

## New hybrid buses in service on Gallatin Road

The Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) fleet is becoming greener. Six new 60-foot, articulated hybrid

service.

“When the first bus left for downtown, I jumped on and rode the bus to Music City Central,” said passenger Dave Miller, who is retired and lives in Gallatin. “The ride was exceptional on the way down...I was surprised at the comfort and smoothness of the vehicle, much better than I expected, and certainly far superior to the Las Vegas Max I rode last year.”

These buses operate with an alternate fuel system and possess the latest in passenger features, and should help to alleviate the standing-room only issue on some of MTA’s

most popular routes. They will save about 35 percent in fuel and 25 percent in maintenance costs. Made by North American Bus Industries (NABI), the new

*continued on page 2*



*Nashville Mayor Karl Dean boards the first hybrid bus put into service.*

buses have been added to the fleet. On April 14, Nashville Mayor Karl Dean, MTA Board members, transit supporters and several others took a ride on one of the new buses as they were officially put into

## Legislation will help establish dedicated transit funding

More funding could be coming to state transit systems following the May 20 passage of transit enabling legislation during the 106th Tennessee General Assembly.

The legislation, which is in response to the growing need to provide more resources for public transportation throughout Tennessee, gives local regional transportation authorities the ability to dedicate a source of local/regional revenue to transit.

“This vote is a historic step for public transportation in our area,” Nashville MTA CEO Paul J. Ballard said. “Dedicated funding is a key component to building a more successful regional transportation

*continued on page 3*

## Mayor delivers State of Metro Address at Music City Central

Nashville Mayor Karl Dean delivered the 46th Annual State of Metro Address April 23 on the plaza at Music City Central. The Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) proudly hosted the historic annual event at its new transit center on Charlotte Avenue.

During his speech, Mayor Dean addressed four areas of focus for this year, which included the importance of mass transportation and the environment.

“This facility we are at today is a great example of the direction our city needs to be headed,” Dean said. “To your right, you can see three of the six new hybrid buses that have just been added to MTA’s fleet. This fall, they will be used, along with other infrastructure improvements, to begin Bus

*continued on page 4*



*The 46th Annual State of Metro Address took place on the new Music City Central plaza.*

## Hybrid buses

continued from page 1

technology is ideal for regular route and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) applications.

“These environmentally-friendly buses are a part of our commitment to growing



Nashville Mayor Karl Dean and MTA Board Chair Gail Carr Williams take a ride on the new hybrid bus.

public transit in Nashville,” MTA CEO Paul J. Ballard said. “The buses offer the latest in passenger comfort and amenities as well as help the environment by using less fuel since they are hybrids. We are excited to get them into service and will use them for

the initial phase of a planned Bus Rapid Transit project this fall.”

MTA put the six new buses into service on route 26 Gallatin Road, which will become Nashville’s first BRT when other hybrid buses arrive and other infrastructure improvements are made along the corridor such as traffic signal light extenders, and new bus shelters.

The open design of these buses and the wider aisles give riders a more spacious feel. Plus, all of the new buses are ADA-compliant and equipped with bike racks.

The six buses were purchased with Metro funds. Additional hybrid buses will be purchased with transit stimulus funds later this year for the planned BRT project along Gallatin Road.

“The addition of six new hybrid buses to MTA’s fleet is a positive step forward for public transit in our city, both

environmentally and in terms of enhancing service,” Dean said. “We need to do all we can to encourage more people to ride the bus, and hybrids, which are lower to the ground and much quieter than traditional buses, will certainly help do that.”

## The Nashville MTA is Going Green.



Six new 60-foot Articulated Hybrid buses have been added to the fleet.

### Features of the new buses include:

- Ample seating for 62 passengers with plenty of room for additional standing passengers (total capacity: 100)
- Wider aisles give riders a more spacious feel
- Low-floor kneeling bus with no steps makes boarding and exiting easier
- ADA-compliant
- Reduced exterior noise levels
- Uses an alternate fuel system (diesel-electric) requiring less fill-ups
- Ideal for regular route and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) applications
- Cummins ISL engine
- GM-Allison EP50 two-mode compound split hybrid drive



For more information, visit our Web site at [www.NashvilleMTA.org](http://www.NashvilleMTA.org).

## Passenger Miller praises ride on new 60-foot hybrid bus

Excerpts of an email from passenger Dave Miller to *Tennessean* reporter Jenny Upchurch regarding the new 60-foot hybrid buses.

