



Snoqualmie Valley Transportation
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Aug. 26, 2019

Valley students take free rides with SVT's Summer Freedom program, ending Aug. 30

Since starting its free rides for students program in June, Snoqualmie Valley Transportation has completed more than 1,100 trips for local schools' students. That's 1,100-plus trips to the lake, to skate parks and to other neighborhoods that parents didn't have to make, and that the SVT buses were going by every day, anyway.

Freeing up parents' time and increasing bus ridership, as well as exposing more young people to public transportation, were the goals successfully accomplished in SVT's first "Summer Freedom" campaign.

Student ridership in July was more than double June's number and kids are spreading the word to their friends through social media.

"We've already reached our highest student ridership ever, and summer isn't even over yet," said SVT Executive Director Amy Biggs, in early August.

The eligible kids, ages 10 to 18, have been making good use of the program, she added. "The drivers are telling me that they all know about it and it's making it really easy for them to get around."

Most of the students riding were from the upper Valley, although a lot of Duvall youth used the bus to get to Monroe's movie theater, too, staff said.

All of the SVT destinations were available to students. SVT routes, all with weekday-only service, include: Valley Shuttle, between North Bend and Duvall; Cedar Falls Loop, a fixed

route connecting downtown North Bend with the Wilderness Rim, Rattlesnake Lake and Riverbend communities; Downtown Loop, a fixed route connecting the downtown areas of Snoqualmie and North Bend; Ridge Loop, a fixed route connecting downtown Snoqualmie and the Ridge, with stops in historic downtown, Snoqualmie Ridge, Snoqualmie Valley Hospital and Snoqualmie Casino; Door-to-Door, the call-in-advance service throughout Snoqualmie Valley; Duvall-Monroe Shuttle, a fixed route connecting downtown Duvall and several locations in Monroe including Walmart, movie theaters, the YMCA and hospitals.

The best part of the program's success is that it will mean a continuation of free rides for students next year. Summer Freedom was launched as a pilot program which had to generate enough student ridership for it to become an annual event.

“We were happy to find such a strong response to the program and to meet the needs of so many students and parents this summer,” said Biggs. “We are looking forward to continuing Summer Freedom again next June.”

Summer Freedom ends Aug. 30, but students can continue to ride the bus, like any other passenger. Fares are \$1 for all routes except the Duvall-Monroe Shuttle, which has a fare of a \$1 suggested donation.

Learn more about SVT by calling 425-888-7001, or go online to www.svtbus.org.

About Snoqualmie Valley Transportation: Snoqualmie Valley Transportation (SVT) is a project of Mt. Si Senior Center. SVT began its services in 2003 with funding assistance from Snoqualmie Indian Tribe, King County Metro Transit, and the Washington State Department of Transportation. Learn more about the bus services and find maps and schedules at www.svtbus.org, or call 425-888-7001.