

WCCE

WASHINGTON COUNTY
COMMUTER EXPRESS

THE WCCE CONNECTION



February 2010

KEEPING CONNECTED

With all the technology available to us, there are many ways you can stay connected to the WCCE transit program. This year's winter season started out with gusto with the WCCE cancelling service on December 9th. The decision to cancel was made early because of terrible road conditions in West Bend and Washington County. Many riders were informed through our text messaging system. If you are not signed up to receive text alerts, we encourage you to do so.

Text Alerts is an example of how the Washington County Commuter Express is using technology to help improve communication by providing riders with real-time information about service issues that could impact their commute. This free service (standard carrier rates apply) will provide you with helpful information and may alleviate concerns if a delay or deviation to the schedule is anticipated. If a particular route is experiencing a significant delay, while you are encouraged to still be at your pick-up location at the scheduled time, this notification will make you aware that your final arrival time could be affected.

Simply go to www.ridewcce.com and click on *WCCE passenger alerts*. Once signed up, you will receive a confirmation text message. Please be aware that due to carrier delivery restrictions or other network issues, messages may take up to 15 minutes to arrive.

You can also keep informed through an email blast. Just send an email to info@ridewcce.com and let us know that you want to be on the email list to receive updates. We do not give out your email addresses and only use them to inform you of updates or changes in the service. You may want to consider providing both a work and home email address.

INCLEMENT WEATHER-GETTING YOU BACK HOME

We have had our share of snow this year and we thank you for your patience as we get you home safely through the traffic and inclement weather. We want to make sure you know that if the WCCE takes you southbound to work or school, we will bring you back to Washington County. We would never cancel an afternoon route if we have riders in Milwaukee. Buses may run late due to traffic and weather conditions and we cannot give you exact times the bus will arrive. The info@ridewcce.com email is not checked continuously so please call 1.888.675.WCCE (9223) if you need immediate assistance. Text alerts will be sent, however, some cell phone carriers do not send the messages on a timely basis.

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WCCE

W201N13900 Fond du Lac
Richfield, WI 53076

262-677-3445 or
1-888-675-WCCE (9223)

**Washington County
Shared Ride Service**
1-888-285-TAXI (8294)

Comments:
info@RideWCCE.com

Website:
www.RideWCCE.com



WASHINGTON COUNTY
WISCONSIN

COMMUTER CHAT

The WCCE is a public transit service provided for the residents of Washington County. It began just over ten years ago and throughout those years, the individuals riding it and the drivers have become part of a special commuter community. You spend a lot of time with your fellow commuters and drivers and have gotten to know many of them. This month our Commuter Chat is actually a *Driver Chat*...

Meet Don who has been with Riteway Bus Co. for nearly 3 years and drives the #4 and #23 WCCE routes. Before driving coach, Don was employed as a military aircraft maintenance technician at the Wisconsin Air National Guard 128th Air Refueling Wing based at Gen. Mitchell International Airport. He retired from there after 30 years.

Don says the benefits of driving are many, but what he finds most rewarding is interacting with the public and a sense of responsibility for the safety and comfort of

his passengers. When asked what he likes best about being a WCCE driver his reply was "the really nice, friendly passengers on my routes that I've come to know." Additionally, Don says he is part of a great group of coworkers including fellow drivers, office staff, cleaning crew and he especially mentioned the two mechanics, Romey and Erv. Don says these are the two that keep the coaches in top-notch condition and it is a pleasure to drive buses that are in their care.

When asked what he likes least about being a driver, Don said that would probably be dealing with the inconsiderate drivers on the freeways. People not maintaining a safe following distance and speeding are the biggest violations seen every day.

Don and his wife Jantina have lived in Jackson for about 5 years and recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They have 3 children and 12 grandchil-

dren. One of Don's hobbies is building and flying engine powered model airplanes and he is active in a club that participates in static displays and demonstration flying of these models. Don is also a long-time member of the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) and volunteers annually at the AirVenture in Oshkosh. Don and Jantina are classical music lovers and are long-time Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra subscribers.

