

Norbert Sorg
Microsoft
Vanpooler



Norbert Sorg has been using an alternative commute to get to Microsoft for the past 13 years. For 5 of those years, he bused to work every day. When he moved, he lost his convenient bus route. His new route included a badly timed transfer, but Norbert stuck with the bus until he was able to help organize a vanpool.

Norbert's vanpool has the nickname "The Fresh Crappies." The van passes a local fish supplier every morning and night. Every day there are signs announcing fresh salmon, fresh crab, fresh halibut, etc. One day the sign read fresh crappies, and the curious vanpool riders had to look up this fish no one had heard of.

The van's motto is "no crappie left behind," and vanpool riders leverage an internal Microsoft website to track who is riding in the morning and in the evening. There are more riders than seats in the van, and Norbert and his fellow riders make sure that everyone has a ride home in the evening if the van fills up.

Norbert estimates that the van's use of HOV lanes saves 2 hours a day on the 35-mile round trip route. "I cannot stress enough what a huge benefit it is to be in a van. The unexpected benefit is the great rapport all the riders have with one another." Norbert says the van is a great place to exchange information: who knows a good plumber, where's a reliable place to have your car repaired, who at work might help with a particular challenge, etc. Norbert is known for the great recipes he shares with fellow riders.

Norbert was nominated by three different colleagues who cited the many volunteer hours he's put in over the years: as bookkeeper, making sure mileage logs are up to date, making sure the van doesn't get oversubscribed. It's Norbert's dedication to keeping the fresh crappies rolling that makes him a 2008 Commute Champion.