

Senior Transportation Group Looks to Expand

Effort may boost shuttle rides to neighborhood services

A group specializing in keeping older residents in their single family homes is conducting a survey to expand transportation service for seniors and people with mild disabilities in inner north and north-east Portland.

The R.A.R.E. Services Group, made up of representatives from various senior service agencies, is asking area residents such questions as: Where do you need to go shopping? What days and times of day do you need to go to the bank, medical appointments, prescription pickups and refills, grocery shopping and some recreation? Which of your transportation needs is unmet?

According to Harvey Rice, an independent consultant for the effort, plans call for distributing the survey via area senior housing groups and aging and disability service agencies.

Once completed, Harvey will lead focus groups to gather more information about unmet transportation needs.

The effort may lead to new schedules for shuttles rides to neighborhood services. Currently, shuttle services are provided to the Safeway Food and Drug on Northeast Ainsworth and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard every first and third Tuesday of each month. The service is collaboration between the African American Chamber of Commerce, RAZ Transportation and Safeway. The service is free to seniors age 60 and over.

Harvey, also the Safeway Concierge, said the hope is to expand and develop an effective Safeway shopping network between the four banks along MLK and non-profit medical services in the adjacent neighborhoods that will improve the quality of life for seniors with



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
 RAZ Transportation Driver Gordon Young (from left) senior rider Zeola Thompson and Safeway Concierge Harvey Rice gather during the recent remodeling celebration for the Safeway Food and Drug on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

mobility problems. "With more budget cuts and cuts of services, we need to find ways to meet senior's needs to go shopping," Harvey said.

African American Chamber executive Roy Jay said northeast

Portland has experienced a growth in senior population during the last decade due to the opening of Albina Corner Apartments, Unthank Plaza, St. Vincent de Paul Apartments, Allen Fremont Plaza, Mallory Courts, Irvington Village, McCoy

Village, Walnut Park Apartments, Martin Luther King Jr. Building, Rosemont Court and Alberta Simmons Plaza.

In order to keep pace with this growth, programs such as Safeway Senior Shuttle, which respond to

the increasing demand for senior grocery shopping service will need to expand, community leaders said.

"We began in August 2001 with approximately 30 riders a month and by the end of February 2003, we are averaging 68 riders per month,"

says Gordon Young driver for RAZ Transportation Trolley.

Troy Steele manager of Ainsworth Safeway, said a recent remodeling of the store has put it a position to meet the needs of more customers.

Multnomah Pet License Enforcement Boosted

Multnomah County has started mailing infraction notices to Portland area residents who fail to license their cats and dogs.

The pets are required to be licensed with Multnomah County Animal Services once they have lived in the county for at least 30 days or have reached the age of 6 months, whichever occurs later.

Currently, out of about 148,000 dogs in the county, just an estimated 37,000 are licensed. Ten percent of the approximately 161,000 cats are licensed.

"Holding pet owners responsible is a necessary step the county must



take," stated Mike Oswald, director of Multnomah County Animal Services. "We have seen significant increases in pet license compliance over the past six months and are confident the trend will continue when holding accountable those, who after

receiving repeated reminders continue to violate the law."

The county began an aggressive campaign to increase pet licensing rates last summer. Education and outreach efforts were expanded in local parks, pet food and supply stores, veterinary offices and in neighborhoods through door-to-door outreach teams.

Mediation Trainees Wanted

Resolutions Northwest, a non-profit community dispute resolution center that has contracted with the City of Portland to provide mediation services, is seeking a diverse pool of community members to train as volunteer mediators.

Application packets are available at the Neighborhood Mediation Program Office in the King

Facility, 4815 N.E. 7th Ave. and are due March 31.

Interviews will be scheduled the week beginning April 7. Final selections will be made by April 18.

Minorities and people with second language skills are encouraged to apply.

For more information, call Tamara Moland at 503-823-3152.



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