

Daily Dispatch



“It’s a Tie”

Two Employees Share Employee of the Month

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Dinah McAbee & Gary Varang



“Dinah always strives to create a positive environment with other employees. Dinah is ready to be involved with and help plan our activities and extra training for waiver days. Dinah is fun, intelligent, dependable, and willing to learn new things.”

“Gary has always been courteous, friendly, and helpful in all my dealings with him. He listens attentively and tries to help however he can. I have

never heard a bad word from him or about him.”

“ I have heard of him coming in on weekends and have seen him here on non-work days just to make sure vehicles were ready for use by other personnel. I believe he puts in more hours than he gets paid. He is one dedicated employee and the district is lucky to have him.”

These are just two of the many comments recorded by fellow employees about Dinah and Gary as well as other fine employees in transportation. We are

extremely proud of all of our hard working and dedicated employees.

The initial *Employee of the Month* was selected by the employees of transportation. Gary and Dinah both received a nice certificate recognizing them for their efforts along with a gift card from Extreme Bean Coffee, and shared parking privileges in the E.O.M. parking spot.

Congratulations!



Special points of interest:

- Superintendent Dorn in Washington D.C.
- Tie for E.O.M.
- Bus driver climbed Mt. Everest
- Birthdays and Anniversaries
- Shop Talk
- Our local library

How About a “Cup of Joe”



I sold magazines door to door in the Bay Area when I was 11 years old, had a newspaper route when I was 12, I’ve worked retail, washed dishes, cooked professionally, delivered packages and drove school bus to name a few of my many jobs I have had in my lifetime.

The most difficult job I have ever had by far was when I was a substitute bus driver for Stanwood and Arlington School Districts.

What made it so hard?

Darkness *Unfamiliar equipment * Not knowing where I was or where I was going * Challenging students * Incorrect information, just to name a few.

We are preparing to train twelve new substitute bus drivers to help us. My goal is to make it a pleasant experience for them.

What can you do to help?

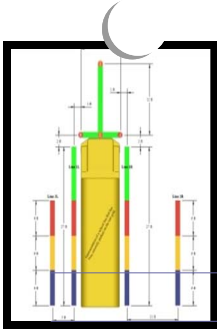
- Be a mentor to them.
- Keep your route guide updated.
- Give us suggestions for a driver’s handbook that the training team is putting together.
- Recruit one or two students on your bus to help them.
- Show your appreciation.

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Safety News

February 25, 2009



ROCKWOOD, Mich. — School bus operations are being offered an easier way to check and adjust safety mirrors on buses before departure from the yard.

The Mirror Lite Co. has developed the Sencillo© School Bus Mirror Adjustment Method to help bridge the gap between the manufacturer’s FMVSS 111 compliance testing and everyday mirror usage.

Consisting of a color-coded grid template, the Sencillo Method accomplishes the same result as the conventional grid-and-cone method, but Mirror Lite says that it does so faster and without the need for cone setup. A driver simply pulls into position and checks each mirror against the color-coded grid.

Mirror Lite offers school bus professionals a free PDF file containing step-by-step instruction on the Sencillo Method. To request the file, contact Dan Swain or Paul Schuster at (734) 379-9828 or pschuster@mirrorliteco.com.



Local News

Deming’s Fountain of Knowledge

Becky Phillips suggested that I visit the local library for this month’s installment of local news in our newsletter, and I am sure glad she did.

I found 23-year library employee Ellen Thompson extremely passionate about her job and **your** library. Ellen told me that there are eleven employees at the library headed by branch manager Frances Barbagallo.

Ellen informed me that the general public takes advantage of about 9,000 items per month at the library. Included in that is not only the traditional hardback book but videos, CD ROMs, music, genealogical data, auto repair data base, magazine index, and internet access to name a few.

Ellen is proud of the expansion work that is going on at the library. “We will double our area size, and

have a 60-person meeting room when they are finished in June of this year.” The enlargement is being paid for by the *Friends of the Library* who also bought the property and existing building for the library.

That has to be a tough job, a construction worker performing their work at a library. Everyone keeps going shhhhhhh!

Ellen kept thinking about and telling me about the additional services that the library makes available to everyone, such as income tax forms, F.E.M.A disaster relief information and forms, photo copy machine, pre-school story time every Tuesday from 10:30 am to 11:00 am, knitting night from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm on Wednesdays, and free wireless internet service 24 hours a day, -all you have to do is pull into their parking lot and connect.

I asked Ellen if the library still takes in donated books?

“Oh yeah”, she replied. “it’s an ongoing process of books coming in and going out the doors.

Ellen wanted me to remind everyone that the semi-annual book sale will be held on May 1st & 2nd and then again on May 8th & 9th.

If you need something to read on those extra trips that are coming up this spring, I suggest you **check it out, so to speak.**



I Can See Clearly Now



(ARA) – Rain, ice and snow all make visibility difficult during the winter months, but if your windshield is damaged, your visibility is compromised no matter what time of year it is, making driving a dangerous activity.

“Shop Talk”

“While driving, a vehicle’s windshield can get damaged from the impact of road debris and rocks that get kicked up by other vehicles.”

“Even a small chip can cause visibility problems, so it’s wise to repair the damage before it gets worse.”

• What Can You Do?

- Inspect windshields daily.
- Write up damage immediately.
- Don’t follow other vehicles to close.
- Watch out for overhanging tree limbs.

