



Operating Above the Standard

The Wheel

Public Transportation News
January / February / March 2023
Vol. 52, No. 1



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The Wheel is published quarterly and mailed or emailed to riders, agencies, legislators and other interested parties.

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OATS, Inc. (dba OATS Transit) is a private, not-for-profit transportation provider serving 87 Missouri counties. Transportation is available to the general public in rural areas. In urban areas (Columbia, St. Louis, St. Joseph, Springfield, Kansas City) service is limited to contract service, and not available to the general public. Contact your local OATS Transit office for service available to you, or to enter into an agreement to pay for services.

OATS Transit operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. We are an equal opportunity employer M/F/H/V.

Relay Missouri is available to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, and/or speech impaired. Use the Relay Missouri service by calling 711 to talk with an OATS representative or to schedule your trip.

OATS Transit Board of Directors

President: Scott Kosky
Vice President: Darleen Rapp
Secretary/Treasurer: Tammy Nadler
Past President: Krissy Sinor

Members: Angie Crowder, John Griesheimer, Jeff Leeman, Patricia Mefford, Essence Montgomery, Julie Rodgers, Rex Scott, Stacey Steffens, Mel Sundermeyer, and Andrew Warlen.

Board Meetings are held six times each year & open to the public.

Bus schedules & fare information can be found at:

www.oatstransit.org/schedules
Phone: 888-875-6287
Follow us on social media:
@oatstransit



Cover photo: George Hilliard's photo of an OATS bus in the winter showcases what some drivers wake up to. Hilliard drives for OATS Transit in the Northwest region.

FY22 Annual Message from the President & Executive Director

IT IS A PRIVILEGE to be leading OATS Transit, an iconic, mission-driven organization through what has arguably been the most challenging time in its history.

There is no denying the challenges we have faced over the past two years. OATS Transit, however, has proven to be resilient and as we enter the next chapter of our proud 51-year history, it is with a renewed sense of purpose as we finally come out of the service reductions caused by the pandemic.

One thing that has deeply impressed us is how OATS Transit resides in the fabric of so many people's lives. The part we play in helping Missourians remain independent and in their own homes and communities is a source of pride and purpose for our employees, partners, and volunteers.



Last year we provided 956,472 one-way trips with a fleet of 752 vehicles that traveled 11,215,062 miles. While still below pre-pandemic service levels, these numbers continue to grow every month.

One thing about a half-century-old organization: it's seen a lot. We've continued providing safe, caring, and reliable service through economic downturns, labor shortages, spikes in gas prices, and now, a plague. Looking forward to the year ahead, we know that we will continue to work through every challenge that comes our way. We may have a long road to recovery ahead of us, but we will get there. With the support of the Board of Directors and Staff of more than 560 people, OATS Transit will successfully move into the 'living with' COVID-19 world and continue to honor our mission as we enter our 6th decade of service.

Krissy Sinor, President

Dorothy J. Yeager, Executive Director

Our Mission

Enhancing quality of life by providing safe, caring, and reliable transportation services.

Winter Weather Policy

Our first concern at OATS Transit is the safety of our riders and employees. While every effort is made to operate according to published schedules, weather conditions may cause traveling to be hazardous.

As a general guide, OATS Transit service will be canceled in a county when school bus service is canceled in that county due to inclement weather. In the event localized weather exists during which school bus operations continue, the OATS Transit driver may still recommend to the Regional Director that service be canceled.

Any service cancellation will be closely coordinated with the local office to assure all who are scheduled that day are notified of the cancellation. Keep in mind cancellations may be localized and not affect the entire region.

Riders are encouraged to listen to their local radio or television stations for updates on cancellations in their area.

Because OATS Transit operates in 87 counties, you must contact your local office with questions or cancellations of your scheduled ride.



New Officers for Board of Directors

New officers were elected to serve on the OATS, Inc. Board of Directors at their meeting on November 29, 2022. Scott Kosky of Springfield, Missouri was elected as President. He will replace Krissy Sinor who has served for the past two years. Darleen Rapp of St. Louis will serve as Vice President, and Tammy Nadler of Clinton, Missouri was elected Secretary/Treasurer. Congratulations and thank you for your service. The Board also recognized former board member, Edna Foster, who retired after 10 years of service.



