

IGNACIO-AZTEC PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE STARTS

By Peter Tregillus

Road Runner Transit, the transit authority of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, in partnership with Sky Ute Casino Resort announced that a public transit service connecting Ignacio, CO with Aztec, NM began service on Wednesday, December 2, 2009. The service will operate Wednesday through Sunday, and offer seven runs per day.

The route begins at Sky Ute Casino Resort and continues south on Highway 172, with bus stops at the Southern Ute Growth Fund and Ignacio Library. It then travels on La Plata County Roads 318 and 310, south on US Highway 550, with stops at Bondad and the State Line Thriftway gas station. It continues on Hwy 550 South to

Aztec. The bus returns by the same route.

All stops along the way are "sight stops"; if no riders request the stop, or, if no one is standing at the bus stop location, the bus will not stop. Riders at stops between the two end points are asked to be at the stop a few minutes early to be sure of a pickup. Riders may call dispatch at least one hour before a scheduled pickup time at a regular stop to alert drivers of their need for a ride. One-way fares are priced by zone at \$1 per zone. Aztec to Ignacio, one way, crosses three zones; thus, the one-way fare is \$3. Riders may purchase a monthly pass for \$60 for unlimited ridership. Punch passes good for 20 zones are available for \$15.

The Ignacio-Aztec public transit route is the result of a partnership between Southern Ute Community Action Programs, Inc. (SUCAP), and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and its enterprises. The Tribe and its enterprises already constitute the largest single employer in La Plata County. For New Mexico residents working in Ignacio, commuting by car costs over \$100 to \$180 per month, depending on vehicle mileage and current fuel prices. Regular public transit use saves money, reduces vehicle emissions, and allows riders free time to read, listen to music, socialize, or ride in a reduced stress environment. Funding for this service comes from the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and a grant from the Federal Transit Administration. ▪

UNIVERSITY NAMES GREAT HALL AFTER RUSSELL GEORGE

Reprinted with permission from Colorado State University



Colorado State University and the Boettcher Foundation on October 26th, 2009, named the Great Hall in The Institute for Learning and Teaching Building after alumnus Russell George, executive director of the Colorado Department of Transportation and former state representative.

The Russell George Great Hall was dedicated at a ceremony at TILT on the university's historic Oval.

"Russ has dedicated his life to public service, so we are pleased to bestow this honor on him on behalf of Colorado State University and the Boettcher Foundation," said Tony Frank, president of Colorado State. "His leadership has been valuable to people not only on the Western Slope but throughout Colorado, and I thank the Boettcher Foundation for its continued generosity and leadership."

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FROM THE PRESIDENT AN INTRODUCTION TO ROB ANDRESEN

While I may not have the benefit of an oval office (mine is somewhat trapezoidal) I am honored to be able to serve the Board and members of CASTA in this prestigious role for the coming year. We have a lot on our agenda and even more opportunities awaiting us as we move into the "ought-tens."

I have had the privilege of working with Elena and Ann in a variety of roles and am confident that I will be able to accomplish my primary goal during my tenure as president working with such a capable staff. It's quite a lofty goal but something which has been occurring naturally in Colorado since I arrived here in 2002 to take on a contract for my company. That goal? To open eyes.

Just think about the changes we've seen in the region. In Denver we actually have a viable, working regional coordinating council, something that took years of effort but which is poised to leap into the new year with a strong core of members including several CASTA members and Elena as their secretary.

The creation of the State Division of Transit and Rail is well underway and CASTA is again in the thick of it. The Interim Advisory Committee is working to establish the framework for the organization and shepherd it through to fruition with Elena as its Chair.

Both of these organizations are the result of some serious eye-opening. It's part of CASTA's mission, to open eyes to transit and what it does and can mean to residents of Colorado. I see my role as the eye-opening ambassador, helping people to see things from a different perspective and making people aware of the many options and possibilities that exist, even in the current economy.



We've already taken the first significant step within CASTA by revitalizing our relationship with the business sector. I hope to see some significant additions to our membership before the Fall Conference in 2010 from the business community. We also need to make sure that our membership is aware of all of the possibilities and options available to them. This requires communication and knowledge, something CASTA has in abundance. We will take this year to help focus them for the benefit of the membership.

