

Way to go!

BY JOAN PETERSON



A van-pooling destination in downtown Medford.

A recent train trip from Portland to East Glacier National Park this past summer was a revealing experience. Someone else was driving. We didn't have to remove our shoes or stand in line before taking off. The porters and staff people were polite and helpful in every way. "This is the life," my husband and I sighed in one breath. "Public transportation is the way to go."

What if we had public transportation from Applegate to Medford and back again...every day, and maybe a shuttle on the weekends? We could go to work with an easy mind instead of dodging those bikers and school busses, and the wine tasting folks could come and go safely on the weekends from town to the wineries and home again without worries about a designated driver. The designated driver would be provided by a shuttle service.

These days, with the gas prices hitting the ceiling and insurance and maintenance costs adding up with our vehicles, a van-pooling option could save us a lot of money. I learned from Nathan Broom at Rogue Valley Transit District (RVTD) that there is a van-pooling system already in place

at RVTD if we can show a need for it. RVTD works in partnership with Enterprise Rent-a-Car to provide vans to five or more commuters who are on the same commute-to-work route.

Van-pools operate like a co-op. A van can have two or three drivers, one the primary driver and one or two to relieve the primary driver when necessary. Each van has a contact person and a treasurer to handle the expenses. When I talked to the Enterprise office in Portland, I learned that Enterprise offers assistance in starting up a van-pool and help with the maintenance and insurance costs, but overall, the van-pool is virtually autonomous. To top it off, RVTD will pay up to 50% of van-pooling expenses for qualified vans, and that includes fuel.

Enterprise in Portland states that the funds are available according to need. At the present time, there is greater need for vans in the Portland area, but their company is searching for companies in southern Oregon that might have a need for their employees to use a van in commuting to work. If the company does have a need for a van, they can contact Rogue Valley Transit District and, if they have five or more people who would be on a commuter route, a van can be provided to them,

saving them costs of wear and tear on their own cars. The funds are made available through Oregon Department of Transportation.

Or, you might be able to join a current van-pool. If you are an individual with a van-pool route and commute time that matches your own, Enterprise offers a free Ride Matching Program that matches your commute schedule to existing van-pools and car-pools.

According to a September 25 article in the Medford *Mail Tribune* by Paris Achen entitled, "Intermodal Transportation Hub," Medford has combined the Greyhound bus station with Rogue Valley Transit's downtown station at 220 Front Street. The central location will make transferring between local and regional bus services easier for travelers who previously had to walk through downtown to transfer. The site also will be a stop for a shuttle that takes Amtrak passengers to and from Klamath Falls. The new station is owned by RVTD and will be leased to Greyhound. Greyhound has taken out a ten-year lease. The station offers ten daily departures with connections

to cities across the nation. Just think, if Applegate had a van-pool service to the new Intermodal Transportation Hub, we could go anywhere in the U.S. with just the price of a ticket. We could read and relax as we travel. No dodging those trucks on Interstate 5.

Another option that would work well for the weekend wine tasters is a shuttle service that could bring people from Jacksonville to the Applegate Valley on Saturdays and Sundays.

There are already a few limousines that provide this service, but at a rate not many can afford. It would be beneficial to our wineries if a shuttle could be provided to take the customers home safely with a designated driver after a day of wine tasting.

It's time for us to create a new paradigm for ourselves if we want to continue living so far away from town. We might have to live more cooperatively with our neighbors and to share in our transportation as well as in other ways. Van-pooling might be a first step toward reducing our carbon footprint.

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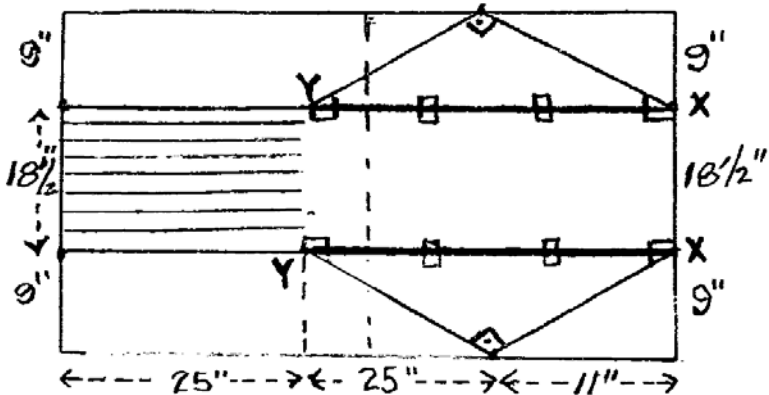
A possible van-pooling depot in downtown Applegate?



FUN AND GAMES

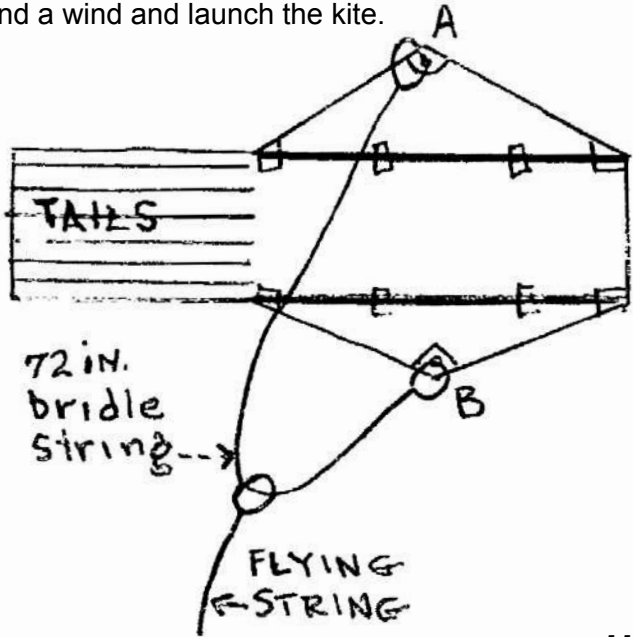
By Marvin Rosenberg

Make a kite using a large trash bag.



- You will need:
- A plastic bag (20 gal.),
 - Two, 1/4 in. dowels or wood strips, 3-ft. long,
 - A ruler, masking tape, scissors, kite string and
 - A ballpoint pen. (You can cut the kite pattern bigger or smaller but keep the same proportions.)

1. Tape the two dowels from X to Y.
2. Place tape for strength at A and B and attach the bridle string. Make a loop at the center of the bridle string and tie on the flying string.
3. Cut the plastic to make as many 25-inch tails as you please.
4. Find a wind and launch the kite.



Have FUN!