Customer use exceeds expectations after launch of mobile ticketing

Six months after Chatham Area Transit launched the Token Transit mobile ticketing service in March, about 1,200 CAT riders have used the app to purchase thousands of digital bus passes. The number of tickets sold, about 7,700, is more than double the amount that was originally projected.

Customers who have praised the service include trolley tour driver Megan Franklin, who said she downloaded the app immediately after being handed a flyer promoting it.

"I love being able to get on the bus wherever I am, instead of having to get cash out of an ATM or finding a way to the bus station first," Franklin said.

Another one of the app’s users is Jie Qin, a local university professor who said she was used to such cashless options when she lived in China and missed them when she first arrived in the United States.

"To be honest, it took me a while to get used to using cash again," Qin said. "When I saw the ad of the app in the bus, I decided to take it immediately."

Fixed-route customers are not the only ones who have good things to say about mobile ticketing. Tiffany Daniels said she uses the app to purchases passes for CAT Mobility paratransit services.

"I tell everybody about the app," she said. "It’s great."

Read more about the many benefits mobile ticketing provides and try it yourself by downloading the Token Transit app. The app can be downloaded at: https://www.catchacat.org/fares-passes/mobile-ticketing/.

Try mobile ticketing
Scan the QR code with your phone’s camera to download the Token Transit mobile ticketing app and start saving today!

Keep up with CAT
Chatham Area Transit

GET CAT NEWSSEN DIRECTLY TO YOUR PHONE!
Text to phone # 41411
Msg: RIDECAT

Message frequency may vary. Message and data rates may apply. Text STOP to cancel. Terms and primary policy services/primary-ten.

Never overpay for riding the bus!

CAT launches vehicle donation program

Chatham Area Transit is set to give away its first surplus vehicle following the implementation of a new vehicle donation policy.

The policy allows for the donation of available surplus CAT vehicles to eligible 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations that serve the residents of Chatham County.

The donation program is meant to help address unmet public transportation needs by increasing the mobility, access and transportation options of local residents, said interim CEO Valerie Ragland.

“We are thrilled to be able to give these vehicles a second life so that they can continue to serve the community,” Ragland said.

Vehicles in the program have exceeded the end of their useful transit life and have received Board approval for disposal. CAT will only offer surplus vehicles deemed by CAT’s maintenance department to be in working condition at the time of donation and are donated as is. All others will be salvaged or auctioned.

Recipients will be chosen through a competitive process based on how the organizations propose to use the vehicles to serve their communities.

The first vehicle being donated is a 2014 Chevrolet Express Cutaway 4500 van that seats 14 passengers plus the driver.

October 2021 edition

CAT training ensures new operators are ready for the road

Destini Dixon, said she applied to be an operator because she saw the job as a way to get closer to her community.

“I want to be one of the people on the ground with them,” Dixon said.

But before new hires, like Dixon, can pick up their first passenger they must complete CAT’s operator training program. And the program’s first passenger takes place in the classroom, where the only thing they will be operating is their pens, said Safety and Training Coordinator Glenn Golob.

“They don’t get to touch the bus until they pass the written test,” Golob said.

After making the grade, the class graduates to a closed-off driving course, where they must demonstrate their ability to successfully complete a variety of complicated bus maneuvers. Only when they are deemed road ready, do the trainees hit the public streets. That’s when the trainees are directed to drive practice runs that feature many of the most challenging aspects of driving a 35 or 40-foot bus throughout Savannah’s downtown.

On one recent excursion, Safety and Training Manager Jeffery Swinton directed Dixon and her fellow trainees to drive a practice run that included navigating the narrow streets around Savannah’s squares that are populated with cars, pedestrians, bicyclists and groups on Segways. The trip also included accident prone one-way streets where speed limits and stop lights are commonly ignored. There are also low hanging tree limbs and construction zones to look out for.

Continued on page 3
CAT welcomes new Chief Human Resources Officer

We are pleased to announce that Chatham Area Transit has hired Chaka White as CAT’s Chief Human Resources Officer.

White is a Savannah native who has been residing in Philadelphia for the past two years. She has more than 23 years of HR and union expertise in progressively advancing leadership roles as a Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer, Vice President, and Director of Human Resources in the District Courts, foodservice, healthcare, politics, and manufacturing industries.

“Chatham Area Transit is very fortunate to have Ms. White join our team as a human resources professional,” said interim CEO Valerie Ragland. “Her knowledge and expertise will certainly contribute to the positive, forward progression and growth of the agency.”