There's a lot we can do together to make this a reality and I hope that I can help lead this initiative. All we have to do is open some eyes. ■

Sincerely,
Rob Andresen
President

U.S. TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY RAY LAHOOD PROPOSES LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE RAIL TRANSIT SAFETY OVERSIGHT

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today called on Congress to pass the Obama Administration's Public Transportation Safety Program Act of 2009, a new transit safety bill to ensure a high and standard level of safety across all rail transit systems. The measure would effectively eliminate the statutory prohibition against imposing such broad safety standards that has been in place since 1965. Secretary LaHood made his remarks in testimony before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in Washington, D.C.

"The current system for federal rail transit safety oversight is weak and inadequate and does not guarantee a consistent level of safety for transit passengers," said Secretary LaHood. "While rail transit remains a safe way to travel, the Obama Administration believes it is time to take serious steps to make it even safer and ensure a standard level of safety across all systems."

Asking the Committee to consider the bill "seriously and promptly", Secretary LaHood pledged to assist Congress in enacting a new safety regime that will better protect daily riders as transit systems age and available revenues remain tight. The proposed legislation would do three things.

First, the bill would authorize the Secretary to establish and enforce minimum federal safety standards for rail transit systems – effectively breaking through the 1965 prohibition. The bill would also provide the Secretary the option to establish a safety program for public transportation bus systems. Secretary LaHood also announced the formation of a Transit Rail Advisory Committee on Safety (TRACS) that will help guide the Department's rail transit safety regulations.

Second, the bill would authorize the Secretary to allow states to receive federal transit assistance to staff and train state oversight personnel to enforce new federal regulations. State programs would have to be well-staffed and adequately empowered by state governments to fully enforce federal regulations in order to be eligible for federal funds.

Third, the bill would require the state agencies conducting oversight to be fully financially independent from the transit systems they oversee. The Federal Transit Administration would enforce all federal regulations where states choose not to participate in the program or where the state program is found to lack the necessary enforcement tools.

"More than 14 million passengers use our rail transit systems every weekday. Yet the responsibility to guarantee their safety is currently left to a patchwork of 27 state agencies with inconsistent standards, inadequate powers and insufficient staffing. With one exception, these agencies average less than one full time employee" said FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff, who appeared with LaHood before the House panel. "Our proposed legislation will better ensure that the millions of passengers who use transit to get to work, school and home every day do so safely and without incident."

Under the Administration's proposal, FTA and state agencies participating in federal transit safety enforcement would be authorized to conduct inspections, investigations, audits, and examinations, as well as test public transportation systems' equipment, facilities, rolling stock, operations, and persons engaged in the business of a public transportation system. They would also have the authority to issue reports and subpoenas, require the production of documents, take depositions, and prescribe recordkeeping and reporting requirements.

For a text of the bill, go to <http://testimony.ost.dot.gov/final/default.htm>. ■

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION LAUNCHES BUS SAFETY AND SECURITY WEBSITE FOR SMALL URBAN AND RURAL TRANSIT AGENCIES

On October 6, 2009 the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) launched a new website designed to help rural and small urban transit providers develop and carry out effective safety, security, and emergency preparedness programs. The Bus Safety and Security Website was announced by FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff at the American Public Transportation Association's annual conference in Orlando, Florida.

"Getting this important information to small transit agencies supports Secretary LaHood's drive to improve safety across the board in transportation," Rogoff said. "This site provides practical safety and security solutions in the most efficient manner possible and allows transit agencies to share their ideas and successes with each other to promote a higher level of transit safety and security throughout the nation." More online at: http://www.fta.dot.gov/news/news_events_10661.html. ■

USING EXCEL FOR SCHEDULES

Reprinted with permission from *Trip Planner Magazine*, Summer 2009 Edition

Some transit professionals have access to advanced planning software, but many still have to resort to using a spreadsheet, even if just to make a printed schedule for public consumption. Here are some tips for creating a basic time spreadsheet that can be copied and reused for very quick schedule making.

No doubt you already know to format a cell for time so that 8 reads 8:00. (If not got to **FORMAT CELLS**, select the **NUMBER** tab, the **TIME** category, and select 13:30).

To establish a headway of 30 minutes, in the cell beneath the start time, in this case, 8:00 in cell A1, use the formula **A1+TIME(0,30,0)**; the numbers in parentheses mean hours, minutes, and seconds, so if you wanted an hour headway you could put (1,0,0) or (0,60,0). If you grab the lower right-hand corner and drag down you will have 30-minute intervals as far down as you drag.

