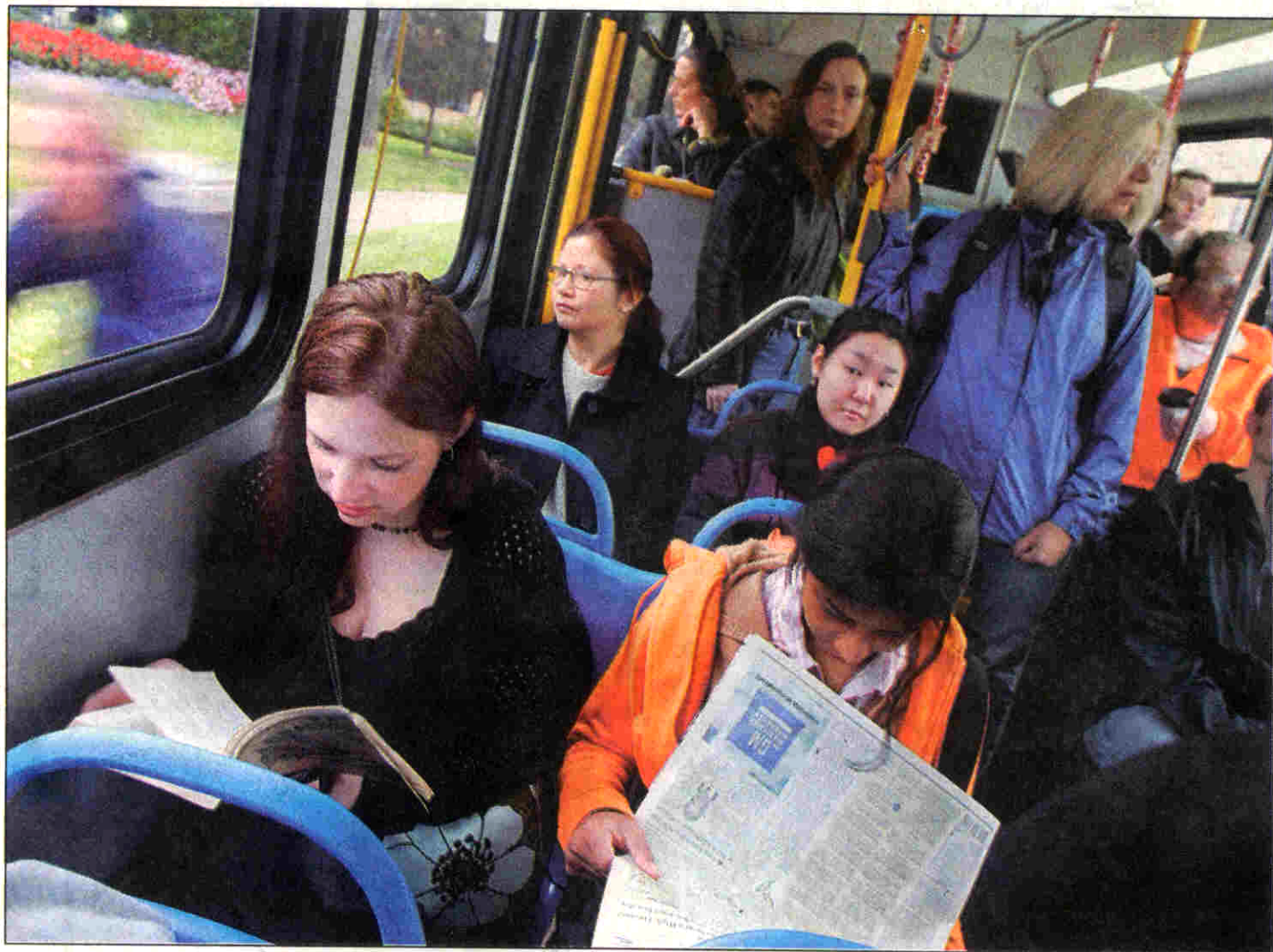


## City woman gives up her car for 2 weeks during Car-Free Challenge



Photos by CRAIG SCHREINER — State Journal

Mackenzie Dunn, left, rides a crowded Metro Transit bus down Williamson Street to work Friday in Madison.

