

### A Word From the Commuter Services Manager...

As I reflect on ways I can introduce simple changes to my life, the first thing that comes to mind with the warmer weather is walking instead of driving. Working in Flemington allows me to run errands by foot. It's a small change but beneficial to the environment, my finances and health.

I encourage you to consider a small change to your commuting or daily travel routine — try walking, bicycling, carpooling, vanpooling or using public transportation — just one or two days a week! If you know of someone that you could possibly share a ride to work with, ask him/her if they would like to carpool. If you're already in a carpool or a vanpool, invite a colleague to join the arrangement for a week, as a free trial. If you would like to carpool, but need to find a carpool mate, complete a "Share a Ride" application online at [www.hart-tma.com](http://www.hart-tma.com) and let HART help you.

And remember, HART supports alternative commuters with our Guaranteed Ride Home, Car Care, Bike Care and Empty Seat Subsidy programs- available to registered commuters who work in Hunterdon County. HART is available to assist you in finding ways to change from your traditional single occupancy vehicle commute. Visit us online at [www.hart-tma.com](http://www.hart-tma.com) or call **908-788-5553** for more information on assistance and programs.

Speaking of change, don't miss the article "Powered by Vegetable Oil" in this issue of "On the Road Again" featuring one of HART's registered commuters, Mark Seltzer, and the '97 Diesel Volkswagen Passat that he converted to run on alternative fuel. We might not make major transformations like Mark has, but consider starting small. **Happy Spring! joan**

### Powered by Vegetable Oil

Zippping down Routes 287, 78 or 202 you may have noticed a vehicle with a roof rack sign that says "Green Car: Powered by Vegetable Oil". If you have, that's Mark Seltzer, of Merck & Co., Inc. Mark is a system administrator supporting a divisional content management system. He commutes from Morristown to Whitehouse Station and registered his carpool with HART in February 2002.

In July of 2003, Mark purchased a 1997 Diesel Volkswagen Passat to convert into a vehicle powered by "corn oil" as an alternative fuel. Mark's interest sparked 2 years earlier while reading an article on "fryer oil" (waste cooking oil) in **Sierra Club** magazine. Not convinced that this was a viable option but more of a science experiment, the embers were fanned into flames after Mark listened to President Bush's 2003 state of the union address. Bush spoke of the possibility that children born today could be driving pollution free cars powered by hydrogen, however, Mark was inspired to seek out a more immediate alternative.

He ordered a conversion kit called "**GreaseCar**" that was acquired online. After a few weekends retrofitting the car to work on a corn oil system and overcoming some drawbacks, such as cold temperatures, the vehicle was fitted with a system that preheats the oil. "The system is comprised of a separate fuel tank, heated fuel lines and a heated fuel filter. Since there is a separate fuel tank, the technique is to start the car on diesel fuel for about 5-8 minutes, until the engine is to temperature and then use the excess heat from the engine (coolant system) to heat the

corn oil. Once the corn oil is a sufficient temperature it can be switched over and run full time on corn oil. The main emission from the tail pipe is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), the same gas we exhale. Since the vehicle runs on live plants, similar to the idea behind bio-mass, initial corn plants remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the environment, burning of the corn oil simply makes the net emissions zero," states Mark.

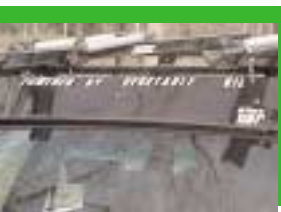
The "Green Car" uses waste oil primarily because it is environmentally more friendly than that of new vegetable oil and using waste oil is free. Mark currently gets his supply of used oil from a Chinese take-out restaurant in Morris County. When asked about cost Mark responds, "Well you have to consider all the costs to get involved in a project like this, but the main cost is time, however, the approximate cost for the conversion works out to around \$900.00". Now that he's getting 45-48-mpg compared to the 30-mpg he had, Mark has since sold that vehicle which is included in the total conversion costs. Ongoing expenses come from replacement filters that cost \$3 per 40 gallons of filtered oil.

Although there are no tax benefits to converting a diesel engine to run on corn oil, Mark continues to think of fun projects. His next project, perhaps converting a gas-guzzling monster, the "Suburban" diesel.

