



Commuter CHRONICLE



News for Smart Commuters

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Inside This Issue:

*VPSI Delivers
5,000th Vanpool*

Park Smart

*Vanpools the
Future at APG*

*MichiVan Reaches
New Milestone*

*A Million Miles at
106 MPG*

*Dona Wayman
Recognized*

*Someday, you too
Will Retire*

*Transportation News
That Moves You*

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VPSI Delivers 5,000th Commuter Vanpool!

UCI's 21st vanpool is 5000th in VPSI's national fleet

VPSI has reached an impressive milestone by adding the 5,000th van to its fleet, with the delivery of a new 2009 Dodge Grand Caravan to commuters working at the University of California – Irvine.

“Vanpooling has long been part of UCI’s sustainable transportation efforts. The addition of this vehicle is the 21st in our fleet,” said University of California, Irvine’s Employee Transportation Coordinator Mike Davis. “The recent spike in gas prices and on-going changes in the environment are making clear to people the financial and environmental toll of single-passenger commuting. Vanpooling interest is increasing because it offers a personal financial benefit and provides a way to make a positive impact on the vexing problem of poor air quality in Southern California.”

In addition to providing a less expensive mode of travel for commuters – a gallon of gas averages 40¢ for each vanpool participant - a fleet of 5,000 vans averaging eight passengers could annually eliminate nearly 900 million



UCI's Employee Transportation Coordinator Mike Davis presents the Key to the 5,000th Vanpool to vanpool participant Karen Robinson, with support from UCI cheerleaders and Peter the Anteater

commuter miles, conserve more than 35 million gallons of fuel, save commuters more than \$115 million dollars in fuel cost and reduce CO² emissions by more than 360,000 tons.

“We are extremely proud to have reached a significant milestone of providing and managing 5,000 vans for commuters throughout the United States,” said Jeff Henning, VPSI’s President and CEO. “Vanpools reduce the cost of transportation for employees, limit congestion on the highways and positively impact the environment by eliminating a significant number of vehicles from the roads. This is a winning situation for everyone.”

VPSI, started in 1977 by Chrysler Corp. for the benefit of its employees, has grown to serve commuters throughout the country and in the Netherlands. Starting this year with 3,925 vans in service, commuter demand has driven a greater than 27% increase to reach the 5,000 vehicle threshold.



UCI vanpoolers and other VIPs, including Tustin Mayor/OCTA board member Jerry Amante; Irvine Mayor Beth Krom; Event speaker/vanpool driver David McCafferty; and Kathryn Higgins, SCAQMD

Park Smart - In a Safe, Secure and Approved Spot

By Andy Bawden

It's early Monday morning. Your vanpool group arrives at the lot where you left the van over the weekend, only to discover all the tires have been stolen.

It's going to be a long day.

VPSI has recently experienced an alarming number of claims for malicious mischief, vandalism and theft. Vans have been found badly damaged and in some cases were set on fire! Among stolen items were catalytic converters, gas, tires, batteries, windshield wipers - even personal belongings.

Most of these incidents took place at *Park and Ride* lots and other areas where the vans were left overnight or over a weekend/holiday.

When asked, VPSI may provide written approval to leave a van parked overnight at a place other than the driver or vanpool participant's residence.

Even if this approval is provided, the van should not be parked in any lot for extended periods, such as weekends or holidays. It should be parked at a residence.

Vans should be parked in well

lighted and patrolled lots, preferably where camera surveillance is available. Many 24 hour shopping areas will provide parking permission. Local police or sheriff authorities can also be consulted.

Where you park your van may jeopardize the safety of the van and compromise its ability to be driven. Please help us keep your van safe, secure and running by parking in a smart spot.

Andy Bawden is the Loss Prevention and Vanpool Safety Manager at VPSI. He conducts driver safety meetings throughout the country for VPSI customers.

Vanpools could become look of the future at APG

By Yvonne Johnson, APG News

Other communities have been doing it for years and now Aberdeen Proving Ground has joined the timely movement to conserve gas and energy by vanpooling.

The first Vanpool on APG began in July and organizers are hoping more will follow.

The program allows for a monthly compensation of up to \$115 for those willing to park their cars and ride in a van with other co-workers.

