommended the replacement of existing bridges at Steubenville, Ohio; new roadway improvements to mitigate the anticipated closing of the bridge at Weirton, West Virginia; and the construction of a new bridge over the Ohio River downstream near Wellsburg, West Virginia. Two of the three bridges studied in the 18-mile corridor are approaching 100 years of age.

Edwards and Kelcey is a nationally recognized engineering, design, planning and construction management firm serving public and private clients. Headquartered in Morristown, New Jersey, the company has 900 employees and 22 regional offices. EK is ranked 61st among the nation's Top 500 Design Firms by Engineering News-Record.

THE "IOWA BUS QUEEN" - A LESSON IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship has been around for a long time. In 1922, despite protests by railroad corporations, Helen Schultz founded the first woman-owned busline, Red Ball Transportation Company in Iowa. Starting with two round trips daily between Charles City and Waterloo, she gradually built up a clientele that consisted primarily of women shoppers and traveling salesmen.



Schultz began to capitalize on her newsworthy image as an attractive, young woman who was fighting the mighty railroad corporations. A local newspaper, the Des Moines Register, named Ms. Schultz the "Iowa Bus Queen."



In June of 1930, Ms. Schultz sold the company for \$200,000 and retired from the bus business.

BRIDGE ACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE SEEKS SAFETY AND ACCESS SOLUTIONS TO BHJ'S MIXING BOWL

BY: JOHN BROWN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On January 12 and March 9 at Half-Moon Industrial Park in Weirton, BHJ's Bridge Access Subcommittee met to assure traffic coordination and progress near the Veteran's Memorial Bridge, Ft. Steuben Bridge, Panhandle Railroad Bridge, Freedom Way and University Boulevard. A consultant and previous BHJ subcommittee in 2003 identified this ½ mile corridor as a crucial transportation link with an immediate need for design and weight bearing improvements.

The following key decisions or announcements were made during the January and March subcommittee meetings.

- HDR Consultants inspected the Ft. Steuben Bridge in 2004 and rated the bridge as in poor or deteriorated condition and suggested weight limitations. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), in July, subsequently placed weight limitations on the Ft. Steuben Bridge.
- ODOT has programmed \$4.3 million in demolition funds to remove the Ft. Steuben Bridge in 2009.
- Given traffic safety and design issues at the intersection of Dean Martin and University Boulevard, ODOT completed a Veterans Memorial Bridge Access Study. A preliminary recommendation for a southbound underpass

at University has been proposed.

- Without the above access improvements and subsequent to a demolition of the Ft. Steuben Bridge, the Dean Martin and University Boulevard intersection will fail during afternoon hours.
- In summer 05, the West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) will provide a \$150,000 widening improvement at Freedom Way and Weirton's Main Street.
- When right-of-way acquisition is approved by private ownership in Half-Moon Industrial Park, a \$400,000 repaving and drainage improvement project will be initiated.

The Bridge Access Subcommittee is composed of a broad range of BHJ, ODOT, WVDOT and elected officials. Subsequent to the subcommittee's March meeting, BHJ's Full Commission met and, in letter form, stated to both state transportation problems a time delay exists between the programmed demolition of the Ft. Steuben Bridge and planned access improvements at Dean Martin Boulevard and University Boulevard. This delay creates a regional safety and access problem.

BUS TRIVIA

- 1827 New York--first horse-drawn urban stagecoach (omnibus) line
- 1905 New York--first bus line (Fifth Avenue Coach Co.)
- 1912 Cleveland--first street railway to operate buses (Cleveland Railway)
- 1916 Saint Louis--first public bus-only transit agency
- 1917 New York--last horse-drawn street railway line closed
- 1920 first bus not based on truck chassis (Fageol Safety Coach)
- 1923 Bay City, MI, Everett, WA, Newburgh, NY--first cities to replace all streetcars with buses
- 1927 Detroit--first bus without cowl-type engine
- 1933 San Antonio--first large city to replace all streetcars with buses
- 1936 bus manufacturers began to assume control of or influence street railways
- 1939 Chicago--first street with designated bus lane
- 1940 first time bus ridership exceeded street railway ridership
- 1941 New York, NY--first racially-integrated bus operator workforce
- 1973 Boston, Dayton, OH, Philadelphia, San Francisco, & Seattle become last surviving trolleybus systems
- 1977 San Diego--first wheelchair-lift-equipped fixed-route bus



TRANSIT – IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE CITIZENS OF THE OHIO VALLEY

by Tim Reinard, Transit Manager—Weirton Transit Corporation

Everyone that is in Public Transportation feels that the service they provide is a benefit to the communities of the Ohio Valley and improves the lives of our citizens or we wouldn't be doing it. With the costs associated with fuel, insurance, repairs and purchase or replacement of a vehicle, the citizens of the valley often find that it is more economical to ride the bus rather than own or operate an automobile. The downside is there is a reduction in the freedom of movement. If one wants to travel from place to place, the individual must plan their trip according to their provider's schedule. The trade off may be a small price to pay when you look at all the priorities in our lives.

