**Summar 2015 Issue**

**Need a Ride? Dial:**
(877)IGO-4KAT  
(877)446-4528

**KAT Calendar of Events**

- **Friday July 3rd** In observance of Independence Day, KAT will be closed.
- **Friday September 18th** Rider Appreciation Day. A day to let our riders know how important they are!
- **Monday September 7th** In observance of Labor Day, KAT will be closed.
- **Monday September 7th** In observance of Labor Day, KAT will be closed.
- **September 9th -11th** Annual Illinois Public Transportation Association Conference, Bloomington, IL.

**Transit Speak**

**Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities**

is a Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration funding program intended to enhance mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities by providing funds for programs to serve the special needs of transit-dependent populations beyond traditional public transportation services and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services. KAT is funded in part with Section 5310 funds, which Kendall County receives from the Regional Transportation Authority, and in turn, passes through to the Voluntary Action Center. These funds help expand KAT service to those who need transit options the most.
Letter from the Director

Public Transportation key to renewed Illinois Prosperity

~ Paul LaLonde, Assistant Director, VAC; KAT Program Director

Earlier this year Gov. Rauner unveiled a budget that proposes $130 million in cuts to local public transit systems, including Kendall Area Transit.

As operator of KAT, the Voluntary Action Center is extremely concerned by this proposal. The State of Illinois is the single largest source of funding for KAT. It is unclear at this time what level of State funding will be available to VAC next year. The political instability of Springfield leaves much uncertainty for us.

Limiting access to public transportation will not help dig Illinois out of its fiscal mess. In actuality cutting public transportation funding will have the opposite effect. Public transportation plays a major role in employment, economic development, shopping/business sustainability, education, and healthcare accessibility.

It cannot be ignored that the State of Illinois faces a significant funding crisis, and steps need to be taken to bring prosperity back to Illinois, but I am disappointed to continually read that our Governor and many legislators don’t look to public transit as a path to prosperity that it is.

This wasn’t always the case. In fact historically, Illinois has been a model of how to successfully build public transportation systems.

For example, the Downstate Operating Assistance Program – one of the transportation funding programs due to be cut – was designed to encourage public transportation growth.

And it has worked. Public transportation ridership has grown across the State. In Kendall County, for instance, KAT ridership increased from providing 4,000 rides in 2010 to 37,000 in 2014. That’s an increase of 825% in five short years!

Economically, investing in public transportation contributes to the vitality of our businesses and communities, and the return on investment can be significant. Statistics from the Economic Development Research Group show that a $1 investment in public transit has a rate of return of $4 and in some cases, up to $9.

Socially, public transportation is a quality-of-life issue for many. It is not a luxury, but a necessity for some. Transit partnerships between local municipalities, businesses, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and social service agencies have resulted in many seniors, persons with disabilities, and other transit dependent persons remain active members of the community.

Cutting transportation funding would halt, if not outright reverse, a lot of these gains.

Continued on page 6
**KAT Ridership - Fiscal Year 2015 Recap**

Fiscal Year 2015 ran from on July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. In many ways, FY 2015 was a mixed bag. The para-transit program provided 27,288 trips, which is a 14% increase over FY 2014. Contributing factors to this growth include additional routes, more local partnerships, and higher demand for transit service overall. Park-N-Ride program ridership, however, fell by 25% overall, with 8,624 rides provided in FY 2015. Many factors — including local economy and cost — contributed to the Village of Oswego deciding to close the Park-N-Ride program. Overall, however, FY 2015 was a very successful year for KAT, as 35,912 rides were provided to individuals and families in need of community and public transportation!

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**County Opposes Rauner’s Public Transit Spending Cuts**

Kendall County Board members said last week that they opposed spending cuts in Governor Bruce Rauner's proposed 2016 State of Illinois budget that would reduce funding to public transit services, including the Kendall Area Transit (KAT) bus service.

KAT provides dial-a-ride bus service to county residents for a nominal fee. The program costs are offset with state and federal grant money to operate a fleet of buses.

The County Board unanimously voted to adopt a resolution at their May 19 meeting that would ask Rauner and the state legislature to reconsider proposed cuts in transit funding within the governor's budget.

Jeff Wilkins, the county's administrator, said the "basic resolution" was provided by the Illinois Public Transportation Association (IPTA).

