

The Transporter



Issue No. 59 Spring 2015

Transportation Information for Business Executives & Elected Officials in Northern New Jersey & Monmouth County

Senior in South Brunswick? Community Cars Is Now at Your Service!

When senior citizens stop driving, they often feel they are losing their independence. After all, hopping into your car, turning the key and going wherever you want has long been part of the American Dream. So, a safe, reliable alternative to driving one's own car is a welcome addition to the non-driving senior's life.

Meadowlink is proud to be working with the Aging in Place Partnership (AIPP), which is dedicated to improving the lives of seniors in South Brunswick in the areas of transportation, caregiving, wellness and healthy living.

Community Cars is a volunteer-driven car service and is geared to provide services at much lower costs than limos and taxis. Riders must schedule a car at least 48 hours in advance to facilitate coordination with volunteer drivers.

Providing affordable transportation for seniors is an everyday occurrence at Meadowlink, as well as a clear fulfillment of our mission. So we are proud to announce that our *Community Cars* service will commence in South Brunswick in May. In partnership with the AIPP, Meadowlink will help older adults go shopping, visit with friends, and see their doctors among other activities.

For more information about the program, please contact:

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A plug-in electric vehicle (PEV) being charged. PEVs that are battery only can travel about 60 to 120 miles on a full charge; It takes about four to six hours to fully charge a PEV, making workplace stations an ideal solution.

Power Play! Meadowlink to Showcase Electric Car Charging Stations

Electric cars can contribute to a huge shift in the way Americans travel while significantly reducing harmful emissions. Plug-in electric vehicles (PEVs) are charged from a specialized electrical outlet, but for them to become popular, a network of charging stations needs to be established. Workplaces are a natural location for charging stations because PEVs can be fully charged during the work day.

To encourage employers to install charging stations, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) started the "Workplace Charging Challenge", which provides technical assistance to employers interested in installing charging stations.

Meadowlink is exploring replacing much of its fleet with electric vehicles over the next few years.

As part of the "Challenge," we submitted a grant proposal to the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority for funds to install charging stations at our Wood-Ridge office. Our partners could include the Clean Cities Coalition, local utility companies and several private businesses.

The Meadowlink charging stations will replenish the batteries of our own PEVs and will also serve as a demonstration site that we can showcase to local employers and municipalities to encourage them to consider installing their own charging stations.

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Revised Fare Policy for Community Cars & Flex-T Riders

Meadowlink has always been dedicated to providing transportation to those who need it in order to bring communities together and break social barriers. We strive to keep costs as low as possible in order to increase access to our services. The *Community Cars and Flex-T* programs exemplify these tenets.

Community Cars is a transportation service for senior citizens that provides a lower-cost alternative to limos and taxis. *Flex-T* is our program for people with reduced mobility that helps them overcome transportation barriers and helps them get to work on time, every day. However, as a non-profit, we are also always concerned about the financial viability of our programs, so that we can continue to offer them to our riders. After extensive financial analysis, we have come to the unfortunate conclusion that in order to continue to provide these services we need to increase the price.

Effective April 1, 2015, all rides will be priced at \$2.50 plus \$1.00 per mile up to 10 miles, and \$1.25 per mile for trips longer than 10 miles.

We are dependent on volunteer drivers to help us control costs and ensure the program's affordability. You can help us by spreading the word about volunteering, or even by contributing your own time as a driver. Volunteer drivers earn free rides that they can use or donate to others. The more drivers we have, the greater our capacity to serve our clients at lower cost.

In an important development for Meadowlink, we have recently been designated a "Qualified Provider" by the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). As a result, our transportation services will be even more available and will work more directly with our clients who participate in the DDD's services. The DDD provides public funding for services that assist adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live as independently as possible. To receive services through the DDD, an individual must meet the functional criteria and be Medicaid eligible. Call the DDD toll free at 800-832-9173 for more information.

We appreciate our riders' continued participation in our *Community Cars* and *Flex-T* programs, and look forward to serving their transportation needs into the future.

For additional information, please contact:

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The Transporter; is a quarterly newsletter about transportation information in our region and is published by Meadowlands Transportation Brokerage Corporation d/b/a Meadowlink. Please call Kinga Skora at (201) 939-4242 with comments, corrections or suggestions.

This publication was prepared with funding from the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This document is disseminated under the sponsorship of NJTPA and FHWA in the interest of information exchange. NJTPA and FHWA assume no liability for its contents or use thereof.

Employers on the Move ...



BCC Students Go Green a Week Before St. Patrick's Day

College students, with their limited budgets, are fertile ground for carpooling. To encourage more ridesharing among young scholars, EZ Ride participated in a campus event at Bergen Community College (BCC) at the Meadowlands in Lyndhurst on March 12. Our efforts to inform paid off well as 46 students joined our carpool database that matches up people with similar commutes.

Since transportation is a constant issue for students, Dean of BCC at the Meadowlands, Linda Emr, invited EZ Ride to inform students about commuting alternatives, in the hope that more will carpool.

