

Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE BUS INDUSTRY



New federal guidelines give coach operators flexibility in presenting safety briefings.

Passenger briefings now called for

WASHINGTON — Four years ago, the motorcoach industry told the Federal Motor Carrier Administration that it would be a bad idea to issue rigorous regulations requiring safety briefings for passengers on private motorcoaches.

Instead, the industry asked the feds to issue guidelines for such safety briefings and leave it up to individual operators to decide what form and format to use to present the information to passengers.

Well, the industry has gotten exactly what it asked for and now it's up to the 3,500 motorcoach

operators in the U.S. to develop their own passenger safety briefings that fit within the guidelines.

It shouldn't be difficult given the guidelines are broadly drawn and make allowance for the diverse nature of bus operations provided across the U.S.

The FMCSA made its guidelines, which it calls "a basic plan for motorcoach companies to implement a safety-awareness program for passengers," official last month by publishing them in the Federal Register.

The idea of requiring coach

operators to conduct passenger safety briefings has been a slow burning issue for nearly a decade.

Following a 1997 bus crash in Stony Creek Va., the National Safety Transportation Board asked the FMCSA to begin requiring pre-trip safety information for motorcoach passengers.

The NTSB said that in the Stony Creek accident and other crashes it had investigated, passengers described a sense of panic because they did not know what to do or how to get out of a smashed

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ▶

Operator 'green award' announced

SAN FRANCISCO — A high-profile industry award has been developed to recognize a motorcoach operator that demonstrates "environmental stewardship" through corporate initiative, community involvement, or industry leadership.

The "Green Highway Award" has been created by Motor Coach Industries, in conjunction with the United Motorcoach Association.

It will be presented for the first time in January at UMA Motorcoach Expo 2008, during the annual Vision Awards banquet.

Expo will be Jan. 16-20 in San Francisco.

"The expanded use of motorcoaches in group transportation can help reduce overall carbon emissions and lessen our dependence on fossil fuel," said Patricia Ziska, MCI vice president and chief customer officer. "We want to encourage operators to take a leading role in promoting the green benefits, as well as the transportation convenience and other attributes, of our industry."

Examples of award-worthy activities might include internal

recycling programs, carbon offset programs, community green initiatives, and campaigns that promote motorcoaches as an eco-friendly means of transportation.

The winner will be selected by a jury of environmental and coach industry leaders. Ziska will be one of the judges.

The award is open to coach operators that are members of UMA.

"We're encouraging all our members — operators, associates and travel partners — to submit

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10 ▶

Top lawyer leaves FTA; industry concerned about impact on rewrite of rules

WASHINGTON — The departure from the Federal Transit Administration of Chief Counsel David Horner apparently will have no notable affect on the agency's drafting of new charter bus rules, easing the concerns of some in the motorcoach industry who worried the move could spell trouble.

FTA officials, who asked not to be identified, said the same team of staff attorneys that has worked on the charter rules since the beginning of the project remains on the job and there is no cause for the private operators to worry.

"The same lawyers are doing the same heavy lifting they have been doing and nothing really has changed," emphasized one official.

Motorcoach operators had raised concerns that the promotion in August of the former chief counsel to the policy office of the

U.S. Department of Transportation could have a negative impact on the overhauling of the rules, which is winding down and is due to be finished in December.

Horner played a key role in a lengthy series of FTA-run negotiation sessions held last year between private charter operators and public transit agencies, and had been the lead attorney in the rewriting of the charter rules.

Some private operators viewed Horner as being understanding of their long-time complaints that public transit agencies often ignore the existing charter rules, and they have been hopeful the new rules will better protect them.

The first version of the proposed rules that was issued in February won praise from many motorcoach operators who saw them as putting a tighter and enforceable clamp on public tran-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ▶

Buses to get free ride on Beltway toll lanes

RICHMOND, Va. — Buses and motorcoaches, both privately and publicly owned, will pay no tolls on new express toll lanes being added to the Capital Beltway in northern Virginia.

Construction of the express lanes, whose toll rate for cars and trucks will be based on the level of congestion at the time the vehicles enter the special lanes, will begin in the spring.

A spokeswoman for the project told *Bus & Motorcoach News* that buses, as well as passenger vehicles carrying three or more people, will pay no tolls to use the express lanes.

The public-private highway project, which has been in the planning for more than a dozen years, will cost roughly \$1.7 billion — nearly double the projected cost two years ago — and will be completed in 2013, the Virginia Department of Transportation estimates.

VDOT Commissioner David S. Ekern said the agency has reached an agreement in principle with two private contractors, Transurban DRIVE and Fluor Enterprises, for design, construction, operation and maintenance of the high-occupancy-toll lanes, com-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 ▶



MOTOR COACH INDUSTRIES
Going further!

Go Green. Go Coach. Go MCI.™

Fast-track J4500 coaches with EPA compliant clean-diesel engines are in stock now!



Call 1-866-MCICOACH or visit www.mcicoach.com.



TAKE A BIGGER BITE OUT OF CO₂ EMISSIONS

INTRODUCING THE VAN HOOL TD925 –
TAKING ECO-FRIENDLY TRANSPORT TO A HIGHER LEVEL.

Imagine one vehicle with the potential to reduce the congestion, pollution and fuel consumption of up to 83 cars. Then go a step further and envision reducing your fleet size with one solution that carries 26 more riders than a standard 57-seat coach. The new eco-engineered Van Hool TD925 double deck intercity coach clearly demonstrates our commitment to environmentally-responsible technology – delivering our highest capacity equipment, loaded with onboard features designed to attract and impress more riders than ever before!

- comfortable, secure seating for up to 83 passengers
- centrally located restroom
- front and rear staircases for efficient loading/unloading
- luggage compartment
- ADA access with 2 tie downs
- State-of-the-art HVAC with zone control
- Ceiling mounted flush TV monitors and 2 deck entertainment system
- Exciting upper level views and so much more!



Exclusive U.S.  Distributor

www.abc-companies.com

Drive more green to your bottom line with the high capacity, eco-friendly TD925. Contact your ABC Account Executive for details.

MIDWEST 800-222-2875	NORTHEAST 800-222-2873	SOUTHEAST 800-222-2871	SOUTHWEST 800-222-2877	WESTERN 800-322-2877
--------------------------------	----------------------------------	----------------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------------

Industry, allies battle proposed Atlantic City rules

ATLANTIC CITY — The motorcoach industry is getting lots of support in its fight against higher fees and more restricted highway access in Atlantic City.

A second hearing last month on changes proposed by the South Jersey Transportation Authority drew a number of coach operators, along with representatives from the Greater New Jersey Motorcoach, United Motorcoach and American Bus associations, other groups and a spokesperson for Atlantic City casinos.

The hearing, like one in August, was conducted to elicit comments from the bus and casino industries on a proposed rulemaking by the South Jersey Transportation Authority, which regulates bus traffic in and around Atlantic City.

Under the proposed rules change, all bus traffic would be redirected from Routes 30 and 40 to the Atlantic City Expressway, which would result in additional tolls and mileage costs to operators.

The rule also would change the

medallion system that operators are required to participate in before they can bring coaches into Atlantic City.

The proposal would switch the medallion fee system from a flat charge to one based on the estimated or actual number of trips into the city, increasing operators' costs.

At the hearing last month, Godfrey LeBron of Paradise Trailways in New York and vice chairman of the United Motorcoach Association; Clyde Hart,

senior vice president of the American Bus Association; Tom JeBran of Trans-Bridge Lines in Pennsylvania and vice president of the Greater New Jersey Motorcoach Association; Ken Presley, vice president of UMA, and a casino spokesperson testified against the changes.

In his testimony, Presley noted that in recent years New Jersey has made significant changes in the way it deals with the charter bus industry by imposing franchise

taxes, corporate registrations and corporate taxes on operators from other states.

The impact of these changes, said Presley, has been that many operators who routinely delivered tourists to Atlantic City in the past have abandoned the city.

He quoted an operator from North Carolina who said he typically ran five or six charters a year to Atlantic City, but doesn't do it anymore. "When you do the math,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 ►



Indian Trails is expanding state service

Since the first of the year, Indian Trails of Owosso, Mich., has significantly expanded its scheduled service in Michigan, thanks in part to cutbacks by Greyhound Lines and winning a contract to provide state-supported intercity service in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Indian Trails has received federal intercity operating and capital funds, plus state money, to provide regular-route services. In some cases, state-owned motorcoaches, purchased with state funds, are leased to Indian Trails.

For its line-run service between Lansing, Owosso and Flint in central Michigan, Indian Trails recently took delivery of a new Van Hool C2045



coach, shown above, equipped with a wheelchair lift.

The company also is negotiating with ABC Companies to be one of the first buyers of the new ABC-branded 3035RE midsize coach that ABC is unveiling this week at BusCon in Chicago.

A prototype of the 35-foot ABC 3035, shown at top, has been demonstrated to a number of operators in recent months. The new model is being built for ABC by General Coach of Imlay City, Mich., which also produces the ABC-branded M1035 midsize cutaway bus.

Industry's largest operator is searching for new CEO

DALLAS — The help-wanted sign is out at Coach America for a new CEO.

Fenway Partners, which purchased Coach America barely 10 months ago, is seeking a successor to Craig Lentzsch, who helped the investment firm of Kohlberg & Co. create Coach America, the nation's largest tour-and-charter bus operator, exactly four years ago.

