



Moving into the Future

*The Weekly Newsletter from America's Most Efficient
Suburban Transit Agency*

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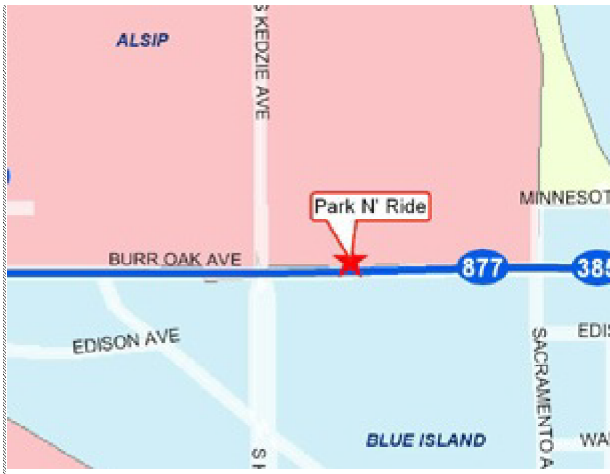
October 27, 2005

Pace is the suburban public transit agency for Chicagoland's six-county metropolitan region. As the 13th largest bus agency in the U.S., Pace operates fixed bus routes, vanpools and paratransit services in nearly 250 municipalities consisting of 5.2 million residents. Visit the [Route Finder](#) for bus route information.

CMAQ funding of web-based technology helps riders access information

While, in the past, Pace Suburban Bus has often funded new or expanded bus routes with federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program funding, the agency recently utilized money from this grant program for two creative projects that benefit both the agency and its riders.

The projects completed recently by Pace's Management Information Systems (MIS)



Pace's Web site can now map the locations of all park-n-ride locations, such as this one in Blue Island.

The projects completed recently by Pace's Management Information Systems (MIS) department allowed the agency to develop ways for those interested in Pace to find more accurate information more rapidly.

The [CMAQ program](#) is an initiative of the U.S. Department of Transportation that encourages transit agencies to develop programs designed to alleviate traffic congestion and ease air pollution by funding projects that encourage people to leave their vehicles at home and use public transit.

Readers of *Moving into the Future* already know about the new [Vanpool Finder](#) feature on Pace's Web site. It allows for individuals to find existing vanpools within their communities that they may join to ease their daily commutes. The creation of the Vanpool Finder software and application was one of the CMAQ-funded projects implemented by MIS. "Much of the credit for this website application goes to Senior GIS Programmer/Analyst Feng Gao," said Ed Miller, Section Manager of Geographic Information Systems. "The goal was to increase the visibility of the Pace Vanpool Program, which will increase the number of vans on the road and hopefully fill any vacancies that there may be within a current vanpool", Miller said.

The CMAQ grant was also instrumental in helping Pace's MIS team create an application that makes it easier for Web site visitors to use the [Park-N-Ride Locations](#) feature. Interested persons are able to access a region-wide, interactive map that allows them to zoom in on specific Park-N-Ride lots and perform searches for locations.

With additional funding, Pace can create even more technological advances to make public transportation easier and more attractive to use. "Currently we are trying to come up with technology to assist passengers in locating bus routes within municipalities or near landmarks," said Miller. While the agency is committed to innovative methods of delivering information to its passengers, investment in modern technology is instrumental to Pace's improvement of service to its customers.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

For those unable to drive a car, especially individuals with disabilities, public transportation is a critical link to employment, recreation, medical services and shopping. Pace Suburban Bus prides itself on focusing a greater percentage of its resources on this special-needs population than nearly any transit system in the country.

October is the National Disability Employment Awareness Month. This annual observance, designed to recognize the contributions of workers with disabilities, began in 1988 with the Presidential Proclamation of Public Law 100-630 (Title III, Sec 301a).

[Seguin Services, Inc.](#) is a prime example of an organization that could not serve the needs of its clients without Pace's transportation services.

Seguin owns 62 residential facilities in 21 different suburban communities. Individuals with disabilities use all forms of Pace's "family of services"--[fixed route buses](#), local [Dial-a-Ride programs](#), [ADA paratransit](#) and the [ADvAntage Vanpool program](#)--to travel to and from the Seguin facilities.

Pace would like to take this opportunity to recognize all the organizations and units of government with which it partners to provide such an expansive network of transportation. Without the support of organizations like these, thousands of people in northeastern Illinois would not be able to make their unique contributions to society that enrich the lives of all.

Pace asks business leaders for input at Southland Expo

At their exhibit this week at the Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce [Expo 2005](#), Pace is both looking for information and providing it. The suburban agency hopes business leaders can stop by to talk about the transportation needs of their organizations and communities. Pace staff will be on hand throughout the Expo being held on Thursday, October 27, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Tinley Park Convention Center.



Participation in the Southland Expo is only one example of the outreach activities taking place as part of Pace's latest service restructuring effort, the South Cook--Will Counties Initiative. The initiative, the most recent of many being undertaken as part of Pace's [Vision 2020 Plan](#), will take a close look at Pace service in south and southwest Cook County and Will County. Travel needs and customer and regional characteristics will be analyzed to develop a service plan that addresses the changes and growth that have taken place in the area.

Anyone stopping by the Pace exhibit can hear more about the Initiative and contribute their ideas. The business community plays a big role in helping Pace to identify what Pace Deputy Executive Director of Strategic Services, Michael Bolton describes as "unmet needs for accessibility to jobs, shopping, and healthcare for a significant number of people." Input from business leaders is critical for Pace to comprehensively understand and address local issues and concerns, since the majority of Pace's passengers use it to get to work.

"Moving into the Future" is a weekly newsletter provided by Pace Suburban Bus to update interested parties on the services Pace provides and the progress it makes to constantly improve. Forward to others as you wish. For best results, please print in landscape format. Please submit feedback or remove yourself from the mailing list by calling 847-228-2421 or e-mail your request to govt.affairs@pacebus.com.