Wilkins told the board the governor's budget would reduce the appropriation for public transportation by 66 percent.

According to the resolution, the proposed reduction in the state's cost sharing formula would reduce rides annually by 21 percent and no revenue exists to replace it.

The resolution, asks Rauner and the General Assembly to "consider the negative economic impact the proposed reductions to public transportation funding will have on the citizens of Kendall County and other downstate counties in Illinois."

According to the IPTA's website they represent the legislative interests of public transportation operators throughout the state, and "promote a positive image of public transportation in Illinois."

The resolution approved by the board also stressed that residents rely on KAT get "to work, school, commercial activity, and other basic life functions."

It goes on to say that the recovery of the Illinois economy depends on providing basic transportation services to maximize employment opportunities for all state citizens.

*This Article originally appeared in the Kendall County Record on May 28, 2015. It is written by Matt Schury.*
**KAT Director Attends Rep. Kifowit Hearing on State Budget**

**June 29, 2015** - As Governor Rauner and the Legislature continue to debate Illinois’ budget for the coming fiscal year, state Rep. Stephanie Kifowit, D-Oswego, invited area residents to share their views and learn about the effects of proposed cuts in a Budget Hearing at Oswego East High School.

Paul LaLonde, Assistant Director of the Voluntary Action Center, operating agency for KAT, sat on a panel of representatives from local non-profits and groups who serve persons with disabilities, seniors, and other vulnerable populations. The panel also included Executive Director of Senior Service Associates, Bette Schoenholtz, among many others.

LaLonde discussed the effects of Rauner’s budget cuts and the long term-consequences to KAT should they be enacted.

“Public transit is both a quality of life issue and an economic issue. Based on our best estimates if KAT funding is cut as proposed, we are expecting a funding gap that will cost roughly 5,300 trips,” LaLonde commented. “This equates to 2,000 less employment trips, 1,800 less medical trips, 2,200 less trips for seniors, and 1,700 less trips for persons with disabilities – two demographics who can least afford to have their accessibility options limited.”

“Cutting transit funding will not save the state money,” LaLonde continued. “In fact studies show that a $1 investment in public transit has a rate of return of at least $4. Kendall County can expect to lose between $300,000 and $500,000 in economic activity generated by the KAT program if cuts to transit are passed. Funding transit is not a Democratic or Republican issue. It is a prosperity issue.”

LaLonde and others advised those in attendance to contact their representatives to voice their opinions.

**KAT in the Community**

**June 25, 2015** - The Yorkville Park District hosted its annual Safety Town Fair, and KAT Director of Training, Val Nickerson, showed up with a KAT bus to teach the students about safety while riding! Park District Staff said the kids had fun, as always!
Oswego Approves Dial-A-Ride Service Agreement

Village to pay $139,000 over three years to continue popular service

Public dial-a-ride service is proving popular in Oswego, according to information presented to the village board this past week.

Christina Burns, assistant village administrator, said use of the service has continued to grow since it was launched in November of 2012.

Burns said the service, provided by the Kendall Area Transit (KAT) program, is currently averaging 400 trips per month in the village.

The DeKalb-based Voluntary Action Center (VAC) of DeKalb operates KAT, which serves most of Kendall County.

The board did its part to continue the dial-a-ride service this past week by approving a new, three-year agreement with VAC. The agency's current contract with the village expires June 30.

Under terms of the agreement, the village will pay VAC $45,000 for dial-a-ride service during the first year of the contract, $46,350 the second year, and $47,742 for the third year.

The contract will expire June 30, 2018.

"It is the goal of the operator (KAT) to provide 4,500 trips to village residents annually over the term of the agreement," the contract states.

The contract calls for KAT to provide dial-a-ride service to village residents Mondays through Fridays between 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., excluding holidays. Fares will range from $2 to $7 per one-way trip. Riders must pre-arrange their rides by calling the KAT dispatch center.

The contract notes that all rides are based on vehicle space and availability, and the service area includes Kendall County and selected out-of-county locations "restricted mostly to medical, social service and educational facilities."

Burns noted the board's approval of the contract also marks the end of the village's Metra Park-n-Ride service.

