

Inside Lane

October 2013

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→ FORWARD TO A FRIEND



We're saluting creative commuting champions on Nov. 6



Mark your calendar for our annual event to recognize creative commuting champions. It's our chance to put the spotlight on organizations, employers, government entities, individuals and others for their great work in promoting alternatives to driving alone.

Come for some networking and learn about strategies that worked!

2013 Commuter Choice Awards Luncheon

11 a.m., Wednesday, Nov. 6
St. Anthony Main Event Centre
219 SE Main St.
Minneapolis, MN 55414

The keynote speaker will be KARE 11 Meteorologist Sven Sundgaard.

[Get a list of award nominees.](#)

Questions about the event? Contact Kelly Morrell at 612-349-7563 or email kelly.morrell@metrotransit.org.

Help us promote carpooling in October



October is Carpool to Work Month. It's a great time

to start a carpool.

During the month of October, we're awarding prizes to commuters who explore carpooling:

- Weekly prizes: \$50 gift cards for gas or coffee (for new users who create a commuter account; two winners each week)
- Grand prizes: portable vehicle GPS system; portable satellite radio plus 3-month subscription; Kindle Fire; or Galaxy tablet

[Learn more about Carpool to Work Month](#) and eligibility requirements for prizes.

Marketing your carpool program

If you have preferred parking available for carpoolers, we can help raise the profile of your program with parking signs you can use at your worksite. Your employer outreach specialist can help you come up with other ways to market your program. Contact [your employer outreach specialist](#) for details.

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Free Wi-Fi now available on Northstar



Here's another great reason to ride Northstar! Northstar Commuter Rail trains now feature FREE Wi-Fi to keep you connected while you ride. You can check email, download documents or search the web (sorry, no streaming).

Look for signs marking Wi-Fi enabled cars (at least one car per train has it). Connect your device to TransitWi-Fi, agree to the conditions and you're ready to go!

[Learn more.](#)

Commute with confidence – we can show you how!

We can show members of your organization how easy it is to ride buses and trains. Our customer advocates can provide free How-to-Ride presentations and other onsite training that can be customized to your group. Contact our customer advocates today:

[Doug Cook](#), 612-349-7478

[Brooke Schablin](#), 612-349-7477

For information on employer programs, please contact [your employer outreach specialist](#).

EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

Quality Bicycle Products



Employers interested in ways to reduce employee health care costs can look locally at how [Quality Bicycle Products' \(QBP\)](#) employee health and wellness program, which includes incentives for bike commuters, is paying off.

The company, headquartered in Bloomington, is a wholesale distributor of bicycle products. Its motto, "Every Butt on a Bike," provides a window on QBP's corporate culture.

QBP worked with its health insurance provider HealthPartners on a study of about 100 employees who participated in the company's Bike to Work program. The findings? From 2009-2011, QBP's health care expenses dropped 4.4 percent, while the national average increased 24.6 percent.

In addition to lower health care costs, the study reported that QBP's commuter benefits program also contributed to productivity gains of \$900,000 over the years studied.

"We've learned that the expenses of setting up a program are more than paid back by a high return on investment," said QBP Commuter Advocacy Coordinator Alice Erickson.

Among the employee benefits, QBP provides indoor and outdoor parking for bikes; lockers, showers and a towel service; commuter credits (available for employees who use smart commute options) for purchasing bike parts, accessories and apparel; a bike shop and monthly bike maintenance classes; and other incentives.

QBP is advocating locally and nationally for more investment in bicycle infrastructure and invites employers interested in setting up their own commuter benefits programs to contact them. [Learn more here.](#)

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