

PORTLAND AFOOT

*PDX's 10-minute newsmagazine
on buses, bikes, and low-car life*



July 2011:

THE
TRAVEL
ISSUE



1 Foot bill

The leftward crook in pedestrians' necks relaxed June 23, when Gov. Kitzhaber signed a bill clarifying that Oregonians are "in" crosswalks **as soon as their feet, canes, leashed pets or bike wheels enter the road.** Striding directly into traffic: still illegal. But now you won't have to wait until you're in harm's way to get the right to cross.

WHY IT MATTERS

2011's legislative session came out **fine for bikes and feet** (PDX bike advocate Steve Bozzone: "We aimed low"), **awful for buses and trains.** High schoolers lost free passes, and thousands of workers lost a 30% subsidy for their employers' transit benefits. Uh-oh.

EMPLOYERS LOSING SUBSIDIES

<http://pdx.be/FullPricePass>

2 Don't jump now

Fare enforcement is on the rebound. TriMet will add **six more full-time inspectors in mid-July**, bringing its total to 11 – still less than half of the 24 who served in 2010. Fare checkers, who earn \$67,000 and up, cost TriMet money because few fare-jumpers pay their tickets. But General Manager Neil McFarlane said he's **worried riders will get used to cheating unless they get checked more often.** TriMet's 64% drop in fare enforcement last winter was first reported in our March cover story and picked up by other outlets.

TRIMET: 6% OF RIDERS JUMP

<http://pdx.be/FareJumping>

3 Amtrak hikes

The main downside of living on **one of the nation's best Amtrak lines** is that eventually, everybody notices. With ridership on the Eugene-to-BC *Cascades* line setting a new record every few

months, the State of Washington has been jacking up fares: ***Cascades* ticket prices are up 13% in 18 months**, capped by a 4% hike June 7. The bright side: The cost of driving a car is up 30 percent, from 16 to 21 cents per mile. "We fully expect to be breaking more records," WSDOT's spokeswoman said.

HOW AMTRAK SETS FARES

<http://pdx.be/CascadesCosts>

4 Good news

Eighteen months after Oregon **banned handheld cell phones behind the wheel**, the City of Portland is sending out the first regular police patrols to hand out tickets, *The Oregonian* reported June 27. The fact that texting while driving is as bad as driving drunk "doesn't stick unless it's matched with **a little bite from police**," Utah psychologist David Strayer told the *O*.

STRAYER'S RESEARCH

<http://pdx.be/DontPickUp>

Street Talk Five questions and someone worth asking

*Russ and Laura were driving through the California redwoods on their **post-college Kerouackian road trip** when Russ saw a trail of cyclists along the highway. "Who the hell is that?" he said. Then: "That looks like fun." A few years later, the pair are on their second bike-powered trek across the country: this time with a mission to blog up a storm about **putting bicycles on long-distance trains**. Before they left, we caught the pair at a Pearl coffee shop to talk about **bike hooks** and **bluffing Bromptons onto airplanes**.*

You're blogging about bikes and Amtrak why?

L: The more we started getting on and off trains, the more we realized that getting on and off a train with a full-size bike is completely absurd. It's never something anybody has planned for. It feels like some afterthought. **R:** We assumed it'd be easier in Portland. Then we saw the hooks. That assumes a certain kind of rider – young and fit. **L:** The bikes need to get to the table now. Not after the fact – that's when you end up with hooks on trains.

But why are bikes important?

R: We had a reader who phrased it perfectly: bikes and trains are like the peanut butter and chocolate of transportation. Let's say for example, Klamath Falls. It's a nice little town, but unless you bring your own transportation with you, there's no way to get around. There's no bus system, no taxi.

People go nuts for trains. What is it about them?

L: I hadn't flown in eight years and I recently had to. It was so jarring. I'm in this metal box climbing through the sky at 700 mph. How did this become normal? No wonder people feel jetlag. Your guardian angel or whatever can't fly that fast.

How much do those folding bikes cost?

