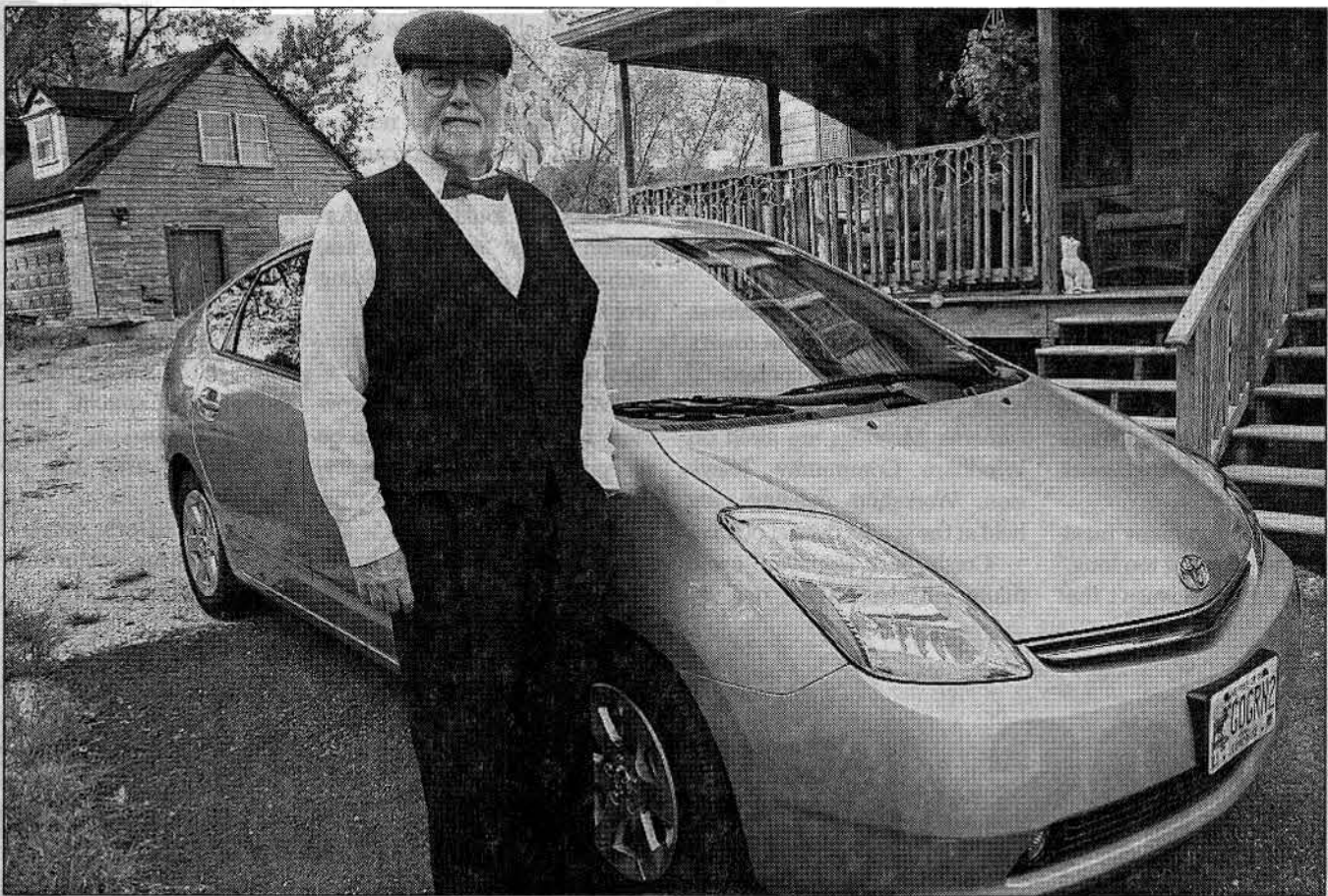


## New business model



Observer/Darrell Halen

Frank Flanagan chauffeurs his customers to and from the airport with a Toyota Prius, an eco-friendly hybrid car.