VAC has been providing weekday bus service between the village's Park-n-Ride lot at the northwest corner of Orchard and Mill roads and the Metra station at the downtown Aurora Transportation Center for the past two years.

Burns said the village budgeted approximately $92,000 to cover its costs for Park-n-Ride bus service during the fiscal year that ended April 30.

However, the board unanimously agreed earlier this year to pull its funding for the Park-n-Ride service due to the cost and the declining ridership.

Continued on page 13
**VAC’s 2014-2015 Membership Drive Underway**

The Voluntary Action Center’s 2014-2015 Membership Drive is wrapping up! This is our largest fundraiser of the year, and we need help to assure that there is a stable source of funding for the important transportation services VAC provides in Kendall County.

The need for KAT continues to grow. Your generosity will enable us to meet the growing need for rides to and from medical appointments, employment, grocery stores, and meal sites.

Your membership contribution will help!

- You help provide vital services in the community,
- For every $100 donated, we can provide 6 rides to people in need,
- You will partner with VAC to improve the quality of life in Kendall County communities,
- All donations stay in the community to support local services,
- And you will help VAC counter the impact of unstable fuel costs.

May we count on you to help provide transportation to our neighbors, friends, and family in need? A heartfelt thank you for your help!

Sincerely,

Tom Zucker, Executive Director

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**VAC Donation Gift Form**

The 2013-2014 VAC Membership Drive helped raise $4,000 for the KAT program. Please help us reach our goal of $4,500 for 2014-2015.

Yes, I would like to donate to the Voluntary Action Center and help support the KAT program!

[ ] Individual / Family Gift  [ ] Corporate Gift

Name/Business:___________________________________
Address:_________________________________________
City:_____________________________ Zip____________
Phone:___________________________________________
Email____________________________________________

[ ] $25 Gift  [ ] $50 Gift  [ ] $75 Gift  [ ] $100 Gift

Any amount will be greatly appreciated!

Please mail Donation Gift to:

Voluntary Action Center
Kendall Area Transit
109 W. Ridge Street Room 002
Yorkville, IL 60560

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**Letter from the Director**

Continued from page 2

I want to make it clear that if the State budget incorporates the proposed public transportation funding cuts the Governor proposes, VAC will not shut down or stop operating KAT. We will continue to operate as much service as our funding allows.

Funding public transportation programs is not a Republican or Democratic issue. It is a prosperity issue. I encourage all Kendall County residents to urge our representatives in Springfield to do everything in their power to assure that cuts aren’t made to public transportation funding, and I ask our legislators at all levels to look at the ultimate impact public transportation has on your district.
KAT Aurora Schedule

**EFFECTIVE MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2015**

To better accommodate the high demand for ridership to the Aurora area, Kendall Area Transit will be implementing the following schedules for the “Galena Road / downtown” area and the “Indian Trail / Mercy campus” area of Aurora. KAT is a dial-a-ride service. *All rides must be scheduled in advance and are based on vehicle space and availability.* This schedule is for trips to the downtown and north Aurora area only. For the time being, trips to and from the Rush Copley Campus on Route 34 will remain scheduled on first come first serve basis. More transit information can be found on the KAT website at [www.co.kendall.il.us](http://www.co.kendall.il.us) or by calling (630) 882-6970.

### Aurora Schedule
(times are approximate and subject to change)

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<th>Route</th>
<th>Drop-offs</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Indian Trail Route</strong></td>
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<td>Drop-offs/Pickups</td>
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### Dial-a-ride Fall 2015 Semester Service for W.C.C. Sugar Grove Campus

KAT is a community and public transportation dial-a-ride service that is available to all Kendall County residents. All riders must be registered to use the service. All rides must be scheduled in advance and times are based on availability. For information regarding registration, scheduling rides, and fares please call the KAT Office at (877) IGO-4KAT, (877) 446-4528.

- Daily One-way Fare: $5.00
- 10-Ride Pass: $35.00 ($50 value)

10-Ride Passes Available for $35: Purchase at Waubonsee C.C. Bookstore, Kendall Area Transit office, or your friendly bus driver.

**Daily Fare:** Purchase on the bus at time of the trip. *Exact Fare Required.* No change will be issued.

The schedules, fares, and other information listed are subject to change.

