



Total Transit Times

Taxicabs, Special Needs Vans & Buses

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APRIL 2003

DYNAMIC DUO WINS AT HORSESHOES!

Who would have guessed it? Mike Patane and Steve Frye whooped the pants off Craig Hughes and Mike Pinckard in the highly acclaimed BBQ Horseshoe Tournament held on March 7.

A BBQ was held for the employees of the Glendale and Mesa Shops in order to recognize their tremendous efforts in cranking out 'get readys' like a car factory!! The shop responded to the management mandate to put 150 new vehicles on the road in the next 150 days by cranking out 90 'get readys' in 45 days. (For you neophytes, a 'get ready' is a term that means they took a police cruiser and turned it into a taxi!) They did this in addition to keeping up their regular preventive maintenance schedule and still completed approximately 200 other work orders for various repairs!! In order to know how incredible that is you have to understand that in the past the shop used to produce only two 'get ready' vehicles per week; now they are producing approximately ten per week. These additions to the fleet will supply both Tucson and the Phoenix metro area and enable us to retire cars from the fleet.

The impromptu tournament was organized (and we use that term loosely) into eight teams of two players each. The teams were as follows:

- Team #1: Alan Jackson and Craig Stangle
- Team #2: Bill Poveromo and Jose Medina
- Team #3: Steve Frye and Mike Patane
- Team #4: Jose Cisneros and David Anaya (our friendly electrician)
- Team #5: David Hermiston and Tom Thompson
- Team #6: Craig Hughes and Mike Pinckard
- Team #7: Mike McHenry (from Coker) and Boris Uvaydov
- Team #8: Jim Stenger and Jerry Mullen (otherwise known as the Jim and Jerry Show)



We are Number 1: Everybody Get Up and Dance!
(L-R) Mike Patane and Steve Frye

In death defying feats of strategy and skill that went four rounds, Mike and Steve pitched their way into the finals to be faced off against **THE MANAGEMENT!** When asked if they had actually thrown the game (no pun intended), Craig and Mike vehemently responded, "Not on your life! We hate to lose at anything!"



Spectators waited with anticipation to see who would win



"Hon, I don't really know how to tell you this, but I think I just lost my job!"



Mike and Tom thank all the mechanics for rising to the challenge to meet the management mandate

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And Discount Cabs were Yellow?

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COMING NEXT MONTH:



St. Patrick's Day Parades and Where Do Our Advertising \$'s Go?



Mr. Dean Ullmann, a voucher customer, was picked up by driver **Allen Long Jr., #30360**, and called to say that Allen was very courteous, nice and was also a very good driver. As this was the driver's first day out on the road, this is great news!! Thanks for the hard work Allen!

Margaret Crites walks with a cane and so it is difficult for her to get around. As she prepared to exit the cab, **Carl Borer, #91256**, immediately got out of the cab and opened the door for her. When she reached her destination (which was only a mile or so away), he again got out and opened the door for her. Carl then went the extra mile and opened the door of the building for her. Margaret called in to say how much she really appreciated his great attitude and kind service.



Christine Day called in to say that she was very pleased with our drivers, and



thinks that Discount Cab has the best drivers around. She wanted to be sure we knew that **Alfred Hamilton, #70931**, was the 'best of the best.'

She said, "He is just really cool. Whenever he picks me or any other family member up he makes the trip very special by the way he treats us."



"**Santos Moreno, #20960**, was very helpful and polite. He gave me fantastic service!" said Jan.



"**Jason Skipper, #22230** was so helpful, sweet and nice. He was driving really careful and was very polite. He is a very, very nice person and a good driver," remarked Anna Wells.

Jan called on March 14 to say that **Bruce Tilly, #00219**, was very polite and a pleasure to ride with. He provided her with excellent service.



Airport Drivers Boost Discount's Credibility!

Driver **Abdi Ali, #21188**, returned a purse with over \$700 in it to a customer who left it in his airport cab. Gayle from the airport called Jim Constantine, our Driver Manager, and remarked, "This is the second incident where a very valuable item was returned by your drivers. Whatever you guys are doing down there, you're doing it right!" The customer gave Abdi a small reward and in addition, Discount Cab gave him a \$20 credit on his lease. "It is important that the airport recognizes what good drivers we have," said Jim. (see related story page 11.)



(L-R) Abdi Ali, #21188, Mursal Yusuf, #10458

Mursal Yusuf, #10458 picked up a woman at the airport on March 7 and upon arriving at the destination, she handed the driver three \$20 bills, telling the him to keep the change. After the customer had walked away Mursal thought about it a minute and realized that the woman may have made a mistake. He found her again, inside the hotel, and brought it to her attention. She was so very impressed that Mursal caught her overpayment that she called the airport to tell them how honest he was. Way to go Mursal... keep up the good attitude and service! (see related story page 11.)

Good Things Come in Twos

Trish Bertram, #30306, Russell Parker, #21140 and **Michael Allen Ricard, #00825**, have been raking in the compliments; each driver received two separate compliments this month!

Sherry Stickland and Kelly Diekhoff both called in to let us know that,

"**Trish** is the best cab driver she's ever had and there should be more drivers like her." Sherry takes cabs daily and has never been treated as nicely as Trish treated her.



Diane Parks and Mrs. Lund called in to say, "**Russell** was very nice, polite and helps them in and out of the car. He is a very good driver who goes out of his way to be helpful. He always helps us with packages and is very safe and courteous." (see related story page 11.)

Jan Stipetick and Katherine Youtsey both called to say that **Michael Allen** was very helpful and couldn't be any nicer. "He is a super, super nice man," said Jan, "I have ridden with Mr. Ricard before, but this time he was even more helpful." "He's very polite, knows where he is going and made my ride very relaxing," Katherine added.



March 17, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

I just wanted to drop a little note to let you know what a pleasant experience I had the other day. I haven't ridden in a cab in a long time, but your driver, **Alan Perry, #365** was very polite to me and my children. He was very professional and asked that we all buckle our seat belts. He was great, we were having a bad day, he made us all smile. I just wanted you to know what a wonderful employee you have working for you.

Thanks,
Monica Guerrero



Alan Perry, 22237

never **discount** the importance of



Safety First

Gerard Labbe, #21136, was involved in an accident in January, just a few short months after starting to drive for Discount Cab. Gerard had been hit from behind and pushed into another vehicle in front. He was impacted so hard that the vehicle was a total loss. At the time of the accident, he had four passengers; two children under the age of four and two adults. All the adults were seat belted and both children in car seats. The passengers and drivers are safe today because of Gerard insisting that everyone use their seat belts and not allowing the children to ride without being securely strapped in a car seat. Great job in safety and customer service!!

by Debbie Hernandez

Gerard Labbe, #21136
plays it safe and
no one is hurt!
(see related story page 10)



Photo of car seats safely belted in, taken by the road supervisor at the accident site.



Rear damage to Discount Cab



Vehicle #1, hit Discount Cab from rear



Vehicle #2, Discount Cab Driver Labbe and four passengers are hit from behind



Vehicle #3, Discount Cab hits truck in front after impact from behind

A preventable collision is one in which the driver failed to do everything reasonable to avoid it.

MeditransITIONS

New Supervisory Positions...

Dave Drefahl and **Pam Anderson** were selected as Shift Supervisors for Meditrans. Dave and Pam will work with the Meditrans drivers to ensure timely driver shift starts and returns, facilitate vehicle readiness and address immediate maintenance/supply needs. Dave is the weekday morning supervisor and Pam will cover the evenings.