# Go Green gets thumbs up

## Environmentally friendly airport shuttle helps reduce CO2

BY DARRELL HALEN

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**E**laine Graham has enjoyed using Go Green Airport Shuttle, a company that uses hybrid cars to provide “environmentally conscious” transportation to its passengers.

Graham, along with her husband, Jim, used the private car service from their Salem home to Logan Airport in Boston and back, likes that the company’s owner, Frank Flanagan, is taking action against global warming.

“We all have to start playing a part in it,” said Graham, who made a two-day trip to New York City. “I think it’s an awesome idea that he’s doing.”

Carbon dioxide emissions contribute to global warming. Flanagan, who started his Pelham-based private car service in July, currently uses two Toyota Prius hybrids.

Each car uses an electric motor, which is CO2 free, and a very small gasoline engine, creating a “gentle” CO2 footprint, Flanagan said.

While the average car is designed to get about 300 miles to a tank of gas, he said, the tank of a Prius is still more than half full after 300 miles.

“We, as individuals, can only do small things. We have no delusions of grandeur,” Flanagan said. “We hope to get other people thinking of global warming.”

Flanagan owns the company with his wife, Judith, who does the bookkeeping; son, Frank III, who also drives; and Frank’s wife, Pam, who serves as the reservation agent. They employ a part-time driver.

“We’ll take anyone anywhere they want to go,” said Flanagan, after recently returning from a trip, wearing a black vest and slacks, a red bow tie and a traditional New England chauffeur’s cap.

Graham found Go Green through a newspaper advertisement. Impressed with Flanagan’s professionalism, clean car and the smooth ride he provided, Graham has already made plans to have Flanagan pick up her and her husband when they fly back from Florida in December.

“I loved his service,” said Graham, who travels frequently. “I loved that he was so professional.”

And she liked that Flanagan – holding a sign at the airport when they returned – was easy to find. Sometimes,

she said, the couple has had to search for their driver.

The Grahams have had bad experiences with other companies, she said. During one trip, the car’s transmission failed and the couple had to urge the driver to have another car come. They made it to the airport with 15 minutes to spare.

When they used another limousine service, the driver dropped their daughter’s bag. A bottle of Irish whiskey broke, destroying gifts in the bag.

“I like to talk and he kept up with me,” Graham said of Flanagan. “The whole trip was a pleasant experience.”

Flanagan, a retired marketing executive who used to fly frequently, calls he and his son former “road warriors.”

“We had an idea, we had a feel for what was uncomfortable,” he said. “Both of us used these types of car services.”

Flanagan, who runs his company out of his Valley Hill Road home, said each car can hold four passengers. He hopes to add a hybrid minivan to his fleet.

The vehicles have jacks that passengers can plug mp3 players into, and there are video players that hang

on back seats. There’s lots of head and leg room and space for luggage, Flanagan said.

Go Green charges by the trip, not per passenger. A trip from Salem, Pelham or Windham to Logan Airport or the airport in Manchester cost \$52 for up to four people.

Flanagan tells people through his company’s brochure that if they want to keep a large amount of CO2 gases from escaping into the atmosphere, they should plant a tree.

“A lot of people don’t know this, but the trunk of the tree is 70 percent CO2. So when the tree grows, it stores the CO2,” Flanagan said. “And when it dies ... it falls over and slowly rots into the ground, it releases that CO2 at a very slow pace.”

Almost every passenger asks Flanagan about the car and how good the gas mileage is. It’s usually the topic of conversation for the first 15 minutes of the trip.

“Most of the people who get into the car compliment us, (say) this is the right thing to do,” he said.

For more information on the business, call 635-4270 or visit [gogreenairportshuttle.com](http://gogreenairportshuttle.com).