

The Transporter



Issue No. 80 - January, 2020

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



VNACJ Clients To Use Ryde4Life Program

Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey, Community Health Center Inc. (VNACJ) in Asbury Park is looking forward to working with EZ Ride and using the Ryde4Life program to provide transportation for their clients. VNACJ works with vulnerable populations such as at-risk children, the elderly, and individuals with chronic illness. Their mission is to help individuals and families achieve their best level of well-being by providing compassionate, coordinated, innovative care in their homes and communities. Transportation is often a challenge for their clients because their homes are located far from healthcare facilities, and most of them don't own a car and could not afford to pay for a taxi service. As a result, many do not get to visit a physician until it's too late.

VNACJ decided to partner with EZ Ride and launch a pilot transportation program. The goal is to provide reliable transportation for their clients, which would help them access healthcare services. Thanks to a grant from New Jersey Health Initiatives, EZ Ride will set up a dedicated transportation account for VNACJ clients. VNACJ representatives will contact EZ Ride and arrange transportation for groups or individuals in need of transportation.

For more please contact:

Barbara Friedman
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Every Wednesday, the Montclair Senior Bus provides transportation for grocery shopping to Shoprite in Bloomfield



Montclair Township Approves Continued Funding For Senior Bus Service

In February 2017, EZ Ride took over the township's senior transportation service. Since then, the door-to-door, reservation-based service has been providing, on average, 700 passenger trips per month. Service is available free of charge for all residents 55 and older, including individuals with disabilities.

The Montclair Township Senior Bus operates five days a week. With our shuttle, you can find something for everyone throughout the week. Trips are provided to access social activities, cultural arts/events, classes, exercise groups, lectures, shopping and doctor appointments.

"I am happy to have extended our contract with EZ Ride because our partnership with them has ensured that the Montclair Senior Bus runs smoothly. And I also know we will receive the data we need

to make informed decisions, and I can rely on them to provide us with expert feedback as well," said Katie York, Director of Senior Services/Lifelong Montclair.

Many senior members are pleased with the service. "Other than much-appreciated availability of the service itself, the "gem" of the service had been the drivers - reliable, courteous, and always on-time," said Augusta Ellen Madyun.

If your town is interested in learning more the senior shuttle program, please contact:

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Commuter Information...



Port Authority, Cashless Tolling To Cancel GWB's Carpool Discount

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey signaled it would go ahead with eliminating the carpool discount in January as it expands cashless tolling technology.

For years, commuters have utilized the carpool discount so they would only pay \$6.50 at the George Washington Bridge rather than the \$15 standard rate. The Port Authority announced in late September that it wanted to cancel the discount.

With the implementation of cashless tolling, officials contend, the discount would not work because toll workers would not be physically present to count how many occupants are in the car.

The cashless tolling system is being installed at the George Washington Bridge and the Lincoln and Holland tunnels, for a \$240 million price tag. Under the new system, the toll booths would be replaced by mounted cameras which will take a picture of the license plate and either send the bill to the registered owner or deduct the funds from an E-ZPass account, if the owner has one.

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New Jersey Employers Must Offer Employees Pre-Tax Commuter Benefits

Governor Phil Murphy recently signed a bill into law requiring New Jersey employers with at least 20 employees to offer a pre-tax transportation fringe benefit to employees (who are not currently in a collective bargaining agreement) beginning March 1, 2020.

The Federal Government allows employees to set aside \$265 per month of pre-tax wages, which can be used for your mass transit commuting costs and parking while reducing your federal taxable income. That means you could save up to \$900/year by not paying federal income tax on that salary. If you need to pay for parking to make your transit connection, the parking fees can be funded with pre-tax dollars up to an additional \$265 per month.

To take advantage of these tax savings, your employer needs to opt-in to either

the NJ TRANSIT Bulk Sales program or one of the programs offered by a third-party provider, like TransitChek by WageWorks. In addition to these programs, payroll service companies like ADP, offer a transit pre-tax benefit option. A common name for the benefit is "commuter tax benefit."

Commuter tax benefits can be structured as an employee-funded tax-free payroll deduction, as an employer-funded benefit, or employer and employee can share the costs. The benefit can be delivered in the form of transit provider-specific passes or universally accepted vouchers and debit cards.

To help you through the process and provide the information, please contact:

NJ TRANSIT Bulk Sales Program
(973) 491-7288.

Public Transportation Update...



AMERICAN DREAM™

NJ TRANSIT Approves Permanent Expansion of Bus Service to American Dream

Since October 25, American Dream opening day, many people have been wondering about parking and transportation options. Parking at American Dream for less than 30 minutes is free, but after that fees start at \$3 for up to three hours and go up from there. Parking for over 8 hours or all day is \$24. But if MetLife Stadium is hosting an event, such as a concert or a Giants or Jets game, parking will automatically cost \$30. While many visitors expect to drive, others may want to use public transit options.