Lentzsch had been president and CEO of Greyhound Lines before its parent company, Laidlaw International, decided it wanted a different CEO to oversee a massive restructuring of the Greyhound route system.

Lentzsch left Greyhound in June 2003, and by November was busy merging more than two-dozen former Coach USA operating companies in the west and south central U.S. into what became Coach America. (Initially, the company was known as CUSA and K-BUS.)

Contacted by phone and e-mail, the 58-year-old Lentzsch said he has no plans to announce.

He remains a director of Coach America and is slated to become chairman of the American Bus Association in January 2009, if, as he says, the ABA board agrees.

Kohlberg sold Coach America early this year to Fenway Partners, a private equity firm with offices in New York and Los Angeles.

Currently, Coach America is being led by a veteran business manager, Michael P. Haley, who holds the title of executive chairman. A spokeswoman for Fenway Partners said a search is under way to fill the position of president and CEO, the job held by Lentzsch.

Haley's history with Fenway partners goes back six years when he was hired to be president and CEO of a company owned by Fenway, MW Windows of Rocky Mount, Va., a manufacturer and distributor of windows and doors in the southeastern U.S.

Fenway Partners, which has been around since 1994, bought MW Windows in 1995 and sold it in 2003. Haley retired as chairman of MW two years ago.

Prior to going to work for Fenway and MW Windows, Haley ran two furniture companies — American of Martinsville, a La-Z-Boy company, and Lowenstein Furniture Group.

Haley started his business career with a trucking company, and today sits on the board of Panther Expedited Services, a specialty heavy freight expediting company that's also owned by Fenway.

Since leaving MW Windows, he has worked with Fenway management teams to get the most out of the businesses they own and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 ►

N.C. operators toil under school inspection maze

RALEIGH, N.C. — Another school year is under way and North Carolina motorcoach operators continue to plod through a maze of safety inspections that make it difficult to do charter business with schools.

David Brown, a former president of the North Carolina Motorcoach Association, says the

state legislature failed to act this year on proposals that would have established a single, state-approved list of operators for carrying school children.

Instead, all school districts continue to be responsible for their own approved list of charter carriers based on their own inspections.

Brown, who heads Holiday

Tours in Randleman, N.C., says the quagmire developed as a result of a 2001 charter bus accident in Georgia involving students from the Cumberland County, N.C., school system. After the crash, the state established new charter bus rules for schools.

"It turns out the bus they were on had some improper equipment,

and a possible ineligible driver, but that's old news," says Brown.

"As luck would have it, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction developed a set of guidelines for the school systems to use when chartering a bus."

The guidelines, which were widely adopted, instructed schools

to review everything from tread depth, to the driver's CDL when chartering a bus, Brown says. Many counties created their own list of approved operators.

"To get on the list, a county representative would inspect the company," Brown says. "As you can guess, the quality of inspections

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ►

THE DOCKET

UCRA's nuances revealed as new system rolled out

WASHINGTON — Additional details about the new Unified Carrier Registration Agreement are surfacing and it may pay to be aware of them.

The 36 states participating in the UCRA process — that replaces the old Single State Registration System — will not be sending “bills” for the new system.

Instead, they will be providing information notices and registration materials. That's because the UCRA fees are self-reported by operators according to fleet size.

That's why the United Motorcoach Association is urging operators to make sure the information they provide on their UCRA registration materials is consistent with information operators have provided the USDOT and other government agencies regarding fleet size.

The new system went on line last month — at www.ucr.in.gov — and reportedly is working smoothly — for the most part. Programming bugs are being fixed quickly, according to one UCRA board member.

Operators making their UCRA payments online should keep in mind that fees paid by credit card carry a service charge. And the credit card service fee can be stiff for the higher levels of UCRA payments.

A receipt is issued when UCRA payments are made online but, unlike SSRS, there is no UCRA credential — neither the receipt nor anything else — is required to be carried in a vehicle.

States participating in the new system have agreed they will not issue tickets for nonpayment of UCRA fees before Nov. 15, but they may not feel bound by that date, and penalties for nonpayment may be high in some states.

Maine adopts new tax on oil changes

AUGUSTA, Maine — Maine has established a clean-up fund for disposal sites for waste motor oil.

Money for the fund is to come from a new tax, which the law setting up the fund calls a “premium,” on oil changes for motor vehicles.

The tax is imposed on those

State & Provincial Fuel Tax Rates

Fuel-tax rates showed little movement during the second quarter of '07. Here are the updated rates for all states and provinces, as of July 1.

State	Gasoline	Diesel	State	Gasoline	Diesel
Alabama	16	19	North Carolina	29.7	29.9
Alaska	8	8	North Dakota	23	23
Arizona	18	26	Ohio	28	28
Arkansas	21.8	22.8	Oklahoma	16	13
California	41.68	36.7	Oregon	24	0
Colorado	22	20.5	Pennsylvania	31.2	38.1
Connecticut	36	37	Rhode Island	30	30
Delaware	23	22	South Carolina	16.75	16.75
Dist. of Columbia	20	20	South Dakota	24	24
Florida	27.7	30.6	Tennessee	21.4	18.4
Georgia	17.3	16.3	Texas	20	20
Hawaii	16	16	Utah	24.5	24.5
Idaho	25	25	Vermont	20	26
Illinois	32.9	36	Virginia	22.4	19.9
Indiana	29	27	Washington	36	34
Iowa	21.7	23.5	West Virginia	31.5	31.5
Kansas	24	26	Wisconsin	32.9	32.9
Kentucky	22.9	24.2	Wyoming	14	14
Louisiana	20	20	U. S.	18.4	24.4
Maine	29.28	29.32	<i>Tax Rate in U.S. is cents per gallon</i>		
Maryland	23.5	24.25	Province	Gasoline	Diesel
Massachusetts	21	21	Alberta	9	9
Michigan	36.6	31.27	British Columbia	14.5	15
Minnesota	20	20	Manitoba	11.5	11.5
Mississippi	18.4	18.4	New Brunswick	10.7	16.9
Missouri	17	17	Newfoundland	16.5	16.5
Montana	27.75	28.5	Nova Scotia	15.5	15.4
Nebraska	27.9	27.3	Ontario	14.7	14.3
Nevada	23.81	27.81	Prince Edward Is.	15.8	20.2
New Hampshire	20.625	20.625	Quebec	15.2	16.2
New Jersey	14.5	17.5	Saskatchewan	15	15
New Mexico	18.875	22.875	<i>Tax Rate in Canada = cents per liter</i>		
New York	38.25	36.45			

Huge increase in fuel taxes proposed in Massachusetts

BOSTON — A special Transportation Finance Commission is recommending a huge increase in fuel taxes to fix decrepit highways and bridges in Massachusetts.

The commission estimates the state is facing a 20-year roadway construction funding gap of at least \$15 billion.

To help bridge the gap, the commission recommended an immediate 11.5-cent increase in the state fuel tax of 23.5 cents. (2½ cents of the tax is used to pay for the disposal of old underground

gasoline storage tanks.)

While the increase proposed by the commission is large, members of the panel say it will just make up for inflation since 1991, the last time the fuel tax was raised.

Gov. Deval Patrick says he wants to use much of the revenue from his proposed plan to develop casinos in Massachusetts to fix bridges and highways.

Critics point out that such money is years away from being realized and it won't be nearly enough.

Congressman says FMCSA too easy on safety violators, wants bigger fines imposed

WASHINGTON — The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration is not being tough enough on bus and truck companies that violate U.S. safety laws, says the chairman of the powerful House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Rep. Jim Oberstar, D-Minn., cited a new report by the General Accounting Office, compiled at the committee's request, that says that while the FMCSA may be doing a decent job of identifying high-risk carriers, it is not following through with tough fines against serious rules violators as mandated by law.

According to the GAO report, the FMCSA is a paper tiger, failing to assess maximum fines against carriers with a pattern of varied serious violations.

In a letter to FMCSA Administrator John Hill, Oberstar used the report's findings to take the agency to task for not complying with specific enforcement mandates, calling the agency's actions “indefensible and unacceptable.”

“I am deeply troubled by the GAO findings regarding FMCSA's practice of assessing fines to motor carriers that repeatedly violate critical motor carrier safety statutes,” Oberstar wrote.

“I strongly urge FMCSA to amend its policies immediately to be consistent with statutory requirements with respect to maximum penalties for repeat rule violators.”

FMCSA's policy for fining serious rule violators is “essential-

ly meaningless and violates the law,” said Oberstar. He pointed out a discrepancy between the number of carriers that were given the maximum fines (280 in 2006), versus the number the GOA contends should have been (1,320) if FMCSA had followed the law.

Oberstar asked to know, within 30 days, what specific actions FMCSA was taking to comply with the statutory requirements.

The GAO contends the agency's “three strikes rule” is contrary to law, which the GAO says requires maximum fines after the second instance of a violation.

The GAO recommended the FMCSA select certain high-risk carriers in the accident safety evaluation area for compliance reviews and revise its policy for assessing maximum fines.

The Department of Transportation said it would “assess the efficacy” of the first recommendation, but it did not comment on the other recommendations.

Other shortcomings identified by the GAO report include:

FMCSA's policy for prioritizing carriers for compliance reviews does not always target the truck and bus companies that have the highest crash risks.

FMCSA does not have an established time frame for follow-up compliance reviews for bus and truck operators that have been given a conditional rating. As a result, companies can continue operating for two years or more with a conditional rating and no

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ►

Trucker fined for false records

HANOVER, Pa. — Is this an example of what Rep. Jim Oberstar (see story above) is talking about?

