

November 21, 2012

New Route 196 Stops Ready to “Go Live”

When Community Transit launched east-west Route 196 on busy 196th Street between Lynnwood and Edmonds earlier this year, it had intended to place new stops by the Fred Meyer store.

Those stops would not only help shoppers traveling to the store, but also provide a transfer point for riders making connections at the nearby Lynnwood Transit Center.

The City of Lynnwood, however, cited notorious traffic congestion on the road as a reason not to have buses make any new stops on that street and denied the request. Over the past year, Community Transit has negotiated with the city to get the stops, while dozens of current and potential bus riders have complained to both agencies about the lack of a convenient stop.



Starting November 27, Community Transit will place a temporary stop on 196th at 48th Avenue in each direction. The stops are temporary because the city wants to evaluate their impact on traffic. Community Transit will monitor boardings and deboardings at the new stops to push for permanent status. As part of the deal, the westbound stop at 52nd Avenue will close.

Rider Alerts and other communications will be placed for riders to be aware of the new stops. In February, Route 112 will be routed into the Lynnwood Transit Center and will travel on 48th Avenue between the transit center and 194th Street, providing all day north-south connections with the new Route 196 stops.

Transit Technologies Activated on University District Buses

The phased rollout of the new Transit Technologies project was extended to the 800-series routes serving the University District earlier this week. This is the second set of buses out of Merrill Creek to join the project. *Swift* buses were activated in early October and continue to be closely monitored for headway management issues.

Transit Technologies is the public name for the APTS project, which is outfitting all buses with GPS and other technology to allow better communications, improved location tracking, and both automatic stop announcements and passenger counters.

Buses are being activated in phases as equipment is installed and drivers are trained. The next scheduled phase will be the Seattle commuter bus routes out of Merrill Creek, Routes 412 and 424. Local buses will be rolled out in 2013.

In spring or early summer of 2013, once all buses are operating without problems, real-time bus information will be turned on. This will allow Customer Service and passengers to check whether a bus is on schedule or delayed at any given bus stop. Also at that time, next bus signs will be installed at *Swift* stations and the Lynnwood and Mountlake Terrace transit centers.

Agency Lends Wheels, Tenderness to Everett Fire Victims

On the night of November 8, a fire ravaged the McCrossan apartment building across from Comcast Arena in downtown Everett. Forty residents were displaced and one perished.

Community Transit received a request to help out at 11:28 p.m., just as we were wrapping up operations. Dispatch quickly rounded up the required permission and sent two buses, two drivers and one supervisor to the scene.

Operators **Barb Davis** and **Art Marbet** stopped their coaches two blocks from the fire and loaded seven residents on one bus and 21 on the other. They then transported them a few blocks away where the Red Cross was setting up.

The Red Cross used the coaches as a shelter for people to get some food, water and rest. As more volunteers arrived, the Red Cross used the buses as a processing center to gather information and figure out which residents needed what type of assistance.

About 4 a.m. on November 9, Art and Barb drove the fire victims to a nearby church where the Red Cross had set up an overnight shelter.

Thank you to Art, Barb and Supervisor **Jon Haugh**, who was first on the scene and stayed until our resources were no longer needed. Also, thanks to Dispatchers **Stephanie Dunn**, **Greg Rasmussen** and **Dan Spargur**, who stayed late to get the buses and personnel to the scene, and to the fuelers who responded quickly to get two buses ready for use. Thanks also to **Mary Jennings**, **Joey Moss** and **Rocky Phambota** who helped wrap up our participation the next morning. Your actions that night helped ease the grief and devastation for a number of victims, and assisted the relief crews responding to the tragedy.

Community Transit is a member of the Snohomish County Transportation Coalition (SNOTRAC) and helps out when called upon in emergency situations throughout the county.

Employees Feast on Thanksgiving Meal

Employees flocked to the MCOB Body Shop last week to get a Thanksgiving meal and receive thanks for their hard work.

The lunch was put on by the Unity Team, and Pilgrim **Steve Peters** served as unofficial greeter.

Joyce Eleanor thanked employees for their hard work and dedication to the agency the past four years, as budget issues have made work more challenging for every department.



There was plenty of food for all employees. While the main lunch was served from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Unity Team members stayed past 10:30 p.m. to serve the swing shift and late shift mechanics and drivers.

Thanks to the Unity Team: **Colleen Baumann, Rita Fox, Jeanine Gallacci, Jayen Hass, Ruben Hill, Nancy Lamus, Mary Lowery, Nick Plantilla, Seema Sharma, Paolo Stracqualursi and Bob Throckmorton.**



Use Marijuana = Risk Your Job!

Personal use of marijuana is legal in Washington State on December 6, right? Not for Community Transit employees. We follow federal laws and marijuana remains a prohibited substance as defined in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act.

Employees who test positive for alcohol at .04 percent or above, or test positive for any prohibited substance will be referred to a substance abuse professional and discharged.