Industry News

Superintendent Dorn meets with Education Secretary

Chief state officers from around the nation discuss the federal stimulus package with Secretary Duncan and Vice President Biden

OLYMPIA – February 26, 2009
 – The crisis predicted for education funding is now a reality. And the future of our children depends on our immediate action.



That was the message State Superintendent Randy Dorn received Wednesday when he and 40 other chief state school officers spent the day in Washington, D.C., at the request of Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Vice President Joe Biden. Duncan and Biden convened the educators to discuss how education will be affected by President Barack Obama's federal stimulus package.

Dorn said his impression about the meeting was that the federal government wasn't simply giving the money to states to help balance budgets; the money is to be used to rejuvenate education. "The crisis we face today presents us with

a responsibility," he said, "but it also presents us with an opportunity. We can, and we should, do away with programs that aren't working. We can, and we should, champion innovative programs that are improving students' lives.

Dorn said the need for more money in Washington state is obvious:

- Because of the state's budget crisis, school districts are using 92 percent of their levy capacity, while in the 1990s, they used only 75 percent.

Districts use local funds (largely levy funds) to subsidize basic education non-staff operating costs (such as utilities, insurance, supplies, textbooks and curriculum) by \$544 million.

- **Districts subsidize basic education pupil transportation by \$125 million a year.**

- Districts spend \$153 million more than they receive from the state and federal government for special education each year.

The state still needs an additional \$400 million annually to equalize salaries among districts.

Dorn said what also impressed him was the Department's desire to look to states for answers. "We have many local programs that are working," he said, "and it was great to hear Secretary Duncan ask us for guidance on how to build a quality education system.

"Plus he gave all of us his cell phone number. That kind of access was a great personal touch."

Humor:

Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath. And if you have friends who make you laugh, spend lots of time with them.



Athletic Political Correctness

The National Football League recently announced a new era. From now on, no offensive team names will be permitted. While the owners of the teams rush to change uniforms and such, the National Football League announced yesterday its name changes for the upcoming season, as well as the first week's schedule that includes:

The Washington Native Americans will host the New York Very Tall People on opening day.

Other key games include the Dallas Western-Style Laborers hosting the St. Louis Wild Endangered Species, and the Minnesota Plundering Norsemen taking on the Green Bay Meat Industry Workers.

There are several key match ups, highlighted by the show down between the San Francisco Precious Metal Enthusiasts and the New Orleans Pretty Good People.

The Atlanta Birds of Prey will play host to the Philadelphia Birds of Prey, while the Seattle Birds of Prey will visit the Phoenix Male Finches.

The Cincinnati Large Carnivorous Mammals from Bangladesh will travel to Tampa Bay for a clash with the West Indies Free Booters.

The Monday night game will pit the Miami Pelagic Percoid-Food Fishes against the Denver Untamed Beasts of Burden.



Birthdays and Special Days

Happy Birthday Wishes To:

Paul Porter April 03
Linda Clow April 27

Job Anniversary Dates:

Al Murphy April 05 8 Years
Alex Tikhonov April 23 12 Years





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*Every Student is a
"Guest of Honor"*

Employee Profile

Jim Millson

"I'm just a simple school bus driver" sure doesn't apply to this month's employee profile.

Born to poor church missionary parents in Everett, Washington makes Jim a native of Washington state but it sure doesn't mean that he stayed close to home after he was grown.

Jim relayed to me a story that his mother told him about the journey to the hospital in Everett from Seattle.

Jim's parents were driving all the way to the hospital in Everett because a doctor that worked with Jim's parents in the missionary field had offered them free maternity care. Charlie Millson, then 66 years old, was a very righteous and law-abiding man.

So mindful of the law that he was making absolutely sure that he was coming to a complete and thorough stop at each and every stop sign, until Jim's mother blurted out,

"Just Go!"

Charlie got the message.

One can sense the pride in Jim as he talks of his mother and father and the work they performed in India and Paki-

stan, helping the underprivileged people of the area to learn a vocational skill that helped them to survive.

Some 20 plus years later, while Jim was visiting the area, he was extremely proud that there were still people in the village that remembered his parents and all the good and kind acts that they had performed. In honor of their dedication, the local people had built the Charles Millson Hostel for young men who were away from their families learning a new trade, and named it after Jim's father. Jim had 2 older brothers, both born in Pakistan, during the time his parents were serving on their mission.

Jim grew up in Seattle and attended Shoreline High School. Jim moved to the Deming area in 1977.

Jim and his wife Kathy have been married for 23 years. Both are the proud parents of three sons. Jim stated that the oldest son will be graduating from Western University and his youngest from Mt Baker this year.

When I asked Jim what he did in his off time, he responded that he liked to sculpt art projects out of stone. Jim uses a substance called stealite which is a relatively soft stone to carve his art.

Jim said that he started out doing mostly

animals but has switched to religious themed art and enjoys it immensely.

I then asked Jim what would be one thing about him that would shock people if they found it out about him:

"I used to be a really intense solo mountain climber in my younger days."

In 1982, he booked a 72-day around-the-world trip with Thai Airlines. He visited England, France, Israel, Egypt, Pakistan, India, Thailand, Katmandu, and Nepal just to name a few of his stops. In Nepal he climbed to the base camp of Mount Everest.

While there he worked with the first person to climb to the summit of Mount Everest, Sir Edmund Hillary, and the Sherpa to construct a building to support the work that Hillary was performing concerning the mountain. Jim has climbed to the summit of Mount Chimborazo in Ecuador which is actually higher in elevation than Mount Everest due to the bulging of the earth around the equator.

Quite a story, "Indie!"

