

WCCE

WASHINGTON COUNTY
COMMUTER EXPRESS

THE WCCE CONNECTION

April 2006



RIDER SURVEY RESULTS

Thank you to everyone who completed a rider survey. The winner of the drawing for a strip of WCCE tickets was Patricia Andresek. Congratulations Pat!

After reviewing the results of the surveys, a general observation can be stated that the majority of the WCCE riders drive (87%) themselves to the park and rides, use the transit service to commute to work (88%) and use the discounted (89%) WCCE tickets to pay for the service. Over 50% have a household income in excess of \$65,000, have a bachelor degree and use the service on a daily basis (66%). Forty four percent of the riders have been using the WCCE between 6 months to 2 years, and 26% started using it less than 6 months ago, so we have a lot of new riders. We also have many long-time faithful riders with 8% riding from 4 to 7 years. Overall, the riders are very satisfied with the service; 50% rate it excellent and 47% rate it good. Ninety-seven percent have recommended the WCCE service to others; they felt this is a great service and that the drivers are very courteous.

Some suggestions include the need for more park and rides (see article below) and the need to improve the dispatch system. When the afternoon buses are running late, riders want to be able to obtain accurate information on the timing of the bus. In addition, 37% of you would like to see a monthly pass, and 40% would like to have a frequent rider program implemented. We are definitely considering all your suggestions and appreciate your input.

PARK AND RIDES UPDATES

Since the Washington County Commuter Express (WCCE) transit program began in 1999, the southbound usage has grown beyond the state and county expectations. The Department of Transportation did not anticipate the number of individuals commuting from Washington County to Milwaukee County, and therefore they did not plan for adequate park and rides. The WCCE is grateful to all the private companies/individuals who have allowed our riders to use their parking lots to park their vehicles. Many of you are new riders since our last newsletter and are not aware that Washington County has been working hard to have new park and rides established and built. Unfortunately, it is a slow process..

There are several park and rides in the planning process. Listed below are some of the details:

Richfield Area Park and Ride

In spring of 2005, Washington County submitted a grant to the federal government for funding to build a park and ride in Richfield, south of Pioneer Plaza. In January, Washington County received notice that they will be the recipient of a Congestion, Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAC) grant. This grant will provide funding for a park and ride near the US HWY 41/145 interchange. Once the County has the signed agreement, they can move forward in developing the Richfield area park and ride project. Projects are typically done in three phases. The first phase will be to design

Continue on page 2

Points of Interest

- Rider Survey Results
- Park and Ride Update
- Commuter Value Certificate
- Wisconsin Ave. Const.

WCCE

W201N13900 Fond du Lac
Richfield, WI 53076
262-677-3445 or
1-888-675-WCCE (9223)

Washington County Taxi Service

1-800-925-9590

Comments:

info@RideWCCE.com
414-640-5165

Website:

www.RideWCCE.com



WASHINGTON COUNTY
WISCONSIN

the park & ride. The second will be to buy real estate on which the project will be built. The third will be to "move dirt" and start building the park & ride. On average, IT TAKES 10-12 MONTHS TO COMPLETE EACH PHASE...but projects can move ahead of schedule. We should have the agreement very soon, so we are looking at a completed project sometime in 2007.

Lannon Road Park and Ride

When the Richfield park and ride closed, many riders had to relocate their parking to either the Lannon Road Park and Ride or the Washington County Fair Park, and we are very grateful to you. We do realize what a stress this has put on the Lannon Road park and ride and that it is full. We have taken pictures of the lot and submitted them to the DOT and state legislators. The DOT is currently working on obtaining a temporary lot to help alleviate the parking situation at Lannon until the Richfield lot can be built. You will be informed of the new location once it has been secured.

West Bend Area Park and Ride

Another park and ride is scheduled to be built in West Bend. The pending

park and ride location is at HWY 45 and Paradise Road, west of the Home Depot. The Department of Transportation presented to the City of West Bend, a plan to include a transportation center at the park and ride. The DOT is now in the process of sending out a Request for Proposal (RFP) to see if a developer is interested in building the park and ride, along with some businesses. This process takes time to make sure it is done fairly. We will keep you up to date on the progress of this park and ride. In the meantime we have contacted area businesses regarding possible park and ride locations.

HWY 60/41 Park and Ride

There is a strong possibility a park and ride will be built at the HWY 60/41 interchange. However, this will not happen until the widening of HWY 60 in about ten years. The DOT would add a park and ride to the interchange project. For riders who live in that area, watch the local paper for community meetings announcements where you can attend and voice your support of a park and ride in that area.

State Fair Boarding Locations

The WCCE State Fair route will board at alternative locations than the normal routes to avoid additional stress on the already full lots. The boarding locations will include Giggles parking lot in Germantown and the K-Mart location in West Bend.

We appreciate your patience as we work at expanding the park and ride locations. You can show your support for the park and rides by contacting your local, county and state legislators. Check out the websites listed below to find out where to contact your representatives:

<http://www.ci.west-bend.wi.us/>

Click on common council

<http://www.co.washington.wi.us/washington/home.jsp>

Click on County Supervisors

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/assembly/assembly.html>

You need to let them know how important the park and rides are to you, the community and the transit program. Who knows, it might help move the process along faster. If you need information on who to contact, emails us at info@ridewcce.com.

