

The Wheel

1971 - 2021 Goats Transit 50th ANNIVERSARY

Public Transportation News
Vol. 50, No. 1



The Wheel is published quarterly & mailed/ emailed to active OATS Transit riders, legislators, current funding sources & other interested people in the 87 county service area. It is mailed third class bulk postage paid at Columbia. If your name is misspelled or address has changed, please call your local OATS Transit office or email the editor.

Jill Stedem, Editor

Phone: 573-443-4516 or 888-875-6287

Email: jstedem@oatstransit.org

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 & 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. Individuals and agencies may contract with OATS Transit for transportation.

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: Krissy Sinor

Vice President: Scott Kosky

Secretary/Treasurer: Darleen Rapp

Past President: Mel Sundermeyer

Members: Rachel Baskerville, Angie Crowder, Edna Foster, John Griesheimer, Jeff Leeman, Patricia Mefford, Essence Montgomery, Tammy Nadler, Julie Rodgers, Rex Scott, Stacey Steffens and Andrew Warlen.

Board Meetings are held six times per year virtually/in-person, and are open to the public.

Bus schedules & fare information can be found at:

www.oatstransit.org/schedules

Development Office: 888-875-6287

Follow us on social media:
@oatstransit



Rural Transpo



They say “when you dream, dream big”! I’m

sure when a small group of people gathered around the kitchen table in 1970 to talk about transportation in Missouri, they never knew just how big their dream would become.

From a small pilot project providing transportation in eight mid-Missouri counties with only 3 vehicles, these amazing pioneers turned three vehicles and five drivers into a multi-million dollar company with more than 600 buses and employees, and 11 offices covering 87 counties in the state.

The end of the year brings about many reports talking about numbers; and our numbers are impressive. But from the beginning, OATS Transit has always been more about People. When looking through the archive of photos for the front page collage, there were far more smiling faces to choose from than vehicles.

When I think about what it’s like to lead an organization like this one, I feel privileged. 50 years in the making, it’s clear that we’ve come from a long line of leaders with a drive to have an impact for our state and communities. I still call upon the first general manager of OATS Transit – Peter Schauer – for guidance and advice and count Linda Yaeger (Operations and then Executive Director from 1978-2012) as a friend and mentor. And no reminiscing about our history is complete without thoughts of former President Nolan McNeill who passed away in 2019 after volunteering for over 30 years on our Board.

It’s astonishing to think how far we’ve come. That from a small group of passionate volunteers with the vision to get rural Missourian seniors where they needed to go, we’ve grown into a renowned industry leader.

Born to meet the increasing needs of a rural population, we’ve since expanded our reach to a far wider demographic. And here we stand today, five decades on, with one remarkable story to tell – a story with many chapters yet to come.

To follow our journey to 50 years, look for stories in this and other issues of The Wheel and on our website. And don’t forget to celebrate with us on Facebook, Youtube and Twitter throughout the next 365 days!

Dorothy J. Yeager, Executive Director

Transportation 50 Years in the Making!

1970 A group of Missouri volunteers attended a White House conference on Aging in Washington DC.

1971 Cooperative Transportation Service was formed & its first 3 buses rolled out on November 1.



1973 Service grew to encompass 88 counties in the state in just two short years.

1973 The company became a non-profit and changed the name to Older Adults Transportation Service.



1980 With the help of federal funds, service was expanded to include the rural general public, and our name was shortened to OATS, Inc.

1981 OATS grew to 231 employees with 134 buses, 1,012 volunteers and 20,000 members.

1999 OATS began its first city service in Sedalia MO, followed by 20 more cities in the years to follow.

2003 When a St. Louis provider suddenly closed, OATS quickly stepped in to begin its first urban service. 50 of that provider's drivers joined the OATS team.



2004 A new headquarters was constructed in Columbia, where the home office & MidMO operations now reside.

2011 A regional office was constructed in St. Joseph MO, followed by Bridgeton in 2012, Macon in 2013, and Springfield in 2014.

2018 OATS updated its logo, which blended the original block lettering with a new tagline (*Operating Above The Standard*) and pop of blue color.



2021 50 Years in business and still growing! Last year we provided 1 million trips with more than 600 buses.



