

Directors' Report for the 2017 Annual General Meeting of the Gabriola Community Bus Foundation

The highlight for 2017 has undoubtedly been the addition of a newer, 2015 Ford Transit 14 passenger bus to GERTIE's fleet of four buses. This purchase was made possible by a grant from the New Building Canada Fund--Small Communities Fund, commonly referred to as the "Infrastructure Grant." Overall, it has been a busy year for the directors who have been working hard to streamline, improve and expand our operations. The GERTIE buses have been busy too as they are carrying an ever increasing number of passengers.

Ridership

GERTIE has carried 58,000 passengers since June 2013. We are now carrying over 1400 passengers a month pretty consistently and in July and August, passenger loads were over 1700. Passenger loads were smaller over the period December 2016 to February 2017 but we saw a sharp increase in the week or so of snowy weather last January despite not being able to put the buses on every run every day. We will likely surpass last year's total number of riders, 13,840, before the end of the year. To date in 2017, we have carried 249 children (who ride without charge), 198 dogs, and 248 bicycles. PHC clients have taken 700 rides. As you can see by the charts on the wall, all segments of our population as well as many visitors are GERTIE users. To serve our community even better, we will be retaining the Saturday late afternoon runs on the fall and winter schedule for 2017-18 on a trial basis.

Tours and Charters

This summer we have been pleased to offer a series of five Natural History tours in conjunction with the Gabriola Museum's History tours. They have been very successful and we look forward to offering a few more such tours in the coming months. Our Christmas Carol Tour last winter was also popular and we will be repeating it again this year. In conjunction with the GAC Thanksgiving Studio Tour in a few weeks time, we are offering a Saturday tour which will visit 6 studios. Our self-directed Adventure Tour brochure continues to be snapped up and we will soon be making available a self-directed Walking Tour brochure which we have developed with assistance from GaLTT. Overall, our charter business shows modest growth.

Grants and Donations

As well as the large Infrastructure Grant, we have also been recipients of a number of smaller grants. \$5,000 was awarded through the Village Foods Community Card for the fleet renewal fund. The Gabriola Health Care Foundation gave us \$3,120 to subsidize bus transportation for seniors. We received a grant from Telus of \$1,750 for the communication of bus schedules which we are using to make GERTIE part of Google's trip planner for transit. The Village Liquor Store awarded us \$911.56 from their June sales for the fleet renewal fund. The Infrastructure Grant for the purchase of two newer buses was for \$77,600 1/3 federal and 1/3 provincial funds, which must be matched by 1/3 of our funds. We were able to purchase one bus in May and said good-bye to one of the Sprinters. Fund raising is ongoing for the purchase of the

second bus. We are pleased that our fall/winter schedule will be printed in full colour, thanks to a generous donation from Martin Velsen real estate.

We are deeply grateful to the many friends and supporters who so generously donate to GERTIE. How it warms our hearts to hear so many of you say, "We love Gertie"!

In the coming year, we will continue to work hard to keep our budget low while serving our community with environmentally responsible transportation as effectively and efficiently as we can. We always welcome your feedback and appreciate the community's support.