Partnered with the new Shift Supervisors as Lead Controller is **Steve Lonsberry**. Steve works the weekday daytime shift in the Meditrans office and will help coordinate the customer service and dispatch functions. Together, Dave, Steve and Pam form a 'much needed' full-day, full-service supervisory team. Steve will share with Dave and Pam on-call duty on a weekly rotating basis ensuring 24-hour Meditrans service.



Eastside Operations...

East valley transport activity is increasing. To better and more effectively respond to both scheduled and 'on-demand' requests for service in that area, a couple vehicles have been assigned to the Mesa yard. Drivers will be able to check in



Dave Drefahl and Pam Anderson take on new responsibilities

and out at the east side station. The Mesa facility has plenty of parking for vehicles, room for supplies and a large maintenance facility.

Additional Vehicle to Lake Havasu City...

With the growing activity level along the Colorado River corridor, another vehicle, #137, was activated and transferred to that area last week. **John Cannizzo** has joined **Kevin Tankersley** in Lake Havasu City and **Tom Leinweber** in Kingman to cover northwest Arizona, aka "the River."

New Routes...

The Phoenix area has been experimenting with a new "routing" plan with great success. Many thanks to the able assistance of **Jerry Mullen** and the invaluable input of Dave Drefahl, Steve Lonsberry, **Freddy Boen** and a few others. Six daily pre-scheduled routes with regular pick-ups and drop-offs at appointed times and places are now active and have helped Meditrans improve our 'on-time' performance and customer service. We thank the drivers of these new routes for their patience and participation in getting this new program going.

by Jim Stenger

New Faces, New Places: Geared For Growth



Barry Levine joins our management team as our new General Manager for the East Valley and most recently worked for Copart Auto Auction. He worked for two years as a Regional Manager covering the five southwestern states.

Barry also worked for 16 years as the Director of Operations for Alamo Rent-a-Car at Sky Harbor Airport. He and his wife, Karen have three children, Amy (23), Jennifer (19), and Lindsey (19). Amy works for Americorp, Jennifer is a freshman at the University of Arizona and Lindsey is a preschool Teacher. Karen works for a marketing and sales company to the travel industry in Arizona, Nevada and New Mexico. "I am enjoying the opportunity to apply my business experience at Total Transit, Inc. and helping us reach our goal of having the 'best service level' in the industry," said Barry during a recent interview. Barry's education includes a BBA from the University of Massachusetts and an MBA from New Hampshire College.

Gregory Naff joins the management team as Information Services Manager. Prior experience includes working as Senior Network Engineer for The Tech Group, Senior Field Engineer for Plurimus Corp. and Manager of Information Systems, Telecommunications and Senior Project Manager for Hypercom. He and his wife, Annette, have a 10 year old daughter, Megan. He is a jazz enthusiast and brews his own beer (stout, very stout!). He came to Total Transit because of the tremendous growth potential and the great people. Gregory has a BS in Business Management from the University of Phoenix.



Jerry Mullen joins Total Transit as a Manager-in-Training. He was the owner of a small commercial and residential repair/maintenance company called Mr. Handyman. Jerry started the business from scratch and operated it for about 18 months before selling it. He

also worked for United Parcel Service for 21½ years. While he had many positions and jobs at UPS his primary responsibility was in operations; loader, driver, supervisor and manager. Jerry also served for four years in the Air Force. Jerry and his wife, Cheryl, met in the 6th grade and started dating in high school. They have been married for 28½ years and have two children, April (21) and Kent (19). April attends the Glendale Community College and Arizona State University West; Kent lives in Tucson and attends the University of Arizona. Jerry's passion is woodworking; he builds furniture for friends/family and in his spare time likes to hike. Jerry attended Glendale Community College for two years and recently enrolled in Western International University to complete his Bachelors Degree in Business Management. When asked why he joined Total Transit Jerry responded, "I was very impressed with the facility and professionalism of the people. I knew after that initial interview this was the type of work I was looking for and felt my background and personality would fit well into the culture and work ethics of the organization."



Dave Drefahl and Pam Anderson are promoted to Shift Supervisors for Meditrans. (see story page 3.)

Rene Williams joins us as a Meditrans Driver. Prior to coming to work for Total Transit Rene worked at a boy's group home as an overnight counselor and also as a cook at YDI and BSS. He is married and has three children ages 26, 22 and 13. Rene loves music, basketball and playing pool. He joined Meditrans because he was looking for a change; he likes to be out and about. So far he has met some good people on the job.



Veronica Vargas is a new Customer Service Rep and has experience answering phones and problem-solving. She is a mother of three wonderful children and enjoys volleyball, roller skating and playing with her children. She is very focused on being a good mother and providing all the necessities of life for her children. She likes everything about her job and enjoys her co-workers, supervisor and dealing with the customers. She is currently attending business and technology classes at AIBT.



Maria Martinez is also a new Customer Service Rep in our Call Center. Previously she worked as a monitor and cashier at Sky Harbor Airport. She worked there for about a year and loved it; that's why she was excited to come to Total Transit and do almost the same job here! She has been married for seven years and has two boys; a 5 ½ year old and a 10 month old. They love to go camping, to the park and to the movies. She likes working with others, meeting new people and making friends. She went to the Phoenix Job Corps to complete her GED.



Nan Parker joins us in the Call Center as a Customer Service Rep. Previously she worked for Yellow Cab for four years with a variety of different titles; CSR, Dispatcher and Shift Supervisor. She has one daughter and three grandchildren; Teranek (6), Arthur III (2) and Christopher (8 months). She enjoys crocheting, puzzles and reading. Nan applied for a position with us after her friends told her this was a great place to work with really great people! She graduated high school in New York City, attended New York University and has continued her education at Phoenix College. She has taken many

business and computer classes.

Trudy Reaves joins our company in a completely new position, Vehicle Coordinator. Our fleet has grown to such a size that we actually need a fulltime person to manage the details of insurance, licensing, etc. Trudy's previous experience is with City Plating in San Antonio, Texas where she was a resident for one year. Prior to living in San Antonio she lived in Houston for four and a half years. She is a single parent with a 12 year old son, Anthony. She graduated from Clear Creek High School in 1983.



John F. Cannizzo joined our Meditrans Division as a driver in Lake Havasu City. He has extensive experience, ten years, as a driver for the Veteran's Administration in Minnesota, Washington and

Arizona. In addition to driving for the VA he spent about three and a half years driving for Catholic Community Services in Washington and Minnesota. John has worked as a police officer and a Deputy Sheriff for Jefferson County. He worked for the Robbins Company as a supervisor and installed tunneling machines around the world; Germany, Switzerland, Australia, England, France, Italy, Zambia, Greece, Norway and the United States. He and his wife, Carole, have been married for 21 years and have nine children, 19 grandchildren and one great grandson. John currently enjoys swimming and walking. "I joined Meditrans because I enjoy driving and assisting people in need. I like the people I'm associated with: Mitch, Kevin and Tom," John remarked. John attended Milwaukee School of Engineering and Milwaukee Institute of Technology.

Ernie Haynes, #1047, is our new Road Supervisor and previously worked as an independent taxicab operator for Discount Cab. He was the owner operator of five cabs and worked at the Discount Cab Scottsdale Cage as the Lead Cashier. Ernie is single and has one daughter (22) who lives in New York City. He is interested in traveling and likes bowling, driving and watching sports. When asked what he liked about Total Transit, Ernie replied, "I have always liked the down-to-earth atmosphere and the friendly people. Ernie graduated from Rice High School and has attended Rio Salado Community College.



