



# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

## i-riderta INSIDER

News from The Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority

December 2015

- The Market @ WSP
- Bike Building
- Holiday Bus

### RTA Heroes – The Charitable Issue

**Editor's note:** RTA employees are amazing. They are generous with their time, their effort, and their money. I am often astounded by how kind-hearted we are. This issue is dedicated to the RTA family members who do what they can to better the world around them. While some people prefer to remain anonymous and declined inclusion in this newsletter, some shared their info to inspire others. I'd like to thank all of them.

– Tracey Hanlin Rohr



Accounts Receivable Clerk Jennifer Lockwood  
flanked by actors

**Accounts Receivable Clerk Jennifer Lockwood** has donated her time and skills as an actress in local theater since the age of seven. She and her theater family (both parents and her brother) have acted or directed in more than 250 local shows. In early November, she shared her talent and expertise as the director of "The Diary of Anne Frank" at the Dayton Playhouse.

**Planning and Marketing Director Frank Ecklar and wife Linda** have spent the past 8 years helping to raise money as volunteers for the Buckeye Cruise for Cancer and the Urban and Shelley Meyer Cancer Fund. In a four-day event last year, their group raised over \$1 million dollars to fund cancer research.



Scheduling Analyst Donna Johnson

**Scheduling Analyst Donna Johnson** volunteers one evening per week at Crayons to Classrooms, and has for the past eight years. Her efforts helped pay for her daughter's education (Donyea is now a sophomore at the University of Akron). Donna continued to volunteer at the Dayton non-profit even after her daughter graduated high school to help pay for the education of other students.

**Training Manager Melissa Moody** has been a Girl Scout troop leader the past two years. She also coordinates Girl Scout product and cookie sales for the 50+ troops in Kettering, trains parents as new leaders, and coordinates the prize distribution. As a hands-on troop leader, she helps her young ladies earn badges in everything from archery to entrepreneurship.



Training Manager Melissa Moody teaches  
a Girl Scout about proper archery technique

**Mobility Administration Specialist Michelle Garrett** is active in two charitable pursuits with her husband James: providing clothes and toys to an orphanage in El Salvador, and organizing a comic book show for the Mad River Schools music department called Stebbins Con 6. She is passionate about both worthy causes, but especially enjoys preparing gifts for the orphans as a group of toys (doll, brush, play bottle, etc.) so the child has a complete play set. Stebbins Con has raised about \$6,000 for the music programs over the past 6 years.



**Payroll Analyst Debbie Harris and husband Jack** spend nearly every weekend helping to serve meals to the poor and homeless at Target: Dayton Ministries. The group served an amazing 45,000 hot meals last year. On “chicken Saturday,” several RTA monthly bus passes are awarded to lucky ticket holders. Debbie and Jack also sing with the traveling Target: Dayton Choir. They will once again participate in the “Fill-A-Box” Christmas gift program by buying and wrapping snacks, bus tokens, toiletries, and other necessities for needy people at Christmas.

**Chief Operations Officer Jim Napier** has organized and recruited RTA employees to help out on National Rebuilding Day (through Rebuilding Together Dayton) for the past three years. Volunteers converge on the home of a needful Dayton citizen to paint, build, clear, and repair whatever is needed in and around their home. Last spring, the RTA group helped out at the home of 94-years-young Mrs. Hicks, a resident of the Westwood neighborhood.

## The Market @WSP - Fresh Option

*Take sweet potatoes home to your sweetie*



CEO Mark Donaghy

Now you can shop for dinner while waiting for your bus at Wright Stop Plaza. The Greater Dayton RTA has a fresh fruit and vegetable market in the concourse of the agency's main transit center. Market hours are Tuesday through Thursday from noon until 6 p.m.

“We know there is a need for fresh food here in Dayton,” said RTA Chief Executive Officer Mark

Donaghy at the October 21 press conference. “That’s why we’re glad to have The Market right here in our facility.”



Donaghy went on to commend the county commissioners and other community partners for making this a reality for those who rely on public transportation to

travel to work, school, and medical appointments.

“Good nutrition should never be out of reach for any family, no matter where they live,” said Donaghy. “RTA is a very proud partner in this effort,” he said.

Donaghy pointed out that Wright Stop Plaza is very busy. “Eleven-hundred buses and thousands of people use Wright Stop Plaza every day,” he said. “Having fresh fruits and vegetables here will save time and, in many cases, fill a void. Many of our customers live in neighborhoods without access to fresh foods.”

