



Transportation Information Station Newsletter

July 2, 2010

Dave's Corner

The Age Wave is about to hit. Currently 11, 438 residents, over 19% of the population in Mason County, are over the age of 65. This number is anticipated to increase by 17 to 20 percent in the next few years. One in five of those over 65 do not drive which is critical since our society is based on mobility.

The impact of a significant increase in the older population to transit service, while primarily based on speculation, does have a factual basis. People are living longer and the most significant increase is with persons 80 years of age and older. This is also a time in life when vision, reaction time and other functions needed for safe vehicle operation reach a point where people are forced to give up driving and seek alternative transportation. Some will depend upon friends and relatives with cars while others will move closer to urban centers where there is greater availability of transportation. Some older persons will be unable to move and must rely on limited transportation to help them obtain medical services, groceries and other needed services.

The new design of public transportation will be influenced, to a large extent, by the massive demand from that segment of the population that lack options to reach needed services. This new design will involve the entire community and will necessitate the greater coordination between public, private and non-profit transportation services. It will be critical for doctors and human service agencies to coordinate appointment times with the availability of transportation.

Mason Transit is currently working with local social service agencies and transportation providers to update the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan. This plan will be focused on developing a unified vision of local and regional transportation services. The Plan is anticipated to be completed by fall of this year. Agencies wishing to be part of this effort can contact Mason Transit for information on how to get involved.

Editor Note

Over the next several issues of the newsletter you'll begin to see some small changes as we move from an internal only agency newsletter to a more broad base community newsletter. The reason for this change is to make the newsletter more relevant to our community and our employees. There are a million great stories and information to provide to our community relating to transit.



Nominations for Employee of the Quarter

Please submit your nominations for Employee of the 2nd Quarter 2010, no later than Friday, July 9th. Remember to be specific since the write-up counts in the selection process.

***Happy 234th
Birthday America!***

THE COMMUNITY OF “BUS”

Kevin Frankeberger, Ph.D.

My guide dog takes me to the door of the bus while Becky’s takes her to the lift. The fun banter has already started with our driver, the “mayor” of the community of bus. It might focus on how the fishing is going or the fact that Becky has let me out of the house once again so I must have been on good behavior – it doesn’t really matter what the banter is, it does matter that our “mayor” knows us and cares about us as people, not just customers but we are that too. He or she keeps us safe while delivering all to their point of need.

Safely seated the exchanges continue with other regular riders or with new voices. Some are older, some younger. A few are generally commuting to work, another might be off to the Worksource office. Some might be dressed in “professional casual” while others are dressed in what clothes were handy that morning. Perhaps another is seated in a wheelchair secured by four tie-downs to the wheelchair and a seatbelt. Our community of bus then goes on its way.

Although this community of bus should be replicated across the US, it isn’t. Almost all other transit agencies segregate the riding population. Those of us with special needs or older ride one bus, the others ride the other one. But here in Mason County, youth who ride get to know our guide dogs; commuters get to know those who are not able to work or desperately trying to find employment. We are with those who have lived longer so we can respect and learn from them. Being disabled is part of the human condition so all can learn, in our community of bus how disabilities truly are mitigated by so many. And, when community of bus delivers us home from the grocery, our fellow citizens carry our groceries the thirty yards down our driveway to our porch – just because they can and do. Our “mayor” doesn’t even suggest that it happen – we are a community.

That ticket to dignity, a ride on our community of bus is open to every member of Mason County. Come join us. It is fun and you can learn many things about the human existence during the trip.

Kevin has been a member of the Mason County Transit Advisory Board since 2001. He and his spouse Becky and their guide dogs reside at Lake Limerick where Kevin has lived since 2001 with Becky joining him in 2004.

Operations Notes

While the summer temperatures haven’t quite made it to Western Washington, there are still items to take note of:

- ◆ Please take the time to congratulate Athena Green for passing the Certified Community Transit Supervisory (CCTS) examination and receiving her certification from CTAA.
- ◆ Don’t forget that leave slips are to be submitted no later than Tuesday before 5 p.m. This is extremely important in order to ensure coverage for vacation and appointments.
- ◆ Please park away from the Communication Center when your vehicle is running - the exhaust enters into the building and creates an unhealthy working environment.