



News Advisory

Blue Water Area Transportation Commission

2021 Lapeer Avenue Port Huron, MI 48060 **phone** 810.987.7373
fax 810.987.2431 **website** bwbus.com **blog** bwwave.com

Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of the Blue Water Area Public Transportation, as well as BWAT's Start in 1976

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 2, 2017

Local Bus Routes Experience Busiest January Ridership Ever

Port Huron, Mich. — Blue Water Area Transit started this year with the busiest January in its 40-year history. An all-time ridership record of 76,602 riders travelled on fixed route buses during the month. The agency's record for January fixed-route ridership was last broken in 2015, with 74,656 riders.

BWAT operates seven regularly scheduled bus routes in the City of Port Huron and Fort Gratiot Township. They all start from the agency's new transfer center in downtown Port Huron. Bus riders can catch a bus anywhere in the system every 45 minutes.

"Maybe lots of people made New Years resolutions to save money and help the environment by riding the bus," said Jim Wilson, general manager, BWAT. "Or maybe January was unseasonably warm this year."

This new milestone joins many others that have been set since 2008 when BWAT broke its monthly ridership record for the first time in 27 years.

"It's great to see more people riding the bus. Everyone benefits with cleaner air and less traffic congestion," said Linda Bruckner, Blue Water Area Transportation Commission Board vice chair and Fort Gratiot Township trustee.

Traffic congestion costs the average American driver \$1,399 per year, according to the recently released INRIX Global Traffic

— more —

Scorecard. The study reported that traffic congestion cost American drivers more than \$295 billion in 2016. The Scorecard analyzes and ranks the impact of traffic congestion in 1,064 cities across 38 countries worldwide – the largest ever study of its kind.

Information about local fixed bus routes is available on the BWAT website (www.bwbus.com) or by calling 810.987.7373.

Blue Water Area Transit just finished celebrating the sesquicentennial of public transportation service throughout the Blue Water Area, as well as its own start 40 years ago.

William Pitt Edison (the older brother of the celebrated inventor Tom) started the local tradition of innovation 150 years ago. He started operating horse-drawn trolleys on several routes as the Port Huron & Gratiot Street Railway in 1866.

The Blue Water Area became one of the nation's first communities to operate electrified trolleys in the 1880s and then motor coaches in the late 1920s. Bus service started in 1927 and continued until an eight-year hiatus from 1968 to 1976. Since BWAT started publicly funded bus service in September 1976, the transit agency has carried more than 29 million riders.

BWAT has produced CNG since 1996. It is Michigan's largest producer of compressed natural gas, with the largest fleet of CNG fuel buses in the state. The agency operates four public CNG fueling stations. The station located at its headquarters at 2021 Lapeer Avenue in Port Huron is open Monday-Saturday, 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. Three additional stations are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week: 516 S. Parker in Marine City, 15041 Downey Road in Capac, and 1529 Hancock Street in Port Huron.

All four of BWAT's public fueling stations are certified by the State of Michigan. The agency accepts Discover, Master Card and VISA.

###



Media Strategies for a Social Generation

gj@glojusticeconnects.com 810.357.6817. fax. 888.654.7118

Smith Justice Group 3560 Pine Grove Avenue. #350. Port Huron MI. 48060. USA