



STAGECOACH SPOKES



STAGECOACH TRANSPORTATION SERVICES, INC., PROVIDING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES IN CENTRAL VERMONT

A Seasonal Edition

89er North to Add New Stop

In response to increased ridership on the 89er North Commuter Route, Stagecoach is adding a stop on State Street in Montpelier. This location, in conjunction with the stop in front of Shaw's Supermarket on Main Street, will now offer two options for passengers boarding in Montpelier. One rider expressed, "The new State Street stop will make a perfect transition to GMTA's US 2 Commuter, ensuring that I can continue to use the service through bad weather and unforeseen traffic." The 89er North provides a round trip, Monday through Friday, operating between Montpelier, the park & ride lots at Exits 8, 7, 5, & 4, through to Vermont Technical College, downtown Randolph/Gifford Medical Center, and Vermont Law School in South Royalton. (See related article on the *Smart Commute* Program.)

Many Thanks for Countless Miles

Stagecoach wishes to acknowledge the great service of Volunteer Driver, Charlie Gaudette. For upwards of nine years, Charlie provided transportation two to three days per week to dialysis treatment for an elderly area resident. Across the years, as reliable as the returning dawn, Charlie was available to provide these life sustaining rides. Regretfully, the passenger he so faithfully served passed away recently. We join her thousand thanks with ours, in saluting Charlie as an Unsung Hero in being so dedicated to a job well done.

Savvy Employers Promote Smart Commute Programs

By Holly Brown



Stagecoach arrives at VT Law School to pick-up evening commuters

Employers in Central Vermont and the Upper Valley are taking the lead in promoting public transportation and commuting alternatives.

Stagecoach applauds the efforts of Dartmouth College, Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, Gifford Medical Center, Vermont Law School and Vermont Technical College who boldly stepped up to the plate with local funding to help make the River Route, the 89er, and the 89er North possible. Furthermore, several of these employers have become involved in the *Smart Commute* project being conducted by the Upper Valley Transportation Management Association (UVTMA) of which Stagecoach is a long-time member.

Through the Vermont Community Foundation's High Meadows Fund, the *Smart Commute* project helps participating employers develop and promote commuting options for their employees. Besides encouraging the use of other forms of transportation - carpooling, vanpooling, cycling, walking and transit - among employees, the *Smart Commute* program addresses the specific needs of each employer such as parking limitations, traffic congestion, and environmental awareness.

With assistance from this initiative, Dartmouth College has advanced pro-active measures including offering two Zip cars on campus, preferred parking for carpool participants, access to Zimride - a social media-based ridematching platform, and the introduction of vanpools for employees in distant towns.

Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center is using the *Smart Commute* study to help streamline traffic flow, reduce parking shortages, and increase conservation of natural resources, as well.

According to Michael Van Dyke, Dean of Vermont Technical College, that institution "continues to explore options for students, faculty and staff to find alternatives to single passenger vehicle commuting.

Continued >>

From Smart Commute to smart commuters - here are three stories of savvy employees:

- To connect with Stagecoach's 89er North at the Northfield Park-and-Ride, a VTC student frequently rides her bicycle from (and back to) the Roxbury Mountain Road! (Winter road conditions may, indeed, curtail this venture!)
- Twice weekly, two Cabot residents associated with Vermont Tech and Gifford Medical Center take Green Mountain Transit's US 2 Commuter bus from Marshfield to Montpelier, where they catch Stagecoach's 89er North, bound for Randolph Center and Randolph!
- The Road to Shanghai... One former area resident took the afternoon 89er North from Randolph to Montpelier where he was connecting with Greyhound, bound for Boston. Following a night's stay there, he was scheduled for a flight ultimately arriving in Shanghai, China, where the fellow teaches English!

Looking at *Smart Commute* options helps to lessen traffic, reduce crowding in campus parking spaces and offers members of the College community an enjoyable alternative to their daily drive."

Public transportation's benefits abound, and more employers in the Stagecoach service area are catching the momentum, advancing *Smart Commute* patterns.



