

PASSENGERS COMMENTS

"I like Neighbor Ride. They are so friendly, you don't have to wait. They are like family." EM

"Keep up this great service." VP

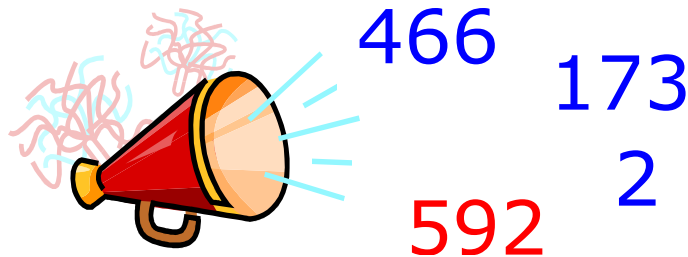
"Except for family members, I have no other source of transportation." JH

"Neighbor Ride has improved the overall quality of my life tremendously...just to get there (dr's appts) is a blessing." FM

"Drivers are always cordial; office staff is pleasant and efficient...a wonderful service." SND

"It (NR) certainly added much to my life since I no longer drive but like to be helpful elsewhere." EP

"You are an essential part of my keeping my appointments and getting to be 84. Best wishes to the best." MCK,



Why these numbers? See p. 2

From the Director.....

One of our objectives is to make things better for our volunteers –whether in the office or on the road. To that end, we have made some progress recently.

We have wanted to improve our handling of last minute changes for awhile and have been searching for the right solution. When there is a last minute change (passenger illness, flat tire etc.) passengers and drivers call Neighbor Ride's main number, select "emergency", and leave a message. Our voice mail system then automatically dials a number so we can get the message. In the past, that number has been my cell phone. Usually, issues could get resolved before a passenger was stranded or a volunteer inconvenienced. However, on some occasions when I wasn't near a computer, there was nothing I could do if the message lacked enough information to call the affected people. After exhaustive review of various cell phones and plans, we have recently purchased an ATT pay-as-you-go web enabled phone. Now, with an "emergency", there is immediate access to our website for ride details and solves the problem. A side benefit (to me anyway...) is that now we can pass the phone around amongst the staff and I am not the only one "on call" whenever the office is closed.

To avert last minute passenger issues, many drivers do share contact information with our passengers. However, we will continue to maintain this capability for those who would prefer not to give out their phone number – and of course for last minute driver issues.

On the office side, this week, the first phase of our driver identification program in the data base has been released and appears to be working. Right now, it provides a list of drivers who have specified that they are available for the duration of a ride so that the Ride Coordinators do not have to check a book. This has been a long time in coming. However, our current programmer (who also did our new website) is doing a great job and we will be providing him with a list of other fixes/enhancements for the data base. **Please update your availability by sending an email with the hours/days you can drive to volunteer@neighborride.org to assure correct information in the database.**

We continue to look for and invest in improvements for our passengers and volunteers. If you have any suggestions, please don't hesitate to let us know.

-Brad

Our Mission

Neighbor Ride will decrease isolation and improve the quality of life for Howard County's older residents by providing a reasonably priced, reliable, supplemental transportation service which utilizes community volunteers and resources.

March **Record** Stats

2= Rides cancelled,
no driver found

592= **Record** number
trips

466= Driver hours

173= Ride Coordinator
hours

Orientation dates:

April 7, 10 am
April 15, 6 pm

NEIGHBOR RIDE

8950 Route 108
Suite 115
Columbia, MD 21045
410-884-RIDE (7433)

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Community Outreach
Coordinator**
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Visit us on the web at:
<http://www.neighborride.org>

Coordinator's Corner:

It was good to see so many volunteers at the annual training last week. Thank you to the 83 volunteers who were able to attend. Contact information for AARP driver safety courses is: www.aarp.org/drive and for MD Relay: www.mdrely.org. We will be sharing information with our passengers in their next newsletter. Door prizes winners were: Kirsten Eland, Kathy Haynes, Gerry Tolson, Jo Roeder, Bill Storey, Pat Harrington, and Steve Sternheimer. Once again you have made several suggestions now under consideration...thank you!

Remember to save June 7 for our Annual Volunteer Family Picnic at Centennial Park.

It's also the end of the quarter, time to request optional partial fuel reimbursement by emailing director@neighborride.org.

Rosemary

Volunteer Opportunity: Neighbor Ride's Marketing Committee

This group of volunteers meets monthly to explore ways to spread the word about Neighbor Ride to potential passengers and volunteers. Through strategic advertising, table-top displays, and presentations to our target audience, we strive to increase the number of passengers and volunteers on an ongoing basis.

If you have experience in marketing and would like to help us increase awareness, please contact Rosemary Noble (volunteers@neighborride.org)

Let's Dish in April

Whether you're a "Let's Dish" regular or you've been meaning to give it a try, remember that from April 1st through April 30th, if you sign up for any session at Let's Dish, they will donate 10% of the proceeds back to **Neighbor Ride**. There are still plenty of sessions available at the Columbia location; and parents and grandparents can even **bring a child**, ages 8 and over, for sessions on Sunday, April 19th or Monday, April 13th (Howard County schools closed for Spring Break).

If you are up for a "Dishing" session to benefit Neighbor Ride, here's what you need to do:

- 1) Go to www.letsdish.com and select the best location for you
- 2) Select an in-store session or their pick-up service, Dish-n-Dash
- 3) Choose a date and time that work for you and select 4, 8 or 12 meals from their monthly menu
- 4) Enter promotional code **F4-NEIGHBORRIDE** on the page with your billing information (this will indicate to Let's Dish! that you are part of our fundraiser)
- 5) Place your order, and show up at your date and time to prepare or pick up your meals

WELCOME TO NEIGHBOR RIDE.....

**Laura Cooper, Peter Frank, Denise LeBlanc, Lupe Lopez,
Mary Lou Mazzuca, Ron Polniaszek, Carol Rudacille**