*I had promised myself a ride on the new bus, and fortunately I was at Walmart in Rivergate (April 14), where the bus was parked ready for its first run carrying passengers to Nashville. I was in fact, the first passenger on the new (hybrid BRT bus).*

*Being retired and living in Gallatin, I use the bus maybe once a month, just to go downtown and walk around and take photographs. The*



Dave Miller

*usual ride is noisy, cramped and very bumpy. These new hybrids are amazing, even better than the new BRT system they have in Las Vegas.*

*I compared the ride on this new BRT, to the same ride and perhaps even quieter than riding the London Underground trains.*

*Before coming to Nashville in the late 60's, London was my home, and I used public transport every day of my life, for work and pleasure. So as an avid public transport user from the past, my hopes are raised that Nashville will eventually get a World Class transit system for the benefit of the locals and tourists.*



*What a difference from the standard #26 buses these new buses are. In the future, I will probably only use these buses for my ventures into Nashville. What a difference it will make, especially for “us” seniors. Eighty cents to ride from Sam’s in Rivergate to the new Music City Central, (now) equipped with a Dunkin’ Donuts shop. A journey that will eventually take around 25 minutes for the ride, compared to the 45+ minute now. A great boon and a great deal for the general public and for us seniors to have access to Nashville.*

*Just think...\$1.60 round trip for me from Rivergate. No parking fee or problems finding parking downtown. Donuts at the end of the “rainbow” and a pleasant, quiet and comfortable ride.*

Dave Miller

# Ridership growing on Madison BusLink, Edmondson Pike Connector

Two new services that began on March 30 are off to a great start. BusLink in Madison recorded 747 passenger trips during the first month of service, and the new Route 72 Edmondson Pike Connector recorded 1,271 passenger trips during April. Both services are funded by new federal Jobs Access Reverse Commute grants.



BusLink is a brand-new project that provides on-demand service for the economical price of regular MTA bus fare.

Passengers needing a ride in the Madison area call 862-LINK (5465) up to two hours prior to when they want to be picked up and give the scheduler their pick-up and drop-off locations. The scheduler provides a pick-up window. Passengers then walk to their stop and wait for the BusLink van. For the return trip, they repeat the previous three steps.

For those passengers needing to travel outside of the BusLink zone, they can transfer to Route 26 Gallatin Road. Once each hour, BusLink has a scheduled connection with Route 26 in front of the Walgreens at Gallatin Road and Neely's Bend.

A special 14-passenger van with an environmental theme is being used for this pilot project, and the service is available from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays.

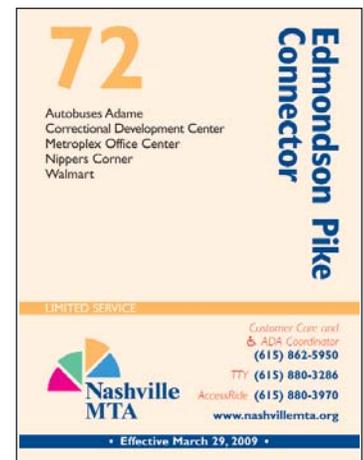
The 72 Edmondson Pike Connector is a new route along Edmondson Pike and Harding Place that connects to Route 12 Nolensville Road. Transfer points to Route 12 are located at the Walmart on Nolensville Road (to downtown) and on Nolensville Road at Welshwood (from downtown).

Other key points about the Route 72 Edmondson Pike Connector include:

- Provides service to the Edmondson Pike Library, Nippers Corner, Walmart (Nolensville Road and Harding Place) and the Metroplex Office Complex.

- Offers three trips during morning rush (6:15 to 8:15 a.m.); three midday trips (8:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.); three trips during afternoon rush (3:15 to 6:15 p.m.) and one evening trip (after 6:15 p.m.)

Cost for BusLink and Route 72 is the same as regular bus fare (\$1.60 for adults, 80 cents for seniors or people with disabilities, and \$1.05 for youth, ages 19 and younger), and all MTA ticket media are honored, including multi-ride tickets and passes.



## Legislation

*continued from page 1*

system, and this legislation helps transit agencies move forward toward establishing that funding. It will allow voters or local governing bodies to decide how to best fund public transportation so that we can create a stable and reliable source of funding for transit in Tennessee.”

Supporters of the legislation included: local governments throughout the greater Nashville Region and other large urban areas in Tennessee, Nashville MTA, Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Regional Transportation Authority, Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, Cumberland Region Tomorrow, and others.

## MTA, RTA announce plans for stimulus funds

The Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) and Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) have identified transit projects for funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

MTA projects include implementing the first phase of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), purchasing BRT vehicles, and starting building improvements while RTA projects include building a permanent station at Martha and rebuilding one of the Music City Star locomotives.

With the stimulus money, MTA plans to purchase three additional 60-foot hybrid buses and two 40-foot hybrid buses to be used for a new BRT service. These buses would help to provide a faster service along

Nashville's most congested traffic corridors. This project includes traffic signal light extenders and fare collection equipment.

In addition, MTA will use funds to begin renovation on its maintenance facility. The building was originally built as a B-1 Bomber wing production and assembly plant. The improvements will increase accessibility to our customers, the efficiency of vehicle movement and maintenance operations and also strengthen security.