Behind The Wheel... Drivers You Can Depend On, Garnett Hebb & David Ferris



By Holly Brown

When it comes to transporting passengers, Stagecoach is blessed with competent and courteous Drivers who safely deliver their precious “cargo” to various destinations.

Every Stagecoach driver has earned a CDL (Commercial Driver’s License) with Passenger Endorsement and has completed a comprehensive training and safety program. Courses to update and refresh driving skills and protocols are conducted on a regular basis, as well.

Stagecoach boasts stability among its Drivers; the current role call consists of eighteen with a combined 126 years of service to Stagecoach! Two of those Drivers have just entered their landmark twenty-fifth year with Stagecoach.

Operating out of the Stagecoach garage in Bradford, Garnett Hebb of Newbury was hired in April, 1986. Currently, he specializes in transporting clients for area human services programs, although Garnett has done a variety of routes over time.

Lisa Culbertson of Upper Valley Services which provides support to individuals with developmental disabilities states, “We utilize Stagecoach 40-50 hours a week so that people can access their communities for work, medical appointments and recreation. Garnett has been one of our drivers for many years and has always shown compassion, patience, and understanding. We congratulate him on reaching his 25-year milestone. We certainly appreciate his dedication!”

“It’s been a lot of years over a lot of roads,” exclaims Garnett. “I particularly enjoy transporting people with special needs. They miss me and express how glad they are when I return from taking vacation time off!”

David Ferris, based in Randolph, began his career as a Stagecoach Driver in the fall of 1986. One of David’s strongest assets is his versatility; at one time or another, he has actually driven every Stagecoach route including services provided at an earlier time in Montpelier, Middlebury, Waterbury, and Stowe.

Lois Blanchard of Braintree, a long-time passenger on the local “Maxi-Taxi” service, comments that “David has always gone out of his way to help me, and he is a very good Driver. He went to school with one of my sons, so I tend to treat him like one of the kids!”

David takes his driving seriously, but claims he “always keeps an extra smile in the glove compartment.”

Stagecoach Manager David Palmer commended both Garnett and David, stating “There is no substitute for qualified and experienced employees. Both these Drivers have made an enormous contribution to the success of the Stagecoach across many years and miles. Probably more than they realize, Garnett and David, on a daily basis have positively affected the lives of their passengers by giving each one a safe, reliable, and friendly ride to their destination.”

One passage in Katherine Blaisdell’s 1979 *Over the River and Through the Years* quotes Bittinger’s Haverhill history, painting a colorful picture of early Stagecoach Drivers in the area.

“They were a hardy set of men, frequently exposed to perils, cold, and storm, and held very responsible positions. In their hands was the safety of mail and passengers. . .In seasons of the year when the roads were heavy and many points of danger were to be passed. . . they met with many delays and brought in their fatigued teams and passengers at late hours.

As a rule they were favorites and justly popular with the traveling public. They were also regarded as important men of the community and a nod of recognition from the driver on the box was enough to make the ordinary man happy through the day. They had a pleasant word for the children and were patient with and considerate of the ladies who happened to be put into their care.

The drivers on local lines became so well acquainted with residents along their route that they carried messages and news, letters and packages for them, and did all kinds of shopping – even buying bonnets in Boston for the ladies.”

While times and conditions have changed over the years, some similarities hold true. The Stagecoach Drivers of today have earned a reputation for the courtesy and cheer they impart in the course of their daily transports. Besides being punctual and dependable, Drivers are always ready to lend a hand or share a joke. Passengers have even cited that, “They’re like family!”

Clearly, driving a bus is one thing, but it takes a very special person to be a Stagecoach Driver!

DATES TO REMEMBER

SATURDAY WEST LEBANON TRIP: OCT. 30, NOV. 6, 13, 20, 27, DEC. 4, 11, 18 • **FRIDAY WEST LEBANON TRIP:** NOV. 12 & DEC. 10
WEDNESDAY RUTLAND TRIP: NOV. 24 & DEC. 22 • **THURSDAY CHELSEA TO RANDOLPH TRIP:** OCT. 28, NOV. 4, 11, 18, 25, DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
AARP DRIVER SAFETY PROGRAM @ Stagecoach Conference Room, DEC. 8, 8:00^{AM} - noon



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