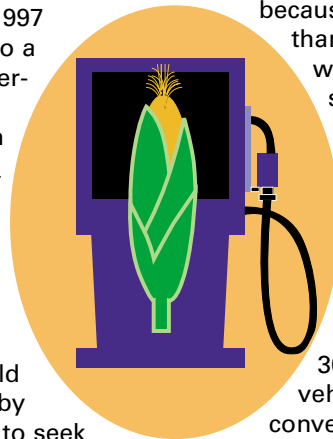
**If you would like to see Mark's Green Car, it will be on display at Merck West on April 20th & Merck WHS on April 23rd from 11:30-2:00 during HART's Transportation Fair.**



Mark Seltzer and his 1997 Volkswagen Passat "Green Car"



"Green Car: Powered by Vegetable Oil" advertisement



## Commuter Tax\$ave for State of New Jersey Workers

Introducing the NJ State Employees **Commuter Tax\$ave Program** – a new benefit program offered through TransitCenter, Inc., which helps employees of the State of New Jersey save on commuting expenses.

Whether you pay to ride the train, bus, or vanpool, **Commuter Tax\$ave** can save you money on commuting expenses. You could save up to \$444 or more a year by paying for commute expenses using a portion of your monthly salary before taxes are taken out (pre-tax).

To get more information or enroll, visit [www.mycommuter-taxsave.com](http://www.mycommuter-taxsave.com).

Or call toll free at **1-866-823-3248**.

## WELCOME!

HART welcomes **Automotive Service Centers** to our Car Care Program. The HART Car Care Program covers an Oil and Filter Service (5 quarts of oil) up to a cost of \$22.00 plus tax. *(Any additional costs due to make/model of your vehicle, special filter, special oil or other services performed are strictly your responsibility).* No appointment necessary. Present your ID card and the tear off coupon at the time of service. Automotive Service Centers is looking forward to serving

you at their full service auto maintenance and repair facility. If you are in a carpool and would like to register for free oil changes and car washes, click here: [www.hart-tma.com](http://www.hart-tma.com)

### Hours

Monday-Friday 7:30am to 6:00pm and Saturdays 7:30am to 3:00pm.

Automotive Service Centers is located at 382 Route 22 West, Whitehouse NJ, 908-534-3721.



## Rest The Car; Bike To Work May 21st

FLEMINGTON – Transportation advocates in Hunterdon and Somerset counties are encouraging commuters to give their cars a rest and bike to work. May 21, 2004 has been declared **"Bike to Work Day"** by each of the transportation management associations serving Hunterdon and Somerset counties – HART Commuter Information Services and Ridewise of Raritan Valley. Both non-profit organizations promote alternatives to single occupancy vehicle commuting as a way to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.

Ridewise of Raritan Valley, a subsidiary of the Somerset Business Partnership, has hosted a **"Bike to Work Day"** for several years. HART joins Ridewise this year making it the first coordinated effort to attract to both Hunterdon and Somerset commuters.

"Biking is a great option, especially in the warmer weather," says Cathy Taglienti, HART Information and Outreach Coordinator. "And, commuting by bike can also include riding a bike to the train station or to a park and ride," she adds.

"Hunterdon has always been very attractive to recreational cyclists. Our goal is to get people thinking of cycling as a commute option as well."

In order to be eligible to participate in "Bike to Work Day" in Hunterdon County, a commuter must:

- work or travel to public transportation within Hunterdon County
- pre-register with HART
- ride their bike to work or to transit on May 21, 2004.

Pre-registrations will be taken through May 19, 2004 on the HART website, [www.hart-tma.com](http://www.hart-tma.com) or for more information contact Cathy Taglienti by calling HART, **908-788-5553**. Bike to Work Day will be held rain or shine.

All Hunterdon County cyclists registered by May 19, 2004 will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win \$50 gift certificates from the following Hunterdon County bike shops: Freeman's Bike Shop, Garden State Bicycle, Pete's Bike & Fitness Shoppe and Clinton Bike Shop.

## Tired of Traffic? BE a TRAFFIC BUSTER!

Join commuters in Hunterdon and Somerset counties for Traffic Buster Day, Tuesday, June 15, 2004 who will carpool, bike, walk or take public transit to work instead of riding alone in their car.

Make a different choice for just one day and make a difference!

All you need to do is choose a new commute, pre-register with HART at [www.hart-tma.com](http://www.hart-tma.com) and then carpool, bike, walk, or take transit to work on June 15, 2004. All registrants will be entered into a drawing for prizes including pre paid gas cards, car washes, safety kits and more!

Need help? HART can help you find someone to ride with, find safe bike or pedestrian route or identify your transit options. Contact HART, **908-788-5553**.

**Special Corporate Challenge:** The company with the most alternative commuters (carpoolers\*, vanpoolers\*, bicyclists, walkers, transit users) on June 15, 2004 will receive a commuter lunch, compliments of HART. Call HART for details.

\* Excludes existing carpoolers/vanpoolers.