Mike DeWell joins our Glendale Shop as a transmission rebuild. He has also worked for Lee Myles and Cottman Transmission companies. He was self-employed for about a year and was also the

Manager for Liberty Transmission. Mike is single with one son, Joshua (11). He enjoys high powered rockets and spending time with his son fishing and camping. He was born and raised in Phoenix Arizona and likes any type of motor sport. He came to us to be around friendly co-workers and to have a respectable employer. Mike graduated from Moon Valley High School and attended Arizona Automotive Institute.



Safe Driver Program

It all begins with you, the Taxicab Independent Contractor!

BE PROFESSIONAL • BE COURTEOUS • ABOVE ALL - BE SAFE

The Safe Driver Program was launched in May 1996. This program gives recognition to individuals for driving safely and defensively. This program is open to all contract, lease purchase or owner operator drivers.

Contractors completing 20 safe shifts without an accident receive \$20 credit toward their lease payment. Drivers completing 100 safe shifts receive 1 shift credit; 500 safe shifts = one week lease credit; 1,000 safe shifts = one week lease credit plus one prorated shift; 1,500 safe shifts = one week lease credit plus two prorated shifts; 2,000 safe shifts = one week lease credit plus three prorated shifts.

PERIOD: FEBRUARY 22, 2003 TO MARCH 21, 2003

1000 Safe Shifts

90925 Franco Pino

500 Safe Shifts

00140 Richard Warren
00513 Albert Moore
60708 Robert Garza

100 Safe Shifts

00810 Clayton Parker
10835 Carl Koste

20413 Charles Tall
20416 Ibrahim Abu-Arish
20613 David Ferguson
20619 Clifford Murphy
20908 Albert Jones
20964 David Ronan
20981 Jeanmarie Dia
21054 Gerard Jeronowitz
21062 James Quinn
21100 James Womack
21102 Stanley Carney

21103 Nader Mansourian
21136 Gerard Labbe
21140 Russell Parker
50618 Anthony Slover

Remember:

- Drive Defensively at all Times
- Exercise Your Leadership Skills
- Practice Traffic Management
- Expect the Unexpected
- No Ride-Alongs
- No Tailgating
- No U-turns
- Brake on Yellow, Stop on Red
- Left and Right Turn Yield
- Keep Your Eyes on Road Ahead
- Beware of the Good Samaritan
- Maintain a Safe Following Distance

**Franco Pino Hits 1,000
Safe Shifts**



Congratulations to Franco for reaching the 1,000 Safe Shift mark! Prior to driving for Discount Cab he worked in construction for a local TV-cable company and has also worked as a roofer. He attended school in Mexico prior to becoming a U.S. resident. Franco and his wife, Olga, have two sons, Fernando (12) and Franco (7). In his spare time he likes to play soccer with his sons when he is not driving. When asked why he decided to drive a cab for Discount he responded, "I was looking for a change and to meeting new people."

Discount Net: This is the City

This is the city and my name is Jim Constantine, I am the Driver Manager working at the Glendale HQ. Keeping Discount safe is my job. On March 17, 2003, I was driving down the road and spotted Discount Cab driver **Ali Ahmed, #20408**; so I decided to follow him and see if he was playing it safe or not. I followed him for quite a while wondering if he'd slip up... waiting ... watching ... instead he did everything just right. I guess that Discount Cab trains their drivers well because he was doing everything very safely. Further investigation on my part revealed that he'd been given a \$10 credit on his lease for his safe driving.



**Congratulations Ali!
Keep up the good work!**

Seven Days Pays Out!! Drawing is Better Than a One Arm Bandit at the Casino!!

Driver **Abdullahi Abbas, #90708** won a free lease! Discount Cab went seven days without a chargeable accident and Abdullahi's name was drawn from the pool of drivers to receive the free lease! When the Discount Fleet is accident free for 14 consecutive days, two driver's names will be drawn and they'll receive free leases also!! Keep up the safe driving!!



DRIVER IDENTIFICATION CARD



DRIVER'S NAME CRAIG C. HUGHES

COMPANY NAME Camelback Taxi

COMPANY ADDRESS 2538 E. McDowell

COMPANY PHONE # 275-4595

273-3300
COMPLAINT NUMBER

DRIVER # 1173
CIRCA 1984 121-302 N-5-83

Remember When . . . We Owned Metro Taxi, Craig had Hair, and Discount Cabs were Yellow?

Interview with Craig Hughes, President and Owner of Total Transit, Inc.
dba Discount Cab and Meditrans

Interviewer: I understand that your cab company is one of the premier cab companies of the valley; as owner and President, why do you think that is?

Craig: Because we've got the right people... the right managers; a lot of the right people in the right places.

Interviewer: You have a degree in Transportation from the University of Arkansas, naturally I assume you've always wanted to be in the transportation business. Is that correct?

Craig: (laughs) No, that is not correct. I was in college during a very difficult economic time and had to have something more specialized than a general business degree in order to get a job; transportation appealed to me. I majored in transportation and completed all my requirements in my senior year of college, and actually worked toward my Masters in transportation and physical distribution. Upon graduating I secured a position as an auditor trainee making \$8,000 a year in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in the JC Penney Catalogue Division, Traffic Department.

Interviewer: What was your first experience in the taxicab business? How does someone go from being an auditor to owning a taxicab business?

Craig: I moved out to Arizona; I had to get away from all that snow. I worked for a man who owned a firm that did freelance transportation auditing. I did okay at that job, but it was pretty boring. When he started cutting my commission and I turned thirty, I decided I was never going to work for anyone again. So I started looking for a business to buy. For some reason I found a little cab company that had fifteen cars and it appealed to me. People always ask me why I got into the cab business and I usually respond by saying, "Stupidity." I think I rode in a taxicab only twice in my life before I owned a taxi cab company. I came into the industry with no preconceived notions, and I think that may have helped along the way.

Interviewer: So what was the first taxicab company that you bought and what year was that?

Craig: In February 1984, I bought Camelback Taxi Company.

Interviewer: That sounds like it might be a gypsy cab company, was it?

Craig: They didn't really have gypsy cab companies back then. There were a lot of small companies. Camelback Taxi was just an airport cab company; we had one dispatcher, fifteen cars and probably ranked 8th or 9th in size. By comparison I think AAA might have had thirty vehicles.

Interviewer: Was AAA the number one cab company at that time?

Craig: No, it was Yellow Cab by far. They probably had a couple hundred cabs.

Interviewer: How many years did you own Camelback Taxi?

Craig: I bought it in February and by July I could see

that I had to do something... it was a good concept, but it was an expensive cab service that depended too heavily on the airport. If the airport wasn't busy, the drivers would come in and complain that they couldn't pay their leases. I wanted a little more control over the income stream. I talked to people about the concept for a low priced cab company and just started doing it. In July of 1984 I started Discount Cab with two vehicles.

It was pretty successful, people couldn't understand how our drivers were coming in with a lot of money. It didn't make sense to them that the company charging the lowest fares (\$.90/mile versus \$1.50/mile) had the highest paid drivers. They didn't understand that frequency has as much to do with making money as the rate being charged. We kept converting one car after another and by September of 1986 I had 35 cars, a nice facility and a pretty good business going. Then the bottom dropped out of the insurance market and it was just about as bad as it is now; I call it "insurance hell." I was forced to buy insurance through a third party and the insurance consumed about a third of our income.

