



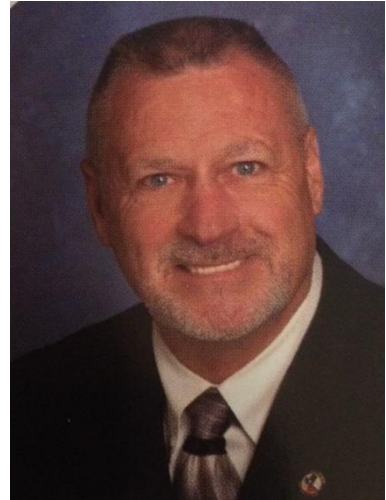
## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

March 2016

**G**reetings from your President to my TAPT Family!

Our TAPT Conference and Trade Show will be here in just three months and I have so much to share with you! The TAPT Board and I are excited about our program this year and looking forward to seeing each and every one of you in Beaumont!

Much is going on in our nation regarding student transportation and it is important that we meet and collaborate often for sharing ideas and making informed decisions. For that reason we are looking forward to the knowledge our keynote speakers, educational sessions and industry panel will impart for us. We are very fortunate to have Mike Martin, Executive Director of the National Association for Pupil Transportation spend several days with us; Peggy Burns, a leader in the nation regarding student transportation and special ed law; Marshall Casey, South Carolina Department of Education; George Horne from the Louisiana DOE; local expert on Generational Differences, Dr. Richard Lewis; and don't forget our Opening Ceremonies with Kent Gonsoulin – Louisiana's number one Cajun Comedian. Kent will help us kick off our theme for the conference! *"Laissez les bons temps rouler"* or as some of us French-challenged folks would say,



### ***"Let the Good Times Roll!"***

Speaking of our theme, start working on your **Mardi Gras** costume and mask for the Saturday night Awards Banquet. We will have some fun contests, great food, music and dancing with Billy Poullard and the Zydeco Kings band. ***Don't know how to dance to Zydeco music?*** No worries...the Beaumont CVB has volunteered to help us and will be on hand for dance lessons! All while we recognize our Rodeo winners, deserving Employees of the Year and Vendor Honoree.

The Certification Committee and TASBT Board have put together a wide variety of courses for you and your staff... And wait until you see the plans the Vendors have for some exciting door prizes for the **Preview Show** and throughout the day on Sunday! Each vendor will donate \$50 toward some "big" prizes to thank you for attending the show. Must be present to win! Be sure to attend and see what products and services our vendor companies have to offer...Yet another way to learn and enhance our operations! In addition, we are offering an **Affiliate Chapter Officers Workshop** for all current and incoming chapter officers. If you are an officer or aspiring to be, we encourage you to attend to hear what other chapters are doing and how you can enhance your local chapter! ***You asked – we provided!***

For the first time we will have a Sporting Clay Tournament on Saturday. If you enjoy shooting at those clay birds-bring your shotguns and join us at the One in One Hundred Shooting Club in Lumberton. If shooting is not your thing...be sure to sign up for bowling, golf or one of the events Charlie Polk has planned for the Companion Program. We would also like to congratulate the Regional Rodeo winners who are practicing and getting ready for the School Bus Safety Rodeos that will be held at Ford Park on Saturday.

Don't let the deadline slip up on you without nominating your deserving staff for one of the **Employee of the Year Awards** or applying for one of the student or adult **scholarships** available to our members and their children. Deadline is April 15. The winning scholarship recipients and their parents will be invited to the **Wednesday morning Scholarship Breakfast** where they will enjoy a final keynote presentation from Mike Martin, enjoy hearing this year's Speech Contest winner recite his/her speech and receive their awards. We will also enjoy the School Bus Safety Poster winner announcements and slide show. Raffle tickets are available now for purchase for the 2 big screen TVs and the \$1000.00 American Express Gift Card to be presented during the final business session. The proceeds from the raffle sales go toward our Scholarships. See your local Area Director for tickets.

Don't forget to vote for your 2016-2017 TAPT and TASBT Officers! Winners will be announced Tuesday night at the President's Banquet where we will also announce this year's TAPT Honoree of the year. ***Dress your best for our Black and White theme at the Elegante Ballroom and enjoy an evening of dancing to the wonderful tunes of the Texas Unlimited Band.***

We are also excited to announce a new (no cost to member) \$2,000 AD&D benefit for ALL our TAPT members. By now you should have received your notice regarding this exciting new benefit which also includes Health and Service Discounts and Child Safe Kits. Be sure to fill out your beneficiary information card and return it. If you did not receive your notice, **American Income Life** will have a booth during our Vendor Show and you will have the opportunity to request more information then.

So, be sure to renew your membership, get registered and join us for a wide array of educational opportunities. Subjects ranging from "Being Positive in Challenging Times", "Creative Approaches to Training" and "Are Our Drivers Fit for Duty" to "Personal Reflections About Our Industry", free TSA Security Evaluations and the latest from our 85<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session will be available for you.

We never want to forget what our military and first responders have done and continue to do for us every day and we will have a special tribute to them during our opening ceremonies on Monday.

Thank you for allowing me the honor of being your 2015-2016 President. I truly love this organization and cherish the friendships and relationships I have had the privilege to enjoy over the years. Let us never forget the reason we are here and that is to offer the safest, most effective and efficient school bus transportation that we can to our Texas school children. With us all working together, we can achieve our goals and all be better for it!

***Thanks to all the Committee Chairs, our Webmaster, TAPT Executive Committee, and all the volunteers for the time and energy they put into planning the conference, trade show, educational opportunities and all the activities that make this conference successful! And a big and appreciative thank you for the vendor support and sponsorships that make it possible to offer these fun and educational events.***

***I especially want to say thanks to our Executive Secretary, Marisa Weisinger for the great job she has done her first year and for her love of this association and its members.***

Mike Williams

*"Laissez les bons temps rouler"*