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... and I quote:

“Maybe the hardest part of my life is just having the courage to try.”

-- Rachel Hollis

NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE

CALL 1-888-373-7888

TEXT “BeFree” (233733)

LIVE CHAT humantraffickinghotline.org

24/7 • Toll free Confidential 200+ languages

GET HELP • REPORT TRAFFICKING



Let's Put a STOP to Human Trafficking

Eleven years ago, the President of the United States proclaimed January as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness month. Raising human trafficking awareness is important to Blue Water Area Transit, as it is to so many other public transit companies.

From victim recruitment to survivor escape, public transit may play a critical role in slavery and human trafficking crimes. Spreading a wave of awareness is our first step – as transit employees, transit riders, and community members- in combating this crime.

We urge you, please:

- Learn the **Red Flags** of Slavery and Human Trafficking.
- Download **'Busing On The Lookout'** to your mobile phone for quick and easy human trafficking suspicious behavior reporting.
- Understand that slavery/human trafficking is happening at our local level; it's happening to our girls, boys, neighbors, and bus patrons.

Together we can keep our system safe and protect future potential victims. Together we can spread a wave of awareness.

Continued Inside

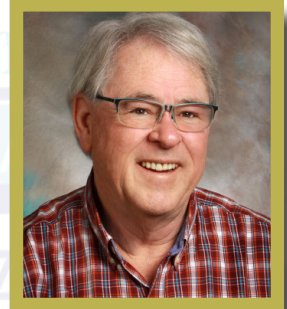
All Around Town

Z P P K R V V F O C G T N Q A G L Y S G
 Z H R G H G I Y D F Q N G K H A E C Q A
 S R A Z P K H A G C S H X J G L O H B Z
 H A V Y A R A U S V P C P U K I O R N Z
 T R E P L M B S M F E O A W M T T I V E
 D R N O M O I A L E R U I B C T B S W U
 I Y C R S C T F B D R N M E M L V T P L
 S Y A T K H A E X T Y C A T O E P O C
 T E F H R E T H M R S I R S R S A P A U
 R H E U Y F F O I A L L I Y R O P H S N
 I U W R S S O R G N A O T S A M A E E I
 C R I O T H R I A S P N I B N E Y R Y E
 T O N N A E H Z R I E A M A N T A S S S
 L N G M L L U O D T E G E K L H B F O S
 Y A S U B L M N E C R I C E U I R L B O
 N V E S A S A S N E O N E S K N A O W A
 C E T E R I N H E N L G N L A G N W A P
 H I C U T U I Z R T B G T Z T Q C E T C
 E P L M F B T I Z E K V E E E O H R C O
 S V P G T N Y Z T R T U R Y S X N S O B

Can you find the hidden words?

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| • Christopher's Flowers | • McMorran |
| • Port Huron Museum | • Lapeer |
| • Transit Center | • Maritime Center |
| • Raven Cafe | • Chef Shell's |
| • Betsy's Bakes | • MIGardner |
| • Lynches | • District |
| • BWATC | • Caseys |
| • Habitat for Humanity | • Palms Krystal Bar |
| • Council on Aging | • Safe Horizons |
| • Lounies Soap Co. | • Wings Etc. |
| • Sperrys | • Kate's |

Wilson Retires



James L. "Jim" Wilson, General Manager of the Blue Water Area Transportation Commission (BWATC) is retiring. After 30+ years managing the agency Wilson plans to retire March 1, 2021.

In 1990, BWATC's system had 21 buses and 44 employees. Today BWATC has 90 buses and 130 employees.

Starting in 1996,

he directed the conversion of the BWATC diesel fleet to compressed natural gas (CNG). This led to BWATC's construction of Michigan's largest compressed natural gas CNG fueling facility (8,400 Square feet) at the Lapeer

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Quotes and Humor Throughout

Winter 2021

Call (810) 987-7373 to speak with Dispatch

Continued Inside

headquarters. This conversion to CNG helped improve air quality in the region.

Beginning in 1997, Wilson managed the coordination and consolidation of 11 different St. Clair County agencies' transportation services. This brought additional millions of Federal and State transportation funds into the county each year.

His other career achievements include the design and construction of the 135,000 square foot BWATC office, maintenance and storage facility on Lapeer and the new Bus Center in Downtown Port Huron.

During Wilson's 30+ years, the Commission provided over 25,000,000 rides. The average monthly rider trips grew from a high of 56,255 to a high of 111,532 during that time.

"I want to thank our current management team and employees," Wilson said. "Our success was always a team effort."

"Jim is leaving BWATC in a strong position, as the quality of the management and operations teams has never been better. We are grateful to Jim for his leadership of Blue Water Transit and his friendship," said Linda Bruckner, chair of the BWATC commissioners.

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... and I quote:

"The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."

-- Nelson Mandela

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Jokes for the Journey

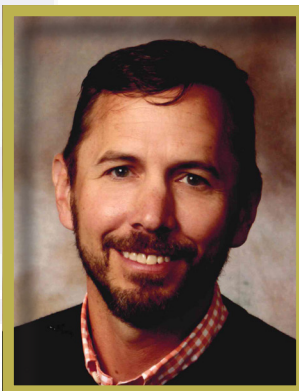
"Why do they call it a 'building'? It looks like they're finished. Why isn't it a 'built'?"

-- Jerry Seinfeld



Looking for a sign that it's time to earn your degree? This is it. With Michigan's new Reconnect Program, you can make your education dreams a reality. Tuition-FREE in-district community college is now available for Michigan residents 25-plus at Michigan.gov/Reconnect!

Blue Water Area Transit Names Dave McElroy New General Manager



The Blue Water Area Transportation Commission's Board of Commissioners selected Dave McElroy as its new general manager.

McElroy has been with the Commission for more than 12 years and played an integral part in the successful operations and major capital projects completed over that time.

A Port Huron native, McElroy is an active member of the community including being past Board Chair of the YMCA of the Blue Water Area and as a current member of the Regional Trails Board and the YMCA Foundation..

McElroy graduated from Michigan State University as a Board of Trustees' Award recipient with a bachelor's degree in accounting.

"I'm honored to be chosen by the Board of Commissioners as the new General Manager of BWATC. I plan to continue the tradition of providing St. Clair County with the exceptional transit service as established by both my distinguished predecessor, Jim Wilson, and the professional and dedicated staff of BWATC," McElroy said.

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**The National Human Trafficking Hotline:
Call: 1-888-373-7888 or Text: "BeFree"**



Locations of human trafficking situations in 2019 obtained from National Human Trafficking Hotline Statistics show Michigan as a hot spot.

Human Trafficking RED FLAGS for Transit

- **Passengers who are not allowed to speak for themselves**
- **Disheveled appearance, agitated, scared/crying**
- **Minors traveling without adult supervision**
- **Offers to exchange sex for a ride, meal, etc.**
- **Doesn't know the person who is picking them up**
- **Any acknowledgment of having a pimp or needing to make a quota**
- **Signs of branding or tattooing (often of trafficker's name)**
- **Passengers not in possession of own ticket, money or ID**

... and I quote:

"If you get tired, learn to rest, not quit."

-- Banksy