So you can imagine, when I got an opportunity to sell my company in December 1986 to the Courier Group (which owned Courier Cab), I took it. I continued working there as a consultant, then after a while I was some kind of vice president, maybe executive vice president or something like that... I don't know what I was, I can't remember now... isn't that funny? Maybe I was the general manager... but whatever the title... it doesn't make any difference. In February 1990 the owner went through a tough time resulting in a personal bankruptcy and decided to sell out to Yellow Cab. The owner gave me a choice and said I could be a part of the bankruptcy filing or I could just take the company back in lieu of what was still owed on it.

So 13 years ago we started Discount Cab again with nothing; no company cars, nothing really except for the telephone line and the calls. We plunged forward and struggled a bit, started buying a few cars and finally got our fleet up to about 35 cars again. Then in July of 1990 we had an opportunity to purchase Metro Taxi.

Interviewer: So tell me about Metro Taxi, you actually owned them?

Craig: Metro Taxi was a wonderful opportunity for us, it was actually a good cab company. It was fairly well run; the only drawback was that they didn't pay a lot of attention to maintaining insurance and that kind of thing. They found themselves in the same position I was in in 1986, they were in "insurance hell" and had lawsuits against them. The owner was actually planning to close the doors, paint the cars and sell them to try to recover some of his money that way. I talked him into selling Metro Taxi to us. The only thing I really wanted was their telephone line/number. They were doing about double the number of calls as us; 1400 calls/day. Metro Taxi afforded us an opportunity to grow three-fold overnight. That is really what established us as number one in town with respect to call volume; that is something we have tried to maintain ever since.



Craig's wife, Chris, with children in first Camelback Taxi ever painted (Circa March 1984)



First Discount Cab color (Circa 1985)



West Valley Discount Cab office (Circa 1989)



Toni Elkin's Cab #831 (Circa 1990 Post Courier)

Remember When . . . We Owned Metro Taxi, Craig had Hair, and Discount Cabs were Yellow?

Interview with Craig Hughes, President and Owner of Total Transit, Inc.
dba Discount Cab and Meditrans

Interviewer: So you actually came up with the name Discount Cab after owning Camelback Taxi for a short period of time?

Craig: Right, I had talked to this old timer who told me how to go about selling myself and promoting the business. He told me that the name of the company didn't really make a difference. I didn't believe that, I thought the name of the company made a huge difference... and it really did. For instance, there used to be a large cab stand at Park Central, and one of our cabs was sitting 5th up and people would walk right past all the yellows because they saw the words DISCOUNT on the top of our cabs. It made a huge difference. We filled a market void. We had a large cab company and were giving better service than Yellow Cab and ACE Cab. That's about the time we came up with our slogan/tag line, "We discount the price... not the service." It was directly aimed at our competition. We wanted to let the customers know that even though we were lower priced, they could still expect to get good service.

Interviewer: You actually incorporated the company in a leap year?

Craig: (laughs) Yes, the actual date that I took over the Camelback Taxi was February 29, 1984. Which means we just hit our 19th anniversary in February.

Interviewer: We have this lovely driver card, DRIVER 1173 for Camelback Taxi, with your picture on it. So you've actually driven a taxi in those early years, how did that work for you?

Craig: (laughs again) I disavow any knowledge of that.

Interviewer: Seriously, when you started Camelback Taxi, it was a small, struggling company. What did you do?

Craig: Everything! I always refer to it as wearing a different hat. I wore every hat and I had a very thin knowledge of the cab business. Drivers soon found out I was naive and that it was easy to get one over on me, so they did it on a regular basis. Occasionally I would drive around to see what was going on out there and after a while I finally figured out that not everybody was truthful about everything. That was part of my learning experience, I had guys

working for me that maybe I shouldn't have had working for me, but they had such a knowledge of the business and I gained so much knowledge of the business from them that it was worthwhile.

Timeline

- Feb. 1984 - Purchase Camelback Taxi
- July 1984 - Start Discount Cab
- Sep. 1986 - Sells Discount Cab to Courier
- Feb. 1990 - Take Discount Cab Back from Courier
- July 1990 - Purchase Metro Taxi
- Sept. 1998 - Start Viva Taxi
- June 1999 - Start Meditrans Division
- Sept. 1999 - Discontinue Viva Taxi
- Feb. 2003 - Open Discount Cab Tucson

I didn't like working the airport. To me it was too much time sitting and I had things to do. You always have things to do when you're wearing all the hats. When we started Discount Cab and it picked up some momentum Friday afternoons would pretty much be insane. There was only one office; we all sat in there, dispatchers, operators and myself. When I'd see a stack of tickets start to build up I couldn't stand it; if we weren't picking somebody up on time it kind of made me crazy, so I'd go out back and try to find anything that ran (maybe the worst car we owned) and pick up a couple of calls near the office to help clean up the board a little bit. My wife would usually call after a while and wonder where I was. I'd let her know that I was just doing a couple of calls and I'd be right in. Before I knew it the time would be 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning. It was a lot of fun. Of course, it was probably more fun for me than for a lot of people because I didn't have to do it every day. I did enjoy it. You never knew who was going to get into your cab next, so there was always some mystery about who'd be in here next, what will they be like? Will they want to talk, or somebody you just can't wait to get out of your cab? That part was very interesting and gave me a better insight as to how the business worked.

Interviewer: You had mentioned to me once that in the early years, you were kind of embarrassed to tell people you owned a cab company.

Craig: Well, it's not exactly a glamour business and that is probably one of the reasons why we've been able to be successful at it. It's the kind of business that a lot of people have turned their back on and historically have not been professionally operated. We feel that we have a very professional management team and training technique and that is what the industry needed.

Interviewer: I see a variety of different colors of cars and styles, kind of a rainbow; white, grey, black, burgundy, brown, blue and green ones. What's that all about?

Craig: It's not as bad now as it used to be. I just like something to play with. We'd just paint cars different colors, and had fan cabs for different teams. When you don't know what you're doing, you get to try a lot of different things. It's not like we were Yellow Cab and had to have a certain kind of look. We could do what we wanted. That was something that made us unique. I really liked the blue color for a while, and thought that might be our company color, but when we did our first green one, I was sold on green. To me it's a great taxicab color. Now it's our identity. In the future we want to have 95% of our cabs 'Discount green,' but we'll still play with other things.

Interviewer: What were some of your biggest challenges over the years?

Craig: Biggest challenges. When you're wearing a lot of hats and have a lot of people working for you it's a big challenge to get your arms around the business and properly manage it; you do what you have to do to get by. Capitalization has always been

Well, He Almost Got it Right!



Craig had just gone back out on his own (from Courier) when the opportunity to acquire Metro came along. I think he said he had 45 cabs, but really it was about 15 - of which some were owner operators. When he took over Metro we had 52 vehicles doing between 1,300 and 2,000 calls per day. We were a very popular company with a consistent wait time of 45 minutes. I remember this because I was the Manager and the Friday/Saturday Night Dispatcher. I can remember sitting at the board with 75 calls pending while Rick Horner, Discount's dispatcher had a clear board. Our drivers used to come in with 80% to 90% paid miles on those nights. We tried to pass calls to Discount but our customers often balked. It wasn't a steady climb to the top after that either. I continued to dispatch Friday and Saturday nights for Craig for a couple of months, but I realized with the dwindling business that he wouldn't need a high priced dispatcher much longer, so I went back to Ace for about three years.

Craig called me and asked me to work for him again while I was at Ace. While I was away he had built a very professional company with 90+ vehicles. I found a home because of the dedication and decency that Craig represents. From one entrepreneur to another, I have to hand it to him; Craig has truly built the dynasty that all of us in Phoenix tried to do. He didn't have any great windfalls, just the ability to attract and retain some of the best people in the business, and the inherent ability to lead through positive example.