Scott Kosky
President



Darleen Rapp
Vice President



Tammy Nadler
Secretary/Treasurer

SAFE DRIVER AWARDS

Each quarter that an OATS Transit driver has an accident-free quarter, they are awarded a Safe Driver award. Their names are placed into a random drawing per region for a chance to receive a gift. Out of all the safe drivers, the eight drivers pictured below had their names chosen at random to win. Congratulations to the winners of the drawings that took place for the Fiscal Year 2022. Also, congratulations to all drivers state-wide who were issued safe driver awards. #FrontLineHeros

East



William Lamkemeyer
Pictured with Pam Knox

Mid-east



Frank Yeggy
Pictured with Michael Burbank
and Megan Ellert

Mid-MO



Darwin George
Pictured with Gary Anspach

Midwest



Robert Noll
Pictured with Tracy Walkup

Northeast



Dan Rainville
Pictured with Sheree Webb

Northwest



Randy Ford

Southwest



Tamela Stevens
Pictured with Jeff Robinson

West



Wendy Schick

SUPPORT FOR OATS TRANSIT

OATS Transit is pleased and grateful to be the recipient of numerous grants given by Missouri businesses and foundations over the past few months.

American Direct Marketing

- \$10,000 for East Region bus match.

Carolyn Sherman

- \$1,000 for operating support in St. Louis.

First Christian Church of Troy

- \$1,242 for bus match in Lincoln county.

Jefferson Foundation

- \$100,000 for operating support in Jefferson county.

Lebanon Area Foundation Community CARES

- \$4,500 for operating support in Laclede county.

Truman Heartland Foundation

- \$11,000 for the West region.

Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth

- \$12,000 for operating support in Pettis County.

Veterans United Foundation

- \$10,000 to pay for rides for Mid-MO region Veterans.



The Veterans United Foundation provided support to Veterans who live in the Mid-MO Region.



Operating Above the Standard

Annual Report

~ Fiscal Year 2022 ~

July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022

Facts & Highlights



956,492
trips
provided



553
employees
statewide



591,697
operating
hours



702
In-Kind
ads
\$79,372.61 value



8 region
offices &
2 satellite
offices



18.3%
of employees
are veterans



752
vehicles



11,206,262
miles
traveled



245
safe driver
awards

Funding & Expenses

Operating Budget: \$ 25.8 million

Where our funding comes from:

Federal funding **47%**
Special billings **24%**
Medicaid **12%**
Rider fares and contributions **2%**
Department of Mental Health **8%**
Area Agencies on Aging **2%**
State funding **1%**
Other **4%**

Where our funding goes:

Driver/dispatcher wages and benefits **48%**
Direct operating support **16%**
Gasoline **14%**
Indirect admin **8%**
Repairs and maintenance **7%**
Vehicle insurance **4%**
Driver expenses **2%**
Supplies and equipment **1%**

Board of Directors meetings are held six times a year at OATS Transit's home office in Columbia, MO. The Board of Directors provide policy direction, guidance, and fiduciary direction for the organization. The Board includes President Krissy Sinor, Vice-President Scott Kosky, Secretary/Treasurer Darleen Rapp, and 11 other board members.

BEHIND THE SCENES

An organization that covers 87 of the 114 counties in Missouri, has an operating budget of \$25.8 million, and employs over 560 employees has a lot to take into consideration. It's a team effort to make sure that rural riders are given safe, caring, and reliable transportation to their daily appointments. OATS Transit takes a lot of pride in our "behind the scenes" training and fun.



(Left photos): Our drivers spend a lot of time practicing and learning how to safely maneuver our buses. Drivers are able to listen to tips and receive feedback from Team Leaders, Operations Managers and Regional Directors.



(Left photo): Directors and managers spent time receiving training on a new payroll system. Making sure the organization has up-to-date equipment and the ability to provide on-time management software helps with cost-saving measures.



(Right photo): Thank you to our Mid-MO (Laclede County) drivers, **Mark Prenger** and **Robin Ballhagen** for making our riders smile and for making the bus look festive.



(Above photo): Santa made an appearance in the Northwest Region and gave the reindeer a break when he drove an OATS Transit bus. We heard that the people that work in our St. Joseph office were all on the good list this year. It sure helps that one of their drivers, **Mike Groce**, knows Santa personally.



(Left photo): Thank you to the Lebanon Area Foundation for their support towards OATS Transit. Pictured are Mid-MO Regional Director **Gary Anspach** and Mid-MO Operations Manager **Mike Altemueller** who represented OATS Transit at the ceremony.



Yeager Celebrates 35 Years of Service

OATS Transit's Executive Director **Dorothy Yeager** was honored this week for 35 years of service with the company. OATS Transit is a not-for-profit corporation that has provided public transportation in the state of Missouri since 1971. The company is headquartered in Columbia MO and serves 87 counties in the state.

Dorothy Yeager started at OATS in 1987 as the Communications Assistant and was promoted throughout her tenure. She held the positions of Administrative Services Director and Assistant Executive Director, before being appointed as Executive Director in July 2012. She has an Associate's degree in Communications from State Fair Community College and a Bachelor's degree from the University of Missouri.