Last February, a tractor-trailer hauling scrap metal rolled over on top of a passenger vehicle at the junction of Interstates 195 and 95 in Providence, R.I., killing a woman driving the auto.

During its investigation, the Rhode Island State Police found the truck driver was past his hours-of-service limit. According to media reports, state police found

several false entries in the driver's log book, including times he indicated he was sleeping when the truck's global positioning system showed he was driving.

The state police turned the case over to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

In probing the company, L&H Trucking of Hanover, the FMCSA found that L&H dispatchers were routinely falsifying driver time cards.

The outcome: the FMCSA fined L&H a grand total of \$7,400.

Applications sought for '07 wheelchair-lift grants

WASHINGTON — The Federal Transit Administration has announced it is accepting applications from private bus operators for grants to help pay for installing wheelchair lifts in coaches.

The FTA Over-the-Road Bus Accessibility Program will award grants totaling \$7.6 million for fiscal 2007, which is slightly more than the agency awarded in fiscal 2006 and 2005.

In fiscal '06, the FTA awarded

\$7.4 million to 91 motorcoach operators, the year before it awarded \$6.9 million.

This year, \$5.7 million will go to intercity fixed-route bus operators, while \$1.9 million will be shared by charter, tour, commuter, local-fixed route and special operations bus operators that apply.

Each year, the grant amounts typically range from as little as \$25,000 to nearly \$200,000, with one exception. And that exception is Greyhound Lines which usually ends up getting roughly half of the amount going to intercity fixed-route operators.

The money can be used to

retrofit lifts, help offset the cost of a new lift-equipped coach, and pay for training.

Applications for the grant money must be submitted by Nov. 13.

There are two possibilities for submitting grant applications: They can be mailed to the FTA regional office in the area where

the operator is based, or sent electronically through the federal government grants Website: www.grants.gov.

The application process is not simple, but some industry trade groups have developed grant application materials to help members through the process.

Transits seek charter firms

The following public transit providers have informed the United Motorcoach Association of their intent to provide charter bus service unless willing and able private operators step forward to provide the service. UMA urges appropriate operators to take the time to respond to these notices.

Clallam County/Olympic Peninsula, Wash. Deadline: Oct. 12, 2007. Write to: Terry G. Weed, General Manager, Clallam Transit System, 830 W. Lauridsen Blvd., Port Angeles, WA 98363. Phone: (360) 452-1315.

Lancaster County, Pa. Deadline: Oct. 12, 2007. Write to: David W. Kilmer, Executive Director, 45 Erick Rd., Lancaster, PA 17601. Phone: (717) 397-5613.

Philadelphia and Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties, Pa. Deadline: 4 p.m. Oct. 12, 2007. Write to: John F. McGee Jr., Chief Officer, Revenue, Ridership, Marketing and Sales, Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, 1234 Market St., 9th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107.

Greene County, Ohio. Deadline: Oct. 15, 2007. Write to: Rich Schultze, Executive Director, Greene CATS, 571 Ledbetter Rd., Xenia, OH 45385. Phone: (937) 562-6522.

False positives found in red-dye fuel tests

The IRS is investigating recent incidents of false positive tests for evidence of red dye in clear diesel fuel.

The bad results have occurred at the refinery level when severely hydrotreated diesel fuel is tested using normal test standards.

IRS enforcement officers routinely collect samples of diesel fuel from highway vehicles to check for visible evidence of dye. Dyed fuel is only to be used in off-road vehicles.



HOW MANY
PARTNERSHIPS COME
WITH A COST SAVINGS
GUARANTEE? ONE.

THE CASTROL FLEET PARTNERSHIP

What would you risk to save thousands? In this case, not a dime. And only The Castrol Fleet Partnership can guarantee those savings. We'll use our unique products, people, and breakthrough program to create a year-long plan pinpointing when, where, and how you'll save. Free. Guaranteed. The only risk to your business might be not calling. Call 800-255-4417 or visit castrol.com/fleetpartnership for more info.

IT'S MORE THAN JUST OIL. IT'S LIQUID ENGINEERING.™



States gain flexibility to build roads quicker

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Transportation has adopted a new rule designed to give states more flexibility to build roads and bridges faster.

The rule allows design work and environmental reviews to occur concurrently.

The rule amends Federal Highway Administration regulations, permitting states to use various fast-track contracting methods, ranging from basic design-build contracts, to long-term public-private concession agreements, while simultaneously pursuing federal environmental approvals.

The rule also increases the opportunity for smaller projects to use design-build contracts by eliminating a required dollar amount for projects.

"This new flexibility will help

states build needed roads and bridges faster, while at the same time protecting the environment," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters.

The rule allows certain design work to begin while the National Environmental Policy Act process is under way. Using this process, states are able to expedite the contract award process and start preliminary design while ensuring the objectivity of the National Environmental Policy Act decision-making process.

"Innovative contracting leads to speedier project delivery," said Federal Highway Administrator J. Richard Capka. "The new rule will help to mainstream the approach and reduce the costs for states wishing to enter into public-private partnerships."

S.C. to finance new I-73 with tolls

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — The portion of the proposed Interstate 73 to be built in South Carolina will be constructed as a toll road, making South Carolina the first state authorized to do so under a new federal pilot program.

I-73 is proposed to run from Myrtle Beach, S.C., to Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., with the South Carolina segment expected to cost \$1.7 billion.

Each of the states I-73 will run through — Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia and North Carolina, as

well as Michigan and South Carolina, can use tolls to pay for new construction, according to a spokeswoman for the Federal Highway Administration.

The Interstate System Construction Toll Pilot Program was approved by Congress in 2005 as part of the long-term transportation funding law signed by President Bush.

Last year, South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford signed a bill that authorized the state to toll I-73 to pay for construction, planning

and operation.

The '05 transportation funding bill provides a second pilot toll program, the Express Lanes Demonstration program. This allows states to request approval to create tolled express lanes to reduce congestion and emissions. The U.S. Department of Transportation is authorized to approve up to 15 such projects through 2009.

The bill also authorizes states to convert high-occupancy vehicle lanes to high-occupancy toll lanes, with no limit on those projects.

Florida's Turnpike to get open-road tolling

OCOOEE, Fla. — Florida's Turnpike is converting SunPass-only lanes to open-road tolling at four major toll plazas. The project is expected to be finished by winter.

The conversion will allow SunPass users to drive through the toll

plazas at highway speeds. Cash and mixed-use lanes are unaffected.

The makeover will eliminate concrete islands and install new equipment. Most construction is occurring on weekends and weeknights.

The plazas affected are Lantana

in Palm Beach County, Cypress Creek in Broward County, and Bird Road and Homestead in Miami-Dade.

For more information, go to www.floridasturnpike.com, and the SunPass site at www.sunpass.com.

Beltway

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

commonly referred to as HOT lanes.

The project is intended to reduce congestion in traffic-choked northern Virginia.

"The project has been under

development since 1994, and it is time for action to bring additional congestion relief to residents, visitors and businesses in the region," said Gov. Timothy M. Kaine.

The plan calls for the private companies to build 14 miles of HOT lanes — two lanes in each

direction — on the beltway. Vehicles with one or two occupants will be charged tolls based on the level of congestion.

The average toll for an auto during rush hour is expected to be \$5 to \$6, according to VDOT. The companies will collect the tolls

and manage all operations of the HOT lanes, including repairs and maintenance, although the state will retain ownership and oversight of the lanes.

The companies also will build three new access points from the beltway into Tyson's Corner, Va.,

along with HOV connections from Interstate 95 to the beltway.

Early plans called for 100 percent private funding of the construction costs. However, rising costs and project upgrades will require the state to chip in about \$409 million.



CoachTM
Motorcoach Software

DRIVING YOUR BUSINESS FORWARD

- Reduce Costs
- Maximize Revenues
- Make Solid Management Decisions

Reservations • Scheduling • Dispatch • AVL • GPS • Mapping • MDC • IFTA Reports • Route Planning • Availability at a Glance and more!

www.eforwardsolutions.com

CALL (416) 273-7458 TODAY
TOLL FREE (800) 216-0978



SEFAC
Mobile Column Lifts

800.826.3486
www.sefac.com

Your passengers aren't the only ones who deserve a little rest and relaxation.



We build reliability into each of our motor coach models, so you can spend more time pampering your passengers, not babying your buses. From the #1 best-selling J4500 to our flagship E4500, and from our ultra-luxurious LX coaches to our D4505 and D4005 workhorses, you'll find the technology you need, the features you want, and the widest array of clean-diesel powertrain options in the industry. Plus, you'll find MCI PRO Support. From parts and service to financing and training, PRO Support is your one-stop business-building resource. When it comes to going further, we're leading the way.



MCI PRO SUPPORT

At MCI, excellence is second nature.

Call 1-866-MCICOACH or go to www.mcicoach.com



MOTOR COACH
INDUSTRIES

Going further!

Wineries forbid tour buses, charge fee to halt guzzling

Wineries on both coasts of the U.S. are starting to ban tour bus and other groups from their tasting rooms, an international wire service reports.

The reason for the ban is an apparent growing breed of visitors who are hitting wineries to get drunk rather than simply sample the wine. One California winemaker has a name for them — limo luses.

They frequently travel in groups from one winery to another to knock back drinks, with their behavior prompting action by wineries that have started to ban bus tours, draw up etiquette guides, and charge for entry.

