

Press Release

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Starlight Express comes to West Main Street

CHARLOTTESVILLE— To further the cause of connectivity and strengthen its reputation as the greenest way to reach New York, the locally-based motorcoach service the Starlight Express will begin picking up and discharging passengers in the heart of Charlottesville, along West Main Street.

The new location launches March 27 at a ceremonial ribbon-cutting at the public bus stop atop the steps to the Amtrak station on the eastern end of the Drewary Brown Bridge. This site gives travelers many simple ways to access the service: cars, taxis, city buses, the Free Trolley, and the greenest option of all: pedestrianism.

“This puts the Starlight Express in walking distance for thousands of Charlottesville citizens and creates new connections to transit systems,” says General Manager Dan Goff. “This is a win for the traveler and a win for the environment.”

The location is a partnership with CAT, Charlottesville Area Transit, the controller of the bus stop, and will be one of Starlight’s two Charlottesville stops, the other one along India Road, located between Seminole Square Shopping Center and the nearby K-Mart Garden Center. A former location at the Ix complex will be discontinued.

The Starlight Express was founded in 2004 by Oliver Kuttner and David New, who sold it to the Goff family in 2010. Former owner New still hails the convenience of the service— as well as the local ownership.

"When you purchase passage on Starlight, you're creating what I call friendly dollars," says New. "Friendly dollars stick around the community and come back and see us again."

Fast Facts on the event:

Ribbon-cutting date: 4:15-4:30pm, Thursday, March 27

Location: 800 block of West Main across the street from L'étoile restaurant

Photo opp: 4:30pm sharp as ribbon gets cut and the bus drives away

Fast Facts on the service:

Mission: Connects Charlottesville and New York City via safe, modern, comfortable, and affordable motor coaches.

Founded: 2004

Name of service: The Starlight Express

Company name: A Goff Limousine & Bus Company

Company owners: Dan and Ana Regina Goff

Price: One-way tickets cost \$49-69; round-trip tickets cost \$99-139 (prices depend on demand and advance purchase)

Two spiffy curbside locations in Charlottesville:

- Eastbound side of West Main (the CAT stop at the Amtrak stairway)
- India Road (between Hampton Inn and K-Mart Garden Center)

One very hip curbside location in New York City:

- First block of 9th Avenue (the cobblestoned street between Catch restaurant and Gansevort Meatpacking NYC hotel — one block east of High Line Park)

Buses the “greenest” way to travel: Per passenger, a bus consumes less than one sixth the fuel used by a solo automobile traveler. *Source: Union of Concerned Scientists*

Schedule/connectivity: Six weekly departures provide New Yorkers with a weekend in Charlottesville and Charlottesvilleans with a weekend in New York. The Starlight Express requires just a little over six hours to reach New York City with such comforts as large seats, onboard snacks, as well as electrical outlets and WiFi on most departures. The new centralized location on West Main Street facilitates footstep connections to both Amtrak and to Greyhound.

Area's only locally-owned inter-city transit service: Ana Regina Goff (A Goff) founded A Goff Limousine & Bus Company in 2000 and has watched it grow into a key provider of passenger transportation throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. Today, the operations also include Yellow Cab Co., Van on the Go, and Executive Limousines. In all, the firms employ nearly 100 people with a fleet of over 60 vehicles including motorcoaches, minibuses, vans, limousines, SUVs and sedans.

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