



LAKE ERIE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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PRESS RELEASE

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“TRANSPORTATION TRANSFORMED” AT LAKE ERIE TRANSIT

LET Releases Three New, Environment Friendly Hybrid Buses into the Community

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – MONROE, MI – April 7, 2009 – Spring has definitely sprung in Monroe and Mother Nature will be pleased with the three new, environment friendly hybrid buses that were introduced today at the Lake Erie Transit (LET) maintenance facility. Released into the fleet with a flurry of colorful wind-up butterflies, those gathered were treated to their first glimpse of the ecologically sound, fuel efficient, hybrid buses.

Continuing their efforts to provide the community with the highest quality service and benefits, LET is pleased to announce the addition of three Gillig, 30 foot, low floor hybrid buses to their fleet. The addition of the Gillig Hybrid enables LET to remain both environmentally and economically responsible.

“When we learned about the long list of benefits that the hybrid models had to offer our system, the community and our environment, we knew we needed to add them to our fleet,” says Mark Jagodzinski, General Manager of Lake Erie Transit. “It wasn’t easy and it’s taken a number of years for us to obtain the funding for these vehicles. But I credit the open-minded commitment of our Board, employees, community and the tireless assistance of Senator Dingell’s office for the buses you see here today.”

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Funding for the hybrid buses was largely secured with the help of Senator John Dingell's office through government grants of \$1,476,116 along with a \$10,330 local commitment from the LET Board of Commissioners. Each hybrid bus costs \$495,482 for a total cost of \$1,486,446.

Some of the hybrid bus features include: a clean diesel hybrid electrical propulsion system; long-life, non-hazardous, maintenance-free nickel-metal hydride (NiMH) batteries; significant reduction of emissions of up to 50% for carbon dioxide (CO₂) and oxides of nitrogen (NO_x); and a 30% increase in fuel efficiency. LET riders and the community will notice a difference in the vehicles being smoother and quieter (almost half as loud) than a conventional bus, with lower expected maintenance costs (30% - 50%) which translates to less down time and more reliable service. The buses will be placed into passenger service immediately.

One of the buses has been fully "wrapped" to draw special attention to the hybrid fleet. Developed locally by Sheroian Associates, the "Transportation Transformed" bus is not to be missed, embellished with dozens of colorful, larger-than-life butterflies along with hybrid bus benefit callouts. As Jagodzinski shares, "It's a big deal for a system our size to have three hybrid buses, we wanted to make a statement!"

Since 1980, Lake Erie Transit (LET) has served Monroe County, MI as a system for public transportation. LET operates a variety of services to meet the needs of 400,000 riders annually. In the city of Monroe, LET operates buses on eight fixed routes with 40-minute schedules. Frenchtown and Bedford townships feature door-to-door Dial-A-Ride services. For more information about fares or routes, please call 734-242-6766 or visit www.lakeerietransit.com.

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** Electronic, high-resolution images are available by contacting Ms. Adam at paula@sheroian.com.*