

*Connecting*

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WRTA

*People Who Care*

**WRTA**

*Giving The Valley a Lift*

*The Future*

*Environment*

*Environment*

*Economy  
Transportation*

*Small Business*

*Non-Profits*

**7,000**  
RIDES A DAY

**WRTA**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2024**

# GIVING THE VALLEY A LIFT *Transportation*



WRTA provides more than 7,000 rides a day to Valley residents - bringing them to work, grocery stores, medical appointments, and more.

Everyone is included, neither distance nor disabilities exclude you from riding. Income is not a factor either because riding WRTA is free. WRTA serves the community with several types of services —

## FIXED ROUTE

A fleet of 56 large buses provides FIXED ROUTE service Monday through Saturday beginning at 5 AM and ending at 9 PM. You can access these routes from Federal Station in downtown Youngstown or 500 bus stops throughout the county.

## ADA ALL ACCESS

If you're 65+ or ADA-eligible and are unable to use or have difficulty using the bus, you may be eligible to use ADA ALL ACCESS — a curb-to-curb scheduled service to travel to and from any location within WRTA's Fixed Route service area.

## COUNTYWIDE

You can travel from your home to any location in Mahoning County (Mon.–Sat.) not served by our Fixed Route buses with COUNTYWIDE — our scheduled curb-to-curb small-bus service. Vehicles are wheelchair-accessible.

## LATE NIGHT

Night time is the right time for a ride anywhere within our Mahoning County Fixed Route service area. Call in advance to schedule a late-night curb-to-curb service that uses dedicated transit vehicles.

## READY FOR ALL

WRTA buses are wheelchair accessible and large buses also have bike racks.



**WRTA** — 90,951  
HOURS IN SERVICE  
**BY THE** — 1,502,092  
**NUMBERS** — MILES TRAVELED  
**FOR 2024** — 2,012,916  
PASSENGER TRIPS

GIVING THE VALLEY A LIFT

# *Economy*

WRTA is a lifeline and necessity for residents who do not have a second car or the budget for gas and repairs to keep one running. And some people just prefer to use their commute for study, thinking or relaxation. There is no fare -- everyone rides free on WRTA.

Business growth is another prime consideration. In fact, one of the first things that potential companies and employers look for when searching to expand or open a new facility is public transportation. Employers need to know workers can get to their jobs even if they don't have a car of their own.



## GIVING THE VALLEY A LIFT

# Environment

Simply put, when fewer people drive their own vehicles every day there is a positive impact on the environment. WRTA encourages everyone to ride the bus at least one day a week to help reduce their carbon footprint. As people ride Public Transit instead of using their cars, they reduce their carbon footprint in the process.

Every WRTA vehicle is kept tuned up and compliant with emission regulations. However, the transit system has also embraced the goal of using only zero-emission vehicles in the future.

As an organization, the Western Reserve Transit Authority is proud to be at the forefront of the movement toward sustainable and eco-friendly transportation. We believe that by taking proactive steps today, we can make a positive and lasting impact on future generations. WRTA is committed to a sustainable and zero-emissions future.

WRTA began replacing staff vehicles with electric-powered versions in 2020. Battery electric LTV buses have already been ordered. Next year, an order for the large full-size electric buses will also be placed. When the older vehicles are phased out, WRTA will have a 100% zero-emission fleet.

Through our efforts to replace traditional staff vehicles and buses with fuel-efficient and electric models, installing a solar panel canopy for our bus garage, and actively reducing our carbon footprint, we are leading the way in environmentally conscious public transportation.



## GIVING THE VALLEY A LIFT

# LOCAL *Small Business*

WRTA held its third Give Local Small Business a Lift Campaign in 2024 — spotlighting and promoting small businesses in the Valley during National Small Business Week and beyond.

Three community leaders who acted as campaign co-chairs, chose 13 businesses, out of 114 submissions, that exemplify the entrepreneurial spirit and work ethic of the valley as Small Business winners. The winners were honored and presented with awards at a special kick-off event in April. Two winners were also picked in a drawing to receive a \$3,000 TV Advertising Package and a \$4,000 Social Media package.

