



800-VIP-RIDE (847-7433)  
ridefinders@mct.org  
www.ridefinders.org

## NEWS RELEASE

Contact:	Joe Wright, Director of RideFinders (800) 847-7433 / (618) 593-4634	Julie Hauser, The Hauser Group (314) 436-9090 / (314) 629-3887
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### **VANPOOL VETERAN PREPARES FOR RETIREMENT**

*After six years as primary driver of RideFinders vanpool,  
NGA's Ric Morrow will take his final ride on June 3*

**GRANITE CITY, IL, May 27, 2010 . . .** With his 15-passenger van's odometer now logging over 114,000 miles, vanpooler Ric Morrow is preparing to say goodbye to the RideFinders vanpool he founded in 2004. For the past six years, members of this vanpool have met each morning at the intersection of highways 40 and 94 in St. Charles County and commuted to National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) with Morrow behind the steering wheel. But as of June 3, Morrow will retire from his position at NGA and officially step down from his duties as primary driver of the vanpool. Having carpooled for over a decade before establishing his RideFinders vanpool, Morrow's final trip will actually mark the end of a 16-year span enjoying the many benefits of sharing the ride to work.

Since the vanpool's beginning, Morrow has handled nearly all of the driving for the 86-mile round trip each weekday from South St. Charles County to downtown St. Louis. Over the past six years, his van has logged more than 106,000 miles, and while the make-up of the vanpool has changed over the years, Morrow's dedication and commitment to serving his fellow vanpoolers has remained strong.

Fellow NGA employee Gene Hoffmeyer has been riding shotgun in Morrow's vanpool since the beginning and he says Morrow's replacement has some big shoes to fill. "Ric has done a really good job as driver of our vanpool. He's always able to keep a cool head in traffic and the vanpool was always on-time when Ric drove. He really deserves recognition for his efforts."

Through his commitment to maintaining his vanpool, Morrow has dramatically reduced the work commute for his fellow vanpoolers, helping them reduce mileage and wear and tear on their individual vehicles, and in turn keep more money in their pockets. In any given month, Morrow estimates that his vanpoolers are saving \$270-\$280 by cutting their work commute mileage. He personally saves even more. As the principal driver, he commutes for free, in exchange for doing a majority of the driving and administering the vanpool.

Morrow also notes that he's been proud of the positive environmental benefits of his vanpool. "I like the idea of knowing that I'm helping to take 13 cars off the road on any given day."

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## **Veteran vanpooler preparing to retire First and Final Add**

Thanks to Morrow's willingness to drive, members of his vanpool have also had plenty of time to catch up on their sleep. "On the way home in the evening, most of the folks in our vanpool take naps," noted Hoffmeyer. "I often sit up front and keep Ric (Morrow) company, while the others practice their snoring chorus. I think they're currently working on snoring to the tune of the William Tell Overture!"

As his retirement date approaches, Morrow says the feeling is bittersweet. "I'm looking forward to retiring, but will definitely miss the individuals in my vanpool. I've always liked the idea of sharing the ride to and from work and it's been an enjoyable six years as a driver."

RideFinders makes it easy for commuters to carpool using their personal vehicles or to vanpool, like Morrow, using vans provided by RideFinders for a low monthly fare. Commuters first register with RideFinders free ridematching service at [www.ridefinders.org](http://www.ridefinders.org) or (800) 847-7433 with their home, work and contact information and preferences. Once they are registered, commuters receive a "matchlist" of other individuals or vanpools with similar commutes to theirs to contact to discuss the possibility of ridesharing. Once they agree to rideshare, commuters register their carpool for free or complete a vanpool rider agreement with RideFinders.

By ridesharing with RideFinders, over 9,000 commuters enjoy a less stressful drive to and from work and save thousands of dollars annually on gas and other commuting costs compared to driving alone. These individuals also receive RideFinders exclusive Guaranteed Ride Home, which provides up to four free taxi rides home annually if they have to leave work early or work late. The entire region also benefits from less traffic congestion and better air quality, as over 65 million driving miles and two million pounds of air pollution are removed.

Employers in the region can help their employees to begin ridesharing by joining the nearly 1,200 employers already participating in RideFinders. In return for their free participation in RideFinders, employers provide their employees with free ridesharing information and incentives to drive them to carpool or vanpool to work. Some employers, like NGA, also subsidize some or all of the vanpool fare for participating employees. Employers interested in joining RideFinders can call (800) 847-7433 or E-mail [ridefinders@mct.org](mailto:ridefinders@mct.org).

*Created and operated by Madison County Transit (MCT) since 1994, RideFinders improves the quality of life and work in the St. Louis region by providing a free ridematching service to help over 9,000 commuters carpool or vanpool to work, and by partnering with almost 1,200 employers to provide free ridesharing information and incentives to commuters at work. RideFinders is operated as a free public service by MCT for commuters who work in St. Louis City and St. Louis, St. Charles, Jefferson and Franklin Counties in Missouri; and Madison, St. Clair and Monroe Counties in Illinois through federal grant funding from the United States Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. For more information, visit [www.ridefinders.org](http://www.ridefinders.org) or call (800) 847-7433.*

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