



The Rotary Club of St. Joseph-Benton Harbor

eWheel

Your Rotary News
Straight
To Your Inbox

January 25, 2016

Michigan is having great weather for the winter. However, many of our Northeastern States are getting pummeled with up to 48" of snow! Let's think of them today, hoping for no loss of life and praying for the safety of all.

Ridesharing, Vanpooling and Public Transportation Opportunities

Presentation by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

Kris Martin, an associate planner at the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, and Debra Panozzo, the Mobility Manager at Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, were the guest speakers at this week's Monday meeting. Both informed us about ridesharing, vanpooling and other public transportation options in our local community.



Kris Martin, Associate Planner
SW Michigan Planning Commission



Deb Panozzo, Mobility Manager
SW Michigan Planning Commission

Kris, who is the Rideshare Coordinator for Berrien, Cass and Van Buren counties, spoke about the Rideshare program and how it is a free and convenient online service allowing people interested in carpooling in Southwest Michigan to connect with each other. Rideshare can help you find a ride or a passenger by identifying people who are going the same direction at approximately the same time of day in their commute to work. This is a service that may be helpful for those with limited transportation or who are interested in lowering their transportation costs or improving

the environment. For more information, go to www.mywaythere.org/carpool.asp.

Vanpooling is another free and reliable option for getting to work for those individuals who qualify. There is an available “vanpool grant,” where individuals who are receiving state financial assistance can qualify to be part of a “vanpool.” A vanpool is a group of 4 to 15 workers who commute together on a regular basis in a van. The 2015 demonstration Van Pool program has been established to provide entry level workers who are enrolled in Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) programs with safe, affordable vans they can use to drive themselves and other DHS clients to their place of employment at no cost to them. For more information, please call Alexis Vertalka at 248-470-8534 or email to: alexis.vertalka@vride.com. More information is also available on www.mywaythere.org/vanpoolgrant.asp.

Additionally, the reduced fare card program allows senior citizens over age 60 and individuals with disabilities to receive half-off fares on bus transportation in Berrien, Cass and Van Buren counties. Please contact Deb Panozzo at 269-925-1137, ext. 1519 or by email at panozzod@swmpc.org for more information.

There are four providers of public transportation in Berrien County, in our area, there are two routes that go between Benton Harbor, St. Joseph, and Stevensville. That is the red and blue routes.

For more information about public transportation options, go to www.mywaythere.com where you can find carpool and rideshare information as well as information about transportation for senior citizens and veterans. This is a very helpful website to learn more about public

transportation in our local community. When on the website, you can use the “find a ride” feature to find options for transportation based on your location, destination, purpose and time.

For more information, please feel free to contact Debra Panozzo at 269-925-1137, ext., 1519 or at panozzod@swmpc.org. Kris Martin can be reached at 269-925-117, ext. 1521 or at kmartin@swmpc.org.



UPCOMING SCHEDULE

1/28 Board Meeting

2/1 K.C. Gast
Center on Wellness

2/8 Cornerstone Alliance

VISITING ROTARIANS

RYAN ARNT
from Lakeshore Rotary

ROTARIANS WITH GUESTS

Mike Huie brought

Don Johnson

and

RICK VILLA brought

Jennifer Cole



STUDENT VISITOR

Micheyla Jones from St. Joseph High School told us of her experience in the mentoring program. Her mentor was Rotarian Sheriff Paul Bailey.



Here is hoping everyone stays warm and safe through this week. This issue was written by Jennifer Kirsch. Be sure and tell her a big thank you. If you haven't met her – now is the time to do so. The Communications Committee is always looking for new members to help with the website, public relations, press releases, and writing for the E-Wheel. If interested, please contact Debra Trapikas.

WILL YOU CELEBRATE ROTARY?

As we approach our 100-year anniversary for the Rotary Club of St. Joseph-Benton Harbor, we want to create the momentum to have a large community celebration at that time. To accomplish this, we have decided to build upon our annual spring evening event and reimagine it.

We've set the date for April 13 and that evening at Shadowland on Silver Beach, we'll be opening the doors to the general public for a prestigious, once-a-year event and inviting the community to learn more about what Rotary does both locally and globally.

You'll be hearing more and more about it as that date draws closer but we wanted to put the bug in your ear now for a few reasons:

1. We want you to put 4/13/16 on your calendar and attend the event.
2. In order to actually raise awareness of our work, we would like to have a number of booths at the event representing some of our various projects such as the Track Meet and Clean Water Project so we may be asking some of you to help support this effort.



3. Because we're inviting the general public to this event, we want to make sure we're making it easy to attend--so we do not want to have to charge a fee at the door. We'll We'll continue to do a cash bar but we want to eliminate that entrance fee. To offset that loss of revenue, we will be seeking sponsorship for this event. We're only looking to raise around \$750 with sponsorship levels at \$100 and \$250 with an additional "member support" option at \$50.

4. And finally, if you are interested in being involved in the planning process for the event or you have any questions about the changes, please email Emily Hosinski at emily_m_hosinski@whirlpool.com.