

Leaving driving to others becoming popular

By RICHARD LECH
Despite the gas crunch, most drivers continue to make the trip to work alone.
But would more drivers participate in car pools and van pools if they had the chance?
Recently, employees at 17 firms in the Big Beaver Corridor in Troy were asked that question in a survey by the Oakland County Road Commission. Close to 700 of the 7,000 employees surveyed said they were interested in some form of ridesharing.
At a Rochester firm, Computer Peripherals Inc., one-fourth of the employees said they would like to give ridesharing a try.
In both cases, the employees are in the process of setting up car pools and van pools.

These efforts, and others like them in southeastern Michigan, are being coordinated by the new RideMatch program of the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG).
The program has been in existence six months. So far some 100 firms and 2,300 individuals have participated, said Sandy Wigent, SEMCOG's ridesharing technical coordinator.
UNDER THE program, SEMCOG supplies ridesharing information and applications and helps set up ridesharing organizational meetings for companies and groups of companies. SEMCOG computers match potential poolmates for car pools and van pools.
"In a large sense, we're doing this for the good of the community," Ms. Wigent said. "Ridesharing reduces gas consumption, air pollution and traffic congestion."

It also saves the driver money, she said. The U.S. Department of Transportation recently estimated that switching from driving to van pooling can save a commuter from \$250 to \$1,000 a year in gasoline and expenses.
Then, too, ridesharing also has its pleasant side benefits. Leaving the driving to others gives plenty of opportunity for "a lot of sleeping, a lot of reading the paper and a lot of coffee-drinking," Ms. Wigent said.
But studies show that 70 percent of drivers still make the trek to work solo. One reason for that could be the drivers' reluctance to give up the independence and personal autonomy they have when behind the wheel of their own car.
"Definitely, I think that's a big factor," Ms. Wigent said. "That's something we accordingly address when we talk to big groups. Especially in the De-

Thursday, October 23, 1980

(WIS.T.S.F.) 11A

troit area, because the auto is so very important here."

A DRAWBACK to the use of company-owned vans has been employer worries about the cost of the van and insurance liability. James Barbaresso, Oakland County Road Commission planner in charge of the Big Beaver Road project, said that project was first proposed two years ago with the Kmart Corp. as the only participant. Kmart was selected for this test project because, with more than 3,000 employees, it is the largest employer in the area.
"Kmart's basic fear was one common among most employers — administrative time and cost involved, and also liability problems with company-owned vans," Barbaresso said. "They (Kmart) preferred to wait until something became available that better suited their needs."

The breakthrough, Barbaresso said, came earlier this year with the inauguration of RideMatch as well as the MichiVan statewide vanpooling program formed by the Michigan Department of Transportation. MichiVan, with vans provided by Chrysler Corp.'s Van Pool Services Inc., covers the insurance liability as a third-party between the company and the employees.
Since employees operate the van themselves (the driver rides for free, and gets use of the van on nights and weekends), the company has little in the way of administrative costs. RideMatch provided the applications and computer match-up to get the poolings started.
The road commission expanded its program to include not only Kmart but 17 other firms in the Big Beaver Road area.

NATURE'S IMAGE LANDSCAPING INC.

~~\$275.00~~

TAKE ADVANTAGE of this great opportunity to enjoy the elegance of mature shade trees.

3" - 4" DIAMETER - 15'-20' Ht.

NOW ONLY \$158 DELIVERED!

20 VARIETIES OF SHADE TREES
HUNDREDS OF PINE & SPRUCE

100 TO CHOOSE FROM. ALL TREES GUARANTEED.

*Inquire regarding additional discounts: wholesale, quantity, non-profit organizations, and residents having Dutch Elm.

OPEN SUNDAY!

TREE SUPPLY & TRANSPLANTING
"VISIT OUR 4 ACRE NURSERY"

528-0440

4210 ROCHESTER RD. • TROY • 1 BLOCK N. of WATTLES

WINTER WALDEN SKI CLUB

Teaching Kids to **SKI**

Saturday & Sunday Is Our Business

855-1075

WWW WWW WWW WWW

Whittier Towers
on the beautiful Detroit River

For Gracious Retirement

The new management of the Whittier Towers extends a personal invitation to You...

come visit us at
415 Burns Drive

More features than you can imagine, more reasonable than you would expect!

Rental Rates begin at \$285 monthly
call Lois Nair at—
(313) 823-6470 or 822-9000

- All apartments w/private bath
- Barber & Beauty Shop
- Registered Nurses
- Attended Garage
- Heated Pool
- Optional Maid Service
- Optional Meal Plan

...and much more!

A ministry of American Baptist Churches of Michigan

Signature Savings

30% and 40% off

beautiful collections from our favorite dressmaker

105.99 to 119.99
reg. 178.00 to 200.00

You'll recognize the pleats and all the delightful little touches in our charming collection of printed dresses with day into evening flexibility. For sizes 4 to 14.

174.99 to 258.99
reg. 250.00 to 380.00

From a designer famed for tucks, pleats and other dressmaker refinements, our exquisite collection of dresses to add romance to your days and nights. For sizes 4 to 12.

**Find Signature Savings selections all over Lord & Taylor.*

Do hurry in, not every style, in every color and size.

Lord & Taylor, Fairlane—call 330-3100;
Lakeside—call 247-4500; Twelve Oaks—call 348-3400;
Briarwood Mall—call 665-4500.
All open daily 10 to 9, Sunday 12 to 5.
Sale ends October 28