

# The Transporter



Issue No. 62 Winter 2015

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

## EZ Ride Starts Fifth Secaucus Junction Shuttle

The Frank R. Lautenberg Rail Station at Secaucus Junction, known to most of us as Secaucus Junction, opened in December 2003 and serves 11 of NJ Transit's 13 train lines; several hundred thousand commuters pass through the station every day.

The station is also the destination for numerous NJ Transit buses and independent shuttles. In fact, EZ Ride is second only to NJ Transit in the number of buses that serve the station daily. In December, EZ Ride added its fifth shuttle service to Secaucus Junction, bringing to 12 the total number of our shuttle buses that serve the station.

Currently, EZ Ride shuttles provide more than 800 daily passenger trips to and from Secaucus Junction.

The newest shuttle runs about two miles each way from an employer on Pennhorn Drive in Secaucus. It operates Monday through Friday during the morning and evening rush hours. This service will allow more people to use public transit to get to work.

The number of EZ Ride shuttles has been growing steadily since we began offering this service. It truly exemplifies our mission which states that we will operate transportation services that enhance the quality of life, regional mobility and economic opportunity for people while reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality. This mission has driven us for more than 30 years and is more relevant than ever.

For more information please contact:

Cesar Gomez (201)939-4242  
cgomez@ezride.org



EZ Ride Board Chairman Perry Frenzel (L) and Board Member Michael Vieira with the seven Night Owl Shuttle buses.

## Late Shift Workers Benefit from Seventh Bus Added to Essex Night Owl Shuttle

Every morning at 1 a.m. at Newark Penn Station dozens of passengers flock to the six buses of EZ Ride's Night Owl Shuttle. They are going home after a long day's work using one of the most unique transportation services in the Northeast. Many of them arrived on NJ Transit's No. 62 bus from Newark Liberty Airport and others took trains. The scene is repeated at 2 a.m., 3 a.m. and 4 a.m.

We have now added a seventh bus to the service, which transports almost 300 people every weekday night and almost 200 on the weekend. The Night Owl meets a very specific need: transporting people from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. between Newark Penn Station and their homes in Newark, Orange, East Orange and Irvington. They are picked up or dropped off right in front of their homes.

For people without cars who work shifts other than 9 to 5, commuting can be a

real problem. But for workers who live in or near Newark and can get to their jobs from Penn Station, the Night Owl fills a critical need.

Over 10 years ago, Essex County started the Night Owl Shuttle to provide a much-needed service for residents by providing transportation to Penn Station in the wee hours of the night.

In those 10 years, average nightly ridership has jumped from about 40 to the current average of almost 300 riders per night. The addition of a seventh bus confirms that the Night Owl was a great idea that has had a positive impact on the community.

For more information about the program, please contact:

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## **How to Select a Shuttle Service Provider**

**S**afety and reliability are the two most important factors that we consider while choosing a shuttle service provider. Here are some questions to ask about vehicles, drivers and the organization itself when shopping for a shuttle service. Price though important, should not be the primary yardstick.

### **The Vehicle**

1. What is the average age of the vehicles in the fleet? Most of the vehicles that are used for shuttle services have a limited life-span of three to five years or about 150,000 miles per vehicle. An aging fleet is less reliable.

2. What level of insurance does the provider carry? New Jersey requires a minimum \$1.5 million of insurance. However, to deal effectively with the outcomes of a catastrophic accident it would be prudent to have coverage of \$5 million or more.

3. How much of the fleet is kept in reserve? A useful rule of thumb is that 20 percent of vehicles should be held in reserve to deal with emergencies and regular maintenance.

4. Do the vehicles have the latest technology? Vehicles should be equipped with GPS and in-vehicle cameras which document driving safety and provide video footage in the event of an accident. Additionally, it confirms on-time performance.

### **The Driver**

1. How are drivers selected and trained? Shuttle drivers should have a commercial driver's license (CDL) with passenger endorsement, a clean driving record and a minimum of two years of experience.

2. What is the drug and alcohol policy? The provider must strictly follow a policy that complies with the guidelines provided by the Federal transit

Administration. All drivers must be tested as specified, including random tests.

3. How many drivers are there? There is an acute shortage of CDL drivers and turnover is high. The operator should have sufficient back-up drivers available at all times to deal with contingencies.

4. How are the drivers monitored? Every driver's performance should be reviewed periodically. Based on the results, they should be briefed throughout the year to improve their driving skills.

### **The Company**

Beyond the driver and the vehicle, it's important to confirm the following about the shuttle service provider:

1. Safety Rating: Check the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration safety rating if it is an interstate provider.

2. Customer Service: The provider must have established protocols for dealing with customer service complaints including time frames for corrective action.

3. Field Inspections: Field staff is crucial to physically monitor on-time performance, driver safety and gather direct feedback from riders regarding the quality of service.

4. Federal Funding: Organizations that receive federal funding are held to a higher standard and are subject to audits and inspections. In addition, this brings down the cost of the shuttle program for you.

Once these criteria have been examined, then the price of the shuttle should be considered.

For additional information, please contact:

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# ● Employers on the Move ...

## **Students at Berkeley College in Clifton Join Ranks of Carpoolers**

**B**erkeley College has campuses across the New York metropolitan area offering a range of degree and certificate programs to prepare students for careers in business, healthcare and other fields.

