

# VantagePoint

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 2009

## New Name, New Look, Same Great People!

**Vantage Point replaces RideOn. With a new look to boot!**

Why the vanpool newsletter name change? We were due for a new look and when considering titles, we happened upon Vantage, which started as a play on VANpool, of course. According to The American Heritage Desk Dictionary, Vantage is defined as a noun: 1. an advantage in a competition or conflict.; superiority. 2. Something, as a strategic position, that provides superiority or an advantage. And Vantage Point, is actually defined as "a position from which a person has a commanding view or outlook." It just stuck with us – that would be our newsletter name. We think that vanpooling is a superior option for commuting to and from work, offering many advantages personally, environmentally, and globally. We also believe our newsletter provides a commanding outlook on our program and services, and supports our customers with important information and news. We hope you agree.

Our new look is a result of some awesome creativity thanks to Lorie Bartnes in our Marketing Department. The vanpool team helped select the final from Lorie's several great drafts. We have Jennie Barton in our Administrative Services Department to thank for her expertise with templates. We hope you like our new look.

The same great people are here to answer to all things vanpool. We thank you for vanpooling with us!



Your Pierce Transit Vanpool Team: Tammy Apthorp, Manager Daphne Tackett, Kim Pontsler, Ellen Cintron, Heidi Hunter, Kim McGilvery, Assistant Manager Lani Fowlkes, Jody Guy (in van), Tracy Klein, Brenda Davis, Lynne Cunningham

**Vantage Point** is a publication of Pierce Transit.

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PIERCE  
TRANSIT  
the way to go!

# What's New



## VANPOOL

**24/7 Emergency**  
**253.381.3762**

**Direct Line**  
**253.983.3377**  
**7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

**Fleet Maintenance**  
**253.905.5306**  
**7 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

**Fax Number**  
**253.984.8227**

## RIDESHARE

**1.888.814.1300**

[RideshareOnline.com](http://RideshareOnline.com)

## PIERCE TRANSIT

**Customer Services**  
**253.581.8000**

**Toll Free**  
**1.800.562.8109**

**TDD Customer Services**  
**253.582.7951**

[piercetransit.org](http://piercetransit.org)

## Vanpool Policy Updates

### Volunteer Vanpool Participant Reference Manual

We replaced the current Backup Carpool Plan with a comprehensive Alternate Transportation Plan and revised the Operational Group Rules policy. We have new policies for Parking Citations, Photo Citations, and Shared Rider. These updates are in the PDF attachment sent with this newsletter. Primary volunteer drivers: please print the updates, review them with the vanpool group, and insert the pages in the front of the Volunteer Vanpool Participant Reference Manual, a copy of which should be in the van. We are temporarily removing the electronic version of the manual from the website. We will make it available once we update it. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. Please call your vanpool coordinator at Pierce Transit if you have any questions on these revised or new policies. We will send an updated manual in hard copy after the first of the year. Thank you.

## PT Tomorrow

### What should the Pierce Transit of tomorrow look like?



In Pierce County, public transportation faces an uncertain future. Despite efforts to control costs, Pierce Transit was forced to reduce bus service 5% in July 2009. And, while everyone hopes the economy will rebound soon, we must prepare for whatever the future may bring.

Help us make choices about priorities and efficiencies that will be necessary in these difficult times. Join us at one of our upcoming community design workshops listed below. This is your chance to learn more about Pierce Transit, share your concerns and ideas, and help us design the system of tomorrow! Join us to discuss:

- **Prioritizing service.** The economic recession has shown us that we can't always have everything.
- **Where you'd like to see bus, paratransit, and vanpool improvements and least like to see reductions.** Destinations? Time of Day? Frequency? This is your opportunity.
- **Regional connections.** Travel beyond Pierce County is important to a growing number of commuters. How should we best serve them? Transit routes? Vanpool? Other?



**We will hold Community Design Workshops at various locations in October and November. To identify an upcoming workshop in your area, follow our progress, or give your suggestions, visit us at [PTtomorrow.org](http://PTtomorrow.org). Thank you.**



# Green News

## Pierce Transit Vanpoolers Do their Part

Thanks to WSDOT, who created a tool for us to calculate gallons of gas saved and pollution reduced by vanpooling. Simply by keying in the average number of monthly riders and the monthly mileage, the calculations return the vehicle miles per trip (VMT), Yearly VMT reduction, and CO<sub>2</sub> reduced in tons, pounds, and liters. These are statistics worth knowing and this particular tool keeps the stats consistent across the state.

In 2008, Pierce Transit vanpools reduced the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> released into the air we breathe by over four trillion liters. Way to go! If you are interested in learning how *your* vanpool directly provides CO<sub>2</sub> savings, contact your vanpool coordinator at Pierce Transit. You may be pleasantly surprised and genuinely impressed!

