

# COMMUTER SERVICES OF PA

## Program Update

Serving employers and commuters in Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry and York counties.

TRANSIT CARPOOLING VANPOOLING WALKING



BIKING TELECOMMUTING STAGGERED SHIFTS

# Fall 2014 - Winter 2015

  
**COMMUTER SERVICES**  
OF PENNSYLVANIA

*Serving Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin,  
Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry & York Counties*

## Letter from SRTP Chair, Beth Artman

When I was first appointed to the Board of Directors for the Susquehanna Regional Transportation Partnership (SRTP) I was really excited about being involved in the Commuter Services program. As the representative for the York Area MPO I was able to play a role in making an impact on our regional roadways by pursuing positive changes to decrease traffic congestion and improve air quality.

Initially I had no idea what a truly unique organization I had joined. However, through the past several years, serving as a board member, then becoming part of the Executive Committee and finally completing my service as the Board Chair I am very proud and humbled to be affiliated with the mission of this organization. Being part of the SRTP and working with the URS staff and the Commuter Services program has been one of my favorite items to spend time on as part of my daily work tasks.

A new opportunity has now arisen for me to make an impact closer to home as incoming Board President of our local library. As we begin implementing the long range strategic plan and a library expansion I am excited about participating in the development of our library's future and its role in the community. I look forward to this new challenge and will approach this endeavor with the same excitement and vigor I shared with the SRTP Board.

Being part of the SRTP has brought me great enjoyment and satisfaction. Having been a part of the SRTP's growth, refinement and program challenges will always offer a personal level of pride. Of all the things that I will miss, it is the wonderful people of the SRTP I will miss seeing and working with the most. Their dedication to our organizational mission is what makes the SRTP and the Commuter Services program so successful and so special. I wish the entire Board continued success in the future and offer my thanks for their cooperation and support over the past several years.



## September was Try Transit Month

Commuter Services of Pennsylvania launched its fourth annual 'Try Transit' month in September, encouraging local commuters to try bus or rail transportation options rather than driving alone. This year, a total of 271 participants, logged their transit trips. Sixteen counties were represented with participants logging a total of 277,656 miles traveled by bus or train instead of automobile. To participate, commuters were asked to try local bus service or Amtrak, log the miles traveled, and turn it in to Commuter Services at the end of the month. By logging the mileage, commuters were entered to win a monthly pass from their local transit provider and other various prizes.

**Giovanna Molina** (top right) of Lebanon County was the randomly selected grand prize winner and received an Amazon Kindle. Molina opted to ride Lebanon Transit for twenty one days out of the month, logging a total of 63 miles.



**Buff Mitchell** (bottom right) of Cumberland County and Kim Monk of Dauphin County each won a pair of round-trip tickets to New York City on the Amtrak Keystone Service®. Mitchell rode Capital Area Transit, logging a total of 157.5 miles and Monk rode Capital Area Transit, logging a total of 10.



The following individuals also won a free monthly pass from their transit agency:

- Elizabeth Rodriguez of Reading, Berks County, logged 18.9 miles by riding BARTA.
- John Hines of Shippensburg, Franklin County, logged 817 miles riding Capital Area Transit.
- Amy Zeravsky of Lebanon, Lebanon County, logged more than 28 miles by riding Lebanon Transit.
- Evette Perry of York, York County, logged more than 119 miles by riding rabbittransit.
- Daniel Foltz of Leola, Lancaster County, logged 34.5 miles by riding Red Rose Transit.

**Special thanks to the following for attending Try Transit Month promotional events!**



(Left to right) Commuter Services Executive Director Matt Boyer, Berks County Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt, City of Reading Mayor Vaughn Spencer and SCTA Executive Director David Kilmer.



(Left to right) City of Harrisburg Mayor Eric Papenfuse, CAT Executive Director Bill Jones, Commuter Services Executive Director Matt Boyer





## Commuters Dump the Pump on June 19



National Dump the Pump Day, a day of awareness focusing on the benefits of using alternative forms of transportation as opposed to driving alone, was on Thursday, June 19th this year. To celebrate, Commuter Services encouraged commuters to submit their story detailing how they have saved money and/or improved their quality of life when they "Dumped the Pump" by using alternative transportation.

**LeeMarie Fisher** of Camp Hill, Cumberland County was selected as the grand prize winner. Fisher bicycles weekly to her job at Holy Spirit Health System in Cumberland County.

*Two additional runner-up winners were also awarded prizes:*

**Anna Foltz** of Lancaster, Lancaster County, who rides transit to her job at New Holland Apparel in New Holland, Lancaster County.

**Lisa Pascuzzo** of Schuylkill Haven, Schuylkill County, who rides in a vanpool to work at NECPAC - Department of Veteran's Affairs in Lebanon, Lebanon County.