If later you want to change the headway it would be cumbersome to go back and change the 30 in each cell, so it is better to put a "headway cell" at the top and then reference it in the formula by placing a \$ between the letter and number of the cell, in this example "**A\$2**"

You can then add stops. For schedules, time points are adequate but if for some reason you wanted to have the time of each stop (perhaps for a downtown circulator), that can be accomplished just as easily. At the top of the spread sheet put the number of minutes between each time point or stop, beginning in B1. If the first time point is 10 minutes after the departure time, simply put 10 in B1 and then continue in C1, D1, etc. In B2 type **=A2+TIME(0,B\$1,0)**. Then drag down to fill the cells below. Highlight all the numbers in column B and drag to the right to fill in all cells remaining.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Headway	Time points/Stops (minutes)					
2	30	10	20	10	10	10	5
3	8:00 AM	8:10 AM	8:30 AM	8:40 AM	8:50 AM	9:00 AM	9:05 AM
4	8:30 AM	8:40 AM	9:00 AM	9:10 AM	9:20 AM	9:30 AM	9:35 AM
5	9:00 AM	9:20 AM	9:30 AM	9:40 AM	9:50 AM	10:00 AM	10:05 AM
6	9:30 AM	9:40 AM	10:00 AM	10:10 AM	10:20 AM	10:30 AM	10:35 AM

At this point you should have a full schedule with half-hour increments vertically and 10-minute increments (or whatever you chose) horizontally. This schedule works fine if you are a European or a member of the armed forces; the rest of us use the 12-hour clock and those 13:00s after noon could be a problem. You could manually change 13:00 to 1:00 but then the formula will be deleted and any change you make later, say adding an earlier run, will mean having to change afternoon times again and this can easily lead to mistakes, namely phantom military times around the schedule.

As far as we know this cannot be fixed with formatting except to have "AM" and "PM" in every cell, but that would be cluttered. There is, however, a way to trick Excel into using the 12-hour clock: use an IF statement to tell the program that if the result of a calculation (i.e. adding 30 minutes to 12:30) is 13:00 or higher to subtract 12:00. It looks like this:

```
=IF(A4+TIME(0,A$2,0)>=TIMEVALUE("13:00"),(A4+TIME(0,A$2,0)-TIMEVALUE("12:00")),A4+TIME(0,A$2,0))
```

The English translation is loosely: If (the result of adding the headway in A2 (to the 8:00 in A4) is greater than or equal to (13:00), (then subtract from that number (12 hours), but if not leave it alone.) Instead of trying to type this out, you can find a sample spreadsheet at triplannermag.com. Good luck! ▪

HIGHLIGHTS OF FTA IMPACT ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The U.S. Federal Transit Administration has released a report that highlights its role over the last 25 years in enhancing the safety, reliability, availability, and accessibility of public rail, bus, trolley, ferry, and other transit services.

More online at: http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FtaImpactBook_Web.pdf. ▪

THE BUSINESS SIDE OF CASTA'S MEMBERS: Freedman Seating's S3 Program

The following article was submitted for publication from a CASTA Business Member. The information provided does not constitute an endorsement by CASTA.

In May, 2009 Freedman Seating unveiled its S3 program. S3 transforms everyday seating solutions to "Sustainable Seating Solutions". According to John Mienik, Freedman's Director of Sales, "The S3 options give customers the ability to buy environmentally friendlier products without giving up durability, safety or comfort."

Freedman's S3 offering is two pronged. The first element is Bio-Cushions. These are seat and back cushion made with foam that has 20 to 30% of the Polyol manufactured with vegetable oil (Soy or Canola) in lieu of petroleum oil. This is good because vegetable oils are renewable and the foam uses 20-40% less fossil fuels than traditional petroleum based foam. Bio-Cushions meet or exceed all

applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards including FMVSS 302 flammability and smoke and CAL 117 A and D. The cushions are also made without the use of any fire retardants (brominated or halogenated) as the material is inherently compliant to the standard. One additional benefit is there are reduced CO2 emissions and carbon foot-printing during the manufacturing process.

The second prong to Freedman's S3 program is fabrics made with recycled yarns. Current offerings include plush fabrics made with 100% recycled yarn. This yarn has a minimum 80% recycled content using both post-consumer waste (plastic water bottles) and post production fiber waste. Recycled yarns are easier and faster to weave thus saving electricity.

