

VantagePoint

MARCH – APRIL 2011

SOARING FUEL COSTS = NEW RIDERS

How can you save more money?

Fuel prices are predicted to hit \$5.00 per gallon by the end of summer! This is a great time to recruit vanpool participants to reduce individual vanpool fares. Spread the word – Vanpool is the Way to Go!

As our demand for vanpools exceeds our supply, we are looking at ridership efficiencies for all our vanpool groups. We want to see at least 50% ridership by all participants. This should be an easy task with the cost of fuel! In these difficult financial times, we're all learning new ways to pinch a penny 'til it screams. In vanpool, part of our strategy is to keep all available vans on the road, and to fill those vans up with as many riders as possible.

Keep 'Em Rollin': Thanks to constant recruitment efforts, we keep all available vans assigned to groups and on the road – anytime a vanpool group ceases operation, we have a new group prepped, approved, and ready to take its place. We have zero available vans sitting on the lot – one of the best records in the state.

Fill'r Up: Full vans make us happy! Our program removes hundreds of cars from the road. We keep a keen eye on ridership trends and actively help groups recruit riders with various marketing tools, such as RideshareOnline, our regional database.

WHAT IS THE TRUE COST OF COMMUTING?

AAA analyzes driving costs each year that reflect the average cost of operating a vehicle primarily under stop-and-go driving conditions. The following link has several tools to help calculate your costs:

http://www.piercetrips.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=35&Itemid=106.

Additional Gasoline Price Info

www.fuelgaugereport.com

<http://www.Washingtongasprices.com>

<http://www.automotive.com/gas-prices/31/washington/index.html>

<http://gasprices.mapquest.com/washington>



Vantage Point is a publication of Pierce Transit.

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**SPRING WHEEL OPTIONS
CAMPAIGN****Declare your independence
from a costly commute!**

The Wheel Options spring campaign is giving away a trip for two to New York City as the grand prize! That's a great incentive for trying new ways of getting to work. When you try a Wheel Option at least twice between March 13-26 you're eligible to win a trip to New York City or many other great prizes. Wheel Options include carpooling, vanpooling, riding the bus or train, bicycling, walking, working from home or not commuting because of a compressed work schedule. If you work in Pierce County, log your trips at www.piercetrips.com and you'll be automatically entered for a chance to win both statewide and countywide prizes. All others visit wheeloptions.org.

**STUMPED AT THE PUMP?****Ever wonder why the pump stops before the tank is full?**

Some gas stations pre-set their pumps to shut off at a pre-determined dollar amount. If this happens, just finish the transaction and start another one. Pierce Transit does not have a dollar limit for filling the tank but you are limited to three transactions per day. We figure two transactions are sufficient to get the tank filled.

PIERCE TRANSIT'S FUTURE

Statement from Pierce Transit's Board of Commissioners Regarding System Cuts: Nine of the ten Pierce Transit Board members participated in a work session February 28th with the goal of ensuring they had all the information they needed to decide our next steps after the failure of Proposition 1.

The Board directed staff to go forward in reducing the system by approximately 35% by October, 2011. All service and staff reductions will occur by that date. These actions will stabilize the agency's finances and allow for short and long-term sustainability. At this time, the number of vanpools Pierce Transit operates is not affected. As financial numbers are refined, this could change.

[PT Tomorrow.org](http://PT.Tomorrow.org) details the system redesign process that preceded the Proposition 1 vote, as well as other interesting PT Information.

Public Hearings**Lakewood/University Place**

Monday, April 11 from 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Pierce Transit Training Center

Rainier Room 3720 96th St SW, Lakewood, WA 98499

Gig Harbor/Key Peninsula

Monday, April 18 from 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Gig Harbor Civic Center

Council Chambers 3510 Grandview Street, Gig Harbor, WA 98335

Tacoma

Thursday, April 21 from 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Municipal Building

Council Chambers – 1st Floor 747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

Puyallup/South Hill

Monday, April 25 from 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Puyallup City Hall

Council Chambers 333 S. Meridian, Puyallup, WA 98371

East Pierce County

Thursday, April 28 from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Interim Justice Center

Council/Court Chambers 9002 Main Street East, Bonney Lake, WA 98391



ODDS & ENDS

A SMOOTHER RIDE

Coming soon to a roadway near you

If your summer plans include driving along Washington highways, a new website will help make your trip a little smoother. The State launched a paving website, <http://wsdot.wa.gov/Maintenance/Paving/>, to give you a quick way to find details about all the paving projects in the state. You can find links on when projects will begin, how they will affect traffic and who to contact for more information.



KEYS, KEYS . . . WHO'S GOT THE KEYS?

Remember to return all Spare Van keys

We regularly supply two keys with each spare van that is assigned. Often times we only get one key returned. Please return both keys when you return the van to Pierce Transit. We assign the van to another group right away and need those keys. Thanks for your attention to this matter.

AH . . . CHOO!

Spring allergies? Or the Flu??

Do you have sneezing, a runny nose, cough and/or sore throat? It might sound like a cold or flu, but it could actually be allergies. Believe it or not, allergies can kick in as early as February.

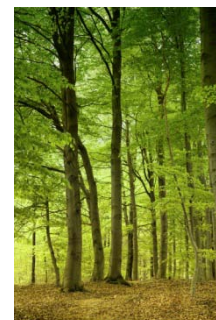
Remember to cover when you cough or sneeze so you don't spread your germs everywhere. This is especially important when commuting in your van. Close quarters make it easier for germs to spread.



Common causes of sneezing include:

- Nasal irritants like dust, pepper, powders, pollens
- Viral infections like the common cold
- Drug withdrawal
- Corticosteroid inhalation
- Exposure to sunlight (this is known as the photic sneeze reflex)

Typically, the peak pollen season is late March into early April, so even higher pollen counts are coming.



Currently, trees are the source of the nasty stuff; the first pollen producers of the spring season include alder, cedar and elm trees. Oak trees will come later in the season, along with grass.



VANPOOL

24/7 Emergency
253.381.3762

Direct Line
253.983.3377
7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Fleet Supervision
253.905.5306
7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Vanpool Fax
253.984.8227

Vanpool@piercetransit.org

RIDESHARE

1.888.814.1300
RideshareOnline.com

PIERCE TRANSIT

Customer Services
253.581.8000

Toll Free
1.800.562.8109

TDD Customer Service
253.582.7951

Piercetransit.org

VANDALISM

Watch where you park

Please park in approved overnight parking locations only. It is extremely important to conduct a pre-trip inspection prior to every commute. We are seeing an increase in vandalism and want to minimize our costs.



PERSONAL USE OF THE VAN

Do you know the rules?

Approved volunteer drivers may use the van for personal use, up to 150 miles per month, and pay for those miles at \$.46 a mile. Approved drivers record personal use miles on the Personal Use Mileage form. Refer to page 70 of the Vanpool Participant Manual for restrictions on personal use. http://www.piercetransit.org/rideshare/pdfs/vp_manual.pdf

ORCA PASSPORT

Employers who offer ORCA Passport

Please remember that we need a clear, legible copy of the ORCA card for any new Vanpool Participant and for any replacement card issued to participants. We need the numbers on the front left side of the card to be clear.



Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work®

Thursday, April 28, 2011

But they can't ride in the van

Just a friendly reminder that our policies do not allow anyone under the age of 18 to ride in the van during the regular commute. If you have a child who is participating in the Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work, plan to drive your personal vehicle, or consider carpooling.