

Press Release



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For Immediate Release

Wright County celebrates OATS, Inc. Driver for 30 Years of Service

(Springfield, Missouri, November 5, 2009) – In November of 1979, Janet Chapin applied for a position as a relief driver for OATS, Inc. With a small child at home, Janet was looking for something part-time. A year later, partly due to a need by OATS and partly due to Janet's love of the job, she became a full-time driver. That love has stuck with her for 30 years.

Janet says when she started driving for OATS most of her (female) passengers were like grandmothers to her. As the years passed, these grandmother-like passengers became more like mothers, and today Janet says they are like sisters. Janet does enjoy that her customers today are more diverse, as OATS has expanded their services to people of all ages. She says she has witnessed a lot of growth for OATS in her time, which has meant more services and more staff. Although she may not know all the drivers as she once did, she still knows many and feels they are a close-knit family.

When asked about her experiences with OATS, Janet says "It's very rewarding, but you need to love people and have patience. It's a lot more than just driving." What Janet most enjoys is meeting new people, and says that anyone wanting to work for OATS must realize how important of a job it really is. "There is a lot of responsibility, and you must be dedicated to the well being of people."

This year has been filled with many accomplishments for Janet. Besides celebrating her 30-year anniversary, Janet has just been awarded her 28-year safe driver award, indicating a perfect record. She was also a lucky recipient of one of the new Stimulus ARRA TIGER Buses.

Scott Kosky, Southwest Regional Director says "Janet has become a vital member of the caregiver's network in Wright County. Throughout the years she has not only served OATS riders but also volunteered with The Southwest Missouri Office on Aging, doing taxes for seniors in Mountain Grove, and has served on a number of local community boards. She has truly been an outstanding asset for OATS and her community."

In her spare time, Janet says she is a "big time gardener", and can be found there whenever she and her husband aren't traveling. She also enjoys bicycling, hiking and bird watching.

Janet is pleased that OATS has been able to expand their services and the number of people they assist. She hopes that OATS continues to reach out to more people, believing that public transportation is very important, especially in this day and time. She also hopes she can continue driving for OATS for many years to come.

For more information about OATS, Inc., please visit their website www.oatstransit.org or contact Scott Kosky, Southwest Regional Director, OATS, Inc., 3259 E. Sunshine, Ste. T, Springfield, MO 65804, (417) 887-9272, scottk@oatstransit.org.

NOTICE TO ALL PRESS AGENCIES: Please do not refer to OATS as "Older Adults Transportation Service" as this is no longer part of the official name. OATS is a public transportation system that is available to everyone, regardless of age, race, gender, color, religion, or national origin, and in fact serves a wide diversity of clientele.

OATS is a private, not-for-profit corporation providing specialized transportation for senior citizens, people with disabilities and the rural general public in 87 Missouri counties. OATS is funded, in part, by an allotment of federal funds from the Missouri Department of Transportation and through contracts with various agencies. OATS also receives rider donations and private contributions, which are tax deductible. OATS is an equal opportunity employer M/F/H/V.

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OATS Volunteer, Mary Bishop, presents Janet with her 30-year Anniversary Award.