The Market at Wright Stop Plaza is located in the heart of downtown Dayton, an area some call a “food desert” for its lack of fresh food. Data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture shows that about 30 percent of Montgomery County’s population has limited access to grocery stores. Almost 60 percent of these residents are low income.



The Market will offer affordable healthy food alternatives for RTA customers. Much of the produce is locally-grown, according to organizers. Non-profit partner Homefull has a microfarm that supplies the market, and Mission of Mary Cooperative also sends fresh produce.

Homefull Farm & Market Manager Jimmy Ryan explained The Market’s Produce Perks program as a “dollar for dollar match for spending on an EBT card.” For every dollar spent, customers receive a \$1 voucher to be used just like cash for their next purchase.

“There is strong support for the Produce Perks program,” he said. “People are surprised how much good food they can buy with the program.”

For more information, log on:  
[www.facebook.com/marketwsp](http://www.facebook.com/marketwsp)





### Veteran's Day at RTA

Air Force Veteran and Chief Maintenance Officer Bill Ingram salutes as the United States and Blue Star Mothers flags are raised at 11:11 a.m. on Veteran's Day.

## Marketing Manager

**Job:** Marketing Manager at RTA

**Previous Job:** All-Media Journalist for News Center 7 and the Dayton Daily News

**Hometown:** Union, Ohio

**College:** Wright State University

**Feather in Cap: Related to three presidents:** John Adams, John Quincy Adams and Gerald Ford

**Favorite Football team:** The Steelers

**In Her Spare Time:** Likes to update house in Centerville and shop at thrift stores and flea markets with friends.



## Midwest Outdoor (RTA) Experience



RTA was once again invited to partner with Five Rivers MetroParks for the Midwest Outdoor Experience – a two-day extravaganza of all things outdoor adventure.

To assist our community partners with the event, RTA provided shuttle buses from far-away parking to the entry. Staffers in the RTA booth promoted transit / bike trail connections, and the convenient bike racks on every bus. Event goers enjoyed dressing up in costume props and shooting pictures in the RTA bus booth.

## RTA Employees Pull a Plane for Charity



An RTA team of 18 grabbed a rope and pulled a 142,000 lb. plane across a runway in September – all to benefit Special Olympics Ohio.

"It was so scary to walk up to that giant plane and think that we were going to move it at all," said event organizer and Wellness Coordinator Julie Bonsall. "But we moved it!"

The Dayton Plane Pull began four years ago to raise money for Special Olympics Ohio. RTA's 2015 effort was an astounding \$1,547 towards the over \$20,000 raised. Friends, family and fellow employees made generous donations. "We were able to bring \$1,547

to the charity and contribute to the over \$20,000 raised," said event organizer Bonsall.

The competition among the teams was fierce, with rankings separated by only tenths or hundredths of a second. "Next year, we are walking away with first place," Bonsall promised.



## RTA Management Connect Donate Toys

The Greater Dayton RTA Management Connect group recently donated \$250 in new toys to Hannah's Treasure Chest. John Highley, the owner of Dent Magic in Centerville, is collecting toys for the charity. Hannah's Treasure chest provides social service agencies in a four-county area with clothing, furniture, toys, books and other essential items for families in need. Photo: Melissa Moody, Rick Bailey and John Highley.



## SCC Safety Awareness Expo

McGruff the Crime Dog checked on the RTA bus routes during the Safety Awareness Expo on the Sinclair Community College campus in September. Over 60 law enforcement and related agencies participated in the event. RTA staffers helped visitors with specific route information to travel from their homes to campus.

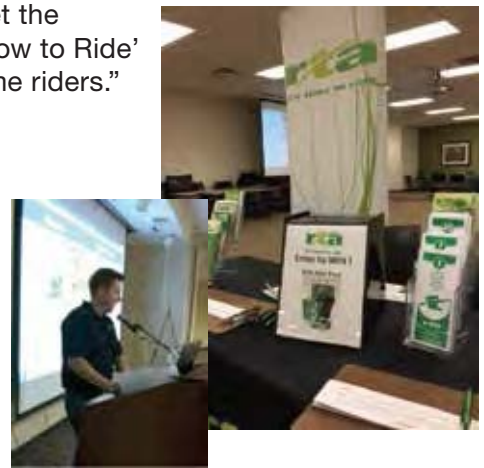
## Education Spotlight: Clark State Greene Campus + The Biltmore Towers

“Students appreciate when they can ask specific questions of a real person and get the answers they need,” said Nathan Owens, Ridership Developer for RTA. “These ‘How to Ride’ sessions and face-to-face meetings are important in helping potential riders become riders.”