Approximately \$1.2 million will go toward rebuilding one of the Music City Star locomotives and \$2 million toward building the permanent train station at Martha.



## State of Metro

continued from page 1

Rapid Transit service (BRT) along the busy Gallatin Road corridor. My goal is to expand BRT to the main thoroughfares throughout Davidson County.

“Gas prices are down from this time last year, but chances are not great that prices will stay low for long. MTA is still experiencing record



Guests on the plaza look on as Mayor Karl Dean delivers the 46th Annual State of Metro Address.

numbers of ridership. For economic and environmental reasons, we need to make mass transit a viable option for more people in our city, and Bus Rapid Transit is a step forward in that direction.

“To go even further in the area of mass transit, we need regional cooperation, and we’re making progress there, too,” Dean continued. “Legislation is moving through the General Assembly with support from all over the state that will enable local municipalities to create a dedicated revenue source for mass transit in our region.”

Vice Mayor Diane Neighbors, Metro Council Members, the Judiciary, other elected officials and the MTA Board of Directors were among those in attendance.

Prior to Dean’s speech, musical guest Keith Urban performed for the crowd.



Country star Keith Urban performs for the crowd prior to the Mayor’s State of Metro Address.

## News & Notes

### Regional Summit

Nashville MTA and RTA employees attended the “Convening the Region Summit” held on May 27 at the War Memorial Auditorium. Co-hosted by Cumberland Region Tomorrow, Nashville Mayor Karl Dean, the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Tennessee Department of Transportation, the summit focused on regional transportation issues, such as dedicated funding for public transportation.

### APTA Safety Award

In May, the Nashville MTA was awarded a Certificate of Special Achievement as part of the 2009 American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Safety Awards. This award is in recognition of notable achievement in bus management.

MTA’s nomination focused on a transmission lock key created to keep non-authorized users from operating a bus. The award was presented during the opening sessions of the annual APTA Bus and Paratransit Conference held in Seattle, Wash.

### International Roadeo

Bus operator Michael Hampton and the maintenance team of Roger Ketron, Charlie Patterson and Wade Scott participated in the APTA International Bus Roadeo in May in Seattle, Wash. Hampton competed in the 40-foot bus division.

### Fitness Center upgrades

The Fitness Center Committee for the Davidson Transit Organization (DTO) recently upgraded the company’s fitness center. The improvements include: an aerobics room; a spin room with four new spin bicycles; new free weights; a boxing center; and commercial grade cardio equipment.

Anyone interested in joining may pick up an application from Melissa Riley. Cost is \$5 per month.

### Newspapers for sale

The Nashville MTA entered into a partnership with *The Tennessean* and the *Nashville Pride* to have their newspapers available for purchase on MTA buses.

Cost for *The Tennessean* is 75 cents daily and \$1.75 on Sundays. The *Nashville Pride* is available for 50 cents. Customers wanting to purchase a newspaper tell the driver and pay for it at the fare box as they board.

### EasyRide partner

In April, Metro Medical Supply joined MTA’s EasyRide commuter benefit program. The company, which has 130 employees, has three locations: Church Street and Summit Medical Center (retail) and MetroCenter (headquarters).

### Earth Day Festival

The MTA once again joined Nashvillians celebrating the environment at Nashville Earth Day Festival activities on April 18 in Centennial Park.

MTA displayed one of its new 60-foot hybrid buses on-site to promote the use of public transit to help improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion.

## Staff Promotions

Employee	Position	Date
Peggy Chatman	Customer Care Representative to Customer Care Supervisor	2/1/09
Tiffany Buckley	Customer Care Representative to AccessRide Scheduler	3/9/09
Daniel Parker	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	3/15/09
Marcus Duncan	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	3/15/09
Mollie Yambrick	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	3/15/09
Connie Moore	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	3/15/09
James Gibson	Apprentice I to Apprentice II	3/23/09
Jackie Crum	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	4/19/09
Maurice Dennis	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	4/19/09
Wirt Grady	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	4/19/09
Jonathan Moorer	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	4/19/09
Charles Price	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	4/19/09
September Seals	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	4/19/09
Sherrol Johnson	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	4/19/09
William Crocker	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	4/19/09
Peter Tyminski	Vehicle Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator	4/27/09

## New Employees

As the MTA continues to grow, we would like to welcome our new employees.