"Craig, they say the mind is the first to go... I seem to remember that what initially sparked you into thinking about trying to go for the low priced market was when you noticed an Ace customer waiting forever in Chris' daycare parking lot. You questioned her about why she would wait so long for a taxi, when there were so many choices out there and realized that price was more important to her than time."

... And now you know the rest of the story!

By Lew Dewey



In SEARCH of color!!



#989: ASU Theme Car



#248: Diamondback Theme Car



Joyce's Pumpkin? (nah, this one is salmon not orange)

a concern, it is a capital intensive business. One of the things we've always prided ourselves on is that we've never had anyone have to wait for payroll. We've always been real good about our relations with our vendors and paying them on time. Those are all things that are important for a successful company. Probably the biggest challenge is the insurance. I feel very fortunate that we have **LaMonte Jackson** with us. He's been with us for 12 years and he understands how to manage the insurance and the risk. That is a big relief to have someone who can get their arms around that piece because that's the biggest risk in this business; knowing that at any time you find yourself back in "insurance hell." I've been there and seen other people there; it's not a pretty place to be. We do whatever we can do to stay out of that place.

Interviewer: That brings up a good question, you mention how valuable LaMonte Jackson is to you and previously mentioned about some of the other people mentoring and helping you. Who are/were some of those people who were important to mentoring/coaching you; helping you move forward?

Craig: Unfortunately some of them are dead and other ones are people who don't work for us now. I learned a lot from a bunch of real "cab" type people, people who had their own kind of problems but did know the cab business.

Interviewer: Who is still with Discount Cab that worked for you then?

I met LaMonte Jackson when I worked at Courier. He was my driver manager. Then, of course, there's Billie, she started working the day that we sold Discount to Courier; that was her first day in 1986. So Billie has been with the organization for 16 or 17 years. Jimmy Constantine used to drive for Metro Taxi; I think he actually drove for LaMonte. LaMonte owned some cars. When I hired LaMonte away from Yellow Cab I couldn't afford to pay him, so I allowed him to operate some cars at a discount for a while. That's a whole other article you can do on LaMonte some day, most people don't realize that he used to own some Discount Cabs. **Law Dewey** used to be the General Manager of Metro Taxi, so he's been in this business for a long time.

Toni Lynn Elkin, #5001, was our first driver and came over with me from Courier. I believe she was my first LP. She was one of the ones who had faith in the future of Discount Cab. A lot of drivers came over later after they realized we were able to stay in business. Toni demonstrated staunch faith in us right from the start; she's been driving with us from day one.

Lewis Levy owned Courier and had a great mind for business and was always way ahead of the curve; a very intelligent guy and a smart operator. I tried to take his very best practices and implement them into my business. When I left Courier Cab and got back into business for myself, I had a whole different skill set than I had before. I learned how to run a larger company, what it took to run one and even though I had a little teeny company I started putting those practices into place immediately. That is one thing we've always tried to do, build an infrastructure that supports what we're doing and is sufficient to take us to the next level. A lot of drivers are not real certain why we do some things the way we do, like right

Remember When . . .

now, we're setting up infrastructure so we can grow to 500 vehicles. When we do that, the drivers we have working for us will be the highest paid drivers in town; they'll just have to go around the corner to get their next trip. It's going to be a win for everybody.

During the 19 years we've been in business I bet we've had 10,000 people pass through our doors. That doesn't say much about retention. Some people come and work for us for a couple of days and leave, others come and find a home for themselves.

Interviewer: Craig, what are some of your biggest opportunities going forward?

Craig: We still have a lot to do in Phoenix. Phoenix is growing marketplace and feel that we have most of the best business in Phoenix, but there is always room to grow. We're now in Tucson and that is really growing fast. We are excited about the prospect that Tucson brings to our company. Meditrans, although not a very old division, has really grown fast. It is starting to get the bulk that it needs to be successful. Meditrans has kind of led us out of the city into other areas of the state; we see more positive synergy in outside communities in the future.

Then there's technology, for instance our recent purchase of a new digital dispatch system. DDS is like anything else; it's a tool, and if you use it correctly it can be very valuable. It's nothing that our competition doesn't have, but I think that because the way we're going to use it in our business that our drivers will see a significant increase in the amount of money they take home. Likewise, I believe our customers will see a significant impact on their waiting time. It's going to be a great thing all the way around. We intend to use it as a tool to take us to the next level.

Interviewer: What are you most proud of?

Craig: The organization, we've got people like nobody else, we have facilities like nobody else and a culture unlike anyone else in town. It's not just a good organization for a cab company, it's a good organization top to bottom, industry notwithstanding. We're very proud of that.

Interviewer: If you could change your past/present or future, what, if anything, would you change?

Craig: That's a pretty broad question. Uhhmm. What would I change... I don't think I'd change a thing.

Interviewer: I do have one final question for you Mr. Hughes, what happened to your hair?

Craig: I worried it away in "insurance" hell.

*Interviewed by Rhonda Robbins
March 26, 2003*

*Special thanks to the following people without whom this blast into the past would not be possible:
Jeffrey Goulet, Chick Westwood, Lew Dewey, Lillye Jones, Edward B. Jones, Joyce Archer, Manuel Alberto Acosta, and Billie Vaillancourt.*

Miss Lillye Jones, #1517

"I was with Metro Cab when Discount Cab bought the company eleven years ago last August. There was a big difference between Metro and Discount; Discount had a much more professional management attitude than Metro. Metro was like a 'mom and pop' company being bought out by a local version of Safeway. Discount was actually smaller than Metro; they just had a different management philosophy. At one time we had a driver's room that was really just an enlarged bathroom with a couple of chairs in it. The driver training was done in the driver trainer's office. A significant change I've seen over the years is the increase in traffic on the streets; at 5:30 A.M. you now have to jockey for a position on the freeways. The first four or five years that I was driving I didn't even know anything about vouchers, now 50% to 60% of the runs I do are voucher runs. Discount has been a good place for me; I've been treated well, I've done well. Taxi driving is a fun way to make a living and if you're going to drive a cab in the valley, Discount is the best company to work for."



Edward B. Jones, #30508

"I've been driving for thirty-two years and been driving for Discount Cab for approximately ten years. When I first started driving for Discount Cab we didn't have the quality of drivers that we have now. I think the focus on safety and the Safety Team is what sets us apart from other cab companies. Mr. Hughes responds to driver's suggestions and that is why we now have safety awards and an annual BBQ for the drivers."



Manny Acosta, #30721

Manny started in 1993 and has been driving for Discount Cab for ten years. "I have seen a lot of change during that time; I can remember when we only had about 30 cabs. A normal day back then was hot, sticky and many of the cabs were smelly; you'd have to clean them before you'd take them out. Now, when you lease a car they are clean and ready for you take them out. You bring them back the way you get them. Back then we had a lot of trouble with drivers who didn't keep the cabs in good shape. I've seen people come and go and then come back again." When asked what is keeping him here with Discount Cab, Manny laughed and responded, "I'm making money." He continued to say, "The people are good here. I've been to the other places years before and I just didn't like the systems, they way they ran things. Discount Cab is run really well; like a family. They're always doing a little extra to help you out. When things go bad, even in your own family life away from the company, they are there to help you. Sometimes we collect money for people who have problems that have come up. It's a real good company. I used to see a lot of Craig and LaMonte, now I just see them every once in a while, they say, "Oh, you're still here?" "Where else would I be?"



