

# Smart COMMUTER



Issue No. 51 Spring 2013

*Commute Information for Business Executives & Elected Officials in Northern New Jersey*

## Shuttle to Shore —

### EZ Ride Jitney is back!

Shore visitors can now use the train and our Shore *EZ Ride* Jitney to get to the beaches in Asbury Park and Long Branch. All you need to do is go to the train station in either Asbury Park or Long Branch to pick up the shuttle. Hop aboard and we'll do the rest.

The Asbury Park service begins on May 18 with Saturday and Sunday service only. Friday service, however, will begin June 28. The Long Branch service begins May 24 but will have reduced service on Fridays until June 21 when the schedule will pick-up. Once aboard, we will take you to the beach or the shops – your choice. Transit riders ride for free. All others pay a nominal fee of \$1 per ride.

The service will be provided on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day from 9 a.m. through to 11 p.m. Two mini-buses will serve the Long Branch station and one mini-bus will serve Asbury Park station. All vehicles are accessible for wheel chairs. Shuttle stops along the route are clearly marked with *EZ Ride* sign. The shuttle schedules coordinate with rail timetables. For a detailed route and schedule please visit [ezride.org](http://ezride.org).

The program is largely paid for by a federal grant with the municipalities of Asbury Park and Long Branch contributing 25% of the operating cost of the program.

For information contact:

Wendy Arias:  
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[warias@ezride.org](mailto:warias@ezride.org)



(From left to right) Krishna Murthy, Executive Director, Meadowlink; Howard Woolley, Business Administrator and Jacob Jones, Director of Economic Development at the trial run of the shuttle.

## Long Branch Shuttle —

### Supports Economic Growth Strategy

The shuttle long considered a necessity by the City of Long Branch and supported by the *North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority*, (NJTPA) and *NJ Transit* will be launched in early June.

The shuttle will pick up passengers every half-hour from 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. in the morning and from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the evening. The service will link the Long Branch train station to *Brookdale Community College*, *Monmouth University*, Pier Village and other businesses in the area. Riders will pay a nominal fee of only \$1.50 per ride.

In addition to the schools and businesses visitors will also be able to take advantage of the

service. *The Monmouth County Tourism Board* estimates that during the peak summer season 21,000 daily visitors will arrive in Long Branch while during the off-season, the number drops to about 10,000.

“The shuttle complements our plans to develop Long Branch as a Transit Village. We believe it will have a favorable economic impact on the area, its colleges and area businesses. We look forward to working with *Meadowlink*, to make the shuttle a success,” said Mr. Howard Woolley, Business Administrator of Long Branch.

For information contact:

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## Vanpools using Pulaski Skyway during construction, to receive \$325 Monthly Incentive

The Pulaski Skyway, the bridge that connects Jersey City and Newark, is scheduled for a major overhaul in early 2014. The Skyway traverses the Meadowlands from Newark to Jersey City and Hoboken and is one of New Jersey's busiest bridges.

Built over 80 years ago, the Skyway carries 67,000 cars a day. It has been rated as the 6th least reliable bridge in the country, by the *Texas Transportation Institute* in 2011 making its renovation urgent. The construction will extend the life of the bridge by at least 75 years.

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) estimates that closing the inbound lanes during the day when the deck replacement phase begins, rather than working at night and weekends, will save up to four years of construction and an estimated \$200 million in costs.

Once construction begins early in 2014, northbound lanes on the 1&9 Pulaski Skyway will be closed. NJDOT is exploring a variety of ways to keep traffic moving during the peak morning rush hours, from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. and again during the afternoon peak hours from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. to help avoid delays and congestion.

One proposed traffic mitigation measure is the use of incentives to encourage vanpooling. Vanpools can typically hold anywhere between 7 to 15 passengers, making it a viable option for commuters, consolidating disparate travellers into one vehicle.

Typically, *NJ Transit* recognizes vanpools and provides \$175 in monthly subsidies. However, to encourage the formation of more vanpools to help reduce congestion, an additional \$150 per month per vanpool will be provided, which makes a total of \$325 per vehicle for the duration of the construction.

Suggestions to avoid congestion would include using local streets to get to Lower Manhattan via the Holland Tunnel. But no matter what route is taken, congestion is sure to be heavy. Carpooling, vanpooling and taking advantage of shuttles from Park and Ride locations, are realistic alternatives and will be available. It is expected that other alternatives will be presented before construction begins.

For information contact:  
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# Employers on the Move ...



## 200 Bergen Community College Students Register for Carpooling

**B**ergen Community College, with over 17,000 students and three campuses in Paramus, Lyndhurst and Hackensack is encouraging students to carpool to help save time, money and help reduce the demand for parking spaces.