EMERGENCY RIDE HOME

Since the beginning of the WCCE Transit program, the Department of Transportation and Washington County have offered riders a way home in case of emergency through the "Emergency Ride Home" program. The program will provide transportation to a WCCE commuter ONLY in case of an emergency. For example, illness at work or illness of a family member.

WCCE riders never have to worry about getting home from work during the day if a personal emergency arises

If you have an emergency and need a ride back to Washington County, you should:

- 1) Call the Washington County Taxi Service at 1-800-925-9590.
- 2) Identify yourself as a WCCE commuter and request an emergency ride.
- 3) Once the taxi vehicle has arrived to provide you transportation, you will be requested to fill out a form .

The ER Program is provided strictly to WCCE commuters only. If the program privileges are abused, the program will be restricted or eliminated. We want our commuters to know that they will never have to worry about getting home.



Aren't you glad you are riding the WCCE!





COMMUTER CHAT

In the past we have done stories about the riders, but this time we decided to talk about one of your favorite drivers. We'd like to introduce you to Jack who drives the #3, #11 and #21 bus for the WCCE. Some of you know him well and gave him great comments on the rider surveys.

Jack has been driving for 6 years having come out of retirement and after driving semi trucks for a while. He has a son and 2 young granddaughters who enjoy visiting him at his hobby farm. In his spare time, Jack keeps busy there with a large garden, chickens, turkeys, ducks and beef cows. You'd never guess this bus driver is also a farmer because he always wears a shirt and tie when on the job. He thinks that while a driver's appearance is an important aspect of the job, ensuring the safety and comfort of the passengers is most important. Jack believes his job is to make the passengers happy – after all, without them, he wouldn't have a job! He believes being punctual is so im-

portant that he waits downtown at the beginning of his PM route so the first pick up is always on time.

The riders appreciate Jack and show it by sharing their fun holiday bus celebrations and treats. During a recent extended illness, he received cards and phone calls from many of his riders. He takes care of them and they return the favor.

When asked what he liked best about the job, without hesitation, Jack responded, "the people!" He also listed Riteway's good equipment and mechanics as another reason it's a good company for which to work. His least favorite part of the job would be when the winter weather makes driving a challenge.

Next time you see Jack, say thanks!

If you have a story you would like to share or a question, email us at: info@RideWCCE.com or call 414-640-5165.

WISCONSIN AVE CONSTRUCTION

We were just informed about the "streetscaping" construction along Wisconsin Avenue. Currently, the City of Milwaukee is working on Wisconsin Ave. from Van Buren St. and going all the east. We will not be able to stop at Cass and Wisconsin for the next month.

The next phase of the construction will begin in mid-April to extend east from Milwaukee Street. We are still getting the details and will notify you how this will affect the stops along Wisconsin Ave. Overall, the "streetscaping" construction will continue through November. We appreciate your patience as we drive through the City of Milwaukee's beautification process.

NOTE:

Along with the drivers, you, the riders are also our eyes and ears. Sometimes the individuals in charge of a project don't realize all the parties that will be affected by the project. We appreciate your phone calls when you see something out of the norm or are aware of an activity that you feel would affect the

COMMUTER VALUE CERTIFICATE

Many commuters ask about the Commuter Value Certificate and how they can obtain one. Let us explain:

The Commuter Value Certificate program is administered by Milwaukee County Transit to Milwaukee-based employers. It enables employers to offer a no-charge and tax-free transit benefit to their employees. Employers purchase Commuter Value Certificates from Milwaukee County Transit after signing a Letter of Agreement which details their responsibilities while participating in the program. Employers then provide the Commuter Value Certificate to their employees.

The Washington County Commuter Express does accept the Milwaukee County Transit System Commuter Value Certificate. We do not accept the Commuter Value Pass.

REDEMPTION OF THE COMMUTER VALUE CERTIFICATE:

WCCE ticket outlets are authorized to accept the Commuter Value Certificates in exchange only for WCCE ticket strips. The Commuter Value Certificate has an exchange value of \$14, but has no actual cash value, and cannot be used for cash refund, exchange, or cash-back transactions.

There is no cash refund or change for the Commuter Value Certificates. The certificates are accepted only in exchange for WCCE Ticket strips. For example, a WCCE ticket strip sells for \$20 each. A commuter may redeem two \$14 Commuter Value Certificates for one \$20 WCCE ticket strip. The Commuter Value Certificates will be accepted, but no cash refund or change will be given in return. Or, the com-

muter may redeem one \$14 Commuter Value Certificate and pay an additional \$6 cash for one \$20 WCCE ticket strip.

The reverse side of the Commuter Value Certificate should be completed by the commuter before redeeming, including the commuter's name, address, and telephone number.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you would like your employer to find out more about the effectiveness of Commuter Benefits, the National Transit Authority is offering a FREE phone conference on **April 13** regarding this tax benefit.. See the flyer on page 4 of this newsletter. Your employer must register A.S.A.P. to receive the toll-free number to call.