

PORTLAND SAFOOT

*PDX's 10-minute newsmagazine
about buses, bikes & low-car life*



October 2011:

THE SHARING ISSUE

- a **Zipcar** in every driveway
- a **concert** in every streetcar
- a **tenant** in every bedroom
- a **full moon** on every commute



1

Good news

A group of young transit pros turned downtown Portland into a **rolling, all-night music festival** Sept. 19 by recruiting 9 local bands to play one-hour sets on 9 Portland Streetcars. It's "**the Sunday Parkways of transit**," city streetcar manager Art Pearce said; he's hoping for an annual tradition.

WHY IT MATTERS

The city closed streets five Sundays this summer to remind people how great bikes and skates can be. With Streetcar preparing to **leave the Free Rail Zone**, rail believers are increasingly eager to make mass transit fun, too.

CONCERT PHOTOS & VIDEO

<http://pdx.be/MobileMusicFest>

2

Tack attack

Did somebody declare war on bikes on N Williams and Vancouver? **Small, sharp metal tacks were repeatedly scattered in the lanes** of the city's #1 bikeway, BikePortland.org reported Sept. 16 & 20. The site reported at least 17 victims. "Dear tack person," one rider wrote. Our "clients, students, patients and coworkers" shouldn't "be inconvenienced because you think we should be driving. **I don't slash SUV tires.**"

HOW TO FIX A FLAT

<http://pdx.be/PatchItUp>

3

TriMet Tuesdays

That's the new nickname for the days when Multnomah County courts are swamped by **hundreds of MAX riders nabbed for fare-jumping** under TriMet's tough new enforcement policy, KATU reported Sept. 7. Overwhelmed, judges will **reduce**

the fine of anyone who pleads guilty from \$175 to \$50. Pretty good deal ... for the sort of fare-jumpers who can get off work.

TRIMET'S FINE REVENUE

<http://pdx.be/FaresPlease>

4

Flexible fare

Until Sept. 1, monthly TriMet passes expired on the last day of each month: bad news if your Social Security or paycheck arrives on the 4th or 5th. Enter **TriMet's new 30-day passes**, which cost the same and expire 30 days from purchase. Downside to this great new idea: You can **only buy the passes at Pioneer Courthouse Square downtown**. That didn't keep TriMet from selling more than 500 in 3 weeks. The agency aims to get them in all ticket machines in "a year or two." **P**

BEST PASSES FOR GUESTS

<http://pdx.be/PickMyPass>

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Your orient.

Street Talk

Five questions and someone worth asking

*In 2003, a Portland Housing Bureau representative walked into a meeting with a small nonprofit side project called Shared Housing, **determined to shut it down**. Then she met its new manager, Barbara Stone. Eight years later, steered by Stone's data-driven, ex-Intel practicality, Shared Housing is still **prescreening homeseekers and the owners of spare bedrooms** across the city and making matches for a one-time fee of \$10-\$50. We met Stone in her office at First Baptist Church to talk about **low-car home hunting** and **whether the Internet makes her obsolete**.*

OK, finish this: "We're Craigslist, but with..."

Supportive services. With Craigslist, there's no net. We're the net.

Good transit and bikeways are useless if you can't afford to live nearby. You guys seem like a solution.

If we have 200 people sharing housing, that's 200 less people who have to find new places to live, infrastructure, utilities. We're taking the burden off the infrastructure by a couple hundred people a year.

Who usually wants to rent out spare rooms?

Home providers are typically singles: divorced women, divorced men, widows, widowers. We have a lot of people that come to us in their 50s and 60s who say, "I looked on Craigslist, but everybody was looking for someone who looked like them."

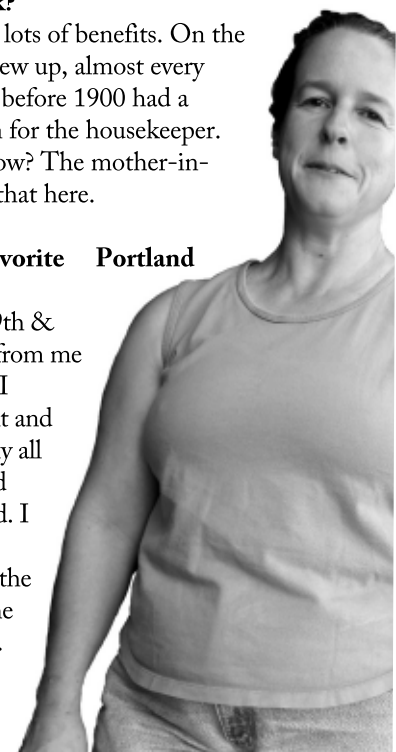
I'd go nuts without housemates. Is shared housing making a comeback?