# Going without

By SANDY CULLEN  
scullen@madison.com  
608-252-6137

Giving up her car for a week wasn't too bad for Mackenzie Dunn — except for the large bottle of liquid laundry soap she had to lug for eight blocks.

"That wasn't so fun," said Dunn, 29, one of hundreds of Dane County residents participating in the fourth annual Car-Free Challenge, an event designed to raise awareness of the environmental, financial and social costs of driving solo, as well as the economic and health benefits of using other ways to get around.

All that's asked of participants in the two-week challenge, which runs through Thursday, is that they make one less car trip per week. But Dunn is taking the challenge much further.

The single mom was selected by the Madison Environmental Group to receive \$360 — the average household cost of owning and operating an average car for two weeks — in exchange for not using her car at all for those two weeks. The



Mackenzie Dunn, left, boards the bus that will take her to work Friday. Dunn is participating in the fourth annual Car-Free Challenge, in which participants make one less car trip per week. She is going an extra step, giving up her car entirely for two weeks in exchange for \$360 from the Madison Environmental Group and Community Car.

Please see WITHOUT, Page C3

# Without

Continued from Page C1

money was provided by the group, which developed the Car-Free Challenge, and Community Car, a Madison organization whose members share automobiles.

Participants in last year's two-week Car-Free Challenge drove a total of 52,191 fewer miles, saving 2,088 gallons of gasoline and eliminating 21 tons of carbon dioxide emissions, the environmental group said.

Dunn said she just didn't think ahead when she used a Community Car during her lunch hour one day last week to run some errands and returned with a 100-ounce bottle of laundry detergent.

"It was on sale," said Dunn, who didn't realize the weight of her action until she left work for the day and took a Metro Transit bus from Downtown to Lapham School on the East Side to pick up her 5-year-old son for their 20-minute walk home.

But that hasn't deterred Dunn, who is considering giving up her own car for good in an effort to save money, natural resources and the environment.

"I really hope to live without one," Dunn said.

An interior designer at Destree Designs, Dunn said the \$400 a month she would save on the car payment, insurance and gas for her 2001 Prism — she bought it in a "hail sale" in 2002 — would help pay off debts and make it easier to make ends meet each month.

"It's tight," Dunn said. "That's about half my rent."

Dunn estimates she already is saving \$250 a month in gas alone after moving to the East Side from rural Mount Horeb to eliminate the commute to her job.

Plus, Dunn said, cutting out

## Car costs

Monthly average costs of owning and driving a car:

Expense	Older	New
Car payment	\$0	\$353
Gas	\$50	\$84
Insurance	\$55	\$80
Maintenance	\$46	\$41
Parking	\$13	\$26
Monthly total	\$164	\$584
<b>Total annual costs</b>	<b>\$1,968</b>	<b>\$7,008</b>

SOURCE: Community Car

## Get involved

To sign up for the Car-Free Challenge, call 280-0800 or go to [www.carfreechallenge.com](http://www.carfreechallenge.com)

her commute to work gives her two hours more a day to spend with her son, Matthew, who started kindergarten this year. And she doesn't have to worry about travel delays caused by bad weather.

"Commuting by bus is really easy for me," said Dunn, who has a bus stop just down the street from her apartment. "The walk home with Matthew is really nice."

One potential pitfall is having to walk the eight blocks home in bad weather because Metro buses do not run crosswise on the Isthmus, Dunn said. But she is willing to take a bus with Matthew back Downtown then catch a transfer home, or take the Community Car from her office to get Matthew's car seat from home, pick him up at school and drive him back to her office and catch a bus home from Downtown.

Along with saving money, Dunn said, her desire to be car-free is fueled by her increased awareness of the toll car travel is taking on the environment and the rate at which natural resources are being depleted.

"I don't want to contribute to that," she said, adding, "I want to teach my son to live without being a burden on them as well."