Joyce Archer # 61108

"I've been with Discount Cab for about seven years. I started working for Discount when they were on Clarendon. It was mud road; you'd wash your cab and then pull in to the yard and it would get all splattered with mud. They didn't have pagers when I started; they got them about two months later. The cabs were not nearly as nice as the cabs we have now; I drove the only orange cab this company has ever owned. Everybody called my cab Joyce's Pumpkin; I drove it until I bought my first cab. Maybe they had a third the number of the cabs that they have now. I see a difference in our customers today and I think it has a lot to do with the quality of the drivers we are now hiring; I attribute this to **Chick Westwood** and the way he screens/trains them. We have better equipment and better drivers now than ever before. I love driving and wouldn't do anything else. I would never leave Discount, never, ever. I love Discount, the people are friendly ... the like the people I work with and I never have trouble with any of the mechanics. I am an owner operator and when I talk to LaMonte about buying a new car he's always fair to me. Why would I leave someplace that I'm happy with?"



Billie Valliancourt

"I started working with Craig in June of 1990. The first time I met Craig and LaMonte was in October of 1986 and I have been working with him ever since; sixteen years. I started working for Craig the very first day they sold Discount Cab to Courier. I worked at Discount its last day and then they moved to Courier the following day. Back then we shared a garage with the mechanics. There was only one bathroom; the staff, the mechanics and drivers all used one bathroom. We had to start out small, we were small. It was a fun time. We outgrew the place; there was not enough room for parking or room to work on the cars. I think it was 1990 or 1991 when we moved to 2929 W. Clarendon. We didn't have insurance, no vacation, we had nothing. But it was challenging. We had fun doing it; it was like, "Can we do this?" "Can we make it work?" "Can we do better than the competition?" "Can we get up to the stature of Yellow and the bigger cab companies?" There was an energy and excitement. It was great to go to work every day; you looked forward to it. What was going to happen, how many calls can you get in a certain amount of time, or how many calls could you put out over the radio? It was a kind of a challenge with yourself just to see what you could really do. Employees competed a lot of times to see who could answer the phone first and how many calls could they take. I couldn't see working for anyone else, I figure I will either die or retire here. Nobody can take Craig's place, he's a great boss. He has tremendous integrity, he is ambitious, intelligent; he cares about people, he's personal, he remembers people's names and he remembers things that happened. He remembers things that happened years ago, but can't find a piece of paper on his desk.. (laughs) I guess people and events are more important than the paper. He shows you he cares; you see it, you feel it, you know. It makes you want to do your best for him and the company."



"I have the number one ID number ever issued to a driver."

Toni Elkin, #05001



"I have been with Discount for 13 years. I drove for Courier prior to coming to Discount; I had a Discount Courier Cab over there. As far as I know I am the last 5000 series driver still driving for the company. I worked in the cage during the week and drove a cab on weekends. After working in the cage for a while the billing was assigned to me and I basically put together the billing department; I did the billing for about five years. I also worked in sales for a year and a half. LaMonte was put in charge of the cage and I loved working for him so came back to the cage as the lead cashier for several more years. I now drive full-time."

The most significant difference between then and now is the quality of the cabs and the repair shop. We have the best driver safety program around and I believe (from what I hear from customers) that we have some of the best, most courteous and safe drivers on the road. I like the leadership at Total Transit. The drivers are happier here and the dress code is well maintained. The attitude of the drivers speaks to the leadership on top, the Board of Directors. I know Craig and LaMonte personally and Craig just knows how to run a company. They are like the dynamic duo. Anything you want to know, LaMonte will give you a straight line on.

When we first started we had seven cabs; they were rough and not as nice as our worst cabs now. I've watched Craig and the drivers continually build this company. Everyone helped. It was more of a family oriented situation where everyone felt they were building something... and we're still building something here."

When asked if she'd work someplace else her adamant response was, "Absolutely not. Not for another cab company. The drivers are treated better here, they have a wonderful safety program; the company gives to the drivers for safe driving. The leadership is good here."

New Faces, New Places



— continued on page 10

Paul Odom is a new Meditrans Driver who previously drove for Pizza Hut and served as a supervisor for six years. In addition, he worked for 23 years at the Safeway warehouse.

Paul is single and enjoys bowling, good oldies music and going to the movies. He dances once in a while and goes to the casino about once a month. He came to work for Meditrans because he wanted a job with good hours and enjoyable staff. He majored in mathematics and graduated from Carl Hayden High School.



Stacia Grable joins us as Meditrans Dispatcher and has been in the transportation industry since 1982. One of her first jobs was driving an ambulance in the bay area. When asked about her experience as a driver she replied, "This job excited me so much that I absorbed all aspects of the company and also learned how to dispatch. It was quite exciting responding to emergency calls and to call ER's explaining a patient's condition. I have been in transportation related businesses ever since then." Stacia is a single parent with a six year old daughter, second generation native Phoenician. In her spare time she loves to ride horseback, camp, take road trips, skydive and meet new friends. After a six month hiatus she came to work for Meditrans because they offered her a great shift, benefits and a four day work week.

Timothy Newman joins the Glendale Shop as a Mechanic. Previously he worked for All Valley Impound where he worked on tow trucks, trucks and cars. He also spent some time as a manager for a busy service station located on 3rd Street and Thomas Road. He is married to his beautiful wife, Angileta, and has two children Anthony and Angel. Timothy's hobbies include working on and restoring old cars; he is currently converting a 1965



Chevrolet Impala into a racecar. When asked why he decided to work for Total Transit Timothy replied, "I'm glad they gave me a chance to show them I can handle the job. I hope to be with the company for a long time. I'd like to thank the Glendale Shop for all their support; on my first day Dennis McAuley, Shop Manager, introduced me to the rest of the crew, and since then they have made me feel extremely welcome. I especially want to thank Jay Lynch, the Night Foreman. If it wasn't for Jay showing me the ropes I don't think I could do my best at the job. Thanks to Jay, Steve and Tom for giving me the opportunity to work in the Glendale Shop. I'm looking forward to being a member of their crew for a long time to come."



Tamara Lynne Cunday joins us in Billing. She previously worked as a Medical ICD-A/CPT Coding Specialist for Valley Anesthesia for two years. She's also been a part-time bartender at Gallinger's. Tamara is a single mother with a beautiful one-year old daughter, Lia. She loves sports and played softball for 16 years

Goodbye Tom and Cathy Rienzo



(L-R) Tom Rienzo, Mike Pinckard, Cathy Rienzo

Talk about "getting into your job!" That would be Tom. Tom almost killed himself for Discount Cab, literally. He believes in Discount Cab so much that he puts his heart and soul into his work... this time he may have put too much of his heart into it! Tom ended up in the VA hospital on Monday after participating in both St. Patrick's Day parades (Phoenix and Tucson). There were rumors that Tom, barely coherent, was pitching Discount Cab to the doctor while lying on a hospital bed!!

When I say he participated I don't mean he walked gently walk along the parade route waving. Dressed in his bright green leprechaun suit you could see him jumping in and out of the cars loudly proclaiming Discount Cab, dancing jigs in the street and passing out candy to the wee little lads and lassies.

You'd think Discount Cab was Tom's very own business; that's how invested in it he is. His knowledge of the taxicab business and understanding of driver relations is phenomenal. Tom and Cathy will be relocating to New Hampshire to be closer to her family; a place where Tom will try to learn how to "take it easy."