The Wine Press of Long Island, published in New York, has come up with a few tips for wine tasting tourists:

Tip No. 1: It's a tasting room, not a bar at happy hour.

Tip No. 2: Don't hog the tasting counter.

Jane Starwood, editor of *The Wine Press*, told the wire service that Long Island wineries — located east of New York City — have established a "card system just like in soccer.

"If a group comes into a winery and they're really loud and rowdy, they're given yellow or red cards and warnings," she said. "And sometimes the tasting room will call ahead to others along the route and warn them."

Starwood said it wasn't just a local problem. She had heard similar tales — from wineries in the Finger Lakes region of New York, near the Canadian border — of college students going wild.

In California, it's an occasional

Saturday occurrence at the Tobin James winery in Paso Robles, said co-owner Lance Silver. Located 200 miles south of San Francisco, the winery doesn't charge for tastings, as many of its competitors do.

"We know if you taste our wine, you'll probably like it and buy a bottle," he said, noting that roughly 70 percent of Tobin James' wine sales come from the tasting room.

"Now, 90 percent of the folks who come are just fine but then there's always that one group," Silver said. "They're loud and disturbing because they've been to five wineries already. And they're drunk. And they try to steal a few things because they think it's funny. They're limo luses."

The Miner Family Vineyards in California's Napa Valley, about 60 miles north of San Francisco, doesn't charge for its tastings either, but it also doesn't allow tour buses and limousines.

On a weekday, there are maybe 30 people who stop by the tasting room in Oakville, but on the weekends it can be 300.

"It always seems to be a bachelorette party that is here more for the drinking than the tasting," said Miner Family Vineyards' spokeswoman Mia Beuhler. Silver speculated that "out here, the bachelorette parties go to (Las) Vegas, the bachelorettes go wine tasting."

Calendar

OCTOBER 2007

1-3 BusCon, Navy Pier, Chicago. Info: www.BusConExpo.com/metro, or call (800) 576-8788.

7-10 American Public Transportation Association Annual Meeting, Charlotte Convention Center, Charlotte, N.C. Info: Go to www.apta.com, or call (202) 496-4803.

9-11 Northwest Motorcoach

Association Annual Road-ee, Yakima, Wash. Info: Go to www.nwmotorcoach.com.

13-16 34th annual California Bus Association Convention, Trade Show & Maintenance Seminar, Palace Station Hotel &

Casino, Las Vegas. Info: Go to www.cbabus.com, or call (800) 664-2877.

17-19 Grey Line Worldwide Annual Meeting, Maui, Hawaii. Info: Call (303) 394-6920.

A Driver's Plea

Operators, industry associations challenged

By Mel Cordani

I have been driving a motorcoach for a few years. I do it for enjoyment; it's sure as hell not about the money.

I drive for a great company and consider myself a company guy and one of the world's best employees.

As a former business owner, I know what it takes to be a good employee, and what it takes to be a good employer. Coming from the outside and looking in, I have never seen an industry with such potential power do so very little.

And, unless something is done for the drivers in this industry, everyone associated with it is going to be in a heap of hurt.

Washington, D.C., is now charging a permit for a motorcoach to enter the city, and the conduct of D.C. police towards motorcoaches is disgusting. St. Louis charges buses for a permit to enter a city park.

Why reward Chicago?

Chicago is hosting a bus convention in early October (BusCon) and the city is ridiculous when it comes to parking and the regulations its puts on bus drivers.

Totally amusing are the political leaders in Chicago who sit in

air conditioned public buildings making laws that protect a dog from being locked in a car, and then demand that a bus driver turn off the bus and remain with the bus. It's most reassuring to all drivers.

For this, the industry rewards the municipality and holds a convention or show in a city that makes life difficult for drivers.

I may do something about that if the industry will not, and I will not wait for another "we-are-working-on-the-problems" delay.

What I see happening here are the municipalities feeding companies and industry associations the set "we-are-working-on-the-problem" statement and the powers that could do something about it just sit back and say, "OK, we will address this later."

In the mean time, all of you just hand it off for the drivers to deal with.

That is pathetic, especially when many complain about the difficulty in retaining qualified personnel. Personally, I have about had it.

A lack of logic

Senators and congressmen sit in offices around the National Mall and contemplate the energy

crises. All say the solution is mass transportation but not one of them will restrict private passenger car parking to make room for motorcoaches.

The logic behind our public officials' conduct and attitude is a shining light of ignorance for political gain.

Don't even think about introducing a national security card for this industry. No terrorist on a budget is going to spend \$100,000 to \$500,000 to blow up a motorcoach when they can rent a van or SUV that will easily maneuver around obstacles. A really big bang for the buck would be to purchase a used school bus for a few thousand dollars.

As a motorcoach driver I am tired of driving around the problems created by a lack of political reasoning, and weak activity on behalf of the industry.

I want the motorcoach industry and the government to do for the driver what the Americans with Disabilities Act did for parking and access.

Do something about it or I and many other drivers with a bit of common dignity will be out of here.

Mel Cordani is an Illinois-based motorcoach driver. Contact him at jrcordani@msn.com.

How to contact us

To submit or report news, Letters to the Editor, articles, news releases:

E-mail: bsankey@busandmotorcoachnews.com

Fax: (405) 942-6201

Mail: 3108 NW 54th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

Call: (866) 930-8421

To subscribe or inquire about your subscription:

Call: (866) 930-8421

E-mail: ebalm@busandmotorcoachnews.com

Fax: (405) 942-6201

Mail: 3108 NW 54th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

To report corrections:

Call: (866) 930-8421

E-mail: bsankey@busandmotorcoachnews.com

To advertise or to mail advertising-related materials:

Call: Johnny Steger

(866) 930-8426

E-mail: jsteger@busandmotorcoachnews.com

Mail: 2200 N. Yarbrough, Suite B

Box No. 336
El Paso, TX 79925

To contact the
United Motorcoach Association:

Call: (800) 424-8262

Online: www.uma.org

To send advertisements or photographs
via the Internet:

E-mail: BMNews@jezac.com

©2007 by the United Motorcoach Association.
Reproduction in whole or in part without
written permission is prohibited.

Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

ISSUE NO. 109

A PUBLICATION OF THE UNITED MOTORCOACH ASSOCIATION

Staff

Editor & Publisher
Victor Parra

Sales Director
Johnny Steger

Industry Editor
Ken Presley

Editorial Assistant
Amy Stalknecht

Accountant
Ted Williford

Senior Editor
Bruce Sankey

Associate Editor
Ellen Balm

Editorial Assistant
Mark Gedris

Art Director
Mary E. McCarty

Advisory Board

William Allen
Sierra Trailways
Sacramento, Calif.

Larry Benjamin
Northfield Lines
Northfield, Minn.

Dave Bolen
New World Tours
Bristow, Va.

David Brown
Holiday Tours
Randlemann, N.C.

Steve Brown
Brown Coach
Amsterdam, N.Y.

Bob Foley
ABC Companies
Faribault, Minn.

Gladys Gillis
Starline Transportation
Seattle

Robert Hume
Travel Mates Trailways
Harrisonburg, Va.

Daryl G. Johnson
J & J Charters
Crosby, Texas

Dale Krapf
Krapf Coaches
West Chester, Pa.

Godfrey Lebron
Paradise Trailways
Hicksville, N.Y.

Joan Libby
Cavalier Coach
Boston, Mass.

Marcia Milton
First Priority Trailways
District Heights, Md.

Michael Neustadt
Coach Tours
Brookfield, Conn.

Jeff Polzien
Red Carpet Tours
Oklahoma City

Tom Ready
Ready Bus Lines
LaCrescent, Minn.

Brian Scott
Escot Bus Lines
Largo, Fla.

Michelle Silvestro
National Interstate Insurance Co.
Richfield, Ohio

T. Ralph Young
Young Transportation
Ashville, N.C.

MTR Western growth recognized, wins trademark case

PORTLAND, Ore. — September was a significant month for MTR Western, an ambitious coach company operating in the Pacific Northwest, as it was named one of the nation's fastest growing private companies and it won a trademark infringement case.

The September issue of Inc. magazine lists Seattle-based MTR Western as the 166th fastest growing small private company in the U.S. That designation put MTR Western on both the Inc. 500 and new Inc. 5,000 lists of up-and-coming companies.

According to Inc., tour-and-charter operator MTR Western has grown from annual revenues of \$1.2 million in 2003, to \$15.4 million last year. A growth rate of more than 1,200 percent.

MTR Western President and CEO Darren Berg said the inclusion of his company marked the first time — in the 26-year history of the Inc. 500 — a motorcoach company has appeared on the list.

Also last month, a U.S. magistrate in Portland found that a company doing business as MCR-West had infringed on MTR Western's trademark.

According to court records and the magistrate's decision, the trademark case developed when two Ukrainian immigrant brothers, Nikolay and Vitaly Yuzko, formed a coach company last year after reading an article about MTR Western and its achievements. The brothers decided to copy MTR Western's success, quite literally.

First, they want out and purchased a used, white-painted Prevost, which is the same coach that comprises the bulk of MTR Western's fleet. To learn more about the business, the brothers visited MTR Western's facility in Portland and talked to its sales manager, who shared information about where they could obtain service and maintenance.

For their new business, the brothers adopted the name MCR West, and added a decal on one side of their coach with the same tag line used by MTR Western ("Proudly Owned and Operated By"), preceding the USDOT operating authority information.

The Yuzkos also set up a Website — www.mcr-west.com, and had business cards developed and printed that used a swirl design in gold

and black that's very similar to the swirl-design logo used by MTR Western.

