

Getting Around: Stories on the Move

Beach Trolley

If you send forth a trolley, they will ride. That's the conclusion of Nancy Griner, of Edgewater — along with 3,999 other fares so far since Memorial Day weekend.

Griner and her husband, Norman, were enjoying a summer day at Calypso Bay Restaurant and Dock Bar in Tracys Landing when the sleek maroon-and-smoke trolley rolled by, bell ringing.

The Griners read about the trolley (www.beachtrolleyassociation.org) in Bay Weekly. Now they're satisfied riders, stepping off at Herrington Harbour North Marina to reclaim their auto following an afternoon at North Beach's Bay Fest.

"It's fun for a quarter," says Nancy.

"We did BayFest last year without the trolley, and I like it better with. You don't have to pay \$5 for parking," agrees John Belser, of Englewood, Florida, who, with his wife, Ina, shared the Griners' afternoon of fun. "It was only a dollar for all four of us."

BayFest was the foursome's second trolley trip. In July, they rode the trolley to hear the U.S. Naval Academy band Country Current play North Beach. That's nearly the full length of the weekend trolley's hour-long, horseshoe-shaped route, from Skipper's Pier in Deale to Rod 'n' Reel in Chesapeake Beach.

"It was fun both times and we'll do it again next year — a lot," says Ina Belser.

Mid-afternoon on the second-to-last Sunday of trolley season, eight of the nine riders were on board for the ride. Four more — Doris, Mary and Matthew Jones and Ruth Contee — were sightseers, adding a trolley ride to an afternoon at Bay Fest. Doris and Ruth, from Washington and Prince George's County, were down at the Bay for the day with Mary, who lives in Chesapeake Beach.

The ninth rider was a commuter, returning from work in Chesapeake Beach.

Two more climbed aboard as the Griner-Belser party dismounted, bringing driver Cleona Stevenson's day total to 74 — with five hours to go. Her busiest day was Saturday, Aug. 16, with 111 riders.

The Beach Business Group, which sponsors the trolley with contributions from businesses, plans to build on its inaugural success, seeking grants to add a second trolley, thus shortening the two-hour round trip.

"With a shorter turn-around, we hope to better serve seniors, children and people with handicaps, so we can be more of a benefit to the community than we already are," says trolley committee member Marilyn VanWagner.

—Sandra Olivetti Martin



Left row: Doris Jones, Mary Jones and Matthew Jones. Right row: Ruth Contee, Norman and Nancy Griner and John and Ina Belser all aboard the Beach Trolley.

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