Employee	Position	Date
Lester Owens	Music City Central Custodian	1/28/09
Mark Kupetz	Apprentice Mechanic	2/16/09
Ronald Johnson	Apprentice Mechanic	2/17/09
Cheri Burr	Human Resource Recruiter	3/2/09
John Sheffer	Apprentice Mechanic	3/2/09
Rosetta Truss	General Helper	3/30/09
Cynthia Barefield	General Helper	3/31/09
James Wilson Jr.	Vehicle Operator Trainee	4/22/09
Joseph Weekes	Vehicle Operator Trainee	4/22/09
David Newman	Vehicle Operator Trainee	4/22/09
Michael Bastin Sr.	Vehicle Operator Trainee	4/22/09
Jerome Bryant, Jr.	Vehicle Operator Trainee	4/22/09
Kenneth Godert	Vehicle Operator Trainee	4/22/09
Christina Hull	Vehicle Operator Trainee	4/22/09
Joseph Hofmann	Vehicle Operator Trainee	4/22/09

## Gone Fishing: MTA Retirees

The following employees have recently retired from the MTA. They are going to be missed, and we would like to extend them our best wishes.

Employee	Position	Date
Jerry Hollins	Repairman (21½ years of service)	2/1/09
David Johnson	Repairman (34 years of service)	4/1/09
Sadie DeMoss	Vehicle Operator (15 years of service)	5/1/09

## DTO elects new officers

The Davidson Transit Organization (DTO), the employment arm of the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), has elected new officers. They are as follows:

President: Bob Baulsir  
 Vice President: Jim McAteer  
 Secretary: Ed Oliphant  
 Member: Patricia Harris-Morehead

## Barrett celebrates 40 years with Nashville MTA

On May 18, Charlie Barrett celebrated his 40th anniversary with the company. He began his career at the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) on May 18, 1969 as a mechanic and is currently an "A" specialist working on the fare boxes.



Charlie Barrett recently celebrated 40 years of service with the Nashville MTA.

## Retirees recognized



MTA Chief Operating Officer Bob Baulsir (back, center) recognized DTO retirees during a retirement party held on May 13. Pictured from left to right are: (front row) Eddie Barnes, Judy Gower, Julia Latham, Sadie DeMoss, and David Johnson; (back row) Ernest Barnes, George Capshaw, William Godwin, Baulsir, Gerald Lilly, Joe Bilbrey and Larry Lane. Not pictured: Jerry Hollins.



130 Nestor Street  
Nashville, TN 37210-2124

Phone 615-862-5969  
Fax 615-862-6208

ADA Inquiry and  
Customer Care  
862-5950  
880-3286 (TTY)

Check our Web site at  
[www.nashvillemta.org](http://www.nashvillemta.org)

**Karl Dean**  
Mayor

**Board of Directors**  
**Gail Carr Williams**  
Chair

**William L. Barnes**  
Vice Chair

**Lewis Lavine**  
Member

**Thomas F. "Freddie"  
O'Connell**  
Member

**Marian T. Ott**  
Member

**Paul J. Ballard**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Newsletter Editorial Staff**

Editor-in-Chief/Writer  
**Patricia Harris-Morehead**

Managing Editor/Writer  
**Wendy Smith**

Graphic Designer  
**Richard Martin**

Editorial Assistance  
**Ellen Davis**  
**Jim McAteer**

Photography  
**Patricia Harris-Morehead**  
**Skip Hopkins**  
**Gary Layda**  
**Dave Miller**  
**Amber Thompson**

If you have suggestions for future  
articles, please submit them to  
the MTA communications office.



## DTO band Transit wins Corporate Band Challenge Group will perform at CMA Music Festival



*Vileta Phillips (right) listens as Dianne Hill performs a solo during the band challenge.*



*Cynthia Whitehead, James Dunn, Vileta Phillips and Dianne Hill perform.*



*Transit celebrates after winning the Music City Corporate Band Challenge.*

The Davidson Transit Organization (DTO) musical group Transit, featuring Priscilla Barcou, James Dunn, Dianne Hill, Vileta Phillips, John Scott and Cynthia Whitehead, won the Arts & Business Council of Greater Nashville's inaugural Music City Corporate Band Challenge in March.

They brought the house down with their medley of songs, including a jingle promoting MTA. And on June 13, they will perform at 11 a.m. on the Music City Zone Stage at the Metro Courthouse Public Square Park as part of the 2009 Country Music Association Music Festival.

To participate in the challenge, bands had to include at least one executive or management level employee, consist of a minimum of three and a maximum of 10 people and 50 percent of the band had to be employed with the company. No band member could be employed as a full-time musician.

Preliminary rounds of the Corporate Band Challenge were held in late February at Dan McGuinness Pub, Tin Roof and the Blue Bar. Out of 13 companies, seven advanced to the finals at Belmont University's Massey Performing Center.

The judges included: Tony Conway, Buddy Lee Attractions; Rod Essig, Creative Artist Agency; Tammy Genovese, Country Music Association; David Ross, Music Row Magazine; and Brad Schmitt, Channel 2 News.

Proceeds from the event went to benefit Belmont University's Mike Curb College of Entertainment & Business and the Art & Business Council's Community Engagement Programs.