White is a strategic leader who can deliver an enterprise strategy to drive culture and business transformation and instituting a framework and model to support sustainable value and success through interactive training, building strong relationships, and operating with transparency and respect.

White cites her proudest achievement as working as the Administration and Human Resources Director for President Barack Obama’s 2012 Democratic Convention Committee (DNCC) in Charlotte, NC, when Obama and former Vice President Joe Biden accepted their presidential nominations.

She also served as a personal advisor to the Human Resources Director for Hillary Clinton’s 2016 DNCC in Philadelphia. White specializes in strategic business management, labor relations, organizational training, and labor and employment law compliance.

She also has over 10 years of experience as a business management Adjunct Instructor at Virginia College and recently a HR Professor at Addamont Business School for middle to senior-level Human Resources professionals.

White received a Bachelor of Science in Human Services from Springfield College, a Master of Business Administration from Strayer University and a Master of Jurisprudence in Labor and Employment Law at Tulane University.

Additionally, she holds professional certifications with SHRM as a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SHRM-SCP), a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) with HRCI, and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion with eCornell.

White has stated that she’s eager to get to work and meet with her fellow coworkers.

Let’s all give her a warm welcome to the CAT team.

CAT’s October meeting calendar

Listed below is the monthly schedule of public meetings for the Chatham Area Transit Authority that will take place in October. All of the meetings will be held remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The virtual meetings can be viewed live on CAT’s YouTube channel at: www.youtube.com/chathamarestransit

CAT Board Committee Meetings
Date: Oct. 12
Strategic and Operational Planning: 10:30 a.m.
Performance Monitoring/Audit: 1 p.m.
External Stakeholder Relations: 2:30 p.m.

CAT Governance Committee
Date: Oct. 19
Time: 11 a.m.

CAT Board Regular Meeting
Date: Oct. 26
Time: 10 a.m.

Go to CAT’s YouTube channel at https://bit.ly/3EUd4uH or by scanning the QR code with your phone’s camera.

CAT training continued from page one

Fixed-route bus operator applicants are required to have a commercial driver’s license, but that doesn’t negate the need for the additional training, in addition to learning how to safely operate their vehicles, op-erators must learn the routes, the sched-ules, the stops and proper use of equip-ment such as headway signs and fareboxes.

Safety & Training Coordinator Glenn Golob

“You have to always expect the unexpected,” Swinton said.

Both Swinton and Golob said CAT’s training program has become much more extensive compared to when they started working at CAT as operators in 1993 and 1987 respectively. The training was typically almost immediately done out on the road and would last maybe a couple of weeks before they were put to work picking up passengers. Nowadays, the programs tend to last six to eight weeks. Training is not something that should be rushed, Golob said.

“It takes time,” he said. “It takes a lot of practice.”

Safety & Training Manager Jeffery Swinton and operator trainee Yevonda Ervin

New operator Yevonda Ervin, who moved to Savannah in June, said the training was very beneficial, even after 20 years of working as a public transit operator in Chattanooga, Tenn. In addition to having to learn her way around town, Savannah has narrower streets and a more road activity to look out for, Ervin said.

“I feel like I’ve learned a whole lot in just a short period of time,” Ervin said. “Swinton’s very thorough and he makes sure you have a full understanding of what you’re required to do before you move on to the next phase of training.”

The main thing to learn is how to both courteously and safely serve the public, Swinton said.

“We’re moving people,” he said. “We’re not moving boxes.”

Interested in being part of the CAT team? Career opportunities can be found online at https://www.catchacat.org/about-cat/careers/. Or Scan the QR code with your smartphone’s camera to go directly to CAT’s career page.

CAT would like to send condolences to the family and loved ones of Richard “Rip” Richardson, who passed away on Sept. 27 at the age of 76. Richard-son was a 46-year CAT and Savannah Transit Author-ity veteran bus operator before his retirement in 2019.

Interim CEO Valerie Ragland recently took a moment at the start of last month’s CAT Board meeting to recognize Richardson and express her condolences to his family. CAT customers will probably remember him from his days as the operator of the 12 Henry or his later years driving the 4 Barnard prior to his re-tirement, Ragland said.

“He was the consummate professional and very good friend to all of Chatham Area Transit and this community,” she said.

We thank him for his kindness and dedication to CAT and his community. He will truly be missed.

Send an email to marketing@catchacat.org to subscribe to our weekly electronic newsletter, the CAT Express

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