

NOTE FROM WALT

So, it is Friday and my gal and I want to go out. We hop in the old truck and drive to our favorite restaurant. To buy the wine by the glass would be logical, but only if we were planning one glass each. So we split a bottle instead and enjoy ourselves eating and drinking. We know better than to have an after dinner drink, because that bottle of wine has already put us close the legal limit, if not temporarily over. We like to dance, so we jump back in the truck and drive to a local bar where there is a band playing every Friday night. OK, so I'm not the best dancer in the place, but after a couple of beers, I am not paying much attention to who is looking and we proceed to get loose on the dance floor. By now the two of us are feeling no pain and we want to make one more stop on the way home, to socialize with old friends. I am trying to remember how many beers and what the time frame was: Let's see now, was that three beers and five dances or five beers and three dances? No problem though we started out several hours ago. Now what was that I learned in Defensive Driving Class? Three drinks an hour or four or five and stay under the legal limit? Not sure about that, but I am sure that I don't feel too drunk drive; so we motorize to the local watering hole and belly up to the bar, with the gang. Heaven forbid we get high enough try the Karaoke, for total embarrassment. By now, it is late and although I not so drunk that I fell off the bar stool, like the guy sitting beside me just did; but chances are we are both legally drunk, like two drinks ago. So what do we do now? Call for cab and leave the beloved truck in the parking lot all night? How many thieves are out there just waiting for that opportunity? Or cast fate to the wind and try to make the few miles home without getting busted, with a DWI, or worse?

Russian roulette via booze and vehicle? There has got to be a better way. So we tried starting out in a cab and after spending 50 bucks and hours waiting in the parking lot, we decided it just wasn't worth it and best to stay home with a bottle of wine and dance in front of the stereo. This is not very social, but a heck of a lot safer.

Meanwhile, I am thinking up this shuttle bus business. For starters, we should all leave the car in the driveway, so the bus and driver will have to pick up the customer at home and eventually return home. Low price will be a must if anyone is to take advantage, of the shuttle bus. People with a lot of money can afford to hire a driver. For safety and convenience, each bus must have an attendant, for making transactions, motivating people on and off the bus and cell phone communications. Now to make this logistically work I will need someone to answer the phone and dispatch the bus. Bus and customer location can be tracked on a computer, but this all means I will have to rent some office space. City of Houston will require licenses and permits. And of course there is going to be the insurance requirement and the ever rising cost of fuel.

Gee whiz, buses, drivers, attendants, dispatchers, computers, office space, mobile phones, licenses, permits, insurance, fuel costs; this idea, of mine, got expensive, in a big way. It is no wonder that there is no service like this available, for the average Joe, like me.

So, I put this shuttle bus idea on the back burner for a while; a long while. But after continued news of drunk driving casualties and hearing the many stories of what happens after a DWI conviction (it is true, in Texas, you can't afford a DWI); I decided to reconsider, with one of those "where there is a will there must be a way" attitudes. Bottom line is that the only way to make this work financially will be for the restaurants and bars to help pay the expenses. After all, they are the ones with most to gain, considering increased business and sales. Not to mention liability reduction for over serving

a customer, that tries to drive afterwards. I mean bottom line, in that if the neighborhood establishments don't contribute, this will be a very short endeavor, considering my currently limited resources.

My plan is to sell advertising space on the outside of the buses, as wraps on each window and inside the bus, as signs front to back. The prices for these advertisements are based on the fact that the outside window skins will be highly visible to all and the inside signs will be for the individual customer to see and maybe help to decide where to go for the evening.

I am also hopeful to get support (financial or otherwise), from the people and other establishments, of the area of operations. This one of the few businesses that I know of, that can directly reduce drunk driving in our neighborhood. I think this is a worthy cause and otherwise I would not go the trouble and expense, of this endeavor. Should this shuttle bus business save just one life, it would most likely be the life of your neighbor, or your family, or maybe even your own. The area of operations is intentionally small for starters. With increased funds, I plan to buy more buses and hire more drivers and attendants, so as to double and double again the area of operations. The Willowbrook Mall area, of NW Houston is the trial area. Should the operation work there; I see no reason why I can't make it operational for other areas in Houston; like the Galleria, Uptown or the Village. Of course my goal is to have an impact everywhere, that the shuttle bus business can eliminate drunk driving. So remember: "Don't Drink and Drive, Call WALT inc." and make this world a little bit safer for all.

Walt Zaneck