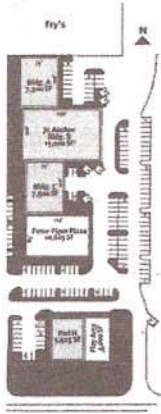


## Shuttle launches

By Shelley Gillespie



In 1972, Ruby restaurants are priced, casual establishments tizers, burgers, saks, chicken, y also have a beers, wines, here is also the up feature for locations are izona.

zza, founded in local Phoenix is a leading entertainment he Southwest. ractive games, air hockey, aster rides, and children, they both birthdays re new facility 10,625 square

Peter Piper, d among the zza restaurant United States. c., the parent operates 41 staurants and 4 restaurants, 1 Mexico.

With gas prices hovering around \$3.00 per gallon and long commutes on SR 347 testing people's patience, the new Maricopa Shuttle and Limo Service offers an antidote to frustrating drives to work. Launched on April 16, the new venture for Udo and Sylvia Obieka has scheduled multiple daily runs, which will leave Maricopa every 25 minutes during rush hours, to the Pecos Park/40<sup>th</sup> Street Park and Ride (\$6 each way), Ahwatukee, Tempe, Chandler, West Mesa and downtown Phoenix. Charges for these destinations vary from \$8 to \$11 each way. The service will also provide regular runs and pickups to Sky Harbor Airport for \$25 each way.

Since the shuttles will deliver passengers to within 3-4 blocks of major downtown Phoenix locations, Fillmore, Washington, and Jefferson streets, most downtown commuters will have a short walk to work. Otherwise, the drop-off locations Obieka has arranged will put people at easy connections to Phoenix transit options. (See the Website at [www.valleymetro.org](http://www.valleymetro.org) for those schedules.)

With the comfort of two 11-person vans, as well as a Lincoln Navigator SUV that seats six, the Maricopa Shuttle will remove people from the stressful concentration on the highway and allow them to get to their destination or transit connection a little more rested or prepared for their day. He also suggests that people who would like to



save round trips driving their children to schools elsewhere could also utilize the shuttle service.

Udo Obieka, also known as "Mr. Peace" since his name means "peace" in his native Ibo language, had worked for the Los Angeles MTA until a back injury forced him to retire. Since his wife "Kelechi," known by her English name, Sylvia, had three sisters living in Chandler, they decided that Arizona and, specifically Maricopa, would be "a good place to raise their children," Angel, almost three, and Audrey, 16 months old.

Taking a look at how much time people were spending on the highway, it was an easy leap to decide on starting a shuttle business. Now, they must "educate" people about their service, which will run seven days a week, currently on a 4:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. schedule. Their office in the Red Barn will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Monday through Friday, with weekend hours of 12:00 noon

to 5:00 p.m.

The Obiekas are eager to service people going to destinations such as Intel and will offer discounted fares if at least five people are commuting together. Since destinations can be arranged door-to-door in the cities it will serve, the Maricopa Shuttle offers flexibility to the time-crunched commuter.

Obieka has four well-qualified drivers who will all have the required Homeland Security clearance for pickups at the Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport. He is insured for more than the required amount of insurance for each vehicle and each of his vehicles is under warranty. Progressive in his approach, Obieka hopes to establish a Maricopa Park and Ride location for his patrons, perhaps with the city's assistance, to get people off the roads.

Maricopa Shuttle can be reached at (877) 568-0123 or (520) 568-0123. A quick call and Maricopa commuters can be on their way, saving gas and patience.