At the Clifton campus, students learn current medical practices and procedures from experienced healthcare professionals. The school offers fully equipped nursing and patient care laboratories, simulated operating rooms and medical laboratories, which replicate current healthcare work environments.

On Tuesday, November 17, EZ Ride joined a number of other companies and agencies at the school's Community Resource Day designed to inform students about services in the area that can enrich

their lives. EZ Ride had an exhibit about our carpool program which generated a lot of interest among the students. Most of them drive to work, so the opportunity to save some money and reduce harmful emissions is an attractive proposition.

Although we have visited other Berkeley campuses, this was our first event at Berkeley College in Clifton and we are very pleased that 28 students signed up to be entered into the Rideshare database which will match them up with others who have a similar commute.

To schedule an event, please contact:  
Stephen Culpepper at (201) 939-4242  
[sculpepper@ezride.org](mailto:sculpepper@ezride.org)

## **Carpooling a Big Hit with Eastwick Students**

**E**astwick College has four campuses in northern New Jersey. Eastwick College – Nutley offers certificate and diploma programs in business, computer electronics, HVAC (heating, ventilation and air-conditioning technology), medical assisting, medical billing and coding, and vascular sonography.

Theoretical instruction and hands-on training are the hallmarks of an Eastwick education. Curriculum and training equipment are continually updated to ensure that acquired skills and knowledge remain competitive in the workplace

Although some students use public transportation, most commute by car. Like students everywhere, they tend to be on a tight budget. This raises the attractiveness

of carpooling, a great way to save money and socialize at the same time.

In November, EZ Ride held a Commuter Fair at the campus to inform students about the benefits of carpooling. There was great interest and many students stopped by to pick up a brochure. Fifty-one students are eager to start carpooling and enrolled in our database.

Carpooling makes a difference in the lives of a lot of people and the students of Eastwick will be among them.

For more information about Commute Fairs please contact:

Stephen Culpepper at (201) 939-4242  
[sculpepper@ezride.org](mailto:sculpepper@ezride.org)

## **VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT**



**NORMAN KLEIN**

“I drive for EZ Ride because I’ve seen that there is a great need for transportation for seniors who no longer drive,” said volunteer driver Norman Klein.

Norman is retired and has been driving for us for about a year and a half. He saw a brochure for “Community Cars” in the Dumont Borough Hall where he lives. “It seemed like a good thing to do, so I called up and soon started driving,” he said.

Norman gets satisfaction from knowing that his efforts pay off big for his passengers. “Many of the people I drive have no other way to get to medical appointments or the supermarket. I’ve also heard from some of my passengers that other transportation options are quite expensive.”

Norman drives once a week for just about a full day and his contribution is greatly appreciated by the “Community Cars” office staff. Like many of our drivers he has regular passengers of whom he has grown quite fond. “One lady that I drive every week is 102 years old and she sits up front next to me. She is just the sweetest person.”

Love to Drive? Contact:

Kinga Skora (201) 939-4242  
[kskora@ezride.org](mailto:kskora@ezride.org)

Comments? Suggestions?

Feel free to forward  
your thoughts on  
improving the

**The Transporter**

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## Service Updates

### October was International Walk and Bike to School Month!

Organized by the Partnership for a Walkable America, Walk to School Day began in 1997 as a one-day event to build awareness of the need for walkable communities.

In 2000, growing interest from around the world led to the establishment of October as International Walk to School Month. The EZ Ride *Safe Routes to School* (SRTS) team has consistently encouraged and supported schools to participate every October. Walking is a good way to promote more physical activity for students and to advocate for safer streets and cleaner air.

This October, 167 New Jersey schools participated in the event. Forty percent of these schools held special "Walk 2 School Day" events in our service area comprising of Bergen, Essex, Monmouth, Passaic and Union counties.

#### ***Safe Biking for Fitness & Play***

To encourage safe physical fitness for communities, EZ Ride continues to teach elementary and middle school students about safe biking. In October, we held Bike Rodeos in Haledon, Maywood and

Prospect Park. A Bike Rodeo teaches basic cycling safety skills. It also allows riders to practice safe bicycling in a controlled environment. A pre-ride safety check, helmet fitting, bicycle handling, safety drills, and education on hand signals are among the skills taught at a Bike Rodeo. EZ Ride also partnered with the Gateway Family YMCA to sponsor a four-mile safety bike ride at Grace Wilday Junior High School in Roselle. EZ Ride equipped students with free bicycle helmets as well as safety instruction to prepare them.

#### ***Safe Routes to School Awards***

On October 20 EZ Ride held its first *Safe Routes to School* Recognition Awards Breakfast at the Brownstone in Paterson. Sixty-one schools earned the First Step award and three elementary schools in Asbury Park earned a Silver Award.

If you or your school is interested in a SRTS activity, please contact:

Lisa Lee at (201) 939-4242

llee@ezride.org

### Freebies galore...

#### **FREE Bike Helmets**

We are planning bike rodeos for the coming school year in the five counties we serve; Bergen, Essex, Monmouth, Passaic and Union.

As grand and exciting as the Bike Rodeos may be, they cannot begin without a properly fitted helmet. As part of our Safe Routes to School program, we fit helmets and teach kids how to fit their own helmet. If they do not have a helmet, we provide the right helmet for them. We then go through the ABC's of cycling prep. No child rides until the Air, Brakes, Cranks and Chains are checked on their bike.

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

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