Paul Josephson, an environmental engineer with the US Army Environmental Command, is the Aberdeen Proving Ground liaison for APG employees looking to vanpool. Josephson said the advantages are both environmental and financial. Federal employees, including active duty military and some non-appropriated fund personnel can qualify for the federal subsidy," he said. "A lot of people discover that it pays for the vanpool cost."

"There are ten or twenty vanpools in the DC area alone and an air force base out in Utah has forty," Josephson continued. "It's definitely something that can work out for folks. It's just a matter of getting the information out to them."



Sgt. 1st Class Wayne Parker, left, Spc. Daniel Ramos, center, and Sgt. Mark Facticeau, right, of the Maryland Army National Guard, pose at their Weide Airfield work site with the VPSI van they and three others commute to and from work in under the state and federally funded vanpool program.

Patricia Fielder is the community resources coordinator with the Harford County Department of Community Services, Community Development Division located in Bel Air. Fielder said the office is making a "concerted effort" to inform commuters of their options in light of rising gas prices, ongoing APG construction and the anticipated influx of thousands of more workers due to baser realignment and closure moves.

She said that software identifies applicants and matches those with compatible destinations and work schedules.

"We don't run the program, we facilitate, coordinate and keep track of users," Fielder said. "You have to have a minimum of six persons to start the

pool. We contact VPSI, they come to meet with the group and we facilitate by helping them select a coordinator, driver, treasurer and meeting times. We don't manage the group."

"This is a grant-funded program from the federal and state governments," she said. "And the big plus is there's no out-of-pocket expense for the government."

APG's first vanpool

A group of Maryland Army National Guard workers from the Edgewood Area's Weide Airfield have formed the first vanpool on Aberdeen Proving Ground. Sgt. 1st Class Wayne Parker, an avionics mechanic, Sgt. Mark Facticeau, shop supervisor and Spc. Daniel Ramos, an electrical mechanic are three members of the six person vanpool group.

They have a nine-passenger van in which they travel to work and back home to Havre de Grace daily.

Parker said he became interested in the program after viewing an ad and then brought the idea up at a section meeting.

"I used to drive thirty-five miles one-way and now it's down to nine

**See APG Vanpools,
Continued on Page 3**

MichiVan Reaches New Milestone

MDOT and MichiVan Launch 300th Vanpool in Michigan

A milestone in Michigan vanpool history was reached in October when the 300th MichiVan commuter vanpool was delivered to employees at the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center in Detroit. MichiVan, the statewide vanpool program operated by VPSI, is managed through a contract with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). The program started in 1980.

"One of the best values for your money is riding in a vanpool," said State Transportation Director Kirk T.



Steuale. "Vanpooling with MichiVan is a cost-effective alternative for commuters who enjoy the convenience of sharing a ride to work. The 2,224 people served by commuter vans each day means there are fewer vehicles on Michigan roads. This is good for the environment and good for the pocketbook."

"As a Michigan-based company and the nation's largest vanpool provider, we are extremely proud to work with MDOT to provide vanpool services for commuters through the MichiVan program," said Jon Martz, VPSI's Vice President of Government Relations. "Vanpooling is not only the safest mode of public transportation, but it also reduces commuting costs for employees, limits congestion on our roads, and positively impacts our environment."

Each month in Michigan, vanpooling saves approximately 152,000 gallons of fuel, reduces about 1,500 tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and takes 40,430 vehicles off the road.

A Million Miles at 106 MPG

By Scott Solberg

It could be a riddle: How can a van go a 1,000,000 miles in 64 months and average 106 miles per gallon? Answer: VPSI!

On or around October 20 my vanpool will celebrate traveling a million commuter miles. Since July of 2003, we've been making the daily 100-mile round trip from Brighton, MI to the Compuware building in downtown Detroit. The million miles are commuter miles, obtained by multiplying the number of actual riders per day by 100. We have ten riders in the van, full capacity, with an average of seven riders per day. When gas mileage is computed using commuter miles, the

result is a whopping 106 MPG!

I know I've saved myself at least one new car by being in a vanpool. Without the van, I would have driven my own car nearly 150,000 miles in the past five years. In September 2008, I saved almost \$850 in that month alone (the difference between the vanpool cost and the cost of driving my personal car daily).