Having Don as one your WCCE drivers is what helps make your daily commute an enjoyable one and we are glad he is with us.



COMMUTER VALUE CERTIFICATE

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 equal to the cost of a standard Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) adult weekly pass or 10 adult tickets, but has no actual cash value, and cannot be used for cash refund, exchange, or cash-back transactions. The current value is \$17.50.

There is no cash refund or change given for the Commuter Value Certificates. The certificates are accepted only in exchange for WCCE ticket strips.

For example, a WCCE ticket strip sells for \$27.50 each. A commuter may

redeem two \$17.50 Commuter Value Certificates for one \$27.50 WCCE ticket strip. The Commuter Value Certificates will be accepted, but no cash refund or change will be given in return. Or, the commuter may redeem one \$17.50 Commuter Value Certificate and pay an additional \$10.00 for one \$27.50 WCCE ticket strip.

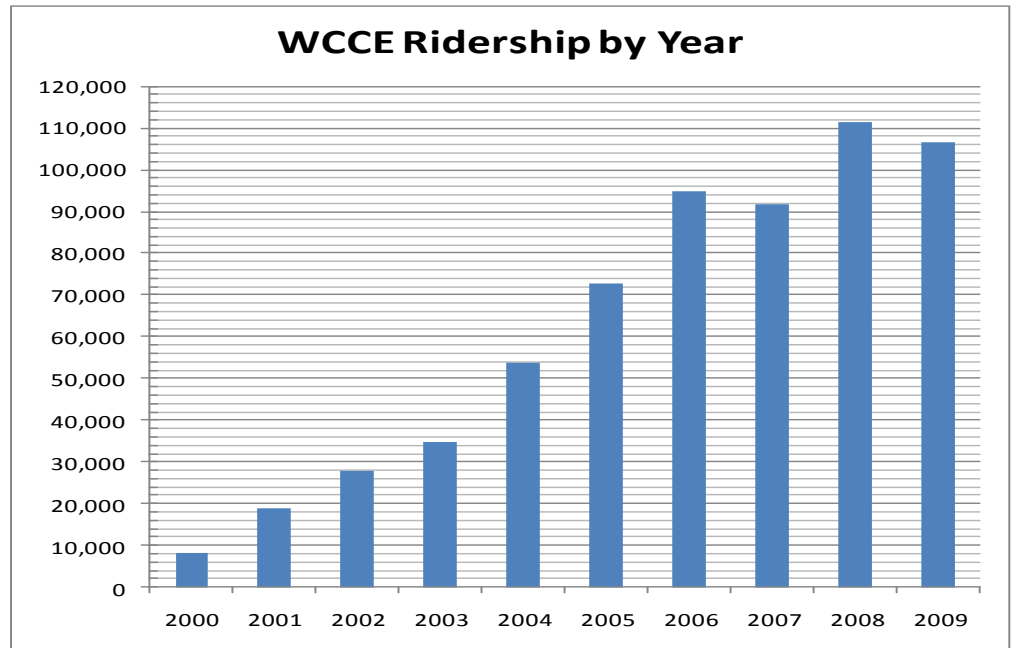
Contact your Human Resource Department to see if your company is enrolled in the Milwaukee County Transit Commuter Value program.

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.

WCCE RIDERSHIP

Since the first four individuals began riding the Washington County Commuter Express downtown Milwaukee route in November of 1999, the ridership has grown by 677% from an annual ridership of 13,701 one way trips in 2000 to **106,458 one way trips in 2009**. (2008 was at 111,358 due to \$4.00 a gallon fuel prices)

You the riders have shown that public transit is here to stay and serve the residents of Washington County.



RIDER SURVEY WIN A WCCE TICKET STRIP

A rider survey will be conducted within the next month. The survey will be handed out on the buses.

You will have a chance to win a strip of WCCE tickets by handing in your completed survey to your driver.

Results from the survey will help us know you better and ensure we are providing the best service to our riders and potential riders.