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) declares CO<sub>2</sub> harmful. They invite you to Share your Climate Choice experiences with them, including your commute stories. "Email us your story" is their invitation, and while you share with them at [taddonio.kristen@epa.gov](mailto:taddonio.kristen@epa.gov), please copy us at [vanpool@piercetransit.org](mailto:vanpool@piercetransit.org) so we can share your story in an upcoming newsletter.

## Go Green, Win Green

There's still time to register for a chance to win \$50 if you act now! Don't need the money? How does a big city adventure or gourmet dining sound? But time is running out. You only have until September 18 to register or update your rideshare record at [RideshareOnline.com](http://RideshareOnline.com). Or telephone 1.888.814.1300 and request a match. Once you register or update your record, you just need to make sure to share the ride at least two days during one of the weeks between August 10 and September 18. You could win a water view room at the Inn at the Market in historic Pike Place Market, gourmet dining at the Willows Lodge Resort in Woodinville's wine country, or a premier lake view room at the Coeur d'Alene Golf and Spa. You already share the ride; just register at [RideshareOnline.com](http://RideshareOnline.com). It's that easy!

## Bail out your commute and WIN a trip!



**We're all in the same boat!  
Share the ride and get some relief . . .**

Sponsored by Washington State Ridesharing Organization, Commuterride, Doug Fox Travel and your local Transit Agency.



[www.epa.gov/cleanenergy](http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy)



According to the Energy Information Agency, transportation accounted for 28 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in 2007. That may be conservative. A report published in 2006 by the Environmental Defense Fund found that U.S. cars and light trucks are responsible for 45 percent of the CO<sub>2</sub> emitted by automobiles worldwide.

## Doing the Puyallup this year?

Share the ride on Pierce Transit's non-stop Fair Express Service. Visit [piercetransit.org](http://piercetransit.org) for eight convenient locations and to view the bus schedules.



# Tips and Reminders

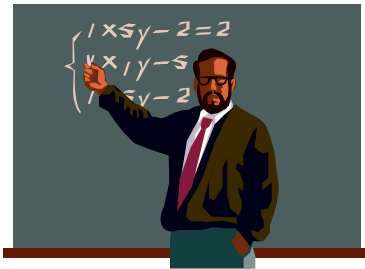


## September Morn...and Afternoon

School resumes and students return to class this month. Children are walking, riding bikes to school, or waiting for school buses. Drive with caution in residential areas, near schools, and near bus stops. Watch your speed.

The speed limit is 20 MPH in school zones, unless otherwise posted, according to the WA State, Department of Licensing, Driver Guide, which can be viewed in its entirety at [dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/driverguide.pdf](http://dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/driverguide.pdf). You must stop for a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing whether it is on your side of the road, the opposite side of the road or at an intersection you are approaching. You are not required to stop for a school bus with red lights flashing when the stopped school bus is traveling in the opposite direction and the roadway:

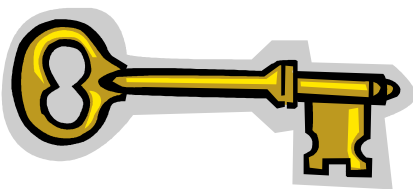
- has three or more marked traffic lanes,
- is separated by a median, or
- is separated by a physical barrier.



*Reminder: Pierce Transit must pre-approve all applicants before they may attend our training classes.*

## Class Schedules and Prerequisites

Speaking of classes, we tried something new mid-summer – holding the Saturday Volunteer Bookkeeping classes at 7 a.m. rather than at noon. Most attendees enjoyed the early class which freed up their afternoon. Our staff also liked the change, and it made perfect sense with sunrise times. We are revisiting the class times for both the driving and bookkeeping classes. Since we schedule applicants for training after we review all applications, there should not be any miscommunication with someone arriving at the wrong time. We appreciate your flexibility and understanding as we coordinate class times with daylight hours as much as possible, for the safety of your arrival and departure.



## Communication is Key

Taking a vacation? Leave of absence? On a different shift temporarily? Notify your vanpool coordinator at Pierce Transit if you are the maintenance or public contact of your vanpool and will be unavailable for a significant time. Let us know who to contact in your absence. Communication is key! Just as important, let the rest of the vanpool group know your schedule so the backup volunteer drivers can share the driving and ensure the riders get to work each work day.



## Sneeze Into Your Sleeve? Or Take Sick Leave!

All the news – from President Obama to the WA State Department of Health, and even some of our employers – reminds us to take precautions to avoid spreading and catching colds, flu, and more recently – the Swine Flu, or H1N1. Vanpools are tight quarters, we all know that. Protect yourself and your fellow passengers. Sneeze into your sleeve, or take some sick leave. Cover your cough, or take the day off. Wash your hands, or change your plans. Yes, even the proponents of ridesharing recognize that sometimes it might be the better choice to stay home, work from home, or drive yourself, rather than subject 4 to 14 of your vanpool buddies to the flu. Spread the words – not the germs!