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## **Everybody into the Pool! (the Carpool, that is...)**

January 02, 2007 - *Pittsburgh, PA*; You live in a small town north of Pittsburgh and you work in the Airport Corridor. You'd like to carpool to work, but you don't know anyone with the same commute. *What do you do?*

If you're Rod Frisk, you register with the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's CommuteInfo program. CommuteInfo's many services include matching people with others who want to be part of a vanpool or carpool.

Rod is an Administrative Law Judge for the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board. At his Parkway Center office in Greentree, he adjudicates liquor code citations brought by the State Police.

"When I worked Downtown, there were a lot of people commuting from Ellwood City, Zelienople, and other places near where I live," he says. "But when I started working here in Greentree, it was a different story. There aren't so many people making that particular commute."



*Interview & photo courtesy of the Airport Corridor*

For a while, Rod carpoled into the city and took a bus to Greentree—but that took a great deal of time. And, over the years, the vision impairment that keeps Rod from driving became worse, so taking the bus

became difficult. He sometimes managed to find carpools by posting signs on office bulletin boards and networking with friends and colleagues, but transfers and retirements invariably sent him back to “square one.”

Then Rod registered with CommuteInfo, and this spring a possible match was found, identifying a woman wanting to carpool to Greentree from Rod’s area. The woman found one rider on her own, and met Rod through CommuteInfo.

The three meet up each morning at the Park and Ride lot at the I-79 Evans City exit and together make the 35-minute trip to Greentree. “Most of the time we talk,” says Rod. “If everybody’s whipped at the end of the day, sometimes we’ll have the radio on—but mostly it’s conversation.”

That companionship, Rod believes, is an under-recognized benefit of ridesharing. He says, “A lot of people focus on the cost savings, and those are important—I hear that CommuteInfo sees a rise in registrations when gas prices go up. Ridesharing also saves wear and tear on cars, lets you use the HOV lane, and helps cut our dependency on fossil fuels.

“But I think it’s the give-and-take, the company, that matters most. You get to know people, and it makes the commute go quickly—a 35-minute ride can feel like 5 minutes. I hope CommuteInfo grows so more and more people can find matches. It’s a real win-win.”

CommuteInfo is a program of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, operated in partnership with transportation management associations, transportation providers, businesses and non-profit service organizations throughout Southwestern PA. The CommuteInfo program is designed to serve commuters and employers as a clearinghouse for information about transit, carpooling, and vanpooling. The program serves employers and commuters in Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington, and Westmoreland counties.

For more information about CommuteInfo and commuter alternatives, please visit [www.commuteinfo.org](http://www.commuteinfo.org), or call toll free 1-888-819-6110. For more information, please call Lisa Kay Schweyer, SPC CommuteInfo Program Developer, at 412.391.5590 x375.

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