

**From all of us at iTNSunCoast,
We wish you and your family very Happy Holidays!!**

Holiday Rides

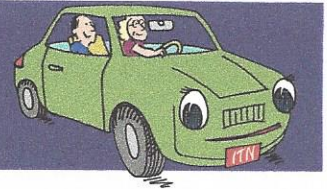
Thanks to the generosity of our volunteer and paid drivers, we will be providing rides on and over the upcoming holidays. In the spirit of meeting your transportation needs during this joyous time of year, please let us know as early as possible if you will need rides around Christmas, Chanukah, and New Years. Give us a call (941-364-7530) and put in early ride requests.

Holiday Office Hours

The iTNSunCoast office will be closed on Monday, December 26 and Monday, January 2 to celebrate Christmas and New Year's. We will be open normal office hours on Friday, December 23rd and 30th to take your ride requests for the following Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. Please remember that since we will be closed those two Mondays, ride requests for the two Tuesdays, December 27 and January 3, need to be made by 1 pm on the previous Fridays. Thank you for being sensitive to the desire by our incredible staff to enjoy the holidays themselves.

We Do Need Your Help!!

iTNSunCoast is a non-profit organization that relies on fundraising and grants to cover 40% of our annual budget. Unfortunately providing transportation services is expensive. We purposely keep our rates low in order to be affordable by as many people in our community as possible. Please help us continue to help you and remember us during this holiday season by making a contribution to iTNSunCoast.



Free Rides to Eye Appointments Both Ways in December

As you may know, for the past few years Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. has provided a generous grant to help cover the cost of iTN members' rides to eye appointments. The grant is for a specific amount of money on an annual basis. Since the number of eye appointment rides we provide varies from month to month, we periodically need to adjust what rides are covered to stay within the limits of the grant. The good news is that there are enough funds available so we can provide free rides both to and from eye appointments during the month of December. Happy Holidays!

Volunteer of the Year – Don Deibert

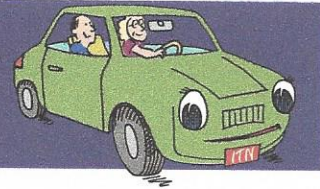
The Board of Directors has selected our 2016 Volunteer of the Year. While there are many deserving individuals, Don Deibert was chosen for the honor. Don has worked tirelessly for iTNSunCoast for the past several years. He has provided hundreds of rides and was elected to the Board of Directors in November, 2015. Once on the Board, Don became the Board's Treasurer and as of July 1 he began doing our bookkeeping. In addition, Don manages a small family foundation that has contributed to iTNSunCoast. Congratulations, Don! Thank you for all you do for iTNSunCoast!

A New Person in the iTNSunCoast Office

In response to an ever increasing number of ride requests, we have applied to AARP's Senior Community Service Employment Program for help. As the result, soon there may be a new addition to our iTNSunCoast office staff. We are hopeful that Susan and Jennifer will get some much needed help within the next few weeks. So, do not be surprised if you hear a new voice on the phone when you give us a call.

Car Donations

Do you have a car in the garage that is costing you money to register, insure and maintain and that you almost never use? iTNSunCoast accepts car donations and takes care of all the details. We will pick up your car and make arrangements for its sale. You can use the value of your vehicle as a tax deduction and/or put part of the proceeds in your iTNSunCoast account to cover the cost of future rides. You can also give credits to a family member or friend or donate to our Road Scholar program. For more information, call Arthur at the iTNSunCoast office.



Rate Increase Beginning January 1

Operating in the non-profit world is very challenging. We exist to serve the community and are proud of and inspired by our mission to provide you with much needed and appreciated transportation services. We are more than a taxi or uber. We provide a very different service. We are your neighbors and, for many of you, part of your extended family. At the same time, we must be able to pay our bills in order to be able to continue to serve you.

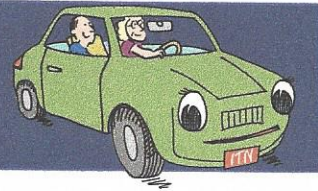
Almost two years ago, our Board of Directors reduced the cost of our rides by nearly 50%. This was done so that our services would be affordable by as many members of the community as possible. While it has been a bit of a struggle, we have gotten by due to the generosity of many area residents. At the same time, in Sarasota and Manatee Counties there are many unmet needs, worthwhile causes, and tremendous competition for foundation grants and donations, while expenses continue to rise. In response to these circumstances, the iTNSunCoast Board of Directors has decided to modestly increase our charges. Even with these increases, our rates are still below what we charged for rides in 2014.

Effective January 1, 2017, the iTNSunCoast rates are as follows. The ride pickup charge will increase from \$2.50 to \$3.00 and the charge per mile will increase from \$1.50 per mile to \$1.75 per mile. Please call our office if you have any questions about these changes.

“Let’s Go!” – Phone Survey

In response to numerous requests from our riders and in an effort to become less dependent on fundraising and grant writing, we will launch a new service in early 2017. Let’s Go! will provide rides to selected shopping, educational, entertainment, sightseeing and dining locations on a set schedule. You will be picked up at your home, share the ride with a few others, go to the specified destination, and be given a ride home at the time set on the schedule. By having a few people share the ride, we can offer this service at a very reasonable cost. This is a great opportunity to get out and enjoy what our wonderful area has to offer.

Over the next few weeks, we will be calling some of our iTNSunCoast members to ask a few questions so we can refine what Let’s Go! will look like. Where would you like to go? How long would you like to stay? How likely are you to take advantage of this service? Questions like that. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.



Friendly Reminders

- iTNSunCoast office hours are 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, Monday thru Friday. If you call us after 2 pm, we will get back to you the following day.
- You may request a ride for any reason, on any day of the week including weekends, at any time of the day or night to anywhere within Sarasota and Manatee Counties. **Please make your ride request by noon the day before you want a ride.**
- **When you call to make a ride request, please be prepared to give us your pickup and destination addresses and the times when you want to get picked up for both portions of your travels.**
- You now have the option of submitting ride requests through email instead of giving us a call. Requests should be sent to Jennifer at jennifer.edwards@itnsuncoast.org.
- You are welcome to have friends join you for rides to wherever you want to go. Your friends do not have to be iTNSunCoast members and there will be an additional charge of \$2.50 per person per ride.
- You may request rides for friends to visit you at your home. In this case, we will charge you, our member, the regular fare for the ride requested and it will be up to you to collect the charge or not from your friend.

Thank you for being a member/supporter of iTNSunCoast!!

Arthur Lerman, Executive Director
Susan Shaw, Executive Assistant
Jennifer Edwards, Dispatcher