I hope so. There are lots of benefits. On the east coast where I grew up, almost every house that was built before 1900 had a room off the kitchen for the housekeeper. What are they for now? The mother-in-law. We don't have that here.

What's your favorite Portland secret?

Director Park (SW 9th & Taylor) was a secret from me for the longest time. I watched it being built and just didn't get it. Why all this marble? I wanted grass. Then it opened. I love that park for the kids in the fountain, the kids playing chess, the ballet in the summer. It's a great place. **P**

Q&As edited for brevity. Get on Stone's list: pdx.be/ShackUp.



Barbara Stone
program manager,
Shared Housing

It'll be available everywhere.

Mountain View, Calif., is a South Bay city so committed to suburbia that zoning laws forbid homeowners from removing their garages. That makes it the kind of town that Zipcar, whose every vehicle must be driven about 6 hours a day in order to break even, can't penetrate. But personal carsharing startup Getaround is already thriving here – because private car owners don't need to pay for their cars entirely with sharing. They just want a little cash on the side. This is the promise of personal carsharing: it makes one-car households possible in any neighborhood. "It's going to allow carsharing to operate in much less dense areas," says Dave Brook, who invented commercial carsharing in Portland in 1998. "It changes the economics of the carsharing company." We asked three Getaround users in Mountain View how it works for them: pdx.be/HowsBusiness

Number of Zipcars in Mountain View

0

Number of Getaround cars

15



It'll turn every member into a marketer.

The best Getaround listing in Mountain View is probably for Brian Klug's black 2000 Civic coupe. He loans it for \$9 per hour plus gas:



"WARNING: THIS CAR WILL GET YOU LAID. Even if you are just renting the car for an hour or two for a business meeting while you are in town, you will somehow end up getting some p-tang out of the deal. ... Owner not responsible for any STDs you get while renting this vehicle – use condoms (two provided in the driver side door)."

Zipcar, eat your heart out.



Libertarians will love it.

There was an audible gasp when, during an Oregon House committee hearing last spring on personal carsharing, a surprise guest strode to the front of the room. It was John Charles of the Cascade Policy Institute, a Portland-based free-market think tank so committed to auto transportation that it sometimes sends people to observe little-used bike lanes, counting cyclists in order to ridicule their small numbers. Had he arrived to kill the carsharing bill? Charles began speaking almost shyly. "I wasn't actually going to testify," he explained.

"I'm waiting for another bill. But I'm fascinated by the whole conversation. ... Owners can get into business without years of delay. Owners can set their own rates based on the type of vehicle they have: \$10 an hour, \$8 an hour, \$50 an hour. ... Consenting adults can voluntarily engage in transactions where mutual gain is perceived. ... Wonderful concepts." Charles quietly left the stand. The bill passed 47-10.

It'll all depend on scoring a 'Carkit.'

Carkits are Getaround's name for the proprietary, user-installed boxes that allow keyless entry to private cars. Brook, now a carsharing consultant, estimates that once they're in production, each will cost \$400 to \$500. Getaround plans to give away 500 free; after that, they might sell carkits to users or award them to the car owners who build up the most impressive peer reviews on Getaround.com.

For car owners, Carkits will be the secret to steady revenue – the trick to becoming Kari Signor, who according to Getaround VP John Atcheson parked her Nissan Xterra in central San Francisco and is "basically living off her car income as she hikes around Peru," he said. "The latest word back was, 'I'm just going to keep doing this.'"

It'll include a hidden tax break.

Under Oregon law, you won't be allowed to earn more annually than your car costs to operate – that'd require a commercial insurance policy. But according to Portland accountant Emily Kingan, it'll be fine to deduct from your carsharing income the full IRS rate (currently 55.5¢) for each mile driven during carsharing ... even though, because the renter buys the gas, your true cost per mile is probably 11¢ or less. "Strange but true," Kingan said. Yes indeed; Brook backs her up.