When MTR Western found out what the Yuzkos were doing it acted aggressively and swiftly — too aggressively and swiftly, in the court's opinion.

Upon being served with a summons and complaint, the Yuzkos destroyed their business cards, took down their Website, and stipulated to a preliminary injunction. Before trial, they stipulated to entry of a permanent injunction.

In her decision, U.S. Magistrate Janice M. Stewart said the Yuzkos were "novice" businessmen who acted "out of ignorance." She said there was no evidence the Yuzkos were attempting to steal customers from MTR Western, and its one unpainted coach "posed no serious competition" to MTR Western, which operates 30 coaches in the Portland area.

She said MTR Western acted hastily by making threats, which did little to persuade the Yuzkos to cooperate and stop their deceptive

practices, and then filed suit only a few weeks after learning of the Yuzkos' existence.

The court said MTR Western attorneys should have sent a cease-and-desist letter before rushing into court. Stewart declined to award MTR Western attorney fees.



Darren Berg

Selective catalyst system favored for 2010 engines

There appears to be little doubt that the vast majority of over-the-road bus and truck engine manufacturers plan to use selective catalyst reduction to meet the 2010 federal emission standards — the most stringent round of exhaust controls yet.

A consultant who specializes in designing and developing urea dispensing systems told a leading Wall Street investment firm, Bear Stearns, that there is now a "general consensus" among heavy vehicle OEMs that selective catalyst reduction will likely be the most practical technology for reaching the U.S. EPA-mandated 2010 NOx-reduction standards.

The selective catalyst reduction system — which injects a nitrogen containing agent like urea into the exhaust upstream of the catalyst to further eliminate NOx emissions — is the technology that's being used in Europe for meeting emission standards there.

However, to maintain the efficiency of the system's required NOx absorbers, the urea needs to be periodically replenished.

With just over two years to go before the standard kicks in, there still isn't a viable urea infrastruc-

ture in place in North America to serve commercial vehicles.

To build a urea supply network, OEMs reportedly are starting to educate not only their customers but also truck stops, private fleets and dealers about what will be needed with respect to urea availability and storage.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issued guidance on selective catalyst reduction to engine makers and OEMs regarding urea availability and what it expects the industry to do to prevent drivers from operating trucks and buses with depleted urea tanks.

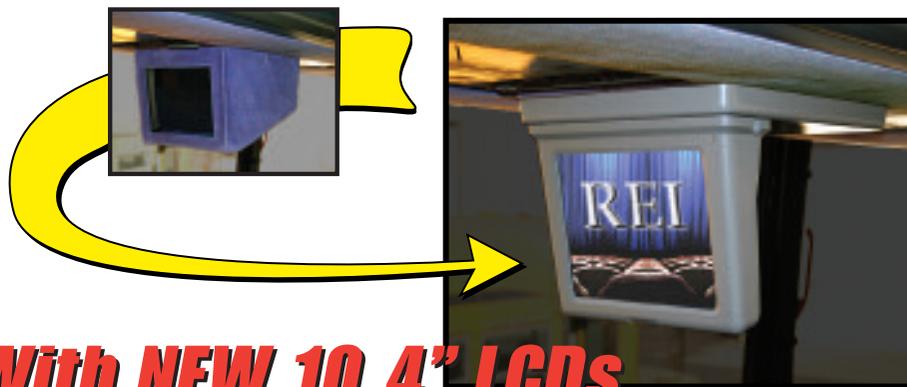
While headway reportedly is being made on that front, the future price of urea also could be a concern.

Strong demand for fertilizer and animal feed (which are components of urea) in the agricultural market could keep supply somewhat scarce for the transportation sector in some regions.

As a result, Bear Sterns' industry source speculated that some OEMs may reconsider using NOx adsorbers to meet 2010 emissions standard if urea prices continue to climb.

LCD UPGRADES! It's As Easy As 1,2,3,

Replace Your CRT Monitors



With NEW 10.4" LCDs

or

UPGRADE Your Current 10.4" LCDs
To NEW 15.4" LCD
Widescreens



Stick with the Trusted. DEMAND REI.



Toll-Free SALES 1.800.228.9275

John Morrison, MCI sales VP, dies

SCHAUMBURG, Ill. — John Morrison, a respected sales executive at Motor Coach Industries and popular figure in the industry, died Sept. 22 after a long bout with cancer. He was 50.

Mr. Morrison was a member of a distinguished bus industry family that operated a motorcoach business in St. Louis founded by his great-grandfather and grandfather. Mr. Morrison cut his industry teeth in that business.

"John's leadership style and selfless personality made him a friend of many in the industry and at MCI," said Tom Sorrells, MCI president and CEO. "He gave more than 100 percent to MCI and to all who knew him. His death is a sad loss for all of us at MCI, and we extend our deepest sympathy to his family."

Mr. Morrison joined MCI in

1993 as a regional sales manager and became regional vice president of sales. Subsequently, he became a product line manager and assisted with the launch of two MCI models.

Early in this decade, Mr. Morrison moved into information technology, directing and expanding the development of MCI's IT capabilities.

During the years he led the IT function, Mr. Morrison was responsible for e-sales, online warranty and parts tracking, IT service for company service centers, and logistics integration at the MCI Louisville parts warehouse.

In early 2005, Mr. Morrison returned to sales when he was named to head MCI's pre-owned coach sales program as company vice president. In that position, he was responsible for used coach

sales at all MCI locations in the U.S. and Canada, and pushed development of the company certified pre-owned coach program.

Despite the change in responsibilities, he continued his interest in information technology, expanding MCI's electronic used-coach marketing program, as well as its conventional sales and leasing programs.

Mr. Morrison and his wife, Deb, made their home in suburban Chicago.

In addition to his widow, Mr. Morrison is survived by his brother Jim, a senior executive at ABC Companies.



John Morrison

Like San Francisco landmark, Coach Expo will 'bridge gap'

SAN FRANCISCO — The Golden Gate Bridge is the iconic realization of a vision to bridge the gap between San Francisco and the counties north of the city.

This connection between distant places also happens to be the premise for Motorcoach Expo 2008. "Bridging the Gap" is the theme for next year's show, as well as the connection between this year's Expo theme of "Finding Your Road to Success!" and last year's "Taking Your Business to New Places!"

"We want operators to focus on a vision for their business, what they want to achieve in the next few years," said Victor Parra, president and CEO of the United Motorcoach Association, which sponsors Expo. "Motorcoach Expo '08 will help operators concentrate on constructing the steps to bridge that gap successfully," Parra said.

Additionally, effectively executing the steps needed to achieve an operator's vision also will be

addressed at Expo, according to Parra. "A mentor of mine once said, 'A great idea poorly executed produces mediocre results, though a mediocre idea well-executed produces great results.'"

"We will assist operators in every way to make sure their approach and execution is impeccable," Parra noted.

This notion of effectively executing a vision has parallels to the development of the Golden Gate Bridge. The original chief engineer of the bridge, Joseph B. Strauss, designed a somewhat unattractive structure. After several attempts to refine Strauss' design, it wasn't until architects Irving F. Morrow and his wife Gertrude took over that its current look and design were implemented.

Motorcoach Expo 2008 will be Jan. 16-20 at the Moscone Center in San Francisco. For a schedule of events or to register, go to www.motorcoachexpo.com. Or, call (800) 424-8262.

Ruth Fisher, owner/devoted driver, dies

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — Ruth Fisher, the matriarch and co-founder of a diversified school bus, motorcoach and bus sales company, died here last month. She was 89.

Together with her husband, Marvin, and son, Mark, Mrs. Fisher helped found what became Virginia Overland Transportation Co. in Richmond, Va., in the early 1970s.

By the mid-1980s, the company had grown to be the second-largest private operator of school buses in Virginia (after Laidlaw); a major dealer for Wayne Corp., the now-defunct school bus manufacturer; an operator of paratransit buses for the transit system in Richmond, and a charter coach operator with a modest fleet of mostly MCIs.

In addition to these operations, Virginia Overland also provided commuter transportation, university shuttles, van service, special event operations, and contract services.

During the decade or more of

the company's growth, Mrs. Fisher continued to drive a school bus everyday for the Richmond public schools — even though her son and husband were operating a fleet of more than a 100 school buses for nearby school districts and she was functioning daily as an officer and executive of the company.

Her son Mark said she was a member of a small cadre of drivers who were deeply committed to the Richmond schools and the safety of children who had to literally ride out school desegregation programs during that period.

In the second half of the 1980s, the company began downsizing after it was hit by the insurance crisis of 1985-86 and health problems struck Marvin Fisher.

Following labor troubles in 1986 and 1987, several of Virginia Overland's major public school district customers began operating their own buses.

In 1996, Mr. and Mrs. Fisher retired. A year later, Mr. Fisher died.

In June 2004, the Greater Richmond Transit Company assumed 80 percent of Virginia Overland's contract operations, and the company was forced out of business.

After her retirement, Mrs. Fisher's interests centered around her church, her circle of friends, her family and the business.

In addition to her son, she is survived by her daughter, Linda Jane Fisher of Richmond, Ind.

A memorial has been established in her name with the Alzheimer's Association — Southeastern Virginia Chapter, 263 McLaws Circle, Ste. 203, Williamsburg, VA 23185.



Ruth Fisher

Students get millions in driver TB suit

ALICE, Texas — Six high school students and a chaperone who were exposed in 2004 to tuberculosis by a charter bus driver won a \$5.25 million verdict last month.