R: \$900 to \$1700. But when you think about the cost of flying a bike, it's between \$100 and \$200 each way. *[see starboard wing of cover story –Ed.]* There's a little bit of Jedi mind trip at the airport. The second somebody hears "bike," they're like, "cha-ching!" So we're like, "It's not a bike, it's a luggage carrier." It actually is true!

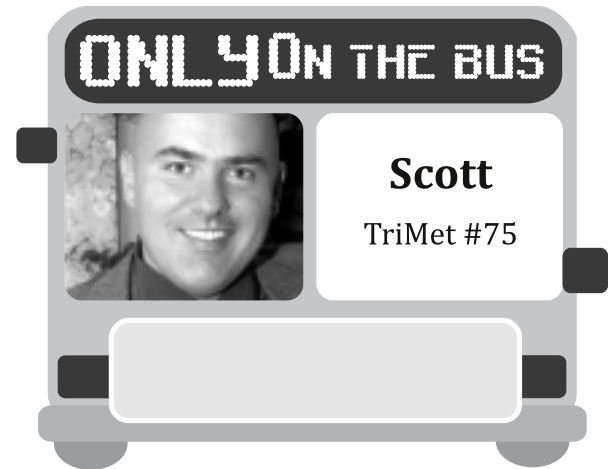
What's your favorite Portland secret?

L: That Portland used to be not-so-perfect. Since the city is thought of as Mecca, I find it really heartening – it wasn't born that way, but rather worked hard to become the sort of place people wanted. Kind of like Chattanooga – used to be the most polluted city in America, now renowned for outdoor access.

Russ and Laura hit the road in late June. Follow their trip at <http://pathlesspedaled.com> or facebook.com/pathlesspedaled.



Russ Roca & Laura Crawford
chief adventurers
PathLessPedaled.com



Editor's note

This month's "Only on the Bus" is by Scott Tienken, a Portland writer whose new novel, *Mass Transportation*, is set entirely on the 75.

We think this is as awesome as you do. Look for our full feature on Tienken in the August issue.

I mean, it's human nature to examine anything relatively out of the ordinary.

Eight of us were still ramming it north on the majestic northbound 75-Milwaukie to St Johns this morning. Most everyone had been dumped out at Hollywood TC or Killingsworth, leaving four of us rush-hour regulars in our comfortable/semi-comfortable/befogged prep-zone pre-work. The other four people I did not recognize.

There is a 4-6 plex on the east side of NE 42nd, near N Columbia, that is one of the worst bits of housing in the city. Very, very small shotgun style, plywood over windows, swampy front-yard, wind-blasted, warped front walls, plastic for windows.

Don't see how they pass any kind of code.

Anyway, we were blasting towards this plex and the regulars know the apartments are coming because you can see people's heads turn to check them out.

I mean, it is human nature to examine anything relatively out of the ordinary. The trick is not bringing judgement or voyeurism to the table. Still, it is not easy to be unemotional/non-political/un-concerned when you see this plex.

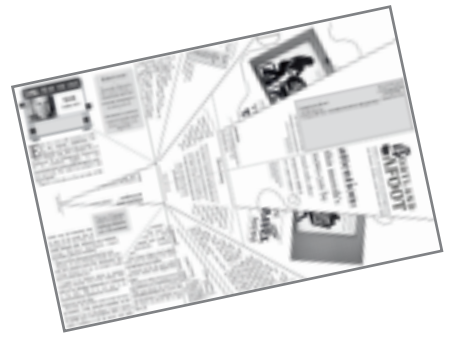
That said, we get there and for the first time all winter, I saw someone standing in the doorway of one of the plexes. It was a woman of middle age in her bathrobe with a cup of coffee, looking at all the geese and gulls overhead. This part of town is a major flyway and really a dramatically beautiful area.

Out of pure chance she looked down as I was looking at her and we had direct eye contact.

I pointed to the sky and smiled and she smiled and flapped her wings.