## Local Transit Agencies Merge

In December the Board(s) of Directors for the Berks Area Regional Transit Authority (BARTA) and the Red Rose Transit Authority (RRTA) as well as the Board(s) of the County Commissioners for Berks and Lancaster Counties respectively, took action to join the transit agencies under a unified management structure.

The passing of long time BARTA Executive Director, Dennis Louwerse, in 2013 left a void in the management hierarchy at BARTA. As the leadership at BARTA began the discussion on how to fill the shoes of their former Executive Director, talks began with RRTA to consider the possible sharing of RRTA Executive Director, David Kilmer, and/or the potential for a merger of the two neighboring agencies. Initially, David Kilmer served as Executive Director at BARTA through a management agreement with RRTA.

Several similarities between the two agencies offered positive reinforcement to the joint venture. In addition to their geographic proximity and common border of Berks and Lancaster Counties, the transit agencies also share individual annual budgets which both hover in the area of \$17 million. BARTA has a handful more fixed route buses in their service area and RRTA maintains a slightly larger fleet of shared vans, however total inventory of vehicles is very comparable.

In April 2014 formal meetings began between the BARTA and RRTA Boards and in a relatively short period of time a blueprint for merging the management components of these transit agencies was in the form of an official Resolution. The Resolution outlined the advantageous cost savings to such a management merger as well as

the benefits of continuing the outstanding transit service provided in both communities under their existing banners of BARTA and RRTA. The Resolution outlined the financial gains to be made by both entities while reassuring the transit service in each community would remain the same.

Through the consolidation of several management positions, the drafting of new Articles of Incorporation and the diligent work by the members of the BARTA and RRTA merger committees the birth of the South Central Transit Authority (SCTA) was finalized in early December 2014.

The immediate cost savings in 2015 is estimated to be \$780,820 by combining the transit agencies. Additionally, the future savings in the next five years has been tallied at \$819,861 in 2016 and grows to an amount of \$996,546 in 2020 for a total five year benefit to taxpayers of \$4,530,250.

The SCTA will be headed by David Kilmer and the headquarters for the new authority will be at the RRTA offices in Lancaster, PA.

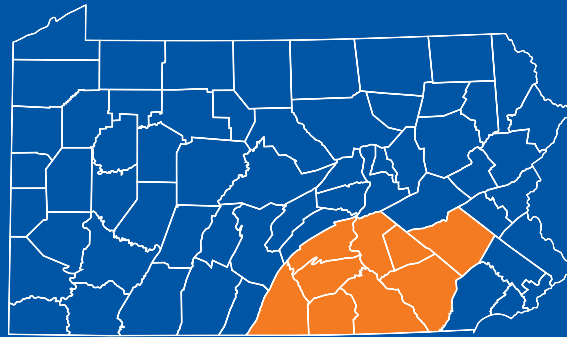


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## Commuter Services Milestones

**November 2004:** SRTP incorporated as non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

**February 2005:** Brandy Heilman, Executive Director, hired as the first full-time employee. "Commuter Services of South Central Pennsylvania" is chosen for the SRTP's traffic congestion reduction program.

**August 2005:** Outreach begins to employers and commuters in the 6-county region of York, Lancaster, Dauphin, Lebanon, Cumberland & Perry.

**December 2006:** Adams County joins the SRTP, expanding Commuter Services' coverage area to seven counties with more than 823,000 commuters.

**January 2008:** Commuter Services announces the launch of its first two vanpools in cooperation with rabbitransit.

**September 2008:** Commuter Services reaches milestone of 10,000 active commuters in the program's database.

**April 2009:** Berks County joins the SRTP, expanding Commuter Services' coverage area to eight counties with more than 1,000,000 commuters. The program name is changed to "Commuter Services of Pennsylvania".

**June 2010:** Franklin County joins the SRTP, expanding Commuter Services' coverage area to nine counties.

**April 2012:** Commuter Services announces the milestone of 20,000 active commuters in the program's database.

**January 2013:** Matt Boyer succeeds Brandy Heilman as Executive Director.

**October 2013:** Commuter Services announces the milestone of 25,000 active commuters in the program's database.

Commuter Services is a program of the non-profit Susquehanna Regional Transportation Partnership, whose board includes the Harrisburg Regional Chamber; the Gettysburg Adams, Lebanon Valley, and Greater Chambersburg Chambers of Commerce, the York County Economic Alliance; Lancaster and Greater Reading Chambers of Commerce & Industry; South Central Transit Authority (BARTA and RRTA), Lebanon Transit (LT); York Adams Transportation Authority (rabbitransit); Capital Area Transit (CAT, Cumberland-Dauphin-Harrisburg); Adams, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Reading Area and York metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs); Harrisburg MPO (Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry counties).

Funding is provided by the Federal Highway Administration and PennDOT in partnership with the participating MPOs.