1 lb of recycled yarn conserves 61,000 BTU's of energy (equivalent to 0.50 gallons of gasoline). Fabrics made with recycled yarns reduce the use of natural resources and are easier to clean and maintain - saving water and electricity. Just like the Bio-Cushions, these materials meet or exceed all applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards. There is a great selection of colors and patterns available, so going green can also be stylish. "We are committed to expanding our S3 program. New fabrics and designs will be added in the near future", says Mienik. "This is not a fad for us; it is a new way of doing business." ■

If you are a CASTA Business Member and would like to submit the latest on your company to be published in the CASTA Connection, please contact Angie Ham (angjeh@coloradotransit.com).

UNIVERSITY NAMES GREAT HALL AFTER RUSSELL GEORGE continued from front page...

"Russ is an incredible steward of natural resources," said Joe Blake, chancellor of the Colorado State University System. "He has contributed to many vital industries in Colorado through his boundless thoughtfulness, wisdom and generosity. Russ is respected and honored around the state as a great statesman and leader."

George, who grew up in Rifle, Colo., graduated from Colorado State in 1968 and earned his law degree from Harvard in 1971.

He and his wife, Neal, enlisted as VISTA volunteers from 1974 to 1976 and

worked on the Crow Indian Reservation in Montana. In 1976, they returned to Rifle where George co-founded the law firm of Stuver and George, which specialized in water law.

From 1992 to 2000, George served as state Representative in House District 57, representing Moffat, Rio Blanco, Garfield and Pitkin counties. He was Speaker of the House in 1999 and 2000.

He later worked as director of the Colorado Division of Wildlife and executive director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. He has also served as

a Trustee for the Boettcher Foundation.

In 2007, Gov. Bill Ritter appointed George to his post at CDOT where he oversees 3,300 employees working at more than 250 locations statewide and an annual budget of \$1 billion.

Wednesday's ceremony at Colorado State University marks the second time the university has recognized George for his achievements. In 2000, the Colorado State University Alumni Association bestowed its highest honor on him with the William E. Morgan Alumni Achievement Award. ■



*Cheers to ringing in 2010!
Make sure you save the date for CASTA conferences in the new year!*

Spring Training Conference
May 4-7, 2010
The Curtis Hotel
Denver, CO

Fall Transit Conference & EXPO
September 14-17, 2010
Park Hyatt Beaver Creek
Avon, CO

DE-STRESS FOR SUCCESS!

2009 may go down in the books as one of the most stressful times for transit managers, supervisors and employees. Budget cuts, increasing demand, furloughs, aging fleets, aging facilities and the increasing costs of operation all conspire to make your job and work environment tough.

There is a Zen saying, "Your work is to discover your work, and then with all your heart to give yourself to it." So, we, in the transit industry have found our calling, and put our hearts and souls into the business of moving people. But when you put that much into a job, you have to make sure there is something left to give. How can we expect to take care of others until we are successful in taking care of ourselves? Following are some quick ideas for getting you to de-compress in order to be healthier, more productive and fulfilled.

- Move! Motion creates emotion. Get up and walk around at a fast tempo. Swing your arms around. Jump up and down and stretch a bit. While sitting in your chair, plop your upper body down like a rag doll. Feel limp and relaxed. Breathe in and out. Stand up tall and perform an overhead palm press up. To prevent carpal tunnel syndrome rotate your wrists clockwise and then counterclockwise. Gently pull on each finger to release tension. It works. Will you feel like a doofus while doing these things? Yes, you will! Will you look like a doofus if you do these simple get-in-motion exercises? Yes, it's possible you might! If looking like a doofus will hinder your ability to fully engage in these exercises, find a quiet corner or a room away from others so you can embrace the doofus within you. You'll feel better – just give it a try.
- Move some more. Walk at lunch. Walk to the corner store. Walk your dog. If you don't have a dog, come over and walk mine! Climb the stairs. Ski. Bike. Swim. Start wherever you are – it is all for the good.

- Get some company. Call a true friend and share what you're going through. Sometimes verbalizing your problems will help you feel better. And they may share horror stories of their own, leaving you to think, "Well, at least I'm not in THEIR shoes!" (Am I right, or what?!)

- Laughter is the best medicine. It relieves tension and loosens the muscles. It causes blood to flow to the heart and brain. It releases a chemical that rids the body of pains. Watch a comedy, read a funny book, read the tabloids. Be thankful your spouse hasn't been abducted by aliens. And if he/she has been, you probably shouldn't be reading this – you should probably be telling your story to the National Enquirer.

- Eat your vegetables and your fruit. And those complex carbohydrates. Your momma told me to tell you that you will feel better if you eat properly. And she is right. You know she is. Put down the candy bar. Grab an apple. Drink water. You wouldn't put low grade fuel into your buses, now would you?