Excerpt from Mass Transportation first published on TriMetDiaries.com. What's your favorite bus story? Write michael@portlandafoot.org or just call 503-On-A-Bus-1. Storytellers get a gift card to our favorite bar or coffee shop.

How to fold it.



1 • Flip inside page sideways, so the crosswalk guy is in the upper right, and fold in half lengthwise so you can see "Only on the Bus," then unfold again.

2 • Fold along the dashed lines so the upper corners meet.



3 • Fold the top triangle towards you. There should be a solid line along the fold on the reverse side.



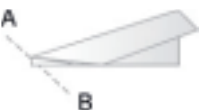
4 • Fold the uppermost corners down again, creasing along the dashed lines. This time, leave a gap at the top of the sheet, so the corners meet in the center of the short



5 • Fold back the short tip of the little triangle. You should have a house-like shape, with the eaves tapering downward on each side.



6 • Turn the piece on its side and fold it in half. The triangular tip you just folded back becomes a tab on the bottom edge, holding the corners in place.



7 • Fold down each wing along the dashed line, leaving a stubby nose in the front.



8 • When throwing your airplane, angle it slightly upward and grip it (this is important) about 4/5 of the way to the nose – further than you'd expect. Happy summertime, Portland.

Though a pair of bicycle manufacturers named Wright once found some pretty useful applications for folded paper airplanes, this one is just for fun. (And information, of course.) Design and images from the indispensable Alex's Paper Airplanes at paperairplanes.co.uk.

(tip: before folding, look for the dashed lines)



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BLOCK PARTY

----- 7/21/11 -----



When 6-8 p.m. Thursday, July 21

Where Valentine's at 232 SW Ankeny downtown, on PDX's first pedestrian-only street.

Who The savviest, sexiest crowd of low-car-life-lovers this side of Gibraltar.

What Free food, cool drinks, raffle and that sweet new haircut of yours. No cover, bring friends: pdx.be/RSVP2011. 

Oregon Department of Transportation



the Portland MERCURY

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On the line *A great idea within one block of a TriMet stop* -----

The Spot Vance Park disc golf course

The Lines Bus 82. But it's an easy 4-minute bike ride or 12-minute walk from the Blue Line's 181st Avenue stop.

The Times Dawn to dusk daily.

The Link pdx.be/VanceParkGolf

The Skinny Disc golf is a hobby that operates on urban secrets: "Did you hear?" "Have you seen?" And it's hard to see the nine-hole course tucked among the Douglas firs at the back of Gresham's Vance Park if you don't know what to look for.

As one of two disc courses within a half-mile of each other in urban midcounty – the other is in Rockwood Central Park on SE Main – there's a steady but manageable stream of players lazily tossing their way through on a weekend day. Vance's



*Vance Park disc golf course
1400 SE 182nd Ave.*

claim to fame, other than its easy access by bike and transit, is the thatch of branchless trunks that complicate the curve of every shot.

You probably won't see handmade posters pleading for help in solving a recent murder near other Portland disc golf courses, most of them off the beaten path. But Vance Park itself is a neighborhood gem, with many families on the nearby playground and a coffee-crepes-and-wifi shop open

until 3 p.m. daily just north of the park.

The three languages of laughter our reporter heard on a Sunday afternoon visit were just an added bonus. 

Got a spot? Send your nominations to michael@portlandafot.org.

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Looking east.

Getting around east county isn't easy. Getting good information about making east county better? That's even harder. Thanks to a \$5,000 grant from the Meyer Memorial Trust, Portland Afoot will be helping fix this.

We're teaming up with OPAL, the city's leading transit advocates, to offer up to 200 free subscriptions to politically engaged East Portlanders. We'll be producing a smaller, free, East Portland edition of our newsmagazine to distribute at 20 east-side locations. We're even hiring a paid intern; see pdx.be/MeyerIntern.

This means we're on the hunt for good stories east of 82nd Avenue – especially parts of the bike, foot, bus and rail network that need fixing. If you know a busted sidewalk or rotten corner, call 503-On-A-Bus-1 or write michael@portlandafot.org. We're on the case.