NJ TRANSIT has implemented the following bus service:

- Bus No. 355 which operates daily express service from PABT to the American Dream every 30 minutes.
- Bus No. 356 which operates daily express service from Secaucus Junction to American Dream every 30 minutes.

To utilize Bus No. 356 express bus service from Secaucus Junction customers may travel on any rail line that serves Secaucus Junction or any of the five NJ TRANSIT bus routes that serve Secaucus Junction

and transfer to Route No. 356 express bus for direct service to American Dream. They are:

- Bus No. 2, Journal Square to Secaucus
- Bus No. 78, Newark to Secaucus
- Bus No. 124, PABT to Secaucus-Harmon Cove
- Bus No. 129, PABT to Secaucus
- Bus No. 329, Harmon Cove to Secaucus

Local bus routes which have expanded their operating hours and include stops at American Dream include:

- Bus No. 85, which operates from Hoboken/Union City to Secaucus;
- Bus No. 703, which operates from Paterson/Passaic to East Rutherford;
- Bus No. 772, which operates from Hackensack to the Meadowlands

For more information about bus and train schedules, please contact:

Michael Jensen
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mjensen@ezride.org

RIDER SPOTLIGHT



Geraldine
Member since October 2017

Geraldine and her husband William, have been married for 59 years. Originally from Brooklyn, they moved to Staten Island to raise their family. They moved to New Jersey to be closer to their son and his family. Geraldine and William have five beautiful grandchildren. She enjoys her relationships with them because they always keep her laughing.

Living in New Jersey does not come without challenges. Things got much more comfortable when they joined the *Ryde4Life* program about a year ago. When William fell ill, it became difficult to get him to his doctor's appointments.

Geraldine exclaimed, "Thank goodness *Ryde4Life* is around to get us back and forth when there is not any other option!" Now, they can enjoy spontaneous shopping trips. Geraldine stated that the drivers are all amiable and helpful. She spreads the word about *Ryde4Life* whenever she can.

For more information about *Ryde4Life* program, please call:

(866) 208-1307, Option 4
www.Ryde4Life.org

The Transporter, is a quarterly newsletter about transportation information in our region and is published by Meadowlands Transportation Brokerage Corporation d/b/a EZ Ride. Please call Kinga Skora at (201) 939-4242 ext. 131 with comments, corrections or suggestions.

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Comments? Suggestions?

Feel free to forward
your thoughts on
improving the
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A New Year's Resolution to Stop Idling and Reduce Our Carbon Footprint

January is the time to make plans and set goals for the coming year. Many people make resolutions to get more exercise and eat healthier foods, and these are two healthy practices.

Our Bike & Pedestrian Team works with more than 200 communities during the year to promote walking and biking. This year the team decided to talk about idling, the impact on kids, and the importance of reducing the amount of idling that happens around schools at drop off and pick up. Idling is when the engine in a vehicle is running, but the vehicle is not moving. An idling car produces 20 times more pollution than a car driving 30 mph and kids breathe 50% more air pollution per pound of body weight than adults and are more severely affected because their lungs are still growing. The #1 chronic disease for kids is asthma, and idling and vehicle emissions make asthma worse.

According to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, "excessive idling causes an unnecessary release of air contaminants into the air in NJ,

including fine particulates and air toxins. Every year, hundreds of New Jerseyans die prematurely from exposure to diesel exhaust and fine particle pollution and may cause more deaths in NJ than homicides and car crashes combined". As a result, NJ law prohibits idling for more than three minutes, and drivers face a \$250 fine for the first offense, \$500 for a second offense and \$1,000 for the third and subsequent violations. The exceptions are for vehicles in traffic, emergency vehicles providing service, and busses discharging or picking up passengers (15-minute idling limit).

For more information, visit:

www.StopTheSoot.org.

Complaints about idling vehicles can be made to the DEP's 24-hour toll-free hotline at:

1-877-WARN DEP

(1-877-927-6337)

Freebies gallery...

Pedestrian & Driver Safety Tip Cards



Street Smart NJ is a public education campaign launched by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) to raise awareness about pedestrian and motorist laws and reduce crashes and fatalities. In partnership with the NJTPA, EZ Ride offers free informative safety tip cards.

Key safety messages are:

- Heads Up, Phones Down
- We Look Before Crossing
- We Stop for Pedestrians
- We Use Crosswalks
- We Slow Down for Safety
- We Wait for the Walk Signal

To get your FREE safety tip cards, please contact:

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