



MEDIA RELEASE

CHRIS SHOFNER
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

PHONE: 615-848-3245
EMAIL: cshofner@murfreesborotn.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 26, 2013

RTA Relax and Ride really is a relaxing ride

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. – It was 5:50 a.m. on a cold and blustery day when around 20 riders gathered at North Boulevard Church of Christ to board one of the region’s most convenient bus services to Nashville’s downtown Metropolitan Transit Authority hub known as the Music City Central.

It was the second stop for the Regional Transportation Authority’s (RTA) Relax and Ride service to Nashville after a first stop at the MTSU campus on Middle Tennessee Boulevard.

The RTA currently provides weekday service consisting of three express routes directly from Murfreesboro to the Music City Central in downtown Nashville in the early mornings; and three return express routes directly from Nashville to Murfreesboro in the evenings via I-24.

The RTA also provides three morning and three evening express trips between Smyrna and LaVergne and Nashville. In addition to the express trips, the RTA also provides 19 weekday non-express trips throughout the day that services Murfreesboro, Smyrna, and LaVergne via U.S. 41/70 that provides trips between these cities to and from downtown Nashville.

Schedules, along with a great deal of other information about the service, are available by visiting the RTA website at www.rtarelayandride.com. Regular fares on Express Plus are \$4 one-way; there are discounts down to \$2 for seniors, people with disabilities, Medicare card holders; and students and multi-ride cards are also available. Call Customer Care at 615-862-5950 for details.

Murfreesboro began a long partnership with the RTA for regional transit service in 1996. The service expanded from 16 to 31 trips per day beginning in October of 2012 primarily for commuters who work in Nashville. RTA works with area businesses to provide access for an ever-expanding Nashville/Murfreesboro workforce. This service also makes public transportation available for a host of other trip purposes such as medical, educational, etc.

Also available to Nashville students making the trek to and from MTSU, the express service is a great way to do last-minute homework or study for a test.

The buses are equipped with Wi-Fi and are very comfortable. Riders can sleep, work, and watch onboard TV's or converse with their neighbors. This particular morning, even at 6 a.m., riders were laughing and having fun talking among themselves.

Reasons for taking advantage of the inexpensive service were many.

"I can get work done and save gas and money all at the same time," one said.

"It's convenient," another pointed out.

Murfreesboro Transportation Department Director Dana Richardson says the advantages are obvious, not the least of which is the cost savings.

"When I take my personal vehicle to Nashville for business," he said, "the reimbursable rate for this travel is between \$35 and \$40 dollars round trip.

"Compare that to \$8 if I use the express service," he added.

If there was one complaint, it was that there didn't seem to be enough bus seats to go around, a point well taken when five riders had to exit the bus that morning because there were no more seats.

"They'll catch the next one (bus) that comes in right behind this one ... in about 10 minutes," another rider said.

Cary Foust Street, Communications and Marketing Specialist for the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority & Regional Transportation Authority, which provides the Relax and Ride service between Murfreesboro and Nashville, said RTA would seek a workable solution to the problem.

The service lived up to its name that day ... the ride really was relaxing!

###