**Pick up and drop off locations at Sugar Grove Campus** are at the Student Center & Science Building. Drop-offs and pickups at all other campuses will be at the respective Main Entrances. Campus & location must be given at time of reservation.

**Arrives at Sugar Grove Campus:**

8:50 A.M. / 1:00 P.M. / 5:00 P.M.*

All service, including to Plano, Rush Copley, & Downtown Campuses, based on availability.

*There is no Sugar Grove Campus 5:00 P.M. pickup on Fridays.*
“TRANSITions” highlights staff members who have recently been hired or changed positions.

KAT’s Happy Anniversaries!

Jeri Shick
Scheduler - 4 years, June 2011

Craig Riemenschneider
Bus Operator - 2 years, April 2013

Laura Keyser
Dispatcher - 2 years, April 2013

Scott Shockley
Bus Operator - 1 year, May 2014

Mike Neuenkirchen
Dispatcher - 1 year, June 2014

Craig Riemenschneider (left) and Gary Miller (right) have been the Park-N-Ride bus operators since 2013. After the Park-N-Ride operations closed on June 30th, both transitioned to dial-a-ride operations. Both Craig and Gary are sad to see the Park-N-Ride go, but expressed excitement for the new challenges dial-a-ride will bring. They’re happy to continue serving the transit needs of their neighbors.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Name: Tony Bannon
Joined VAC/KAT: 2009/2014

Position: Bus Operator

Before KAT: Worked for 3M company for 15 years in Cleveland, OH, and for 17 years at the 3M plant in DeKalb. After retirement, I worked part time for MedVAC in DeKalb until I transferred to KAT in Yorkville.

Favorite Part of the Job: Meeting people and helping them get from place to place safely when they have no transportation of their own.

Most Rewarding Experience Thus Far: Bringing people to and from the food pantry. I enjoy seeing how they appreciate the service, and how we at KAT do a very good job for the needy.

Hobbies: Playing golf, playing cards, going home to Ireland to see my family, and playing with my 3 grandchildren!

“My riders insist I have an accent. I’m of the opinion that I don’t.”
KAT Holiday Schedule to Change Beginning July 1, 2015

ATTENTION ALL RIDERS

EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2015

SERVICE CHANGE TO HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Beginning July 1, 2015, we will no longer be offering limited service on select holidays. All KAT operations will be closed on the following holidays:

- New Year’s Day
- President’s Day
- Memorial Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Good Friday
- Independence Day
- Columbus Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day

More transit information can be found on the KAT website at www.co.kendall.il.us or by calling (630) 882-6970.
On Tuesday May 19th, VAC staff went to Kankakee to pick up the newest KAT vehicle! Bus 12 is a light-duty bus with a 12-passenger capacity. After it was all stickered up and equipped with a two-way radio, it went into service, replacing Bus 5, which will go into a part-time backup role with over 170,000 miles!
2014-2015 Membership Contributions

Voluntary Action Center is a non-profit community transportation provider, who, in part, relies on the generosity of the community to do what we do best, provide rides to those who otherwise may not have one. As such, we feel compelled to give recognition to individuals, companies, or agencies that have given generously to the VAC mission, which is commitment to providing high quality services that address the basic transportation needs of the community. Thank you to our friends and supporters throughout the greater Kendall County area!

**INDIVIDUAL GIFTS**

William and Jo Anne Behrens
Earl and Mary Ellis Bushnell
Genevieve Covic
Kathleen Cupples
Wendy and Terry Dearborn
John Ermel
Diane Evans
Mary Faulhaber
Margie Ann Fuller
Kathy Grubar
Michael and Karen Hardecopf
Jill Hauser
Martha Hettinger
Jerry and Nichola Hilligoss
William Holstine
Richard and Lori Jansen
Steve and Mary Kapernekas
Richard Kuhn
Marilyn Langhart
Gordon Lehnert
Lucille Maly
Louise Maritato
Blanca Mustafa
Jayantilal Patel
Phil and Cynthia Ruff
Janet Schor
Janet Scott
Kathleen Snow
Howard and Debra Springborn
Thomas and Margaret Wagner
Eleanor Wenckus
Robert and Mary Wolfe
Elaine Yoakum

**ORGANIZATIONAL GIFTS**
Public Transportation Can Be a Ride Out of Poverty

When policy makers talk about solutions to inequality, they usually focus on education and jobs. But this conversation largely ignores the need for improved transportation infrastructure to provide access to these jobs and schools. Through better transportation, American cities can provide opportunities for millions to escape poverty. Yet infrastructure improvement wanes, with Washington unable to do anything despite bipartisan support.