RTA schedules more than 50 outreach events per year, and that number continues to grow. The Resource Fair at the Clark State Greene campus is such an event, a place where students can stop to speak directly to an RTA rep to get information.

Owens has a presentation called “How to Ride” that he adjusts for the specific audience. “Elderly citizens are going to have different questions and concerns than that of college students,” he said.

Dayton groups are welcome to call Nathan Owens at 425-8374, or send an e-mail: [nowens@greaterdayton.rta.org](mailto:nowens@greaterdayton.rta.org) for more information or to request a training session.



## Spare-Time Bike Builders DesLauriers & Wysong



Sometimes people with great ideas get spread a little thin. Lack of resources, time, and money can stall -- or even stop -- a good idea. That's when LINK Bicycle Technicians James DesLauriers and Kenny Wysong step up.

During a typical work day, DesLauriers and Wysong monitor the bikes at 24 stations around Dayton, and then travel to redistribute them throughout the city. They build bikes. They repair bikes. They put free lights on bikes. Some say they live, eat, breathe and sleep bikes.

That may be an exaggeration, but the truth is that DesLauriers and Wysong are men who like to keep busy. When they learned about the Life Enrichment Center's efforts to get bikes into the hands of Dayton's most needy citizens, they volunteered to build them.

In their spare time, DesLauriers and Wysong have assembled about 75 bikes for the Finlay Street non-profit organization. The bikes were donated by companies like Huffy and need assembled to become useful modes of transportation for someone who needs them.

Life Enrichment Center Founder and Executive Director Jeff Sorrell is thrilled to have a helping hand with the bike building efforts. “Clients,” he explained, “often have life issues that prevent them from participating in their Earn-A-Bike Program.” But they are in need of transportation nonetheless.

DesLauriers' and Wysong's efforts are so very much appreciated, he said. “They will never really know the full extent of their efforts, but there are many, many people in our community who are benefiting,” said Sorrell.

## Looking Ahead and Overhead

### Line Survey Analysis



As part of RTA's commitment to a long term overhaul and upgrade to the overhead electrical line system, RTA welcomed Deutzer Technische Kohle (DTK) to Dayton in October.

DTK conducted a wire wear analysis over RTA's entire 124 mile network. The team used laser technology to create a detailed report of the actual wire condition, including the percentage of wear. A line crew truck was used for the

analysis; work was done in the overnight hours for less impact on traffic and bus services.



RTA is one of only five cities in the United State to maintain overhead trolley lines, and determining the priorities for future work on these wires is critical to ensuring the wires stay in good shape.



# Drivers Made it a Spooktacular Halloween

RTA passengers were pleasantly surprised to board their bus on the Friday before Halloween to find a witch driving. Or Abby from NCIS. Or an Indian chief.

Drivers who wished to dress up for Halloween were in a social media competition to get the most posts by passengers. This first year event had better participation than anticipated, said Employee Wellness Coordinator Julie Bonsall, who organized the dress-up day to help with employee stress.

Drivers were welcome to wear any costume of their choosing with safety in mind. Safety of customers is – and will always be – the focus of the RTA, said CEO Mark Donaghy.

Passengers were encouraged to vote for their favorite costumed driver by snapping a picture and then posting it to Facebook or Twitter using the hashtag: #RTAHalloween.



Winner with the most pics/shares/posts:  
Tammy Youngerman



## The Rolling RTA Holiday Spirit



Danny Copeland  
graphic designer & designer of bus

RTA will demonstrate its holiday spirit again this year by putting a holiday-themed bus into service throughout the month of December.

The design and décor is a collaborative effort between two RTA departments: Danny Copeland in marketing and Kenny Arnold in the maintenance department. Together they transformed bus #2810 to special bus #1225. The design features a Santa driving a sleigh and reindeer and lighting on the exterior. A lighted Christmas tree is inside. Customers will enjoy holiday music throughout the season as they ride the holiday bus on various routes throughout the end of the year.

Several RTA employees and their families boarded and rode the special bus for its debut appearance during the Dayton Holiday Festival and Children's Parade.

Miami Valley, switching routes daily. Anyone lucky enough to find the holiday bus on their normal route will be treated to a free candy cane.

"We've decorated a holiday bus for decades," said RTA Chief Executive Officer Mark Donaghy, "because our passengers really enjoy it. I love to see the faces of the kids light up when that bus rolls into Wright Stop Plaza."

