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RTA launches iRider pages

The RTA communications team recently launched new “iRider” pages on the Music City Star Web site. Music City Star Riders are encouraged to send photos and stories about their train commute to share with the community. To submit a story or to read what your fellow passengers are saying, go to www.musiccitystar.org.



New express bus routes begin in Williamson, other nearby counties



The RTA expanded its regional bus service in December with the addition of new bus routes that operate into Williamson and other nearby counties.

Both routes are part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding RTA received for new regional bus service to Franklin, Brentwood, Spring Hill and Thompson’s Station. The routes operate during peak times and are similar to existing service to Gallatin and Murfreesboro.

Operated by Gray Line, buses for these routes can seat up to 56 passengers. Customers experience a more productive, less stressful commute while saving money on gas and helping the environment. Cost is \$3.50 per ride or \$60 for a 20-Ride pass.

To view the schedules for the new regional routes 91X and 95X, visit www.rtaretaxandride.com.

Kudos

Over the weekend, I rode the Music City Star for the first time and LOVED it!!! I live in Murfreesboro and drove to Lebanon to ride the Game-Day Express. The staff was very friendly; the ride was smooth and very punctual. It eliminated all of the hassle of fighting traffic and finding parking at the Titans game. I am now looking for other opportunities to ride the train since it was so much fun.

Although I realize this may not be easy to do, but I would love to see a route from Murfreesboro to Nashville. Thanks again for a great first time experience.

David Read
Murfreesboro

RTA friends:

Paula and I are back at it again. Friday night we took the Music City Star to the Christmas parade with some of our bicycling riding buds from Donelson/Hermitage. We really had a great time. Thank you for the complimentary hot chocolate and cider at the stationhouse. It really was great on such a cold night. Your staff’s hospitality was outstanding. The young folks were singing Christmas carols inside while we were waiting on the departure time of the train. Thanks again and Merry Christmas.

Tim “Bubba” Garrett
Hermitage

Train operates for special events

The Music City Star operates for several special events throughout the year, and 2009 was no exception. In addition to the special July 4 train, tickets were sold for Game-Day Express (RTA’s train service to Riverfront Station for all Tennessee Titans’ home games) and the Friday evening trains to the Nashville Christmas Parade.



Paula Godsey, Jill Meese, Susan Walker, Amy Haynes and Tim “Bubba” Garrett ride the train to the Christmas parade.

Music City Star celebrates third anniversary

The Music City Star regional passenger train celebrated its third anniversary on September 18. In honor of



Nancy Reuther (left) of Old Hickory is pictured with her daughter Robin Swafford, who was visiting from out of town.

this achievement, the RTA celebrated with its customers by holding a Rider Appreciation Day. Commuters received light refreshments at Riverfront Station, and several area restaurants partnered with the RTA to provide special discount offers to Music City Star riders.

Ridership on the train has increased from 614 passenger trips per day in December 2008 to 718 passenger trips per day in October 2009, which is an increase of 29.8 percent since the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) became the new management team in December 2008.



Valerie Brust (left) of Hermitage, pictured with Lebanon Mayor Philip Craighead, rode the train for the first time on Sept. 18, 2009.

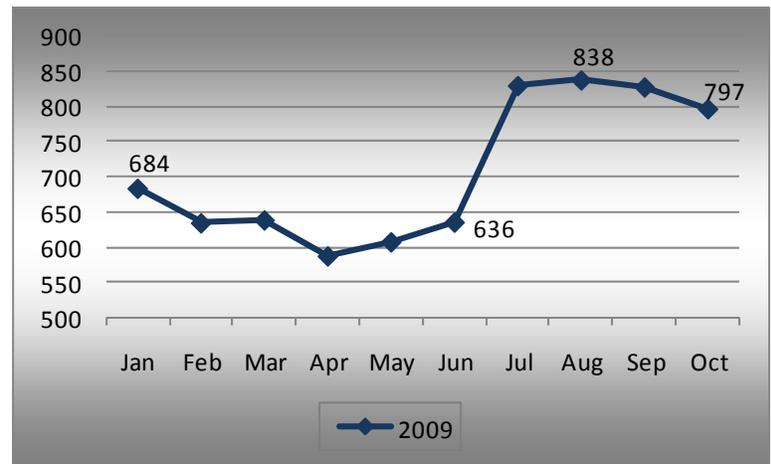
Mock disaster drill held on train

A mock disaster drill was held on the Music City Star near Hermitage Station in October as part of an ongoing emergency training program for the RTA.

The scenario simulated the Music City Star hitting a bus and included simulated dispatcher calls to Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County personnel from Fire, Police, the Mayor's Emergency Management Office, and the Metro Nashville Emergency Communications Center. Volunteers from Hands On Nashville portrayed accident victims, and more than 100 people participated in the exercise.

The Federal Railroad Administration, which regulates the rail industry, requires such exercises once every two years for rail operations the size of the Music City Star.

Music City Star Average Daily Ridership



Several passengers try the Music City Star for the first time during the trial Lakewood run in early October.

Star has trial run in Lakewood

During October, the RTA operated temporary weekday service of the Music City Star from Lakewood to downtown Nashville. The train departed from Lakewood City Hall and stopped at Donelson Station before arriving at Riverfront Station in downtown Nashville.

Forty-four people rode the first day. On the following days, average passenger boardings were 30 per day. The total passenger boardings during the nine-day project were 270.

This temporary service from Lakewood was designed to gauge the interest of commuters from Lakewood, Old Hickory and Madison.

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