**Carey Pope Award for Transit Comradery and Sportsmanship**

Carey Pope was born in April of 1962 in Azores, Portugal. He was raised in a close-knit military family and graduated high school overseas in Wiesbaden, Germany. He easily made friends with people from all walks and always had an air about him that made everyone feel familiar. Carey met his wife, Sheri, in Denver and they married in June of 1985. He and Sheri lived with their children in Pennsylvania for many years but relocated to Montana in 1996 to be closer to Sheri's family. Carey began working for the City of Billings MET Transit System as a Transit Operator in December of 2000 and displayed his dependability as an employee with a strong commitment to his craft. After being initially hesitant about working closely with the public, Carey grew to discover he greatly enjoyed passenger transport. He found success by channeling the traits that had defined his character throughout his days, never treating passengers as strangers and putting everyone at ease, no matter their life circumstance. He could start up a conversation with anyone, maintain a professional work ethic and make anyone feel like they mattered.

Through his work, Carey became very passionate for the competition and comradery he found in transit Roadeos. He regularly placed well at local events, competed at State competitions several times, and even achieved the honor of competing at the national level. At all of these events, Carey was always willing to assist his peers in practice and development and never failed to cheer them on during the competitions. Further, Carey was always willing to assist the groups responsible for running theRoadeos, lending a helping hand when it came time not just to promote the events, but also to set up courses, transport competitors and spectators, and even help prep the food for local award banquets. Carey displayed a true level of sportsmanship, advocating not just for himself, but for those he competed against.  He displayed an acute awareness of how important the roadeo was to his fellow operators, not just as a chance to compete and display their skills, but to come together as a family in the transit industry.  The Pope family, the City of Billings MET Transit system, and Montana transit as a whole lost a piece of this family on December 08, 2019, when Carey passed away. His comradery and dedication to service is sorely missed by his loved ones, friends, coworkers and passengers.

The Montana Transit Association recognizes the importance of the values, attitude, and character that Carey displayed throughout his service as an operator as well as the spirit of sportsmanship and competition he displayed through the transit Roadeos. In his spirit, the Carey Pope Award for Transit Comradery and Sportsmanship is given to recognize an operator who displays the following characteristics and values:

* Comradery amongst coworkers and peers, including encouragement and support.
* Willingness to go above and beyond the expectations of their role or job.
* Exemplary customer service, providing compassion, dignity and respect to passengers and the public.
* The desire to continue growing in their skills as an operator and the desire or ability to display mastery of transit vehicle operation.
* Creditability and respect amongst their peers supporting these traits.