It'll have emerged, once again, from the Northwest.

Just as commercial carsharing was created in the U.S. by a small for-profit, Dave Brook's Car Sharing Portland, personal carsharing owes much of its success so far to Seattle's Sightline Insitute, a small nonprofit that began championing the concept in 2006. Learn how they've quietly driven this idea to market (and how long it might be until it arrives in Portland) at pdx.be/CarsharingRoots.



It'll be a back door to usage-based insurance.

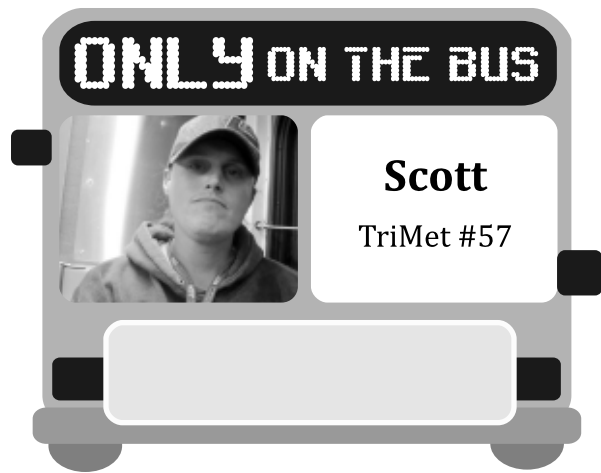
For years, usage-based auto insurance – paying by the mile or hour driven, not by the month – has been the sweetest dream of transportation wonks. But insurers have resisted. The solution? Carsharing. Insurance is paid by the hour, but negotiated in bulk. Getaround VP John Atcheson

said the firm put huge effort into persuading its insurer, Berkshire Hathaway, to charge Getaround based mostly on usage. Under Getaround's policy, a car borrower recives a perfect duplicate of the car owner's coverage – but doesn't pay a penny for it until she actually slips behind the wheel.



secrets from the future of carsharing

Peer-to-peer carsharing is ready to slice up car ownership by letting anybody turn their own car into a Zipcar. It's already shaking up San Francisco Bay ... and Portland could be next. We've got the country's first report from the ground.



He was just throwing a fit. We tried to clam him down for a good five minutes. We couldn't. He was mad because he wanted to play with his trucks.

Samuel's 2. I'm 34 – married 14 years. I'm an honored citizen, disabled. Fifteen years of boxing can give you rheumatoid arthritis.

It was about 4 o'clock, 3 o'clock in the afternoon, six months ago. My wife Christina and I had groceries from Fred Meyer. It was raining.

This bus driver – she's driven for us many times; about 50 with short blonde hair – she said she wouldn't leave the stop until we got off the bus.

We couldn't believe it. It's an eight-minute ride to our home on 170th. I ride this bus every day, and you're telling me because our kid's screaming and yelling, that you can't handle it because it's too loud for you to drive?

It's like, *you obviously have not had children*. Terrible twos.

Some of the other passengers vocally complained – a couple. They were middle-aged, probably about 43 or so, obviously *had* had children.

This line is notorious for drivers being very rushed. There's nothing but tension on this bus. I think they're just checking the clock, and I don't think they care that it says "publicly owned" on their license plate.

I just felt really discriminated. But we got off. What could we do?

We didn't think it was right, getting off in the rain like that.

My wife was going to take the bus

Driver, you obviously have not had children.

number down, but we didn't.

Editor's note: After a TriMet driver reportedly confronted Magdalena Rabadan on the 57 Sept. 29, asking her to silence her 2-year-old Jessica or get off the bus, several other riders got off the bus in protest. One contacted local TV, the story went national, and TriMet suspended the driver pending investigation. Not widely reported was the fact that

this violation of TriMet policy happens regularly. I rode the 57 one night after the story broke; Scott was the first person I interviewed. Two other riders said they'd seen similar incidents.

Think TriMet's driver training needs an update? Think bus operators need less time pressure? Write comments@trimet.org. 

Electronic mail.

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