A state court jury in Jim Wells County, Texas, found that Garcia Holiday Tours of Corpus Christi, Texas, was negligent in allowing the bus driver, who had exhibited signs of sickness during the trip, and in the weeks before it, to drive a commercial bus without a valid medical certificate.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations require commercial

bus and truck drivers to obtain a medical certificate every two years to assure they have been examined by a doctor and are in good health.

The Garcia Holiday Tours driver last obtained a certificate in 1999 and had not renewed it in five years.

Alice High School had contracted Garcia Holiday Tours to take the school band to San Antonio for its year-end trip in April 2004.

At the time, the driver, who had a family history of tuberculosis, was suffering from four of the six major symptoms of the disease. He was officially diagnosed with ac-

tive tuberculosis nine days after exposing his passengers to the disease.

The six children and the chaperone have been diagnosed with latent tuberculosis, an asymptomatic and noncommunicable form of the disease that can afflict its victims later in life without warning. It is treatable, but not curable.

The jury found the company and its driver jeopardized the passengers' future health.

More than 200 students were exposed and tested for tuberculosis after the driver sought medical attention.

Motorcoach to be auctioned at annual NTA convention

KANSAS CITY — Tourism Cares, the philanthropic arm of the National Tour Association, will auction a motorcoach provided by Stallion Bus Industries at the 2007 NTA Annual Convention here next month.

The 36-passenger SLC 936 Sunliner Coach will be on display on the convention floor and will be the premier item during the live auction Nov. 5.

The NTA convention runs from Nov. 2-6, and will feature a bus and coach display sponsored by the United Motorcoach Association.

A highlight at the NTA convention each year is the Tourism Cares live-and-silent auctions, featuring items donated by NTA members. The theme this year is "Bidding on the Best," which will focus on high-end, unique items. Bidding starts Friday and ends at 5 p.m. Monday before the live auction.

"We are thrilled Stallion Bus Industries has made such a generous donation that will make this year's (auction) a great success," said NTA Chairman and CEO Randy Julian.

Tourism Cares Executive Director Bruce Beckham said he was excited that a motorcoach will again be auctioned at an NTA convention. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, ABC Bus (now ABC

Companies) donated a coach each year that was auctioned to benefit the National Tourism Foundation.

"The (Stallion) coach will draw attention to the many other items that the ... auctions have to offer and also to the Tourism Cares booth where NTA members can learn about the wonderful things that Tourism Cares does to help the travel industry give back," Beckham added.

Tourism Cares is a program of conservation, restoration and preservation.

For more information on the auction, e-mail Jill Talladay at jillt@tourismcares.org, and for information on the convention, go to www.nta.travel.

Award

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

nominations," said Victor Para, president and CEO of UMA.

"Operators also can nominate themselves or a peer whose activities demonstrate a culture of environmental responsibility and leadership."

Nomination forms will be available shortly on the UMA Website, www.uma.org. Deadline for nominations is Nov. 30.

For more information, go to www.uma.org, or call UMA at (800) 424-8262.

Study offers tips to increase fuel economy

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — With energy experts saying retail diesel fuel prices will remain high for the foreseeable future, it continues to be smart business for coach operators to take steps to boost fuel economy in their buses.

An 18-month, telematics-based study of commercial vehicle fuel economy conducted by a fleet management and ground transportation support services company has identified several fuel-saving tactics that go beyond the usual focus on reducing speeding and idling.

The study by Fort Lauderdale-based PHH FirstFleet resulted in this hypothesis:

By slightly over-spec'ing engines to run more consistently in the "sweet spot," choosing a gear ratio low enough to suit a fleet's application and location, and enabling the correct fuel-efficient, engine-specific parameters, fuel economy can be improved by around 5 percent.

The study's findings supported the hypothesis.

When combined with other variables, including progressive shifting, the engine "sweet spot" is where both performance and fuel efficiency are maximized, resulting in measurable fuel savings.

Operators of commercial vehicles are facing a number of challenges, observes Michael C. Lewis, president and general manager of PHH FirstFleet. These include tougher emissions standards, the introduction of ultra-low-sulfur diesel fuel and new vehicle requirements.

"This study points to fuel-saving initiatives other than driver habits, such as speeding and idling, to help reduce operating costs," said Lewis.

Bus & Motorcoach News asked long-time coach industry maintenance guru Scott R. Crawford, fleet support central zone manager for Motor Coach Industries, for his comments on various aspects of the PHH FirstFleet study.

Here are the key findings from the study, along with Crawford's observations, that will help coach operators achieve better fuel economy:

1. Increase engine torque rating. Increasing the engine torque rating provides a simple and effective method to decrease time spent in the high-output torque range. Driving at high-output torque ratings leads to over-revving, or

RPMs higher than the engine parameters specify. Over-revving shortens the life of the engine, sustains lower fuel economy and higher costs.

On the same note, driving in a lower RPM range than the engine's specified parameters may result in driver dissatisfaction and could require increased downshifting, which indirectly causes over-revving.

Notes Crawford: "Operators need to spec the highest horsepower rating as possible." He adds, however, that coach operators usually don't have a lot of options to choose from.

2. Decrease rear-axle gear ratio. Choosing a lower gear ratio improves fuel economy, reduces engine wear, increases speed at lower RPMs and may help reduce over-revving. In general, choose the correct rear-axle gear ratio for the fleet's application and needs, but consider that while higher gear ratios may improve overall performance and provide added power in lower gears, additional power causes equipment to lose fuel economy. If improving fuel economy remains a priority, consider whether the extra performance validates the loss in fuel economy.

Adds Crawford: "There aren't too many choices engineered into coaches."

3. Engine-specific parameter controls.

A. Speeding. Above 65 mph, the engine works harder to overcome aerodynamic drag. In fact, it demands more than 50 percent of the engine's total available horsepower, which significantly increases fuel consumption. If speed is decreased to 55 mph in the appropriate gear, the horsepower demand is reduced, drawing less fuel.

B. Idling. Idling achieves 0.0 mpg and uses .5 to 1 gallon of fuel per hour. Consider idle shutdown to save fuel while at stops.

Says Crawford: "Speeding and idling are something we need to push. Speeding especially. There is a huge impact (on fuel economy) if operators would slow down their units instead of running up against the top-speed setting. Idling is tough during certain times of the year, however."

C. Progressive shifting. Drivers shifting quickly in lower gears prevents over-revving, which decreases fuel consumption and increases fuel economy.

Notes Crawford: "You really need the ZF unit to do so. The transmission ECU keeps the RPM closer to the desired range because of increased ratios and the ability to skip shifts

4. Lower weight. New materials allow for less weight and more potential fuel economy gains.

Observes Crawford: "Weight reductions are hard to achieve. Aluminum rims help and composites help but are hard to retrofit."

5. Low-profile radial or single-

wide tires. Research indicates that fuel economy can improve from 2 to 5 percent by using low-profile and/or wide-based tires and wheels. Decreased weight and lower rolling resistance are the key contributors to fuel economy improvements.

Asserts Crawford: "Single drive tires sound great on the surface as a possibility to cut costs but there are some issues that reduce the feasibility on a bus. No spare tire can be stored in normal locations, availability of replacements

on the road, safety on blow outs and the like."

6. Tire pressure settings.

Says Crawford. "Proper tire pressure settings are critical. SmarTire systems will help operators, as well as providing additional safety for the coach."

"A big plus to all these changes in fuel prices, as well as the increased awareness of 'environmental concerns,' is that they should... help the industry expand business," said Crawford.

BIG RIG COLLISION

YOUR ONE STOP SHOP FOR :

Collision Repair

Frame Straightening

Fire Restoration

Mechanical Services

Graphics & Signage

Re-Finishing

customer satisfaction is our top priority

NO HASSLE

North America-Wide

Lifetime
Warranty

NO CHARGE
ESTIMATES!

contact us at:

1-888-848-8686

403-243-7400

24/7

availability for all
of your repair needs

Family owned and operated for more than

25 years

www.bigrigcollision.com

REPOS FOR SALE
 Variety of makes and models of
 "Bank Repos" across the United
 States and Priced to Sell!
 1-877-737-2221 Ext. 716 for more information!

Passenger briefings

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

or overturned bus.

Four years after the NTSB made its recommendation, the FMCSA held informal meetings to discuss the issue with coach manufacturers, insurance companies, safety consultants, trade associations, other regulatory agencies, industry representatives, and officials from the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance.

Out of those meetings grew a working group that, within five months, came up with suggestions for meeting the NTSB recommendation. The working committee said it would be best to initially encourage the coach industry to take voluntary action to improve pre-trip safety awareness.

And coach industry representatives on the working group maintained it was impossible to develop a uniform passenger safety awareness regulation that was flexible enough for industry-wide application due to the broad operational variations within the industry.

The group said that development and promotion of a list of best practices was a more effective and realistic alternative to assure motorcoach passengers receive safety information.

Fundamentally, the FMCSA adopted the working group's ideas.

It has come up with a basic plan that coach operators can follow to implement a safety-awareness program for their passengers and it's specifically designed to meet the needs of diverse motorcoach operational types.

Guideline elements

Here are the recommended safety topics to be covered in a motorcoach passenger safety awareness briefing or program:

1. Emergency exits: Point out the location of all emergency exits (push-out windows, roof vent and door) and explain how to operate them.