- Take mini-breaks from staring at your computer screen during work. Look out the window to stretch your eyes from detail work. If you have no window, close your eyes and imagine a panoramic view. Rub your two hands together to generate heat and then place them gently (gently, I say!!) over your eyes for thirty seconds. If you see stars, you are pressing too hard, so don't do that. If you want to see stars, there's no need to hurt yourself - just go stand outside at night and look up.

- Prioritize and delegate. I know...I know... you have to do it all and you have to do it all yourself. Still, it wouldn't kill you to share, right? Be a team player -- don't hoard. Ask for help; give help to others. Misery shared is misery halved (or something like that!)

- Plan more time for a project than you anticipate it taking. If you finish ahead of time, you are a hero. As a hero, you should have a cape. With the extra time you have from finishing your project ahead of schedule, take a moment to consider which color your cape will be.

- Organize your desk and your computer files. Organization and productivity are linked -- if you are too busy to organize, then you really need to organize, so you can be less busy. Schedule time to organize and stick to it. De-clutter: sort out your paperwork and your email inbox, and your mind will follow.

- Leave work on time. The work will be there when you return, and your personal life is as important as your work life. Get out there and LIVE people! And tell us your stories so we can live vicariously through you.

- Play. Some people may perceive playing to be frivolous, but they're missing the point. You need occasional periods of recreation in order to avoid burn-out and to keep caring about what you're doing with your life. Play is not an extra - waiting for the end of your "to do" list. Guess what? You will never get it all done. Pick the most important tasks, get them done, and then get out and reward yourself.

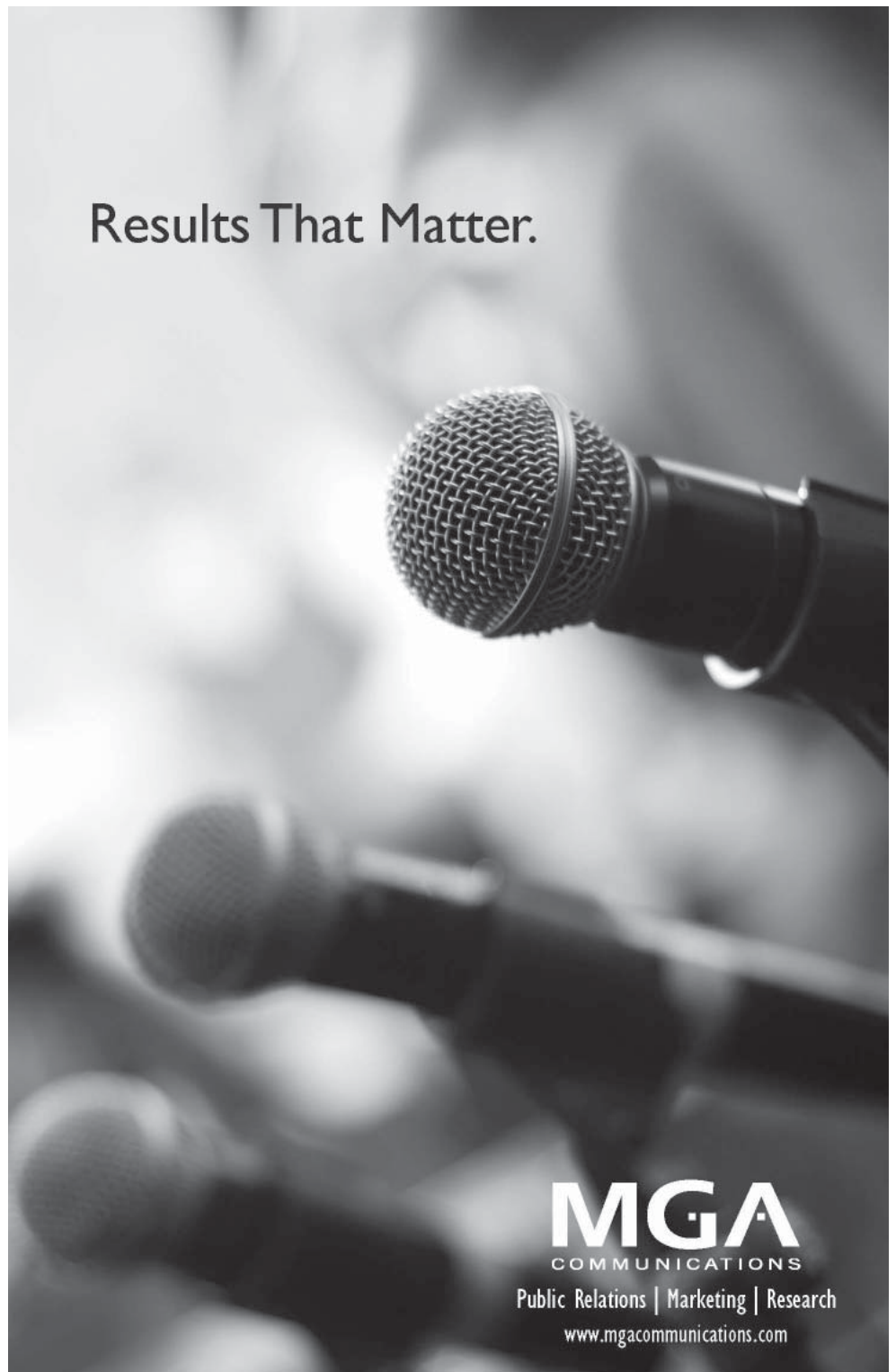
- Pray. Whatever your belief system, some things are best left to a higher power. Some things are squarely in your camp. Wisdom, they say, is knowing the difference. So work on the things that you have the power to move, change, create...and set aside those things that are out of your control.

