

# The Training Wheels

West County Transportation Agency 707.206.9988

## Special Interest Articles:

- Around the Corner
- The Big Day
- New Proficiency Requirements

## Highlights:

Poster Winners  
Kindergarten Orientation  
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## Around the Corner

Bid day for next school year is just around the corner.

I realize that no one wants to think about coming back to work this early in the summer however you do want to be prepared for bid-day.

The buses that you are proficient in can make a difference on what route you can bid on.

Generally, you get to bid on the route and then pick

the bus you would like to drive for the year.

Some of the routes have specific buses assigned to them.

All of the routes out of the Santa Rosa yard have CNG buses – you would want to make sure that you are proficient in all of the CNG buses.

Included with this newsletter is your drivers report.

Make sure to read the report thoroughly. Check all expiration dates and buses listed on the report.

If you find that a bus is not listed that you would like to be proficient in please call an instructor to schedule behind the wheel training.

Proficiencies are changing so please read the article on “New Proficiency Requirements” on page # 2

## The Big Day

**BID DAY**  
**August 13, 2007**  
**8:00am – 4:30pm**  
**Location: Main Yard**

*Bidding for all drivers starts at 8:00 am and continues until 12:00 noon. Each driver has a maximum of 5 minutes in dispatch to decide on a route. Please check the memo from Mike included with this newsletter for your specific time.*

*Beginning of the year Orientation meeting will be from 1:00pm – 5:00pm – at the latest – usually done by 3:30*

NEW DRIVERS IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BID PROCESS PLEASE CALL OR REVIEW YOUR CONTRACT.

ALL DRIVERS! PLEASE BE PREPARED WITH YOUR CERTIFICATE, MEDICAL CARD,

DRIVER LICENSE AND FIRST AID CARD IF APPLICABLE! I WILL BE MAKING NEW COPIES FOR YOUR FILES DURING THE BIDDING PROCESS!

## New Proficiency Requirements



The law states under Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations Section 1229 concerning driving proficiency that motor carriers shall require each driver to demonstrate that the driver is capable of safely operating each different type of vehicle or vehicle combination (i.e., vehicles with different controls, gauges, of different size, or requiring different driving skills) before driving such vehicle(s) on a highway unsupervised. The driver's capability to operate the vehicle shall include special equipment such as wheel chair lifts, ramps, or wheelchair tie downs.

The law does not specify how often you must demonstrate proficiency; however, we currently require you to demonstrate proficiency to an instructor or delegated behind the wheel instructor every two years.

After much discussion and debate we have decided to change our requirements to each driver will need to demonstrate proficiency to an instructor or delegated behind the wheel instructor when renewing their California Special Driver's Certificate. Proficiencies will now be good for a maximum of 5 years. Proficiencies will

expire at the end of your renewal year. The only exception to this policy will be for wheel chair proficient drivers who will be required to demonstrate proficiency every 2 years.

This however does not preclude you from obtaining new proficiencies at anytime.

If you have any questions or concerns about this new proficiency requirement feel free to call me @ 707-206-9988 ext 12.



## Poster Contest Winners

1st Place in Division 3 and Overall Winner: A Field Trip for the classroom & a \$100 Savings Bond. (\*Limited to 4 hrs.)

The winner is from **Guerneville School** in **Mary Bracken's 6th grade class**

Congratulations to:

1st Place in Division 2

\$100 Savings Bond.

The winner is from **Guerneville School** in **Johnson's 4th grade class**

Congratulations to:

1st Place in Division 1

\$100 Savings Bond.

The winner is from **Apple Blossom School** in **Mary Grech 2nd grade class**

## Mark Your Calendars

**2007 / 2008 School Year**  
August 6th Routes open for Inspection

August 13 Bid Day

August 14 & 15th In-service Programs

### Renewal Classes

Next renewal class will be held in November – Dates & Times to be announced.

## Kindergarten Orientation

We are looking for professional dedicated school bus drivers interested in spending time with a class of potential bus riders.

Every year prior to school starting we offer a kindergarten orientation to any school with the hopes of starting these young riders off on the right track.

We use a professional and well-received program developed by a bus driver in California.

This program is called S.A.F.E. The program consists of a dry erase board and magnets that the driver uses to teach basic school bus safety and ridership. We have a video that the driver can watch to see how the program should be delivered.

After delivering the program in the classroom, the children will be allowed the opportunity to ride your bus around the

block to practice what you taught them in class.

If interested in participating in this exciting program, please contact Justin to set up a time to view the video and practice the program.



## In-service Programs

### In-Service Workshop

**August 14, 2007**

**Santa Rosa Yard**

Is scheduled from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm Location is the Santa Rosa Yard

Topics will be a surprise!!!

Lunch will be provided for you from 12:00 – 1:00.

Bring a hearty appetite for one of our fantastic barbecues.

**DON'T MISS THIS IN-SERVICE WE WILL BE HAVING GREAT DOOR PRIZES THIS YEAR!**

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

#### ***IN-SERVICE***

**August 15, 10:00 AM  
– 12:00 PM**

This in-service is for

drivers who are driving special needs routes this next year and for all standby drivers as well.

If your intent is to bid on a special needs route or standby position, plan ahead to attend this in-service.

We will be covering protocol, confidentiality, notice to parents, route sheets, etc.

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*"It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so."*

*Mark Twain*

## West County Transportation Agency

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.schoolbusing.com](http://www.schoolbusing.com)

or

[www.schoolbusing.org](http://www.schoolbusing.org)

## Interesting Web Sites

How Stuff Works

[www.howstuffworks.com](http://www.howstuffworks.com)

Sonoma County Chapter  
of the American Red  
Cross

[www.redcross-sonomacounty.org](http://www.redcross-sonomacounty.org)

School Transportation  
News

[www.stnonline.com/](http://www.stnonline.com/)

National Transportation  
Safety Board

[www.nts.gov/](http://www.nts.gov/)

School Bus Fleet

[www.schoolbusfleet.com/](http://www.schoolbusfleet.com/)

National Highway Traffic  
Safety Administration

[www.nhtsa.dot.gov/](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/)

School Bus Information  
Council

[www.schoolbusinfo.org](http://www.schoolbusinfo.org)

California Association Of  
School Transportation  
Officials

[www.castoways.org](http://www.castoways.org)

National Safe Kids  
Campaign

[www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)

Parents Soup

[www.parentsoup.com](http://www.parentsoup.com)

Safe Havens International,  
Inc

<http://www.safehavensinternational.org/>

Stop Bullying Now

<http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/index.asp>

Drivers.com

<http://www.drivers.com/>

## ***About West County Transportation Agency***

The West County Transportation Agency is a public, Joint Powers Agency that has been formed to provide school transportation service for the school districts that are our members. In a sense we are an extension

of each of the school districts we serve, as they provide our funding.

Our mission is to provide safe, coordinated, cost-effective and child-centered transportation for our member schools. The student is the

individual most impacted by our service. School transportation is a crucial transition for students. A positive experience on the school bus can enhance a student's positive attitude and willingness to learn in the classroom.