



# News Advisory

## Blue Water Area Transportation Commission

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Council on Aging Presents Community Service Award**

#### **To Blue Water Area Transportation Commission**

PORT HURON, MI — During this year's Annual Awards Celebration, the Council on Aging presented its Community Service Award to the Blue Water Area Transportation Commission for making a positive impact on the lives of area senior citizens.

In presenting the award, the Council cited many innovative programs that have greatly improved the quality of life for thousands in our community. New programs include transportation into Macomb County in an effort to help reduce unemployment rates, as well as expanded hours that include early morning and late evening routes.

"We value our excellent working relationship with Blue Water Area Transit, which supports our efforts to provide seniors with greater mobility," says Laura L. Newsome, CoA executive director. "Mobility is critical to our mission of keeping seniors living independently in their own homes."

Newsome also believes that the partnership with BWATC accounts for the Council having lift-equipped transportation operating countywide. (Lifts help accommodate riders in wheelchairs.)

The Council, with a fleet of two dozen buses, provides seniors with more than 70,000 rides each year, including transportation to kidney dialysis, chemotherapy, and other life-sustaining medical appointments. Council transportation supports four senior centers located in Port Huron, Marine City, Yale, and Capac.

"By working with the Council on Aging and other nonprofit agencies, we have brought a lot of transportation dollars back to St. Clair County," says Jim Wilson, BWATC general manager. "We couldn't have done it alone, but we do appreciate the recognition."



***Jim Wilson, general manager, Blue Water Area Transportation Commission, accepts Community Service Award from the Council on Aging, Inc., Serving St. Clair County.***

BWATC has played a guiding role in empowering the Council to obtain grant funding for vehicles and equipment that provide the quality service available today. These new buses run on compressed natural gas, a low-emission alternative fuel that costs less and burns cleaner than diesel fuel or gasoline. BWATC has produced CNG locally for 15 years.

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**BWATC continues a proud tradition of innovation** in public transit that has served Port Huron for more than a century. Port Huron was one of the nation's first communities to operate an electrified transit system in the 1880s and one of the first to operate motor coaches when they became popular in the 1930s. Following an eight-year hiatus, the current bus service began in September 1976. Since then, BWATC has carried more than 22 million riders and continues the tradition of innovation by producing its own compressed natural gas alternative fuel since 1996.

**The Council on Aging, Inc., Serving St. Clair County**, is a private, non-profit, non-sectarian, non-political organization which coordinates programs that promote and safeguard the independence and wellbeing of senior citizens (persons 60 years of age and older) living in St. Clair County.

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