

SNOQUALMIE VALLEY RECORD

Never been big on the bus: Public transport is, mysteriously, reserved for vacations

By [Carol Ladwig](#) • June 2, 2015 6:46 pm

Public transportation sounds so unglamorous, so sensible-shoes. So it's a riddle to me how I became such a stranger to it. I like practical things, and my stance on glamor is almost always the less the better, yet I have never been a reliable user of public buses, trains, etc.

Unless I'm on vacation, or my vehicle is in the shop, I'm in one of those single-occupant vehicles that traffic planners have nightmares about.

Of course, it's not practical for me to use public transportation these days, I tell myself. No, my schedule is too variable for me to have to rely on some fixed-schedule bus.

That argument is getting harder to justify than it used to be, for a couple of reasons. First, those little white Snoqualmie Valley Transportation buses are everywhere. I often meet them on the road as I drive to work, and even more often, I end up following one home at the end of a day. They're cute. They're also cheap — I think it's \$1 per trip — and kind of fun to ride. Every driver I've met on them is friendly and helpful, and I've gotten at least two story ideas from them.

Second, I have no problem using public trains and buses when I'm traveling, even when I'm using a different currency to pay my fare. To me, being on vacation means letting somebody else drive. The inconvenience of relying on someone else's schedule and figuring out the timetables is not nearly as hard as figuring out the streets of a new city, and, worse, parking there.

When I was a kid, I loved to take the train. We could switch seats, wander the aisles, and meet new people. In the car on family trips, we could sit, and complain about my Dad's music selections. Ever since getting my own driver's license, though, I hardly even think about how to get there, I just grab my keys and head out the door. Then, when I hear about state or county budget cuts that will make it even more difficult to use the handful of buses that still come to the Valley, I complain.

Now, for the second time in my recent memory, King County's Metro bus service has announced plans to increase bus service, which could improve things for Valley commuters. The changes start in September and none of them are actually in the Valley, but it could still be good news for those of you who brave the bus.

For the rest of us, the little white buses are still rolling, up and down the Valley every hour, with no signs of stopping. Even if I don't ride them more than once a year, it's nice to know they are there.