### 2024 featured small businesses:

- All Spruced Up Cleaning Co.
- Avalon Downtown Pizzeria
- Jenee Spa & Wellness
- Gloris Counseling Services
- La La Love Healthcare LLC
- Charly's Family Restaurant
- The Joshua Tree
- The Emma Elf Project
- Rescued to Riches Pet Groom and Board
- Bending Oak Permaculture Farm
- Haus Auto Group
- Guided Compass Holistic Health
- QUICKmed Urgent Care



### CO CHAIRS:

**Teresa Miller**, Executive Director of Valley Economic Development Partners

**David Wilaj**, Director of Mahoning Valley Logistics Council

**Dan Procopio**, Product Manager of CBC Global

### SPONSORS:

WKBN TV, THE BUSINESS JOURNAL and FARRIS MARKETING/STRATEGIX SOCIAL



# Give LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS *a lift!*

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# GIVING THE VALLEY A LIFT

## Non-Profit ORGANIZATIONS

WRTA kicked off the 2024 holiday season with the annual Holiday Lights Campaign. This campaign put the spotlight on organizations that Light Up the Valley all year long by doing exceptional and beneficial work in the Valley. Twelve honorees were selected, and this year's campaign also featured a brand-new award — the Non-Profit of the Year Award. Twelve non-profit organizations were chosen out of 129 submissions, and one winner was selected from the twelve honorees by the community to be recognized as the Non-Profit of the Year. All honorees were honored at a special kick-off event in November, where they received awards and Christmas tree ornaments with their logo.



### The twelve honorees included:

- Clover Recycling
- Dylan's House
- Olivia's Grace
- Sight for All United
- Friends of Fido
- Limitless Dance Co.
- Yellow Brick Place
- United Returning Citizens
- Mahoning County Public Special Olympics
- Veterans Haven
- DIVA Donations
- Youngstown Lions Club

### Yellow Brick Place was named Non-Profit of the Year and received:

- A \$3,000 TV Advertising Package from WKBN
- A \$4,000 Social Media Marketing package from Farris Marketing and StrategiX Social



Kathleen Moliterno  
(Yellow Brick Place)  
and Dean Harris  
(WRTA)



### CO CHAIRS:

- Barb Ewing, CEO of Youngstown Business Incubator
- Karen McCallum, Recreation & Engagement Director of Boardman Township Park
- Jordan Pennell, Special Projects Coordinator/Representative for U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown

### SPONSORS:

ADSPOSURE, FIRST NATIONAL BANK, WKBN TV and FARRIS MARKETING/STRATEGIX SOCIAL

## GIVING THE VALLEY A LIFT

# PREPARING FOR THE *Future*

Recently, WRTA became involved in testing AUTONOMOUS SELF-DRIVING VEHICLES. While it seems like a futuristic concept, self-driving autonomous vehicles are expected to be a main factor in public transit. AVs are proven to be safer and more efficient, and since they are often powered by battery electricity, they are better for the environment.

After receiving funding last year through the Enhancing Life with Automated Transportation for Everyone (ELATE) grant, WRTA developed the AV1 project to test Autonomous technology for transit. This past August, WRTA hosted an Introduction Event for its first Autonomous Vehicle shuttle. Many community members and leaders joined WRTA at the event to get a sneak peek at the vehicle and its Autonomous features. Once put into service, the vehicle will provide service between WRTA's Federal Station and Mercy Health Hospital in Downtown Youngstown.



# GIVING THE VALLEY A LIFT

## People WHO Care

WRTA is headquartered in Youngstown, Ohio - the very heart of the Valley and its rich culture of hardworking people who care about their community. That caring quality of Valley residents is also reflected in WRTA, even in their bus drivers...



### WHAT'S THE BEST PART OF THE JOB?

**Charlton Glenn** 4 years of service

The best part of the job is providing service for people who need the service there are people who need to get to work there are people who need to get the doctors appointments there are people who just need to get around the city. It's feels good to see us providing a service that satisfied their needs.