Using marijuana in the privacy of your home, as you might drink alcohol, still carries serious consequences.

Remember:

- You may not be on company property under the influence of alcohol or any prohibited substance.
- Some prohibited substances stay in your system longer than others. Don't come on property (whether it's to work or not) while there is a prohibited substance in your system.
- If you test positive for alcohol at .04 percent or above, or test positive for any prohibited substance, you will be fired.

People may think that because it has been several days or even weeks since they have ingested marijuana, it won't show up in a test. However, that may not be the case and if any marijuana shows up, you will be fired.

Community Transit's interest is in ensuring everyone's safety and being able to trust that folks around you are safe, too. We also want to assure the traveling public that our transportation system is the safest it can possibly be.

~ Submitted by Tina Guzinski, Drug & Alcohol Program Manager

Register and Start Training Now for The Big Climb

It's that time again. Everyone and anyone is cordially invited to join our team Men Not At Work in our journey up the Columbia Tower on March 24, 2013. It is only 69 floors, 788 feet, 1,311 steps!

The Big Climb is the largest fundraiser for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Washington/Alaska Chapter, fighting blood cancers. Visit www.bigclimb.org to learn more about the event and register for the team. The event is already 75 percent full, so act this weekend! For more information about Men Not At Work, contact **Keith Larson** at keith.larson@commtrans.org.



Administrative Wellness Trackers are Due December 5!

As part of the Health Benefit Cost Containment program that requires Administrative employees to pay for part of their medical benefit premiums (depending on the plan they choose), a wellness benefit credit of \$10/month will begin in 2013. To earn that benefit, admin employees must log at least 60 points on a Wellness Tracker to indicate they have participated in healthy activities this year.

The deadline to turn in your Wellness Tracker to **Leslea Bjornsen** is 3 p.m. Friday, December 5. All activities on your Wellness Tracker must have been completed by November 30.

The form needs to be signed and your employee number should be on the first page. Participants can scan the two documents and email them to Leslea or send them via interoffice mail to Leslea in MCOB. If you have questions, call Leslea at x6126.

12 Days of Fitness

On December 10, I am kicking off the next wellness competition, 12 Days of Fitness. I know that this is a bad time to try get people involved due to the holidays. That's why the activities can be integrated into shopping, parties and other holiday events. For example, parking further away while shopping and taking the stairs versus the escalators.

I have really tried to choose activities that are not cumbersome or stressful. 12 Days of Fitness is only....yes, 12 days long, from December 10 - 21. The prize is two tickets to The Nutcracker on December 29. What a great present to give someone, or a fun day for you and a loved one! Contact Leslea by December 3 to sign up.

~ Submitted by Leslea Bjornsen, Wellness Coordinator



Prize Drawing Winners

We have two winners from the Benefits Fair gift prizes!

Theresa Imholdt wins a \$25 Subway Gift Card from MHN!

Pamela Muellenbach wins a Coffee Break in a Bag from FlexPlan Services!

Thank you to all employees who submitted their Open Enrollment forms by November 15. If there are follow-up forms for you to sign, or somehow you failed to get your paperwork completed, your friendly HR representative will be in touch!

Lend a Hand to Foster Children This Season

As a follow-up to the United Way giving campaign, Community Transit has “adopted” a local human service agency this year – Hand in Hand. The first activity is a holiday giving campaign running from November 27 through December 13.

Hand in Hand provides short-term (up to 72 hours) and long-term (up to 28 days) temporary shelter for children removed from their homes in emergency situations. This temporary shelter allows social workers time to find an appropriate foster family to care for these children without simply finding an “empty bed.”

How can I participate? Starting November 27, "Giving" trees decorated with wish cards will be located in the Administrative building, MCOB Great Hall, KPOB and KPCR. Simply choose a wish card, purchase the item on the card and return it to your building holiday campaign committee representative (see below) between November 27 and December 13.



Hand in Hand representatives have asked Community Transit's giving campaign to focus on kids ages 10-15 years old since the majority of the donations received are usually for babies and younger children.

How will the gifts be distributed? Hand-in-Hand is celebrating with foster kids and their families at a holiday gathering on Tuesday, December 18. The gifts donated by Community Transit employees will be distributed to the kids at the event.

Should I wrap my gift? No, we ask that you deliver the gift to your campaign representative unwrapped.

Is there a dollar goal for this giving campaign? Our goal is to provide a gift for each wish card. You are more than welcome to make monetary donations to the agency on your own.

To learn more about Hand in Hand, visit <http://www.handinhandkids.org/>.

Thank you so much for your participation! Look for more opportunities to help children benefitting from Hand in Hand in 2013.

The Hand in Hand Giving Campaign Committee:

Admin: Jan McBride, Gail McNutt

MCOB: Mary Lowery, Steve Winecoff

KPOB/CIS/RideStore: Bonnie Ginsberg, Stacey Gunnerson, Nancy Lamus, Wade Mahala, Bob Throckmorton

KPCR: Pam Muellenbach