"The true value of any company is built upon the quality of its employees. Discount Cab has built its reputation on this premise and believes deeply in the value and contributions of all our employees. Tom and Cathy epitomize this belief. Tom and Cathy both played integral roles within our organization and both brought passionate enthusiasm to all their activities. While we will miss them both deeply, I personally will miss the day-to-day counsel and

and volleyball for 12 years. Tamara thinks the people here are great and a far cry from others she has worked with in the past. She graduated from high school in 1998 and attended college for two years with psychology as her major.

Renee Burkett is also new in Billing and previously worked for a local citrus and alfalfa grower. She is married with a 21 years old son and two stepsons (17 and 14). Renee loves animals and belongs to a rescue organization for Sugar Gliders. She also enjoys her family, gardening and reads in her spare time. When asked why she decided to work for Total Transit, she replied, "The challenge." While Renee has no degree, she is no stranger to college and has taken many courses mainly in business and accounting.



perspective that Tom offered. While we didn't always agree, I could count on the fact that Tom's perspective was always built upon his heartfelt, passionate convictions. Thanks Tom!" said Mike Pinckard.

When Joe Volpe heard that the Rienzo's were moving he said, "I'm so sorry to see Cathy go. I'm hoping to talk Craig into opening a Discount Cab in New Hampshire so Cathy can take care of it! Until we meet again or as the French say, "Au revoir." Well I think that's what they say! Anyway, Good Luck Cathy!"

We wish you both the very best in all that you do and thank you for your many contributions and dedication to the development and growth of our company.



Tom dreams of starting up the Manhattan branch of Discount Cab



Toni Toscano is selected as Employee of the Month for April

Toni exhibits several qualities which distinguish her excellence as a voucher representative; she radiates positive energy and is always quick to resolve issues. She is always professional with the customers, never loses her cool and can always be counted on to step in when an emergency arises. She consistently shares her knowledge and teaches others. She often stays late to finish her work and is available to answer questions when at home.



Mitch Riggs is selected as Employee of the Month for February

Mitch's attention to detail in emphasizing client safety and comfort is paramount and reinforced by his example. He willingly shares his expertise and provides appropriate training. Mitch is good at mentoring and developing others; he is well liked and respected by clients and employees alike. In short, Mitch is an outstanding employee and supervisor; an asset to our company.



Who's Driving Your Cab, Anyway?!



Russell Parker, # 21140, hits the streets and has been driving #89 for Discount since November of last year. But don't let his short tenure fool you, Russell has been around the taxicab business for a long time. Russell is married and has three children. He is a first degree black belt in karate. In his own words, "I had a chance to drive a cab for LaMonte Jackson when he was at Courier Cab. I met Mr. Hughes when he started Discount Cab, however, when Mr. Hughes moved Discount Cab away from Courier LaMonte and I stayed with Courier Cab. Eventually, as you all know, Craig and LaMonte joined hands and have worked hard to build Discount Cab to where it is today. Thanks, Total Transit!"

Abdi Ali, #21188, is an Discount Airport Resort Cab driver and joined Discount in November 2002. His friend, Hassan J. Yusuf, convinced Abdi that driving a cab was a good idea. Abdi has been driving a cab for about a year and a half; four months of that with Discount Cab. Prior to driving for Discount Cab, he worked as a chemist for an electronics company in Chandler. He and his wife have two sons, Yusuf and Hiis. He received his BSC Chemistry from Eastern Oregon State University. To other drivers he says, "Discount has the best cars, the best drivers and a good repair shop. If you need a repair done, they do it right away and give you down time for it. The cabs are cleaner and neater. The management is better than the other cab company I drove for."



Hassan J. Yusuf, #00781, was our first driver at the airport. He is from Somalia and has been driving for Discount for two years. He drove a cab for another local taxicab company prior to driving for Discount. "Discount Cab is the best company I have worked with. Thanks to all of you; this company has good managers and co-workers. I would encourage all drivers to drive safely and avoid accidents," said Hassan during a recent interview. Hassan is single and likes soccer.

Gerard Labbe, #21136, joined Discount in November 2002. Prior to working as an independent driver he was a car salesman, a telemarketer and teacher/van driver for a daycare. He is married to his best friend of two years, Datausha, and has a four year old son, Cameron. Gerard's interests include bowling, sporting events, spending time with his family and he loves to eat! He's always cookin' up something. When asked what he likes about driving a cab Gerard responded, "I was looking for a change and I had always had an interest in driving a cab. I like not knowing where I might end up ... like Black Canyon City or Tonapah."



April Anniversaries

Join with us in congratulating the following staff for their dedication, loyalty and service to our company.

11 Years

Patricia Simmons, Glendale CSR, 4/27

2 Years

Pamela Anderson, Meditrans Shift Supv., 4/24

1 Year

Michael McEntee, Jr., Glendale Shop, 4/9
Serwa Suma, Glendale CSR, 4/15



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 4-01 Ronald Evans, Tucson Dispatch
- 4-06 Todd Greaves, Prescott Meditrans
- 4-06 Rosalva Amaro, Glendale Voucher Rep
- 4-06 Nora Gutierrez, Glendale Voucher Rep
- 4-09 Amanda Million, Glendale CSR
- 4-09 Lee Elbert, Show Low Meditrans
- 4-10 Freddy Boen, Meditrans Driver
- 4-10 Paul Odom, Meditrans Driver
- 4-12 Gregory Naff, Manager Information Services
- 4-13 Lizeth Sanchez, Glendale Voucher Rep
- 4-30 Charles Smith, Glendale Shop

March New Hires

- Kristyn Handy, Glendale CSR
- Lashanda Jordan, Glendale CSR
- Aisha Dean, Glendale CSR
- Jennifer Shade, Glendale CSR
- Jerry Mullen, Manager in Training Meditrans
- Jeffrey Scott, Meditrans Attendant
- Danny Jorgensen, Meditrans Attendant
- Paul Brewton II, Meditrans Driver
- Sherry Jones, Meditrans Driver
- Stanley Hart Sr., Glendale Shop
- Mark Hawkins, Glendale Shop
- William Eisman, Mesa Shop
- Rachael Duran, East Valley Cashier & Sales
- Patricia Machtemes, East Valley Cashier & Sales
- Andrew Bock, Tucson General Manager
- Mary Mathews, Meditrans Driver Show Low
- Gregory Naff, Information Services Manager

SHORTY'S RULES OF CHOCOLATE

1. Calories are scared of height, so place your chocolate on top of the fridge for a few minutes and the calories will run away.
2. The best way to get chocolate home from the store on a hot day is to eat it in the parking lot.
3. If no one sees you eating it, the calories don't count.
4. An equal amount of dark chocolate and white chocolate in each hand is a balanced diet.
5. Chocolate is a vegetable; chocolate comes from a bean; beans are veggies, so go eat your chocolate.
6. Chocolate is a dairy product. There is milk in milk chocolate, so go eat your chocolate.
7. Calories don't like fruit, so eat all the chocolate covered strawberries, orange slices, raspberries, and such that you want.

by Barbara "Shorty" Zola

Help Me Rhonda! Letters to the Editor

Editor:

I wanted let you know that my service anniversary date was wrong in the March newsletter. You listed my anniversary as my first, but I have actually been here two years!

Bud McEuen

Dear Bud:

Oooppsss. You'll just have to shoot me. Not only did I incorrectly list your anniversary as one year instead of two, I also managed to get five others wrong as well. Thanks for helping me get that right!