The average monthly savings for our van riders over the past 64 months has been close to \$550 each, for a total savings of over \$330,000 for our riders. I definitely have other things to spend that money on.

The answer for me is most certainly VPSI.

APG Vanpools (cont.)

miles one-way to the park and ride," Parker said.

Facteau, who lives even closer to the *Park and Ride* where the group meets, said his commute is down to three miles one-way.

"I expect to save gas and have more money in my pocket," Facteau said. "I have a new truck and vanpooling will save on wear and tear. Plus, knowing you have to go as a group is more incentive to get up and get moving."

Facteau estimated that he saved about \$200 on gas in just the first week.

Ramos said that he travels only two miles to the *Park and Ride* and that with a five year-old car and a new baby girl he's all about saving money.

"I have more money to spend on my family," he said. "Now I just take a nap and relax on my way to work."

Capt. Sherrill, the group's supervisor said the MDARNG encourages group travel arrangements like vanpooling.

"Having civilian technicians, you can't give them a raise and with gas prices so high it really lightens the load for them," he said.

"I'm just surprised we're the first ones to do it," Parker added.

This story originally ran in the August 7, 2008 issue of APG News. Reprinted with permission.



Front row, left to right: Clark Hunter, Cindy Finley, Keri Knedgen, Christine DaPra, Victor Smith. Back row, left to right: Greg Stratton, Matt Schick, Greg Pierce, Scott Solberg

Dona Wayman Recognized

Dona Wayman of our Brevard County Florida Office recently received an Award from David Cooke, President/CEO, and Emily Rose, Senior Manager, Marketing & Business Development, of Bridges BTC, Inc.



Bridges is a community based organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing informed choices for children and adults with disabilities.

The award was presented to Dona at their 2008 Casino Night and Fund Raiser where she was recognized for her *Dedicated to Service* support of Bridges' clients and staff members.

Bridges joined the Brevard Vanpool Program in 1986 as the Association for

Someday you too will retire!

By Don Allen

I was a vanpool driver for some 17 years. It was an unforgettable experience. I had the opportunity to meet many new and fascinating people. There was never a dull moment. Many of my riders were with me for ten years or more. My ace backup driver was with me from day one until I retired. Upon my retirement, one of my backup drivers assumed the role of primary driver. So the vanpool lives on. I will really miss those vanpool folks, but there comes a time when retirement calls.

The service I received was top notch from beginning to end. Dona

Wayman and George Gaudy at VPSI were more than helpful. I thank them for the delightful opportunity of being able to utilize VPSI. During my tenure, there was never a single moment when they were not able to be of assistance.

Thanks guys!



Don Allen and VPSI's George Gaudy

Retarded Citizens (ARC), and currently is VPSI's customer in Brevard County with ten vans.

The Brevard Vanpool Program supports Bridges' special transportation

requirements by supplying six fifteen-passenger vans, two wheelchair lift equipped paratransit vehicles, one high top, transit entry van, and one seven passenger mini-van.

Transportation News That Moves You

New website promotes military ridesharing

Jen McGillis, a former Marine, speaking about MilitaryRideShare.com, said, "The concept for this site came to me each time I would hop on the highway for a long weekend and I would see so many vehicles with DoD stickers getting on the highway too."

McGillis thought, "How many of these people are heading in the same direction I am and why isn't there a forum for us to find each other and ride together?"

Now, ten years later that thought is a reality with MilitaryRideShare.com. McGillis hopes that active duty members will be able to utilize this site to find other military members who are going in the same direction, ride together, and save some green. "This is a great morale booster, especially around the

Holidays when everyone wants to be with those they love."

McGillis has received many ideas from these men and women as to what they would like to see on this site. Some of those include expanding the ride sharing opportunities to retired military members, offering a daily commuting link on the page, and opening up the use of the site to dependent family members. Some of these ideas we adopted right away (retired and dependent family members using the site) and some we are still working out the details (daily commuting) but anticipate seeing come to fruition in the near future.

www.militaryrideshare.com

Helping Marines, Sailors, Airmen, and Soldiers ride home together and save some green.



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Be sure to check out VPSI's blog, Pooling Resources, at www.pooling-resources.com