The driving force for transit service is the local economy and the age of our citizenry. In our area the mill jobs and jobs that supported the mill were the base of our economy. These jobs have now been downsized and often pensions have been reduced or are frozen. These factors affect the disposal income of the valley residents. Often this requires that people work one or two part time jobs to make ends meet. These factors often put safe or economical automobiles out of the reach of people that must be mobile. So the transit steps in to fill the gap. And while there is often transportation for those of us over the age of 62, which accounts for approximately 32% of our population,

provided by the Senior Centers or the Commissions on aging there is a large market of person who do not qualify for this service that may well be underserved.

To this end, the transit providers of Hancock and Brooke counties have joined together to look at an expansion study that should be completed in October of 2005. It is my belief that the Goal of the Study is, to figure out how we can coordinate the services of all the transit providers, so we can move people in the most cost effective way for the clients and also for the providers. All the providers rely on federal grant monies and each of us has to maximize our grants to get us through this economic downturn and into a mode that will support our citizenry's mobility needs and any possible economic development in the area.

We will keep you informed of our progress and will provide the residents of the area with opportunities to voice their opinions, concerns and requirements in a public forum. We hope that when the forums occur people tell us what they think or we may well miss the mark of serving the communities with a seamless transit that will open new windows of opportunity for our citizens.

Watch for future articles from BHJ and your local newspaper.

SPRING CALENDAR

| | | |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| May 3 | BHJ Executive Committee | Noon |
| May 18 | TAC Meeting Full Commission | 10:30 a.m. Noon |
| May 30 | Memorial Day—Office Closed | |
| June 15 | BHJ Awards Luncheon—Serbian American Cultural Center, Weirton, WV | Noon |
| July 12 | Executive Committee | Noon |
| August | No Meetings | |
| September 5 | Labor Day—Office Closed | |
| September 6 | BHJ Executive Committee | Noon |

HAVE YOU RIDDEN AN OMNIBUS????

Public transportation has been around for a long time. In 1826, a retired French army officer set up a short stage line between the center of town and his public baths on the outskirts. He discovered, however, that his passengers were getting off at intermediate points rather than patronizing his baths. He changed his focus, and the “omnibus”, which combined the functions of the hackney and stage-coach was born.

Omnibus service came to the United States in 1829 in New York City and expanded to Philadelphia in 1831, Boston in 1835 and Baltimore in 1844. The city government would grant a private person who was in the livery or freight business an exclusive franchise to operate coaches along a given street. In return, the company agreed to maintain certain minimum levels of service.

The omnibus, however, had repercussions in society. Even the most liberal-minded had never experienced being put, even if for only half an hour, into unheard-of physical intimacy, squeezed together knee-to-knee.

As technology developed, elevated steam railroads, cable-pulled cars, electric streetcars, and underground electric trains all became common, and many of these developments were pioneered in the U.S. All operated on rails,



and it wasn't until the 1910-1920 period that improved street pavement and internal combustion engines led to the widespread introduction of buses.

As gasoline motors became practical, companies started using multi-passenger vehicles to provide transportation where rails and water transportation were not available. Buses became more



Kiaser Bus

and more popular in part because of their speed compared to horses and their flexibility compared to rail vehicles.

They were also popular for their relatively low cost.

Today, bus transportation is not as common in the rural



areas such as ours. People travel greater distances to work and for recreation. The downtown area is not longer the hub of activity. In the larger cities, however, bus transportation remains a vital means of transportation.

Another challenge to bus transportation is the relatively slow speed compared to cars. However, buses maintain low cost of entry and route flexibility and they are a standard part of public transportation both within cities and between cities.



Do you remember.....1951 GMC used for bus service in the Steubenville-Weirton area.

“Omnibus” is actually a Latin word meaning “for all”. As technology advanced and motorized transportation became successful, the motorized omnibus was called an “autobus.” Eventually, the term bus was used meaning “large public conveyance.”



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Related Web Sites

Appalachian Regional Commission
www.arc.gov

Brooke Pioneer Trail Assoc. Inc
www.brookepioneertrail.org

Business Development Corporation of the
Northern Panhandle
www.bhbdc.org

CHANGE, Inc.
www.changeinc.org

City of Steubenville
www.ci.steubenville.oh.us

CommuteInfo
www.commuteinfo.org

Hancock County Convention and Visitors Bureau
www.hancockcvb.com

Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce
www.jeffersoncountychamber.com

Ohio Department of Transportation
www.dot.state.oh.us

Progress Alliance
www.progressalliance.com

State of Ohio Government Information
www.state.oh.us

State of West Virginia Government Info.
www.state.wv.us

State Route 2 & Interstate 68 Authority
www.route2andi68.com

U.S. Census Bureau
www.census.gov

U.S. Department of Transportation
www.dot.gov

Village of Wintersville
www.wintersville.net

Weirton Chamber of Commerce
www.weirtonchamber.com

Weirton Steel Corp.
www.weirton.com

West Virginia Department of Transportation
www.wvdot.com

West Virginia Development Office
www.wvdo.org