

ITEM #4

Walk & Ride Challenge Overview

Bethesda, MD
Employee Walking/Transit Event



About Walk & Ride

- Teams of Montgomery County employees used pedometers to track their steps over the 3-week period in the fall, competing to see who could log the most steps to an online web site.
- Those who walked at least 25,000 steps per week were entered into a weekly drawing for a \$25 gift card to a local business.
- Those walking 50,000 steps were entered to win a new iPod Nano.
- Weekly Challenges to win \$25 gift cards to local businesses.



Pictured: Don Mooers Walking Team

- ❖ Team with highest average steps won \$100 Visa gift card & \$50 SmarTrip card
- ❖ Individual with highest steps also won \$100 Visa gift card & \$50 SmarTrip card

Goals

- Provide a fun event that promotes walking and the use of transit.
- Help Bethesda-based employees learn how easy it is to get in and around downtown areas on foot or by the use of transit instead of driving.
- Encourage team building among co-workers.
- Promote Bethesda businesses while developing relationships between TMD office and employers and employees.

Some Quick Stats

- In its first year, the Challenge was restricted to SuperFare Share companies, and registered just under 100 participants.
- In 2008, BTS opened up the competition to all Bethesda-based employees and saw a huge surge in participation, with a total of 400 registered participants.
- In 2009 and 2010, BTS teamed up with North Bethesda, and the two jurisdictions had increased participation of close to 550 registered participants.

2011 Registration

- Bethesda
- North Bethesda
- Silver Spring
- Friendship Heights

650 total participants

Marketing - Bethesda

- Logo and Flyer created (Handout)
- Email and targeted phone calls to employer contacts (TBCs)
- Highlighted on BTS website and events
- Article in e-Newsletters
- “BUPdates” to Board/Advisory Committee
- Bethesda Patch articles
- Street banner (Wisconsin and Woodmont Aves. in Bethesda)
- Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber “Member in the News” post in their e-Newsletter



Doing Business Since 1926



Marketing – North Bethesda

- Email blast to last year's participants
- Multiple e blasts to mailing lists
- Distributed flyers with cover letters to employer contacts
- Posted information on TMD website
- Promoted at employer events and other events
- Promoted at Community groups, such as the Advisory Committees, Citizens Advisory Boards, etc.
- Personal phone calls to select employer contacts

Marketing – Friendship Heights, Silver Spring

- Multiple e blasts to mailing lists
- Faxed, emailed, and mailed event flyers with cover letters to employer contacts
- Posted information on website
- Promoted event at employer events and other County events in those areas
- Promoted event at Community groups, such as the Advisory Committees, Citizens Advisory Boards, etc.



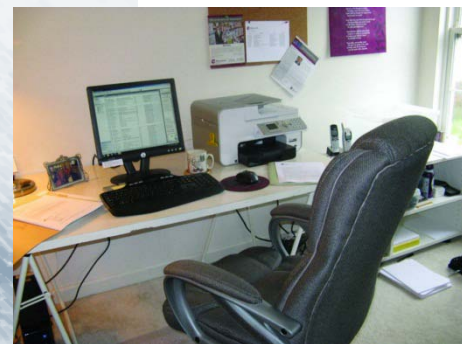
Bethesda Packet Hand Out

- Wednesday & Thursday, Veterans Park
- All teams sent a rep. to pick up packets containing t-shirt, pedometer, z-card map, other promo items
- BTS, transit, carpool, biking info on site along with BTS staff to answer questions
- “New teams” allowed to register during those days



Bethesda Photo Challenge

- Participants took pictures of non-SOV commutes
- Winner randomly selected, won \$25 gift card to local business
- All photos posted on Facebook with comments
- Photos and testimonials used for "BUPdates", newsletter profiles, personal stories to tell other commuters



Facebook Challenge Quotes:

- **Lee Ann Weir**

"Joining this challenge is making me **plan my commute** to work. I'm doing everything I can to **avoid driving** and its working!"

- **Naomi Schultheis**

"I have three goals: 1. To **learn new walking routes along my commute**, 2. To be a good representative of my age group (senior citizens :-)) and 3. To blow away the competition!"

- **Moyo Myers Ellis**

"I'm **seeing all sorts of businesses** I never noticed before as I'm walking around Bethesda"

- **McKenzie Midock**

"I rarely take lunch breaks, but am **enjoying a reason to get out and take a walk** or run some errands!"

Grand Prize Winners Event

- At winning team worksite (ASHP)
- Over 100 employees attended
- Partnered with Naked Pizza, new Bethesda restaurant
- Gift bags with gift cards for team members, gift basket and cards for individual



Post-Event Surveys

- Each year, we distribute a short 10-question survey via email to all participants.
- To encourage a higher response rate, we advertise a random drawing from all survey respondents for a prize - \$25 gift card to a local business.
- Responses help to determine changes for next year's Challenge.

Survey Responses

How would you rate your overall experience?

- 69% rated the Challenge as Excellent/Very Good (4 & 5 from 1-5)

How would you rate your overall likelihood to participate again?

- 64% definitely will/most likely will participate (4 & 5 from 1-5)

How would you rate the website?

- 81% rated the website very easy to use (4 & 5 from 1-5)

Survey Responses, Cont.

Where did you hear about the Walk & Ride Challenge?

The vast majority of respondents indicated they had heard of the Challenge through their **Transit Benefits Coordinators**, indicating an effective marketing strategy on the part of BTS staff.

Another significant source was other co-workers within their company.

Survey Responses, Cont.

Have you altered your commuting practices in any way (have you switched from driving to work to any alternative modes)?

- I am not driving to work. I'm taking the commuter bus and I love it.
- I now sometimes take metro, and every once in a while I commute with my neighbor.
- Now that I am familiar with a new route, I sometimes now choose to take Metro to work instead of driving.
- Occasionally carpool
- Considering taking metro instead of driving

Survey Responses, Cont.

The remaining questions were open-ended and do not lend themselves to charts. However, we did receive a number of extremely positive comments; below are a few of the best.

“I’m still wearing a pedometer and chart my steps every day. I’ve increased my walking by at least 3 times the amount I used to do.” --Ginanne I., B-CC Chamber

“I had more energy and lost several pounds.”
--Jen G., First Potomac Realty Trust

“I now bike to work, and find myself walking for pleasure and not just to get from A to B.” --Cy C., lululemon athletica

“I realized how many more steps you walk when you walk/metro to work rather than drive.” --Randi K., Reznick Group

Survey Responses, Cont.

- "I no longer drive to the commuter bus. I walk & take the closest local transit bus in Frederick." – Wendi J., DAI

"I take the metro more often." – Meiry R., Lerch, Early & Brewer

- "I lost 12 pounds!" – Elizabeth B., AGA

"I wanted to walk more, so it became like a healthy addiction." – Angie F., ICF Macro

- "It was just lots of FUN!" – Bernarda J., Lerch, Early & Brewer

Summary

Overall, we believe the Walk & Ride Challenge has been a huge success, widely loved and anticipated as an annual event.

A majority of survey respondents indicated they saw health benefits over the course of the program, have changed their commuting habits as a result, and will definitely participate next year.

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