Public transit can be a ride out of poverty. The cities identified by Raj Chetty, an economics professor at Harvard University, as having the highest chances for a person moving from the bottom fifth to the top fifth of income across generations are the cities ranked as having the best public transportation, as my research found. Five of the top ten cities for physical mobility — New York, San Francisco, Boston, Washington, D.C., and Seattle — are also in the top ten for social mobility. Of course many other factors are at play, but good public transportation is among them.

Access is the ticket. People from neighborhoods that lack reliable transportation are stuck and can’t find opportunity. For example, Chicago ranks sixth in public transit in general but 53d out of the 100 largest US metropolitan areas in labor market access, with only 22.8 percent of residents able to reach their jobs using public transit in 90 minutes or less, according to a Brookings Institution study, which accounts for especially high unemployment in underserved neighborhoods. In Massachusetts, a survey of Latinos in low-income areas by Northeastern University found that limited public transportation adversely affected finances, job choices, and ability to get to health care appointments.

Fixing pothole-ridden roads and crumbling bridges is essential for a car-centric nation. But to broaden opportunity and address disparities, public transportation is equally, if not more, essential. If we improve infrastructure deficiencies, we will improve inequality in the United States.

Transportation is a big household expense, constituting as much as a fifth of the budget for an average family of four. For those with low incomes, cars are not an option. If it costs hundreds a month to own a car, an $80 monthly transit pass is a better alternative. And if low-income families don’t have credit cards, the new urban bike-sharing systems won’t help. Without mobility, opportunity wanes.

Even in the best cities, a failure to invest in repairs and replacements hampers opportunity. Sometimes buses well past their 20-year useful life are still in service. Subways and light rail with aging infrastructure are vulnerable in crises, as became painfully clear during the shutdown of Boston’s T during severe winter storms this year. My team’s interviews with lower-income transit users in six cities offered a depressing picture of the seamy side of bus systems: drivers who don’t complete routes at night in neighborhoods viewed as dangerous, buses that whiz past students trying to get to high school, and an absence of well-lit bus stops with shelters against bad weather.

Middle-class jobs are also dependent on the state of the transportation system. In a Harvard Business School survey of business leaders, the top action item for improving America’s infrastructure is more and better public transportation. This would help employees get to work on time without stress, since the average American wastes 38 hours per year stuck in traffic.

Every issue that Americans care about — health and safety, family budgets, education choices, air quality, and environmental sustainability — is affected by transportation infrastructure. To address inequality, let’s add transportation to the conversation.

This Opinion Editorial, By Rosabeth Moss Kanter, originally appeared on the Boston Globe website on May 26, 2015.
Eliminating the Park-n-Ride service will save the village what Burns described as a "significant amount of money."

The village opened the Park-n-Ride in 2004 as part of its continuing effort to secure a Metra station for the village.

But Burns said ridership at the Park-n-Ride peaked in 2008 at about 130 riders. The facility currently has about 32 riders.

Burns said the village has halted its sale of bus passes and notified current Park-n-Ride users of the pending end of the service.

Burns noted village officials did consider the impact that the closure of the Park-n-Ride will have on the village's efforts to obtain a Metra station.

She said the Metra station is still in the village's long-range plans and it "remains on the RTA (Regional Transportation Authority's) long-term radar."

Burns added that she does not believe the limited use of the Park-n-Ride is indicative of the actual local interest and potential demand for Metra service.

She said she believes area Metra riders would find a station in Oswego much more convenient to use than the Park-n-Ride which requires them to drive their cars to the lot, board a bus and then take a train to their destination.

Driving a car directly to a Metra station and then boarding a train would be much more appealing, Burns said.

"The (Metra) ridership is certainly here, they are just not using the Park-n-Ride," she added.

"I think there would be a lot more people using a Metra station than the Park-n-Ride," said Judy Sollinger, a village board member.

This Article originally appeared in Oswego Leger Sentinel on May 28, 2015. It is written by John Etheredge.