

VantagePoint

July – August 2012

VANPOOL SURVEY

Results are in!

Thanks to all who completed our online vanpool survey. We appreciate the feedback and are already using your comments and suggestions to create a better vanpool program for you.

To incentivize a high response rate, all survey participants who provided a name and phone number were entered into a gift card drawing. This incentive helped us net a whopping 39% response rate, and we received lots of great information from you, our customers, through this triennial survey. We randomly selected five respondents to receive a Target gift card for completing the survey and including their contact information. And the lucky winners are...

- ★ **John Brown**
- ★ **Tony Trotter**
- ★ **Mindy Garvin**
- ★ **Mark Brunson**
- ★ **Karl Pyl**

We especially liked your ideas for newsletter articles. Many of you want to hear more human interest stories about individual vanpoolers and vanpool group experiences, as well as tips from other vanpool groups about how to operate efficiently, recruit riders, and negotiate hazardous driving conditions.

So consider this your personal invitation to bombard us with vanpool-related anecdotes, tips and tricks! We will incorporate them into future issues to continue providing an informative, interesting document for your reading pleasure.

We read every newsletter response and carefully consider your thoughts and requests. Your opinion matters. Thank you for your responses. We'll provide a link to the survey report as soon as it is ready.



Vantage Point is a publication of Pierce Transit.

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Please consider the environment before printing this newsletter.

News and Views

SUMMER TRAVEL TIPS

Plan ahead for personal travel

Plan itineraries and arrange accommodations in advance. Reservations for hotels, restaurants and rental cars get booked quickly during peak travel times. Online resources and/or your travel agent can help you get the lowest rate and make sure your rental car has room for your family, luggage and whatever souvenirs you bring home.

Reduce your vehicle's load. To save gas, eliminate excess cargo such as extra tires, equipment, and bike or ski racks. For every 200 pounds of extra weight in a vehicle, fuel mileage is reduced by approximately one mile per gallon.

Get a tune-up. Before any long-distance drive, check your oil, brakes, fluids and tire pressure. The slightest deficiency in air pressure significantly reduces your car's gas mileage. On the flip side, too much air can result in a flat.

Get an early start to avoid weekend gridlock. Traveling during peak commute times can increase your stress levels and time spent sitting in traffic. Early morning hours tend to have less traffic. The worst times to travel are after meals when you are more likely to be relaxed and sleepy with a full belly. Make sure that all drivers are thoroughly rested prior to hitting the road.

Stay safe, and have a great summer!



VANPOOL FAMILIES

Happy endings and new beginnings!

Vanpool is a commute mode like no other. Many a vanpool friendship has formed over the years...and some vanpoolers even become family!

Case in point, van 7090 that travels from Lakebay to Tacoma Public Utilities. This vanpool group boasts two marriages AND a new baby! Meet Laura Darlene, beautiful daughter of proud vanpooling parents **Eric and Molly Ortiz**. Baby Laura was born on January 11, just a few days before the ice storm. Says momma Molly, "We are so happy to be on the vanpool, and when Laura is older and realizes how much extra money we have put in her college account from transportation savings, she'll love that mom and dad vanpool too. I also love that it gives me an extra 50 minutes in the morning...sleep is very precious these days."

Carl and Debra Busenius met on the vanpool...for the second time. Says Debra, "We didn't know it at first, but our parents used to be friends and we used to play at his grandparents' house when we were little...we are very happy that the vanpool introduced us again."

COMMUTING RESOURCES

Do you live or work in Downtown Tacoma? Check out this link to [Downtown on the Go](#). It's a great smart commute-oriented website that offers services, resources, and programs specific to Downtown Tacoma commuters, businesses, and residents. Enjoy!

Are you (or would you like to be) a clever commuter living or working in Downtown Seattle? Go to [Commute Seattle](#) for Seattle commuting updates and benefits info.



News and Views

BOOKKEEPERS' CORNER

Check your checks

Pop quiz! Should personal checks for riders' fare payments be made payable to:

- A. Pierce County
- B. Pierce County Transit
- C. Pierce Brosnan
- D. Pierce Transit**

If you guessed **Pierce Transit**, you are correct! Bookkeepers, please remind all peeps to make their payments payable to Pierce Transit. And please double-check each payment you receive to ensure it is signed and completed with correct information.

Does your vanpool group pay with vouchers? Please check voucher expiration dates before accepting them as payment.

DRIVERS' CORNER

Summer Overnight Parking Tips

School's out and summer vandalism is on the rise. You may already park in an approved overnight lot...but is it the safest place *within* that lot?

To help discourage vandalism:

- Park under a streetlight.
- Do not park side-by-side with another van – it gives vandals a place to hide.
- Park so the left side of the van (the gas cap side!) is clearly visible to the most high-traffic area (usually a storefront).

Got driving/parking/any kind of vanpool tips? We'd love to hear them. Please pass them along to your vanpool coordinator, or email them to vanpool@piercetransit.org.

APPRECIATION

Going the extra mile

Last week, the vanpool staff were in a real pinch: A group of eight vanpoolers suddenly became a group of 14, outgrowing their 8-passenger van by a longshot! What to do?

Vanpooler **Brian Moen** of MultiCare to the rescue! The PT Vanpool team devised a triple-van-swap plan and asked Brian if he could exchange his van the following day. Undaunted by the sudden request, Brian's reply was: "How about today? How about right now?" Brian washed and vacuumed his van and arrived at Pierce Transit within the hour. WOW!

The entire van swap plan and execution all happened within 24 hours, and the amazing growing vanpool group was able to commute in their larger van immediately.

Now THAT's teamwork!

WAY TO DUMP THAT PUMP



On Thursday, June 21, [Pierce Trips](#) recorded 584 total trips and 18,017 miles **not** driven, much thanks to Pierce Transit vanpoolers! Check out the number of trips logged by smart commuters like you:

Bike	52	Telework.....	18
Bus	88	Train	9
Carpool.....	261	VANPOOL	119
Compressed Work Week	9	Walk	28

GREAT job getting those single-occupancy vehicles off the road!

Agency News



VANPOOL

24/7 Emergency
253.381.3762

Direct Line
253.983.3377
7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Vanpool Fax
253.984.8227

Vanpool@piercettransit.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

Piercettransit.org

PIERCE TRANSIT PUTS FORTH BALLOT MEASURE

November sales tax initiative

On Monday, June 11, the Pierce Transit Board of Commissioners passed a resolution to put forward a ballot proposition for the November 6, 2012 election to exercise the final 0.3% sales tax authority available to Pierce Transit.

At a May 11, 2012 work session, the Board discussed the financial impacts of 10 months of continuing declines in sales tax revenue and the removal of jurisdictions from the Pierce Transit boundary. They carefully reviewed agency financial projections and scenarios that ranged from staying at the current 0.6% sales tax authority to putting forward a ballot measure that could utilize the 0.1%, 0.2%, or 0.3% capacity that remains. They also discussed timing options for potential ballot and the merits of including a sunset clause.

The Board determined that to restore access to essential services for seniors, the disabled, and people who rely on Pierce Transit requires asking voters to approve a ballot proposal to utilize the remaining 0.3% (three cents on a \$10 purchase) authority.

Pierce Transit has made significant cuts in service since 2008 to mitigate the impacts of the recession. Nearly \$111 million dollars has been cut or saved including 43% cut in bus service, elimination of special events service, sale of land and assets, and a 19% cut in staffing. Pierce Transit moved to a high ridership and efficiency service plan in 2011 during the most recent cut to service to focus on moving the most people with the limited resources available.

For more information about the ballot measure, please check out Pierce Transit's [website](http://Piercettransit.org).