The country's bike-friendliest major airport

photo: Michael Schoenholtz



We'll give you one guess. Okay, we're biased. But calls to the 40 busiest U.S. airports turned up exactly one with a dedicated bicycle assembly station – and it's conveniently located at the last stop on the Red Line. The double clamp is free. So are the tools you can borrow from the information desk. Portland International is also one of seven major airports that offer dedicated bikeways directly to the terminal. The others: San Diego, Salt Lake City, Oakland, Seattle, Minneapolis

(one of two terminals) and D.C.'s Reagan National. Our publicly owned airport knew it was breaking boundaries when it installed the clamp last year. "We have gotten a fair amount of publicity," said Rachel Wray, PDX's enironmental outreach manager. "Bike tourism is a big part of northwest Oregon and southwest Washington."

"Connections to and from airports are usually enormously expensive and benefit a relatively small percent of the population," transit writer Yonah Freemark said. Still, transit builders clearly love airports. When Minneapolis and Seattle built light rail, the airport was their very first stop. In interviews, airport spokespeople – Salt Lake City, Indianapolis, Oakland – often scrambled to tell us about the new rail lines that'll run to their airport in a few years. Maybe the real goal is to convince wealthy business types to support transit politically, Freemark writes. Here's another trend we saw: if an airport spokesperson doesn't even know whether the airport has a bus connection to downtown, you're probably in the South. Nashville, Orlando, Cincinnati and Honolulu failed that low-car-literacy test. Then there was Memphis, one of two major U.S. airports that doesn't have public transit at all. "We have the same type of ground transportation you would find at most large airports: rental cars, taxis," spokeswoman Janice Young said. "Some people rent limos." Sorry, Janice – your information is out of date. Maybe it's time to do a little traveling. 🚲

Public transit connections at top 40 US airports

no public transit

Detroit (DTW)
Newark (EWR)
Oakland (OAK)
Orlando (MCO)
Tampa (TPA)

transfer required to downtown

Atlanta (ATL)
Baltimore (BWI)
Boston (BOS) *
Chicago (MDW, ORD)
Cleveland (CLE)
Minneapolis (MSP)

rapid, light or commuter rail

* or water taxi. awesome.

New York (LGA)
Philadelphia (PHL)
Portland (PDX)
San Francisco (SFO)
Seattle (SEA)
St. Louis (STL)
Washington (DCA)

just a bus

Charlotte (CLT)
Cincinnati (CVG)
Dallas (DFW)
Denver (DEN)
Fort Lauderdale (FLL)
Honolulu (HNL)
Houston (IAH)
Las Vegas (LAS)
Los Angeles (LAX)
Miami (MIA)
Nashville (BNA)
Salt Lake City (SLC)
San Diego (SAN)
Washington (IAD)

photo: Michael Schoenholtz



Flying with a bike: PDX's cheapest choices

Baggage fees shift a lot these days, but here's a snapshot of the current fees for checking a bicycle at the nine airlines that serve PDX. "Small bike" means 45 pounds (box included) & 60 linear inches (L+H+W) of packaging. "Big bike": 65 lbs., 70 inches. Internaltional fees differ. Doesn't count excess baggage fees if you have other luggage.

Airline	small bike	big bike
1 / Southwest	\$0	\$50
2 / United	\$0	forbidden!
3 / Frontier	\$20	\$95
4 / Alaska	\$20	\$120
5 / Continental	\$25	\$100
6 / American	\$25	\$150
7 / US Airways	\$25	\$200
8 / Air Canada*	\$50	\$50
9 / Delta	\$150	\$240

* pre-registration required. Space not guaranteed.

We're hiring.

The future of local journalism is going to be a lot of fun. Thanks to a grant from the Meyer Memorial Trust, we get to share it this fall with you or someone you know. We're recruiting a 14-time, \$500-a-month intern to beef up our coverage of East Portland and learn the ropes of modern web & print reporting. Apply by July 31 at pdx.be/MeyerIntern.

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