



News

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For Immediate Release

The T asks public to be Airesponsible at Dump the Pump challenge June 18

**State Rep. Vicki Truitt to announce 25-year transit pass winner as poster child for expanded rail*

FORT WORTH (June 12, 2009) – As America’s economic and air quality concerns continue, The T announced today that it will offer free transportation service and award a 25-year premium transit pass on National Dump the Pump Day on June 18.

The T will offer free bus service all day in Fort Worth and Richland Hills on all regular, express and rider-request bus routes to encourage people who don’t use transit to try it.

State Representative Vicki Truitt, R-Keller, will announce The T’s Silver Anniversary winner of a premium transit pass good for 25 years, at a Dump the Pump event with Fort Worth-area officials at 10 a.m. on June 18 at the Intermodal Transportation Center, 1001 Jones Street in Fort Worth.

“The T’s 25-year pass winner could be a “poster child” for the cause of expanded regional transit connections, especially the 251-mile network of regional rail that has been planned to connect millions of people across the North Central Texas region. The 25-year premium transit pass will provide our young winner a ride into the future,” Truitt says.

The 25-year pass winner is a student at the University of North Texas without a personal vehicle, who said he gets around by “bumming rides, riding a bike,” and would commute to college if he had a car or regional transit connections.” His parents drive to Denton for family visits. He hopes to use the 25-year pass to “commute to school in the future, work or anything else.”

Using his pass five days a week until its expiration in 2034, would result in more than 126 tons of emission reductions, according to the North Texas Clean Air Coalition.

The T’s Dump the Pump event hopes to challenge more residents to “Be Airesponsible,” and try some form of public transportation year-round -- a theme of The T’s new environmental campaign that promotes transit as an effective way for individuals to significantly reduce their carbon footprint.

“If we had the option to choose to leave our cars behind, we could reduce traffic congestion and make a positive impact on the air we breathe,” Truitt says. “We are already out of compliance with Environmental Protection Agency air emission standards in a region that is among the fastest growing in the country. More transportation options would go a long way toward bringing us back into compliance and make it easier for commuters to navigate all over North Texas.”

Dick Ruddell, president of The T, says in less than five years, the 25-year pass winner will be able to take The T's new Southwest- to- Northeast commuter rail across Tarrant County up to Grapevine and DFW Airport where plans are to connect with the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) light rail system. This would allow our winner to travel to all of the cities currently served by DART light rail, and cities slated for new service by 2013.

“We’ve got a good start on our regional transit connectivity,” says Ruddell. “So for our winner, and all our residents, a little bit of the future is possible now.”

Already, The T's winner may travel across The T and DART transit systems. A premium pass includes all T bus service in Fort Worth, the Trinity Railway Express, co-owned by The T and DART, and bus and light rail services throughout the DART system.

“We also appreciate another regional transit agency partner, the Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA), that will enhance this regional connectivity when its new A-train begins operating at the end of 2010,” Ruddell says.

In less than two years, The T's 25th anniversary winner would be able to take the DCTA A-train from Denton to Carrollton, pick up DART light rail into Dallas, and then catch the Trinity Railway Express all the way to his home in Fort Worth.

“With the economic downturn affecting everyone, now is the time to save money and ride public transportation,” says Ruddell. “National Dump the Pump Day is a time to get acquainted with public transportation if you haven’t already. North Texas is working together to make sure that public transportation provides even greater value and convenience in the future.”

The fourth annual National Dump the Pump Day, sponsored by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), encourages people to ride public transportation to save money, protect the environment, reduce dependence on foreign oil, and improve quality of life.

According to APTA, public transportation saves 900,000 automobile fill-ups each day – 4.2 billion gallons of gasoline per year. If an individual switches a 20-mile round-trip commute to public transportation his or her annual CO2 emissions will fall by 4,800 pounds per year, equal to a 10 percent reduction in a two-car household's carbon footprint. These numbers are expected to grow substantially with the addition of regional connections throughout the country.

National Dump the Pump Day Event Agenda: 10 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

***Dick Ruddell, president of The T**, host.

*Introduction of public officials and visual roll out of The T's “**Be Airesponsible**” campaign.

***State Representative Vicki Truitt** on ‘where we go from here’ on regional rail.

*Truitt announces 25-Year Premium Transit Pass winner as “poster child” of regional rail using blow up of photo ID pass and reading his remarks (student has class test that morning).

***Burleson Mayor Ken Shetter, Chairman of Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition.**

*Shetter recognition of “Jet Pack Guys” – who won TRTC's “Cannes-gestion” video contest.”

*Jennifer Cohen, North Texas Clean Air Coalition Commuter Challenge contest for residents.

* Endorsement of transit by Jamie Terrell, an employee of American Airlines who commutes by bus and Trinity Railway Express and is a member of The T's Customer View Committee.

*Recognition of 25-Year Premium Transit Pass winner at The T's board meeting at 4 p.m.