Missouri Foundations & Businesses Provide Support

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

- **American Direct Marketing**- \$10,000 for operating support in St. Louis area.
- **Arnold Eagles Club Golden Age Fund**- \$1,000 for Jefferson County operating.
- **Boone County CARES Act**- \$5,931 for COVID related expenses.
- **Community Foundation of the Ozarks, Marshfield Area Community Foundation**- \$1,200 for Webster County bus match.
- **Community Foundation of the Ozarks, Ash Grove Community Foundation**- \$2,000 for Greene County bus match.
- **Community Foundation of the Ozarks, Nixa Community Foundation**- \$6,000 for Christian County bus match.
- **Community Foundation of Central Missouri**- \$1,000 for senior transportation.
- **First State Community Bank of Lebanon**- \$1,500 for Laclede County operating.
- **Jefferson Foundation**- \$100,000 for operating support and \$26,000 for bus match for Jefferson County.
- **Mercy Hospital Jefferson**- Donation of a 2010 bus for Jefferson County.
- **Moniteau County MO CARES Act**-\$2,367 for COVID related expenses.
- **Orscheln Industries Foundation** - \$1,000 for Northeast MO bus match.
- **Rotary Club of Springfield Southeast**- \$1,000 for Greene County senior transportation.
- **Sisters of Charity**- \$10,000 for Johnson County bus match.
- **Taney County**- \$3,867 for COVID related expenses.

To find out how you can support public transportation in your local community, call OATS Transit Development staff at 573-443-4516, or email jstedem@oatstransit.org. Your support is important so we can continue being there for individuals who need rides to medical appointments, work and so much more!

Photo left to right: First State Community Bank employees Brett Burnell, Kelli Wright, Katie Massey, OATS Transit Driver Robin Ballhagen, OATS Transit Operations Manager Mike Altemueller, FSCB employees Judy Taylor, Lesli Reid & Michelle Arnold.



2020 Safe Driver Awards



Randy Lee-West



Steve Griffith- Northwest



Lyle Jones- Mid-Missouri



Keith White - East
with Chantelle Gragg



Debbie Arnall- Southwest
with Jeff Robinson



Kelly Barron- Mideast
with Michael Burbank



Kathy Robinson- Northeast



Joy DelValle- Midwest



Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2020

Facts & Highlights

1,025,692
trips provided

590,613
operating hours

625
employees
statewide

134,631
volunteer
hours
\$1,422,725 value

1,192,644
gallon of
gas

17%
Employees
are Veterans

10,395,611
miles
traveled

292 safe
driver awards

1,287 In-Kind Ads
\$150,281 value

8 region
offices and
4 satellite offices

Revenue Sources:

- Federal Funding **43%**
- Special Billings **16%**
- Medicaid **13%**
- Local Cash & Gas Tax Refunds **12%**
- Dept. of Mental Health **8%**
- Area Agencies on Aging **4%**
- State Funding **2%**
- Rider Fares & Contributions **2%**



Expenses:

- Driver/Dispatcher Wages & Benefits **51%**
- Direct Operating Support **13%**
- Gasoline **11%**
- Indirect Admin **8%**
- Repairs & Maintenance **6%**
- Vehicle Insurance **5%**
- Driver Expenses **3%**
- Supplies & Equipment **3%**

Board of Directors meetings are held six times a year. The Board of Directors provide policy direction, guidance and fiduciary direction for the organization. The Board includes President Mel Sundermeyer, Vice-President Krissy Sinor, Secretary/Treasurer Scott Kosky and board members.

New Members Join Board of Directors

OATS Transit is happy to welcome two new members to its Board of Directors in 2021. Essence Montgomery and Andrew Warlen were newly appointed members of the Board, who will serve four-year terms in office.

Essence Montgomery of Raytown MO is the Chief Financial Officer of St. Mary's Medical Center in Blue Springs. Essence has a Bachelor of Science in Accounting, and a Master of Business Administration, both from Rockhurst University. In her spare time she serves on the Finance Committee of Memorial Church International, and Shepherd's Staff Holiday Foundation, as well as other community activities. She has received several honors and awards for her community involvement. Essence knows that transportation to healthcare is a barrier for many people, and she hopes her input will help remove those barriers.

Andrew Warlen of Blue Springs MO is the Cass County Health Department Director in Harrisonville MO. Andrew has a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Truman State University, and a Master of Public Health from the University of Kansas. He is also Past President of the Missouri Public Health Association, a Board Member on the Independence Kiwanis Club, President of the Greater Kansas City Chapter of Association of Professionals in Infection Control, and an Eagle Scout. Andrew wants to assist Missourians in acquiring transportation services to meet their daily needs.

These new newly appointed members join 14 other members from around the state of Missouri who make up the Board of Directors. The Board is responsible for overseeing the development and adoption of company policies, assisting with community outreach and approving the annual budget and audit. The Board meets six times per year.