### WHAT'S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING RIDERS?

**Tess Willis** 20 years of service

One of the biggest challenges is not owning a vehicle or having car problems, It pushes them to ride the buses. As an example we have route that goes all the way out to Mom's Meals in North Jackson or HomeGoods in Lordstown used by employees. That's a lot for them...keeping food on the table and paying for a car. They usually find it's a better option to use WRTA.



### WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

**Traci Fields** 10 years of service

I'm proud of the relationships and friendships that I built with coworkers and passengers. A lot of people are down on luck and sometimes, when they get on the bus, they just they want to talk to me about what they're going through. I try to encourage people and...They appreciate the encouragement. It makes me feel good because they usually come back and thank me for being there for them. WRTA has made it part of its mission to recognize and honor the people and organizations making a difference in the Valley.

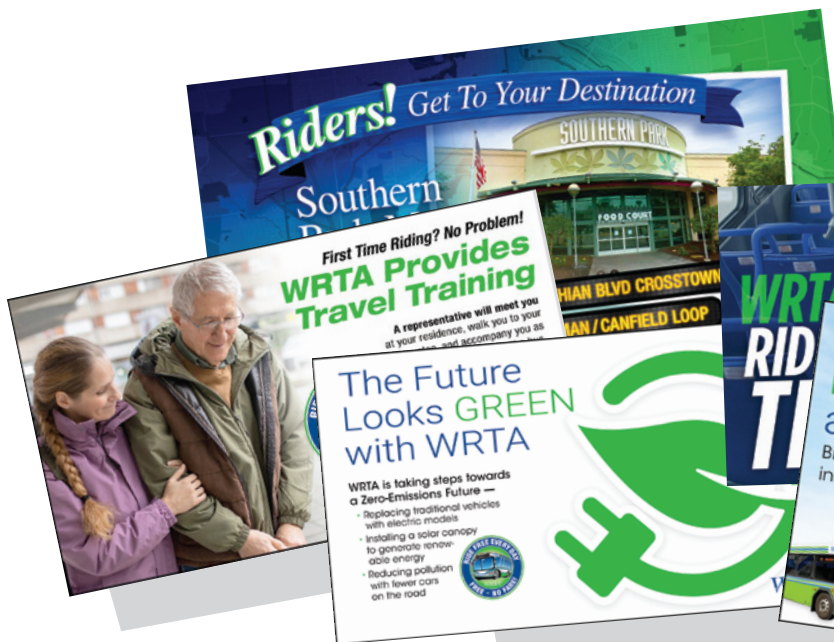




# GIVING THE VALLEY A LIFT

## Connecting

Communicating with our riders and the residents in our service area is an ongoing responsibility. We know that everyone has a preference, but just about everyone communicates today via social media. That's why you'll WRTA messages on most major social media platforms. Here are some of our recent posts with graphic and copy content.



GIVING THE VALLEY A LIFT

# *Our Board* IS ON BOARD



Front Row (L to R): Anthony Stratis, Tracey E. Oates, Mary Boyd  
Back Row (L to R): John P. Brown III, Carlton Ingram, Steven Gondol  
*Not pictured: Emilio Sabastiani*



GIVING THE VALLEY A LIFT

# Partners IN Progress

Several organizations and agencies have been instrumental with helping us with grants and funding to develop major projects and initiatives. We'd like to thank the Federal Department of Transportation, Ohio Department of Transportation and Eastgate Regional Council of Governments for their assistance with projects that will keep WRTA and the Valley moving forward.



WRTA takes pride in "Giving the Valley a Lift" with several community engagement campaigns each year. Our Holiday Lights campaign has done highlighted the work of more than 40 Valley non-profits. Our Give Small Business a Lift campaign honors small businesses and encourages patronage of local businesses. These campaigns also rely on sponsors who help provide incentives and recognition to the non-profits and small businesses. Our long-time sponsors include First National Bank, WKBN TV, The Business Journal, Adsplosure and StrategiX Social.



# *Thank You*

*for your interest and support*



**Dean Harris**  
*Executive Director, WRTA*



Western Reserve Transit Authority

For questions or more information:

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*Giving The Valley a Lift*