

# Vantage Point

March - April 2013

## Vanpool Proposals

On Monday night, the Pierce Transit Board of Commissioners adopted two resolutions:

1. Increase vanpool fares
2. Recover Tacoma Narrows Bridge tolls for vanpools crossing the bridge

**The third proposal regarding service area was tabled for further discussion.**

### FARES

Effective May 1, 2013, vanpool fares will increase. We will post the new fares on our website in mid-April.

### TOLLS

Effective May 1, 2013, Pierce Transit will recover Tacoma Narrows Bridge tolls from vanpool groups that travel on the bridge. Monthly toll fees per vanpool will be:

Work week	Flat monthly fee
4 day	\$68
5 day	\$80
6 day	\$100
7 day	\$116
9/80	\$76

Note: Tolls will be collected in advance (like fares). We strongly recommend that groups evenly split the toll fee among all vanpool participants. Tolls accrued during personal use of the van will continue to be collected after the fact.

### SERVICE AREA

The Board will further discuss the vanpool service area policy at their March 29 work session. We expect to know more in early April, and will communicate updates as they become available.

If you have questions about the resolutions regarding fares and bridge tolls, or about possible service area changes, please contact your Pierce Transit vanpool coordinator.



**Vantage Point** is a publication of Pierce Transit.

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*Please consider the environment before printing this newsletter.*

# COMMUTING NEWS

## Transit Ridership Up

A recent article in *USA Today* states that "ridership on buses, subways and other modes of public transportation in the USA rose 1.5% to 10.5 billion trips" in 2012, the highest annual total since 2008, according to a new report.

APTA president and CEO Michael Melaniphy reports that although Superstorm Sandy and its aftermath slowed ridership on some of the nation's largest transit systems, at least 16 systems reported record ridership in 2012. Melaniphy says the increase in transit ridership was partly driven by high, unstable gas prices and the nation's changing demographics.

"In the last 18 months or so, we've seen [gasoline] prices be very volatile," he says. "When you can't count on your transportation costs being consistent day over day, week over week, that's really hard on the budget."

A 2012 report by the National Conference of State Legislatures said that "affordability likely plays a role" in the growth of transit, noting "estimates are that an individual can save more than \$10,000 a year by riding public transit instead of driving."

That report also noted the growing popularity of public transportation, especially among Baby Boomers, empty-nesters and Millennials, who total about 150 million people.

"We expect we're going to continue to have good ridership," Melaniphy says. "More than 80% of transit systems have cut services, raised fares or considered it. Think about what ridership numbers would look like if they didn't have to cut back."

*Adapted from an article in USA Today by Larry Copeland.*

## Travel Advisory

If you're planning to travel on SR 520 this weekend, plan ahead...that's the word from WSDOT.

Crews will close both directions of SR 520 and all connected ramps between Montlake Boulevard in Seattle and I-405 in Bellevue from 11 p.m. Friday, March 15, to 5 a.m. Monday, March 18. Drivers will need to take I-90 or find alternate routes around Lake Washington.

For more info, visit [WSDOT - 2013 - Looking for luck St. Patrick's weekend? Drivers will find it on alternate routes as SR 520 closes](#)

## Pierce Trips Commute Incentives

Did you know...by vanpooling, you are not only saving gas money, wear and tear on your personal vehicle, and helping the environment...you are also eligible for some really great incentives!

If you commute to a worksite in Pierce County, drop everything NOW and register for Relax Rewards on [Pierce Trips](#)! Track your commute trips on Pierce Trips' online Commute Calendar and your name could be drawn during the quarterly incentive drawing!

Use a smart commute option for at least 24 days during a quarter, and here's what registered Relax Rewards participants could win...

Prize Level	Prize	Days Needed to Enter
Dream	\$250 gift card (1 winner)	48+
Dream	\$100 gift card (5 winners)	48+
Wish	\$50 gift card (10 winners)	36-47
Whimsy	\$25 gift card (20 winners)	24-35

Tracking your trips will also help you meet your personal commute goals, like saving money for a vacation, living a healthier lifestyle, or doing your part for a cleaner planet. What's *your* commute goal?

Pierce Trips is a cooperative program sponsored by the City of Tacoma, Pierce County, and Pierce Transit.



# VANPOOL ROCKS



## VANPOOL

**24/7 Emergency**  
253.381.3762

**Direct Line**  
253.983.3377  
7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

**Vanpool Fax**  
253.984.8227

[Vanpool@piercetransit.org](mailto:Vanpool@piercetransit.org)

## RIDESHARE

**1.888.814.1300**  
[RideshareOnline.com](http://RideshareOnline.com)

## PIERCE TRANSIT

**Customer Services**  
253.581.8000

**Toll Free**  
1.800.562.8109

**TDD Customer Service**  
253.582.7951

[Piercetransit.org](http://Piercetransit.org)

## Take Our Kids to Work

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day is Thursday, April 25.

Just a friendly reminder that Pierce Transit policy does not allow anyone under the age of 18 to ride in the van during the regular commute.

If your child is participating in the Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work day, please plan to drive your personal vehicle, or consider carpooling.

For more information, visit <http://www.daughtersandsonstowork.org>.



## BLAST From the Past!



Dig way back in your memory banks... Can you remember what year the above gas prices were in effect? (Big Hint: It wasn't last year!) Answer below. And yes...today's prices are about 450 percent higher than those pictured at left.

Also, note the "Free Glass with Fill Up" promotion. Anyone out there still got an Exxon "gas glass"? It might be worth some money!

ANSWER 1971

## Spring Clean Your Machine

Spring is here and it's time for spring cleaning! Why not give your vanpool van the full meal deal while you're at it? It's as easy as 1-2-3!

1. Remove personal belongings.
2. Clean out door pockets and wipe down the dash.
3. Use the Voyager card to get a \$10 wash and vac.

Voilà! One sparkling machine, ready for a safe, clean commute.