Emphasize that, whenever feasible, the motorcoach door should be the primary exit. Encourage able-bodied passengers to assist any injured or mobility-impaired passengers during an emergency evacuation. (Provide passengers with sufficient guidance to ensure compliance with 49 CFR 392.62, "Safe operation, buses.")

2. Emergency contact: Advise passengers to call 911 by cellular telephone in the event of an emergency.

3. Driver direction: Advise

passengers to look to the driver for direction and follow his or her instructions.

4. Fire extinguisher: Point out the location of the fire extinguisher.

5. Restroom emergency push button or switch: Inform motorcoach passengers of the emergency signal device in the restroom.

6. Avoid slips and falls: Warn passengers to exercise care when boarding and exiting the motorcoach and to use the handrail when ascending or descending steps.

7. Encourage passengers to remain seated as much as possible while the motorcoach is in motion. If it is necessary to walk while the motorcoach is moving, passengers should always use handrails and supports.

Presentation method

The FMCSA suggested a variety of methods of presenting the safety information. However, it also said its list of ways of providing safety information was neither exhaustive nor should it be construed to restrict combinations of the methods or additional presentation methods.

1. During passenger boarding: Informational pamphlets could be distributed to passengers during boarding.

2. After passenger boarding and immediately prior to moving the motorcoach:

a. The driver requests the passengers to review informational pamphlets located in the pouches or sleeves on the back of seats.

b. The driver provides an oral presentation (similar to the presentations by airline flight attendants prior to take-off) with or without informational pamphlets as visual aids.

c. An automated audio presentation broadcasts a cassette tape or compact disk over the motorcoach audio system.

d. An automated video presentation plays a videotape or DVD on the coach video system.

Timing, frequency

Here's when the FMCSA says safety briefings should be given:

Demand-responsive motorcoach operations, such as charter-and-tour services, should present the safety information to passengers after boarding and prior to movement of the motorcoach.

Fixed-route motorcoach service operations should present the safety information at all major stops or terminals, after passenger boarding and prior to movement of the motorcoach.

discouraging its inspectors from making repeat visits to high-risk truck and bus operators that received unsatisfactory ratings during their last compliance review because the agency "believed that

Filing by Florida operator gains real traction at FTA

ATLANTA — The southeast regional administrator for the Federal Transit Agency has told a private Pensacola, Fla., bus operator, Beach Boy Trolley, that its charter rules complaint against the Pensacola transit agency has merit.

Thomas E. McKean, president of Beach Boy Trolley, filed the complaint against Escambia County Area Transit in August, alleging about a half-dozen major charter rules violations by the transit agency.

In an interview in May, McKean told how his business was being damaged by the transit agency and how he was trying to scrape up enough money to hire an attorney to file a formal complaint with the FTA. (See May 15 issue of *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

FTA attorney

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

sit agencies, limiting the charter work they would be able to do.

They cited the elimination of the willing-and-able process, cease-and-desist orders, the appeals process and regulatory language that was seen as vague, unenforceable and easily disputable.

Those and other provisions were replaced with language the

North Carolina

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

(has) varied widely."

At least one county went so far as to require \$10 million in liability insurance. The county subsequently reduced the amount to the standard \$5 million, Brown says.

Another county required a criminal background check of drivers, but now the driver's permission to do such a check is required, according to Brown.

"Several counties joined a consortium, decreasing the number of physical inspections, while other counties simply opted out of the program entirely," Brown says.

The state motorcoach association was preparing a bill to deal with the issue, but Brown says legislative leaders shut down all committees in August, except for budget-related measures.

"They ended the session and left," he says, "and the bill is still there. It'll be among the first up in the next session, which starts in January."

A draft of the bill apparently doesn't exist because it was in the

In his complaint to the FTA, McKean exposes a sham bus operator that Escambia Transit, known locally as ECAT, set up to do charter work for the county administrator's office and the Pensacola Downtown Improvement Board.

Exhibits attached to the complaint show that the "sham operator" is not legally engaged in the transportation business and apparently accommodates several business friends by charting ECAT trolley buses at cut-rate prices.

Dr. Yvette G. Taylor, region four administrator for the FTA, took a look at the complaint and quickly fired off a letter to McKean, saying it contains grounds on which relief may be granted, and under FTA procedures she advised McKean to try to con-

private operators said were fairer, clearer and more reasonable.

However, publication of the proposed rules touched off a firestorm in the public sector, with transit agencies flooding the FTA with letters of complaint. Of the nearly 300 letters filed with the FTA during the public comment period, about two-thirds came from public bus operators.

FTA lawyers began reviewing the complaints in April in prepara-

tion of writing the final rules.

Horner was replaced at the FTA by Severn Miller, a 1988 graduate of Washington and Lee University who does not appear to have any experience in transit or motorcoach transportation activities. He practiced appellate litigation in election, tort and insurance law and served as general counsel for the election committee of Bob Ehrlich, the former governor of Maryland.

in North Carolina deserves the same high level of safety, so the inspection process should be uniform, and there should only be one approved list in North Carolina."

Ralph Young of Young Transportation in Asheville, N.C., echoes Brown's concerns, calling the inspection dilemma a huge issue. "Every county is doing it differently," he says. He, too, was hoping that the Legislature could straighten out the mess.

Brown says another issue faced by North Carolina coach operators involves so-called school activity buses. They're the same as the yellow school buses, but painted in school colors.

"Originally they were intended to carry teams to athletic events," Brown says. "Now they're using them for over-the-road field trips. Even interstate trips. Each county does it differently. Some charge students 50 cents a mile. Some school districts are in the charter bus business but they just don't admit it.

"Every trip that's run on an activity bus is not run on a motorcoach."

Warning, parts of the report may make your blood boil because of the shortcomings it identifies and its explanation of the policies, practices, and bureaucratic shortcuts the FMCSA has adopted to

cope with the enormity of the responsibility assigned to it.

That is, regulating the safety of hundreds of thousands of truck and bus operators with a tiny army of inspectors.

FMCSA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

follow-up inspection, posing safety risks to everyone.

The FMCSA has a policy of

THE WORD IS OUT.



RBS has ...

- The most new products ...
- The most affordable prices ...
- The best customer support ...
- The widest range of services ...
- Of any software provider in the motorcoach industry.

Industry Partners



Prophesy
Mileage & Routing and more.



MRK
Remote Hosting - Run GoChart from Anywhere.



RTA
Maintenance Management and Parts Inventory

- GoChart2000

Complete Charter Management System

- GoTour Online

Retail and Group Tour Management and Reservations

- GoMile3000

IFTA Compatible Fuel Tax Reporting Module

- DriverDuty3000

Driver Time Management for Payroll

- Mobile Comm.

Vehicle Tracking and Transmission of Driver Orders

- Reporting Module

Advanced Accounting & Management Analysis Suite



CALL 800-448-7001 OR GO ONLINE TO WWW.RBS2000.COM TO REQUEST A FREE, FULLY OPERATIONAL COPY OF THE RBS SYSTEM TO RUN IN YOUR OFFICE FOR 45 DAYS.



Take Control of Your Costs and Odors!

Ultra PowrPak XL

Better than ever. Controls odors all week long.



Deep blue non-staining dye and long-lasting fragrance!

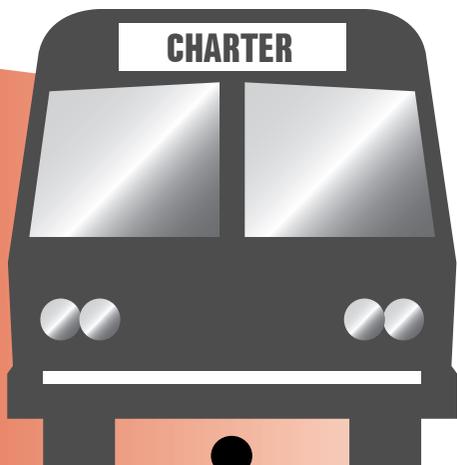


**Call for Free Samples!
1-800-423-5350**

339 Arco Drive • P.O. Box 3484 • Toledo, OH 43607
419-535-0101 • Fax 419-535-0531 • www.chempace.com

Dump CLEAN...

Dump LEGAL!

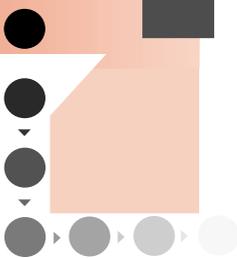


WASHROOM WASTE DISPOSAL UNIT

Installs directly into your existing sewer system!

Lavatory dump hopper is assembled and ready to install in your existing sewer system. Its cover plate is easily rolled back with the remover tool. Each of your service lanes can easily be equipped with this time-saving unit, which has been the industry standard for over thirty years. All major credit cards accepted.

Call 1-866-LAV-DUMP or email lavdump@yahoo.com for additional information.



Washroom waste is removed quickly, easily and safely

HUDSON RIVER CORPORATION

Call toll free: 1-866-LAV-DUMP | Fax: 1-201-420-3322

NIMCO/Bus Division

973 589-9265 • Toll Free 800-526-8055
FAX 973-589-2253 • P.O. BOX 5157 • NEWARK, NJ 07105
www.nimcobus.com

Supplying the Transportation Industry with Used, Serviceable & Rebuildable Bus Parts for Over 25 Years!

VOLUME DISCOUNTS • PRIDE IN PERFORMANCE

DEEP DISCOUNTS!
on all Detroit Diesel & Allison Transmissions

SAVE MONEY ~ SAVE TIME

We sell good running qualified bus components.