- Slow Down. Time management doesn't mean packing your day like a moving van, ensuring every single minute is full. Studies show that multi-tasking makes you not only less productive "in the moment" but over the long-term as well. We really can

only do one thing at a time. Pick your one thing, and do it well!

- Write stuff down. A good daytimer, PDA, or other organizer frees your mind from having to remember things. It also helps you stay on track and reminds you of all that you've accomplished. Write down birthdays, events, and other to-dos, but also write down dreams, goals and even things you want to research or look in to.
- Think carefully about what you take on. Every new commitment takes time away from other things you could be doing. So choose your commitments carefully, unless it is CASTA committee work, then of course you should volunteer without a second's hesitation!
- Declare an hour of technology black-out. Turn off your cell phone. And your Crack-Berry (or smartphone of your choice). Turn off your computer. And the TV. You will not die if you take a break from these things for an hour. I promise you won't. You might even feel refreshed when you break free from the bondage of technology for an hour each day! Try it and see for yourself!

We hope you utilize some of the tips detailed here to set you up for a healthier, happier, less-stressful year in 2010! ▪



NEW ADDITIONS TO CASTA LIBRARY

Determining ADA Paratransit Eligibility: An Approach, Guidance and Training Materials. Developed by Easter Seals Project Action, these materials contain an extensive workbook and multiple CDs. The CDs contain the following - Guidance for Conduction Physical Functional Assessment, An introduction to the Functional Assessment of Cognitive Transit Skills Administration, and An Assessment and Scoring Exercise.

ACCESS Matters: Accessibility, Communication, Cooperation, Excellence, Sensitivity and Service. This training DVD from Easter Seals Project Action is valuable for training public transportation fixed-route bus operators. This training course includes a video, trainer materials, a participant worksheet, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) materials.

To check out materials from the CASTA library, contact us at 303.839.5197.

UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information on events visit

www.coloradotransit.com and click on

Conferences and Training.

- **Project Management for ARRA Recipients**
January 7-8, 2010
Sponsor: NTI
Location: Fort Collins, CO
- **Transit Rail System Safety**
February 8-12, 2010
Sponsor: TSI, RTD
Location: Denver, CO
- **Transit Rail Incident Investigation**
March 29-April 2, 2010
Sponsor: TSI, RTD
Location: Denver, CO
- **CASTA Spring Training Conference 2010**
May 4-7, 2010
Sponsor: CASTA
Location: Denver, CO
Additional information forthcoming.
- **Community Transportation EXPO**
May 23-28, 2010
Sponsor: CTAA
Location: Long Beach, CA
- **Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigations**
June 29-July 2, 2010
Sponsor: TSI, RTD
Location: Denver, CO
- **CASTA/CDOT Fall Transit Conference & EXPO 2010**
September 14-17, 2010
Sponsor: CASTA & CDOT
Location: Beaver Creek, CO
Additional information forthcoming.
- **APTA Annual Meeting**
October 3-6, 2010
Sponsor: APTA
Location: San Antonio, TX
- **19th National Conference on Rural Public & Intercity Bus Transportation**
October 24-28, 2010
Sponsor: TRB, FTA, RTAP
Location: Burlington, Vermont

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