

Naval Support Activity Bethesda Commuter News

Important Events

July 2011

July 25

-Zip Code Get Together

Ridesharing Matching

Building 1 Room 1643

1400

SmartBenefit Program on the Horizon

The days of standing in line to pick up transit benefit fare cards are about to come to a close. The DoD will be transitioning to the SmartBenefits program operated by WMATA on Nov 1 to electronically distribute transit benefits.

The SmartBenefits program is a web based program that allows participants to assign a dollar amount directly to a SmarTrip card or to direct funds to a non SmarTrip enabled provider such as MARC, VRE or MTA Com-muter Buses.

Participants will need to follow these steps before Oct 15:

- Obtain a SmarTrip Card
- Register card with WMATA and create a using the name that appears on your CAC card.
- Link SmarTrip card with the MTBP program at the WHS application page.
- Submit claim to WHS from the MTBP page by the Oct 15 for Nov benefits.

- Continue to submit a recurring claim once a month by the 15th for the following month's benefit.

For more information please visit this site set up by WHS with step by step instructions:

[SmartBenefits Step By Step Instructions](#)



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Every Choice Counts—MARC Train

This is part of the 'Every Choice Counts' series that details mass transit experiences in the National Capital Area.

For this month's edition, we will detail the experience of Pete Keener of NAVFAC who tried out the MARC train in the afternoon rush hour.

At 1530, Pete leaves Bldg 14 and walks to the Medical Center Metro Station. The metro trains operate every 5-10 minutes, he arrives at the Rockville Metro in time to pick up the MARC Brunswick Line train at 1602. At 1700 the train pulls into the station in Brunswick.

From Pete's point of view, the fellow commuters on the train are friendly and the environment is comfortable. The conductors do a

good job of keeping the stops short in an effort to ensure the train remains on schedule.

When temperatures rise above 80 degrees the trains slow down due to heat restrictions. Pete does not mind the slow down as the train offers him a chance to complete work for the day, sleep or read a book. He mentions that his commute allows him to arrive home relaxed, refreshed and ready to enjoy the evening.

Have you tried an alternative commuting method? Email me and I will include your experience in an upcoming issue.



Road & Construction Update

Finishing touches are underway at North Gate. . .

- On, or about, Jul 18 vehicular and pedestrian traffic will revert to the newly constructed roadway, sidewalk and ID checkpoints at South Gate. Please use caution with this new traffic pattern.
- ADA improvements will continue on Brown Drive during the week of Jul 11—Jul 15. In this phase of the project the sidewalks and curb cuts along Brown Drive on the East side of the walkway will be redone. Additionally, the stairs up to Building 9 from Brown Drive will be closed. Phases will continue for several weeks heading North On Brown Drive ending at North Palmer/Brown Drive intersection. Please be aware of changing pedestrian and vehicle patterns.
- When driving along Gunnel Rd to reach the NEX Gate, please use courtesy and permit vehicles to exit from the Medical Swing Space and McDonald's parking lot..
- Construction work at the North Palmer Rd and Brown Dr intersection will shift to the North side of the intersection on, or about, Thurs, Jul 14. Work will end on, or about, Sun Jul 31. During that time work will be done to better align the intersection. A temporary pedestrian walkway to Building 11 and 62 will be put in place in the "Q" lot.
- A crane lift is tentatively scheduled for Jul 23 for the Healing Garden Project on the roof of Bldg 10.
- To avoid congestion, try to exit NSA Bethesda using one of the gates on Jones Bridge Rd. The outbound hours of operation include:
 - NEX Gate: (Gate 3) = 0500-1900
 - Navy Lodge (Gate 4)= 1400-1800
 - University Gate (Gate 5)= 1430-1800

Parking Facilities in Bethesda



As an alternative to parking at Metro stations, staff could park in Downtown Bethesda and catch the red line to Medical Center Metrorail. Active duty military and civilians could apply for the transit benefit to pay for the metrorail costs.

Parking is available at many locations in downtown Bethesda. Many of the sites are within close proximity to mass transit options that will connect you to the NSA Bethesda installation.

The cost for parking is \$140 per month or .75 cents for per hour for long term parking. Parking can be paid for with cash, cell phone, cash key or you can park at a garage with an attendant.

For a complete listing of parking in Bethesda please visit this site:

<http://www.downtownbethesda.com/guide/parking.php>

Commuter Questions? Please email me at ryan.emery@med.navy.mil

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