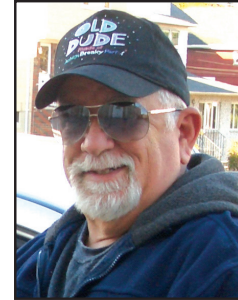
Over 200 students signed up to find carpool at a transportation event organized by *Meadowlink* in March. The event was held at the *Bergen Community College* campus in Lyndhurst. Even though schedules vary widely, the large number of registrants will increase the probability of finding carpool partners and benefit all participants. All registered carpoolers are eligible for the *Emergency Ride Home Program* that guarantees a free ride home in the case of an emergency. A maximum of three such rides are provided over a calendar year.

The statewide carpool program is provided free to participants. It is jointly managed by the *New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT)* and the *North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA)*. About 30,000 participants and 12,000 carpoolers take advantage of the program annually.

Colleges and universities contribute the largest number of carpoolers in our program. Participating institutions include: *Rutgers University, Kean University, Essex County College, Felician College, Monmouth County College, Brookdale Community College and of course Bergen Community College.*

For information contact:  
Steve Culpepper  
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## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



**Bob Martinelli**

“I’m a volunteer at heart,” says our EZ Ride veteran, Bob Martinelli, who has been with us since the inception of our senior transportation program in 2008. He’s a big hit with his customers and colleagues alike. What he really likes about volunteering at EZ Ride, is not having to drive his own vehicle. Late model Honda Accords, fully insured and equipped with in-vehicle cameras are provided for his use.

Volunteering for one company would be enough for most people, but Bob also volunteers for Queen of Peace Church in North Arlington. In addition, he’s been a volunteer for North Arlington EMT.

He is also an active participant on a senior Bocce ball league, and enjoys gardening, going to the gym and spending time with his granddaughter.

He is married with two daughters.

We are proud to recognize Bob’s 1,400 hours of service as a volunteer and thank him for his selfless dedication.

Want to volunteer? Contact:  
Kinga Skora  
201-939-4242  
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## Vitamin Shoppe employees enjoy late night shuttle service to Journal Square

**T**he *Vitamin Shoppe* facility in North Bergen is about a mile from the nearest bus stop. Additionally, bus service is limited or not available for the night shift that ends late at night. *Meadowlink* in partnership with *NJ Transit* and the *Vitamin Shoppe* launched the North Bergen night shuttle service in late 2012 to assist these employees.

The shuttle operates from 91<sup>st</sup> Street along JFK Boulevard to Journal Square, Jersey City. The shuttle operates both a weekday and a weekend schedule. During weekdays, the service operates at 11:10 p.m. and 12:30 a.m. and on

weekends at 10 p.m. and 11 p.m. Service is provided using a 22-passenger mini-bus that is wheel chair accessible.

The service is largely used by employees from the *Vitamin Shoppe* facility but is also available to the public. Users pay a flat fare of \$1.50 for all stops south of 8th Street and \$3 if traveling to stops north of 8th Street. The program is largely funded through a federal grant that covers about 75% of the operating costs.

For information contact:  
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Comments? Suggestions?  
Feel free to forward  
your thoughts on  
improving the  
**Smart Commuter**  
to Brenda Dainton at  
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Permit No. 1761

## Service Updates

### Maplewood Tuscan Elementary School Encourages Children to Walk to School

**S**afe Routes to School (SRTS), inspired by the “Walk don’t ride” idea was the inspiration for the program, started in November of 2011. In 2013 Tuscan Elementary School in Maplewood, joined 20 other schools currently enrolled in the program.

With funding from the *New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT)* and managed by *Meadowlink*, the SRTS program is designed to encourage children to safely walk to school and adapt a more healthy lifestyle. So far, *Meadowlink* has introduced the program in five counties in New Jersey and expects to have over 30 schools actively involved by the end of the year.

The goal is to encourage children together with responsible volunteer adults to form a “bus” and walk to school. Prior to 1969, it was estimated that 48% of

children walked to school. Today that number has dwindled to 15%.

As the children “bus” to school, the adult “drivers” will teach them road safety tips including the three basic safety tenants: be safe, be seen and be smart. The aim is to make the journey fun, safe and healthy. The benefits of the program include healthier children, less congestion around schools and a more engaged community.

There are more than 700 schools in the Meadowlink service area with main priority given to schools in disadvantaged communities. The program is largely funded by federal dollars with no cost to the school or the community.

For information contact:  
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### Freebies galore...

#### Free Transit Display for your worksite

*Meadowlink* is an advocate for public transportation with a ‘transit-first’ policy.

Our displays provide easy access to New Jersey Transit information. These displays are available for your worksite free of charge.

We will customize the displays and set them up at your worksite and at your convenience.

Each display holds relevant commuter brochures, together with information, regarding carpooling and vanpooling as well as all bus and train schedules relevant to your location. For your FREE display, contact:

Michael Jensen  
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