Essence Montgomery



Andrew Warlen

New Officers for Board of Directors

New officers were elected to serve on the OATS, Inc. Board of Directors at their meeting on December 1, 2020. Krissy Sinor of Walnut Grove MO was elected as President. She will replace Mel Sundermeyer of Holt Summit who has served the last two years. Scott Kosky of Springfield will serve as Vice President, and Darleen Rapp of St. Louis was elected Secretary/Treasurer. Congratulations and thank you!



Krissy Sinor
President



Scott Kosky
Vice President



Darleen Rapp
Secretary/
Treasurer



Mel Sundermeyer
Past President

Employee Anniversaries



Donna Short- 35 Years
pictured with her co-workers



Lea Dzurick- 20 Years

The employees listed below celebrated an anniversary October - December 2020. Thank you to each of these employees for your hard work and dedication to OATS Transit!

35 years:

Donna Short- Southwest Operations Coordinator

20 years:

Lea Dzurick- Mid-Missouri Operations Manager

15 years:

Jerry Shaver- Midwest Driver

10 years:

Gina Wehde- Northeast Driver

Jim Slone- Midwest Driver

Terry Brown- Northeast Driver

Congratulations to all!

Mercy Hospital Donates Bus to OATS Transit

OATS Transit was pleased to receive a bus donated by Mercy Hospital Jefferson in Festus MO in October 2020. The bus was presented to OATS in order to help local resident's access health-care. The donated bus will be used on the Missouri Baptist route, which picks up individuals for cancer treatments and other appointments at Missouri Baptist. OATS Transit Operations Manager Kevin Porter was on hand to receive the bus donation from Megan Drissell, Mercy Hospital Community Health Director. OATS Transit has collaborated with the Hospital for many years to ensure local residents have access to health-care.



50th Anniversary Stories Needed!

We need your help! We are looking for rider stories, poems, thoughts, special memories and photos for a special edition book to be published for our 50th anniversary.



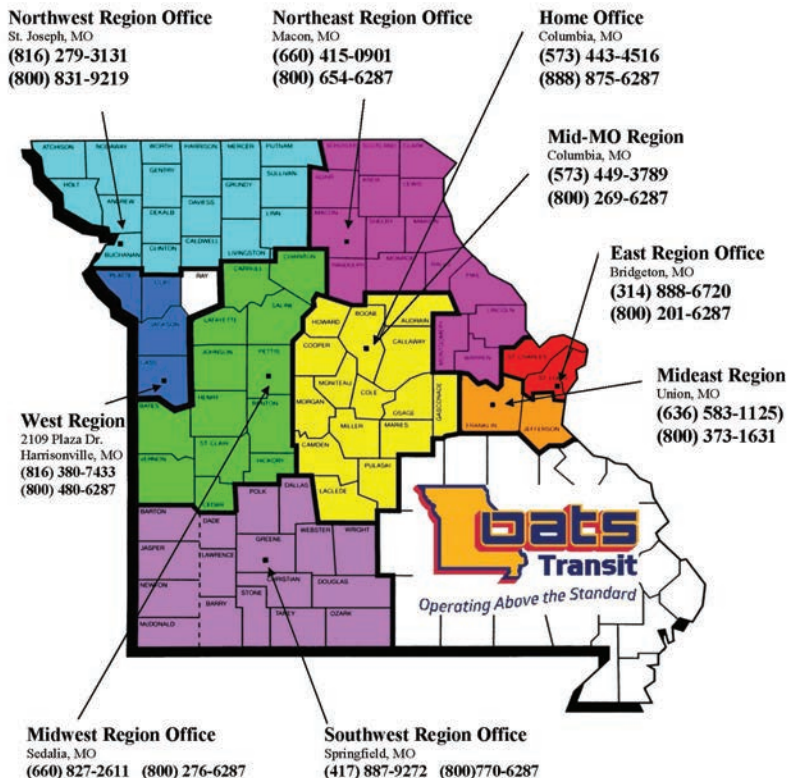
Please send your stories for the book to us at: OATS Transit 50th Project, 2501 Maguire Blvd, Suite 101, Columbia, MO 65201.

If you have a photo to share, but want to make sure you get it back, please make note of that and we will send it back to you once we have made a copy.

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

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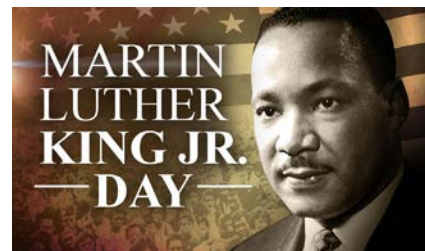
OATS Transit Service Area



Upcoming Holidays

OATS Transit offices will be closed and regular routes will not be running on the following 2021 holidays:

January 1st



January 18th

February 15th