Hand in your completed rider survey for a chance to win a strip of tickets, worth \$27.50.

CONNECTING THROUGH THE INTERNET

The WCCE is a member of the Southeast Wisconsin Transit Systems, which is a partnership between the six area bus systems. The partnership goal is to promote the benefits of riding, along with being dedicated to providing affordable, convenient transportation to all.

This partnership is funded through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. The partnership has many components for you the transit rider. One of these is a web site —yourotherwheels.com

As part of yourotherwheels.com you can create your own profile and receive updates on promotions and news affecting transit. Oftentimes the promotions include contests. For example, last fall was the “My Ride to Fame” contest. Several WCCE riders were involved and two of them became finalist. See their comments on page 4.

You can also become a Facebook fan of the Southeast Wisconsin Transit Systems Facebook. Join by going to: <http://www.facebook.com/RideTheBus>

Along with Facebook, you can keep in touch with the regional transit programs through Twitter, check out youtube videos and receive RSS feeds. The links to these sites are available at the yourotherwheels.com web site.

RideWCCE.com web site updates

The ridewcce.com web site will be updated in the next few months. Please email us at info@ridewcce.com if there are features on the web site that would be helpful or of interest to you.

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.

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

- 1) Call the Washington County Taxi Service at 1-888-285-TAXI (8294).
- 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 to WCCE commuters only. You may obtain an Emergency Ride Home card from your bus driver. 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.

WISCONSIN AVENUE CONSTRUCTION

It is anticipated that starting Monday February 22, 2010, the WCCE Downtown Milwaukee Route, **eastbound only**, will be detoured off Wisconsin Avenue between 2nd Street and Broadway Street due to bridge construction over the Milwaukee River. Detour routing is as follows:

Eastbound Detour Routing:

East on Wisconsin Avenue to 2nd Street, south on 2nd Street to Michigan Street, east on Michigan Street to Broadway Street, north on Broadway Street to Wisconsin Avenue to regular routing.

The bus stops of these routes will be moved from Wisconsin Avenue to a comparable stop on Michigan Street between 2nd Street and Broadway Street. **The affected stops will be Plankinton/Michigan, Water/Michigan and the Broadway stop will be between Broadway and Milwaukee, where there is a bus shelter.**

All westbound stops will remain on Wisconsin Avenue until further notice. Please watch for updates regarding this construction since at a later date eastbound bus stops will return and westbound buses will be detoured.

This work will be completed in two phases to allow the bridge to remain partially open to traffic during the repairs. The first phase will commence on the south half of the bridge and close the eastbound traffic lanes and south pedestrian walkway. One lane of westbound traffic, as well as the north pedestrian walkway will remain open. This phase of eastbound lane closure is expected to last 6 weeks. Once work is completed in the eastbound lanes, eastbound traffic will be restored and the westbound traffic lanes will be closed to allow the remainder of the deck work to be completed. The second phase of work is expected to take another 4 weeks to complete.

We apologize for any inconvenience and we thank you for riding the WCCE.

RIDER COMMENTS

"Riding the bus has so many benefits they are hard to list completely... The main benefits included: Reduced parking costs, fuel savings, and automobile operational expenses... For me this is about \$2500 savings per year! That's nearly \$3500/gross pay per year! After riding the WCCE bus for about 15 months I would not consider driving again. Time on the bus has given me the chance to relax, read, work on the laptop, and meet so many new people. I've made some good friends, and look forward to my commute everyday! It's a great way to decompress after a day at the office, or ramp up for a new day.

Happy Commuting everyone!"

"I love the bus ride. It all starts with the friendly and courteous drivers that we have. The people on the bus are all like family...we know each other and it's a great atmosphere. The bus stop is only 4 miles from my house so the cost savings is immediate. I enjoy the comfort of knowing that I don't have to do anything but sit back, read, take a nap or just relax and enjoy. I let them do the driving. Makes my day EVERY DAY!"

**Thank you for using the
Washington County Commuter Express**