Corrected Anniversary Service Dates are as follows:

- 12 Years: LaMonte Jackson, Director of Risk Management and General Manager 3/20;
- 7 Years: James Rabourn, Glendale Dispatcher, 3/18 and Sheri Lightle, Accounting, 3/21;
- 4 Years: Toni Toscano, Glendale Voucher Rep, 3/29;
- 2 Years: Michael Hostetter, Glendale Shop, 3/26 and Bud McEuen, Special Projects Coordinator, 2/26

— Editor

Dear Editor:

I read your latest edition of Total Transit Times with a slight bit of excitement this week. The newsletter is getting better with each issue (color, better articles, more info) and you mentioned the DDS units, which I used extensively in the mid-1990s when I drove a cab in Southern California.

Steven Benson
#20449

Dear Steven:

As the Editor/Writer/Photographer/Layout & Designer of the newsletter I appreciate your kind words and am glad you feel it is improving. I see the newsletter as an incredibly valuable way to communicate with staff and contract drivers. **I have been seeking to get more involvement from drivers themselves and welcome any ideas on how I may accomplish this goal of greater driver involvement.**

— Editor

Dear Editor:

I noticed that we had a combined February/March Newsletter last month. Who was the February Employee of the month?

—Enquiring Mind

Dear Enquiring Mind:

Thanks for asking, we ran into a big of a space crunch last issue. You can find that write-up on page 10.

— Editor



You may write to the Editor, Rhonda Robbins, at Total Transit, Inc, 4600 West Camelback Road, Glendale, AZ, 85301. email: Rhonda.robbs@totaltransitinc.com Phone: 602-200-5500 or 602-889-0701 Fax: 602-200-5505

Cab #498 Gets First DDS Unit!



We're moving forward with our plans to install the Digital Dispatch System. The timeframe has been pushed back a little and we expect to have DDS fully operational by the end of June. Taxicab #498 received the first DDS unit to be installed. The shop had a special bracket made for mounting the unit near the driver for ease of access.

We were fortunate to find another driver, **Steven Benson, #20449**, who was willing to share his experience working with the DDS system.

Steven joined Discount Cab in April of 2002, but has been driving cabs for about ten years. Steven was a driver for United Independent Taxi and for Valley Cab in the Los Angeles area; an area that is heavily regulated. Regulations permit only two taxicab companies to operate in the San Fernando Valley, but all LA city licensed cab companies may operate at the Airport. Because LA is so spread out, it is divided up into sections and companies are assigned locations within the city for street service. The city even mandated that taxicab providers must go to computer dispatch! Valley Cab was forced out of business because they refused to go digital, but continued to operate as Valley Car Service (similar to a town car service). Steven helped train approximately 15 of the 300 drivers on the DDS system at United; where he drove for about two years.

When asked what he liked about the DDS system, he replied, "I really liked almost everything about it. I believe there is a lot of flexibility in how the units can be programmed and companies may program theirs differently. In addition, advances in the software in the last several years probably allows for more features. The system I worked on allowed the drivers to:

- View new calls/fares that just pop up on the screen
- Bid directly on fares: not necessary to communicate directly with dispatcher
- Communicate with dispatchers easier
- View one screen and see all pending orders and on another screen see how many cabs were logged into the various zones
- Reject a call that is outside your zone without losing your position
- Improve safety: you're not fumbling around in your cab trying to write information down
- Save time: it's faster; you don't need to wait on the dispatcher or write down orders
- Log into zones quicker and bid on pending calls quicker once you begin to understand the nuances of the system

Let the Regulation Begin!

As many of you know, we are in support of the bill that has been introduced and sponsored by Representatives Pierce and Thompson, **House Bill 2283: Taxis, Limousines and Sedans; Regulations.**

Why is this Bill Important?

When the bill passes into law it will mean that ALL transportation providers will be playing on a level field, with all things being equal and that every provider must be in complete licensing/insurance compliance with regulatory agencies. Further, this means that the community and its residents will be safer because uninsured, non-compliant cabs will not be allowed to operate. As people in the valley begin to understand the importance of this, Total Transit will continue to grow our market share, which will bring more fares and money to the professional, hard-working independent contract drivers. Passage of this bill can be equated to bringing the transportation industry into the 21st century.

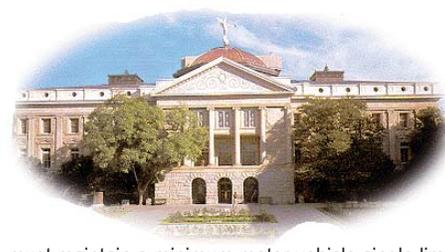
Overview of the Bill:

The Department of Weights and Measures (DWM) is responsible for issuing annual licenses for taxis. A taxi license is based on the fare-measuring device in the taxi, which can be a taxi meter or an odometer. Licensed taxis are issued a license sticker, which is placed on the rear window. According to DWM, odometer accuracy can be manipulated to increase fares charged to passengers and concerns have been expressed about taxis that do not carry the appropriate level of commercial insurance. Currently, DWM does not have the authority to refuse to issue or revoke a taxi license for the failure to comply with the statutory financial responsibility requirements.

H.B. 2283, as introduced, defines executive sedan, limousine, sedan, taxi and taxi meter. It also requires the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) to work with the DWM to exchange information relating to the registration and licensing of these vehicles; specifies minimum liability insurance requirements. H.B. 2283 prevents ADOT from issuing a license to any of these vehicles unless the vehicle meets specific licensing and insurance requirements. In addition, the bill allows ADOT to revoke a license if the vehicle fails to maintain these requirements. The bill requires taxis, limousines, and executive sedans to have a taxi meter and posted license, both of which, must be clearly visible to passengers. Further, the bill clarifies that taxis, limousines, executive sedans and sedans

- Call out the customer electronically: Press a button to callout the customer and the system calls the customer and in a computer voice lets the customer know the cab is outside
- to think about an order before accepting it."

Steven moved from New York City to Los Angeles when he was twelve; his parents moved their electronics business and family to the valley. Steven works primarily days in the east valley, enjoys listening to music, driving, collecting license plates and reading.



must maintain a minimum motor vehicle single limit liability insurance coverage of \$300,000 and increases the uninsured motorist coverage limit to \$750,000. Requires insurance coverage be purchased from an insurer holding a valid certificate of authority or who is permitted to transact surplus lines of insurance in this state. H.B. 2283 authorizes MVD to suspend the person's driver license and registration if insurance was not in effect. H.B. 2283 amends Title 28, Transportation and Title 41, State Government.

What has happened with the bill so far?

- 1/20/03 Received its first read in the House
- 1/20/03 Assigned to the Transportation, CMA, Appropriations and Rules Committees
- 1/21/03 Second read in the House
- 3/10/03 Received a Majority and Minority House Caucus
- 3/12/03 Bill transmitted to Senate
- 3/13/03 First read in the Senate
- 3/19/03 Assigned to the Commerce and Rules Committees
- 4/2/03 Passed Senate Committee on Commerce with a unanimous vote

Next Steps:

The bill sponsors will need to decide whether or not to allow it to go to conference on Monday or Tuesday (April 7 & 8). The bill will go on to the COW (Committee of Whole); next the bill will be presented for a Republican and Democratic caucus and finally back to the Senate for a final read and passage. If the bill sponsors should decide not to take it to conference, Representatives Pierce and Thompson will confer the findings of the Senate to the House (which means that the House does not have to hear the bill again) and the bill will go directly to the governor for signature and be enacted into law.

Sources: <http://www.azleg.state.az.us>, www.azleague.org

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