

# Transportation Matters

## Centro Named Best Mid-Sized Transit System

The Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA) was named by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) as the 2006 Best Public Transit System in North America among systems providing between 4 and 30 million rides annually. Transit systems are considered for this prestigious award based on their performance in safety, operations, customer service, financial management, employee costs, minority and women advancement, marketing, policy and administration, and community relations.

The CNYRTA was specifically praised by APTA for its exemplary fiscal management, commitment to the community and its ability to grow ridership over a three year period.



*John Andrews, Vice President Sales, GFI Genfare presents the American Public Transportation Association's 2006 Outstanding Public Transportation System Award to CNYRTA Executive Director Frank Kobliski, and CNYRTA Senior Vice Presidents John Renock and Steven Share.*

Among the CNYRTA's achievements in 2005:

- ▶ *Expanding its service territory by 33% and increasing ridership by 11% when it took over troubled transit systems in Utica and Rome. Over a period of 18 months, the CNYRTA refurbished those transit fleets, improved facilities, and stabilized transit operations in those communities.*
- ▶ *Earning a "United We Ride Leadership Award" for its Call-A-Bus and Rides for Work accessible transportation services for the disabled and those seeking work. One of just 5 transit systems in America to do so.*
- ▶ *Increasing ridership in Auburn, NY by 28% after restructuring its route services and introducing a new fleet of buses*
- ▶ *Earning a perfect score, 23 for 23, in all areas of compliance in its Triennial Review by the Federal Transit Administration*
- ▶ *Being praised by New York State Comptroller Alan Hevesi following an extensive audit of the Authority's fiscal management practices. Comptroller Hevesi's report recognized the Authority for having developed "a system of oversight and ethics above and beyond state requirements, and should serve as an example for other state authorities."*

In congratulating the CNYRTA on the award, New York Governor George Pataki recognized staff members and Board "for their commitment to providing Central New York residents with a high quality transportation system" and added that "we look forward to building on this important achievement".

"We've had an unbelievable year" said CNYRTA Executive Director Frank Kobliski. "My hat is off to all of our employees who really stepped up to meet all challenges. This is the transit industry's equivalent to winning the Super Bowl."

The Authority's Centro bus operations are now in the fourth year of an upward trend in ridership -- a significant achievement given the stagnant economy in Central New York.

"Fuel prices have certainly played a part in recent increases, but we saw ridership growth both prior to the fuel price increases and after those fuel prices eased," said Kobliski.

The Authority's bus services are also vital to several community events, including the New York State Fair, Harborfest in Oswego, the Boilermaker run in Utica, the Jazzfest in Syracuse and all events that take place in Syracuse's signature venue, the Carrier Dome.

The CNYRTA is also continuing its commitment to improving the environment. It currently operates 120 clean air, compressed natural gas buses and plans to add state of the art diesel-electric hybrid technology to its fleet in the coming months.

The CNYRTA officially received the award at APTA's Annual Meeting in October. It's the second time the CNYRTA has won the award, having also garnered first place in 1983.

## Centro/SU Kick Off Connective Corridor



Syracuse University Chancellor Nancy Cantor and CNYRTA Executive Director Frank Kobliski untie a ribbon to begin Centro's Connective Corridor bus service. The shuttle will operate 3 days a week connecting the University with various cultural venues in Syracuse. For schedule details visit our website at [www.centro.org](http://www.centro.org).

## CNYRTA Raises Money for Juvenile Diabetes



The CNYRTA raised more than \$20,000 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation at its annual walk at Long Branch Park in October. CNYRTA Executive Director Frank Kobliski served as the Corporate Chair of this year's event. More than 40 CNYRTA employees took part in this year's walk to raise money to find a cure for diabetes.

## Centro Renovations Reduce Company Utility Bills

The CNYRTA is saving money on its utility bills after undertaking an energy mitigation project that has helped reduce the amount of energy used by the Authority.

The Authority's energy bills have decreased by about 20 percent compared to the same time last year. During the past year, the CNYRTA has made significant changes to help reduce energy usage:

*\*Replaced 1,260 lights at the transit center with more efficient bulbs.*

*\*Removed five older heating and ventilating units and installed four energy-efficient models.*

*\*Replaced 31 heat pumps with new, higher efficiency units.*

*\*Upgraded its energy management system.*

*\*Installed 40 new infrared radiant heaters to take the place of older air handling units.*

Centro said it expects to save more than 713,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity and 5.5 million cubic feet of natural gas per year once all the improvements are completed. A kilowatt-hour is the amount of electricity required to power ten 100-watt light bulbs for one hour. It takes about 1,000 cubic feet of gas to heat a typical home on a very cold day in the winter. Centro will also be eligible for New York State Energy Research and Development Authority rebates when the project is completed.

The energy efficiency work was performed by Siemens Building Technologies, Inc., a global company with local offices in Syracuse, under a federal grant awarded to the Authority. Siemens makes buildings comfortable, safe and less costly to operate so clients can concentrate on their core functions.

## Congratulations!

The CNYRTA had two bus operators place in the top ten in this year's New York State Bus Roadeo.

Steve Wehner of CNY Centro finished in 7<sup>th</sup> place and John Perez of Centro of Oneida placed 10<sup>th</sup> in this year's competition in Ulster County. Wehner's performance earns him a trip to the International Roadeo Competition held in Nashville, Tennessee in May 2007.

Wehner, Perez and Chris Stevens qualified for the state roadeo after outstanding performances in Centro's local roadeo.

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