

## Meetings and More Meetings to Grow OATS

-by Peter Schauer, first Manager of OATS

Establishing and growing OATS took hundreds of meetings and gatherings to discuss the need for transportation for older Missourians and people who did not have an automobile or could not drive. Meetings were held in churches, senior centers, various offices, and even the Missouri Governor's office.

Yet all those hundreds of meetings pale in comparison to the meetings we held in

**Missouri Transportation Workshop**

WHERE:  
Camp Clover Point  
Kaiser, Missouri

WHEN:  
September 5, 6, 7  
Registration Sept. 5 - 4:00 p.m.  
Adjournment Sept. 7 - After Noon Meal

SEPTMBER 1975

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

WHY:  
To emphasize the need of transportation for ALL Senior Citizens AND Find Answers from SENIOR CITIZENS.

the woods at Camp Clover Point at the Lake of the Ozarks. We called those meetings "Transportation Camps" and what we did at those camps was the first instance of what is now known nationally as an "unconference." Looking back, now being of the age of people we invited in the early 1970's, I am amazed at the willingness of people to come to the woods and sit on logs and eat camp fare with the sole purpose of discussing transportation needs and solutions. Each of the camps had a goal of identifying needs and gaps in service and how to bring passenger transportation to every county in Missouri. We worked to make sure at

least one person or a group of people were in attendance from every county.



The thought of taking 70 and 80 year old people to a camp in the woods was as bold and daring as establishing the entire concept of OATS. Some of the people sitting on the logs remarked that this was the first time they had ever gone camping. And that “first time but no fear” spirit guided our attitudes and activities. Our attitude about OATS and the camp was all “can do” yet no model or plan existed for what our “can do” spirit would accomplish. The OATS concept and the OATS camp just depended on the good will, common sense and determination of many kind hearted and caring people. The formative OATS “can do” spirit continues to this day.



I feel privileged and fortunate to have been the “boy” wearing an OATS t-shirt in a position of leadership before so many people with so many more years of life experience than me and with so much good will and energy. It was a group effort of goodwill and energy. Yet, surely more than just the goodwill and energy of the attendees at those meetings was in effect because in three years of three weekend camps we never had a rainy day.

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