Dorothy serves on the board of the Missouri Public Transit Association and the Bus Coalition as a state delegate for the Community Transportation Association of America, a member of the Society for Human Resource Managers, and a Certified Community Transit Manager, which is a national certification program for transit professionals. This activity in transit at both the state and national levels has served OATS Transit well, making it one of the most recognized community transit systems in the nation.

Thank you, Dorothy, for your service to the organization!



OATS Transit Board of Directors, with Dorothy Yeager, Executive Director. (left to right): Andrew Warlen, Jeff Leeman, Patricia Mefford, Dorothy Yeager, Krissy Sinor, Mel Sundermeyer, Julie Rogers, Stacey Steffens, Darleen Rapp, and John Griesheimer. Other board members not present: Tammy Nadler, Essence Montgomery, Angie Crowder, and Scott Kosky, and Rex Scott.

Employee Anniversaries

The employees listed below celebrated an anniversary October - December 2022. Thank you to each of these employees for your hard work and dedication to OATS Transit!

35 years:

Dorothy Yeager - Executive Director

30 years:

Delilah Osborn - Mideast Driver

25 years:

Donna Chism - Midwest Driver

15 years:

Lisa Bailey - Southwest Operations Manager

Teresa Gilbert - Northeast Driver

Charlie Jakeway - East Driver

Sharon McElfresh - Northeast Driver

Magda Villarreal - Midwest Driver

10 years:

Charlotte Hall - Mid-MO Driver

Randy Hillyard - Northwest Driver

5 years:

Richard Casady - Northwest Driver

Cleaster Dean - East Driver

Bruce Miller - Mid-MO Driver

Rob Monroe, Jr. - Home Office Custodian

David Nations - Midwest Driver

Larry O'Dell - Midwest Driver

Stan Rippey - Northwest Driver

Debbie Smith - Mideast Driver



Delilah Osborn



Donna Chism

Thank
you

OATS Transit
2501 Maguire Blvd., Ste. 101
Columbia, MO 65201-8252

Nonprofit Org.
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Columbia, MO
 Permit No. 86

OATS Transit Service Area

Northwest Region Office
 St. Joseph, MO
 (816) 279-3131
 (800) 831-9219

Northeast Region Office
 Macon, MO
 (660) 415-0901
 (800) 654-6287

Home Office
 Columbia, MO
 (573) 443-4516
 (888) 875-6287

Mid-MO Region
 Columbia, MO
 (573) 449-3789
 (800) 269-6287

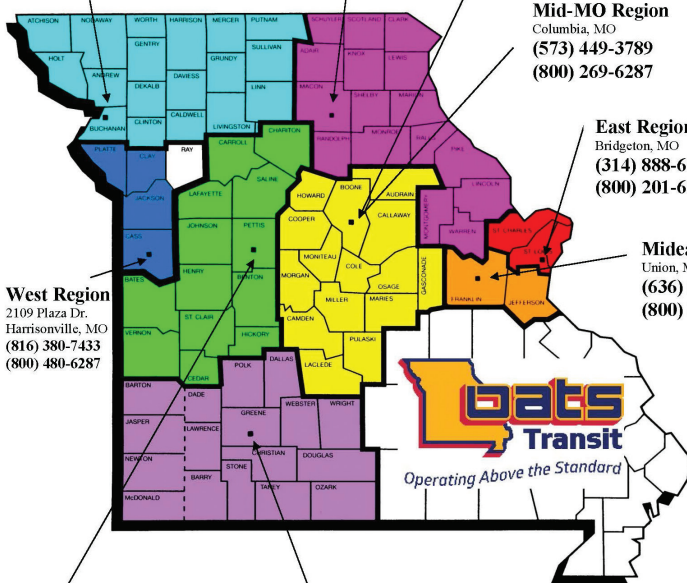
East Region Office
 Bridgeton, MO
 (314) 888-6720
 (800) 201-6287

Mideast Region
 Union, MO
 (636) 583-1125
 (800) 373-1631

West Region
 2109 Plaza Dr.
 Harrisonville, MO
 (816) 380-7433
 (800) 480-6287

Midwest Region Office
 Sedalia, MO
 (660) 827-2611 (800) 276-6287

Southwest Region Office
 Springfield, MO
 (417) 887-9272 (800) 770-6287



Holiday Reminder: OATS Transit offices, as well as regular routes, will be closed and not running on these upcoming 2023 holidays:

January 2nd, January 16th, and February 20th.

Enjoy time with
 your friends and
 family!

**Happy New
 Year**