Access to public transit is good at the campus; NJ TRANSIT buses stop nearby and the school runs a shuttle between the Lyndhurst and Paramus campuses. But not everyone lives near a bus line. Some students already carpool, some get dropped off and others, though it's expensive, drive alone. So students were eager to sign up with EZ Ride hoping to find carpool partners or register their current carpool for emergency rides home.

With sunny days ahead, now is the perfect time for students to find carpool partners. College is a social experience and carpooling is as social as it gets, not to mention cost effective.

To schedule event, please contact:
Stephen Culpepper at (201) 939-4242
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Meadowlink is the Carpooling Authority, Even at Port Authority

Twenty-seven Port Authority employees decided to take the jump into carpooling as EZ Ride visited their Erie Avenue, Jersey City location. The February 10 event gave employees of the Port Authority from many different job backgrounds, including Port Authority Police, an opportunity to find reliable carpooling transportation for their commuters.

Despite the abundance of public transit options for reaching Jersey City, there are still people who come from areas where transit is unreliable or simply nonexistent. This was confirmed by the range of locations in which the future carpoolers reside. Monmouth and Morris counties and Staten Island were among the home bases of the Port Authority workers who signed up.

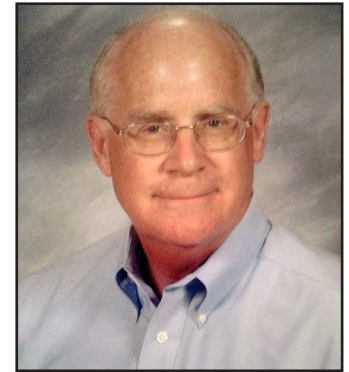
The main commuting option from these and other areas is driving, and thus for them finding a carpool partner is a helpful way to reduce the cost and stress of their daily journey.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey manages bridges, tunnels, airports and transit in New York and New Jersey. Port Authority knows how important it is to provide their own employees with multiple options to get to work such as having them share rides through carpooling. The employees after all make transit work for the rest of us.

For more information about Commute Fair events please contact:

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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



RON DANIELSON

“Driving for EZ Ride is a perfect fit for me,” says volunteer driver Ron Danielson. “I enjoy driving, my schedule is flexible and I don’t have to make any decisions!”

Ron had a long and rewarding career at Memorial School in Eatontown where he made his share of decisions. He was a teacher for six years and the principal for 41. After retiring in June 2013, Ron took a well-deserved rest for about a year. Then his commitment to serving the community led him to volunteer for EZ Ride.

“It was by chance that I saw the article about EZ Ride in a local paper. I knew immediately this was what I wanted to do,” says Ron. He drives three to four times a week and the EZ Ride staff appreciates that he is open to getting last minute calls to pinch hit for a driver that canceled a shift. “If I’m not busy and I can help out, I’m there.”

And Ron is a great ambassador for EZ Ride. He says, “I am greatly enjoying the opportunity to volunteer for this program while still having plenty of time for myself. I encourage others who may be interested to give it a try!”

Love to Drive? Contact:

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Comments? Suggestions?

Feel free to forward
your thoughts on
improving the
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Service Updates

It's Cool to Walk to School

April is Walk to School Month. The coming of spring and warmer weather is the perfect time to encourage your students to enjoy the many benefits of walking to school. It's easy to do, and Meadowlink's Safe Routes to School coordinators are experts at planning a successful and fun event.

Meadowlink offers guidance on how to host a Walk to School Day. We provide information and help prepare a layout for the routes which helps to introduce students and parents to the idea of walking to school. One fun activity, especially for younger children, is a "Walking School Bus." A Walking School Bus is a group of children walking to school with one or more adults. If that sounds simple, it is, and that's part of the beauty of it. It's a great way to make walking part of the school culture.

Last year more than 150 schools in New Jersey participated in Walk to School Month. Walk to School Month is an opportunity way to bring press, recognition and enthusiasm to your school.

April is New Jersey Walk and Bike to School Month. Support your state, walk to school and set the tone for a healthy lifestyle – you can register your event on New Jersey Safe Routes to School website <http://bit.ly/1w7nQgt>

If you or your school is interested in organizing a "Walk to School Day" or setting up "Walking School Buses", please contact:

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Freebies galore...

**Ride 'em Cowboy!
Hold a Bike Rodeo and Get Free
Kids' Bike Helmets**

The New Jersey Department of Human Services has provided about 1,500 bike helmets for Meadowlink's Safe Routes to School Program. We look forward to fitting them onto the heads of New Jersey's junior cyclists. We plan to have bike rodeos from Spring onward in the five counties we represent; Bergen, Essex, Monmouth, Passaic and Union.

As grand and exciting as the Bike Rodeos may be, they do not begin without a properly fitted helmet. We fit helmets and teach kids how to fit their own. Then we go through the ABC's of the safe cycling.

To schedule your Bike Rodeo and request your free helmets, please contact:

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