NO RISK PURCHASE PLAN

We unconditionally guarantee our customers satisfaction.

WE ALSO STOCK

- Front and Rear Axle Parts • Engine Accessories
- Alternators and other Electrical Components
- Air Conditioning Components • Body Parts

We Buy & Sell Buses... Call for a Quote

Bang-up event may warrant one more Atlantic City run

ATLANTIC CITY — Coach operators who have written off Atlantic City as a destination for their gaming customers may want to reconsider — at least for one night later this month.

On Oct. 18, the old Sands Casino Hotel will come crashing down in what the local newspaper says will be a “spectacular implosion that will light up the nighttime sky and give the Boardwalk some Las Vegas-style pyrotechnical pizzazz.”

There will be a six-minute fireworks display — designed to “build excitement” — before a series of controlled explosions rip through the 21-story hotel tower at 9:30 p.m., bringing it down in a cloud of dust and debris.

The Sands operated for 26 years but the demolition will reduce it to rubble in a matter of seconds. The old casino, which closed in November, is being razed to make way for a \$1.5 billion mega-resort by Las Vegas-based Pinnacle Entertainment Inc.

To bring down the Sands, Pinnacle is adopting a fairly common style and method used in Las Vegas — splashy, fireworks-laden implosions to create a spectacular send-off, as well as draw large crowds to the beach and Boardwalk.

“There’s something about implosions that people are just fascinated with, even if you’re not into construction or demolition. It’s fascinating to watch a building come down,” said Kim Townsend, CEO of Pinnacle’s Atlantic City operations.

This will be the first casino implosion in Atlantic City. The city

has not had an implosion since a handful of old Boardwalk hotels were cleared out in the 1970s to make room for the new generation of casinos — among them, the Sands.

The Sands opened in 1980, as the Brighton Hotel & Casino, adopting the Sands name of Las Vegas fame the following year after a change in ownership. The hotel was popular in the 1980s and early ‘90s, catering to high rollers and bringing big-name entertainers, such as Frank Sinatra, to its Copa Room.

However, over time it was outpaced by the competition.

The new casino being developed by Pinnacle is tentatively scheduled to open in 2011 or 2012. The complex is expected to include about 2,000 hotel rooms and 500,000 square feet of space for retail stores and restaurants in a mall-like setting. There will be another 250,000 to 400,000 square feet of space for the casino, conventions, entertainment arena, ballroom and spa.

The implosion is being staged on a Thursday night to try to minimize disruptions. After the building is imploded, crews will use the overnight hours to begin cleaning up debris in hopes of getting the city back to normal by morning rush hour.

The company handling the implosion previously imploded the Stardust, Aladdin, Dunes and Sands casinos in Las Vegas.

Fireworks by Grucci, billed as “America’s first family of fireworks,” will stage the pyrotechnics preceding the Sands implosion.

portation Authority to hold off on making the changes. The convention and visitors authority says the proposed rules would be disastrous for the city’s chief industry: tourism.

The convention and visitors authority presented a written recommendation to the transportation authority, asking it to wait until a regional master transportation plan already initiated by the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority — and in which the SJTA is taking part — is completed next year.

“Why make these changes, these sweeping changes, without getting the results of this study?” said visitors authority Vice President of Marketing Maureen Siman.

She said that keeping tour buses off the White and Black Horse pikes would further clog the congested expressway on weekends, frustrate customers who have to wait in traffic and pose pedestrian safety issues at the base of the expressway.

Bridgestone Firestone hikes prices

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Bus and motorcoach industry tire supplier Bridgestone Firestone has announced a 4 percent price increase effective Nov. 1.

It is the second price hike announced by the tire company this year. In March, a 5 percent increase was announced effective May 1.

Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire LLC and Bridgestone Firestone Canada Inc. jointly announced that the latest price increase would apply to the compa-

nies’ Bridgestone, Firestone, Fusion and associate brand tire lines.

The announced increases — generally up to 4 percent on bus, truck, passenger and light truck, and off-the-road tires, with possible specific in-line adjustments in excess of 4 percent — will affect the replacement, original equipment and export channels.

“The unprecedented on-going escalation in raw material costs — especially those related to petroleum — continue to strain our abili-

ty to offset these increases with countermeasures,” said Asahiko ‘Duke’ Nishiyama, vice chairman and president of Bridgestone Americas Holding Inc., parent company of Bridgestone Firestone North American and Canada.

“The record-breaking price of oil affects every aspect of our business, from the manufacture of our products through their delivery to our customers. As a result, we have no choice but to implement this price increase,” Nishiyama added.

DaimlerChrysler expanding Florida center

WINTER GARDEN, Fla. — DaimlerChrysler Commercial Buses North is expanding its service and sales center in Winter Garden, near Orlando.

Construction is expected to begin next month on an expanded parts area, as well as upgrades to the service facilities.

To make room for the expansion, DaimlerChrysler Commercial Buses is conducting what it calls a “pre-expansion sales event” on Nov. 6.

The one-day event will be an open house, showcasing used coaches and offering special pricing, as well as highlighting the service and sales center and its capabilities.

DaimlerChrysler also will be offering specials on various coach services, including oil changes and inspections.

Complimentary lunch and refreshments throughout the event will be provided, and several prize drawings will also take place.

“This event is to both showcase our pre-owned motorcoaches, as well as feature our soon-to-be-refurbished service center,” said Tom Chezem, vice president of motorcoach sales for DCCB North America.

To RSVP or for more information, customers can call Robin Faulkner at (800) 381-4630, or e-mail robin.faulkner@dcbusna.com.

The DCCB Service & Sales Center of Orlando is at 1155 Elbow Way in Winter Garden.

Wynn proposes mega-casino in A.C.

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Las Vegas casino mogul Steve Wynn has told an Atlantic City newspaper he wants to develop a mega-resort casino here.

“If I have a site at Bader Field, I’ll build Wynn Atlantic City,” Wynn told *The Press of Atlantic City*.

Wynn has long been thought to be interested in returning to Atlantic City to develop a casino of the caliber of his upscale properties on the Las Vegas Strip, like the Bellagio, Mirage and most recently the \$2.7 billion Wynn Las Vegas.

Wynn says Atlantic City is at a

crossroads — either it struggles to survive against the slot parlors in Pennsylvania and New York, or it takes the next step to become a top-notch tourist destination.

“It seems like the right moment for Atlantic City to do something dynamic,” he said.

Wynn owned the former Golden Nugget casino in Atlantic City in the 1980s. He had plans to build a new casino in the Marina District in the late 1990s, but that project died when he sold his former gaming company, Mirage Resorts Inc.

Now he’s scouting for sites in Atlantic City that would accom-

modate a huge casino-hotel complex. His first choice is Bader Field, a former municipal airport that includes 140 acres of bayfront property between the Atlantic City Expressway and Route 40 corridor.

“If we have the property, I’ll build the hotel,” he said of the Bader site. “I’ll guarantee that, and I’ll put it in writing.”

The city is trying to decide how the Bader property should be developed, and whether it should be a site for casinos. The idea has strong opposition, including that of other casino developers.

Atlantic City airport begins bomb screening

EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP, N.J. — Buses, limousines, trucks, cars and other vehicles entering Atlantic City International Airport are now being screened for explosives and contraband hidden underneath them.

The pilot program and new technology, said to be the first of its kind in the nation, captures a video image of the underside of vehicles as they enter the airport.

Vehicles drive onto a four-inch-high ramp equipped with a series of cameras and lights that transmit an image of the underside of the vehicle to a security screen located in a vehicle parked nearby.

“This equipment gives law enforcement officers another tool to use in the fight against terrorism and helps us to ensure a safe flying environment for the traveling public,” said state Transportation Commissioner Kris Kolluri.

Egg Harbor Police Chief Blaze Catania said authorities needed a better way to inspect vehicles approaching the airport. “It’s a big improvement over trying to stick an inspection mirror under a car,” Catania said.

The equipment was funded with a \$22,500 grant from the state Office of Homeland Security. Catania said his department applied for the grant following safety recom-

mendations made a few years ago by a group consisting of county, municipal and emergency response officials.

Critics of such expensive technology contend determined terrorists will not be scotch taping dynamite to the underside of vehicles if they decide to detonate an improvised explosive device at an airport. The critics say such explosives will be well concealed.

Atlantic City

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

it’s simply not worth it. I have advised my sales staff, no more Atlantic City, no more New Jersey,” Presley said the operator told him.

“While Atlantic City and the South Jersey Transportation Authority may not miss those 300-400 tourists, along with the retail sales and tax revenue they produced, these dollars now appear on someone else’s (income) sheet.

“At a time when bus and motorcoach tourism is increasing, Atlantic City is recording dramatic declines in bus and motorcoach visits, (down) approximately 40 percent in the last decade,” said Presley.

“While Atlantic City once enjoyed a regional lock on gaming, this condition no longer exists,” he added.

Meanwhile, the Atlantic City Convention and Visitors Authority has asked the South Jersey Trans-

Coach America

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

operate.

In addition to being on the board of Coach America and serving as vice chairman of the ABA, Lentzsch remains a member of the National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission, a creation of the U.S. Depart-

ment of Transportation that’s studying the long-term financing of the nation’s transportation infrastructure; a director of the Intermodal Transportation Institute, and chairman of the trustees of the Winston School, an institution in Dallas that specializes in teaching young people who have learning disabilities. He has resigned as a director of Gray Line Worldwide.

Dollar decline is mixed news for coach industry

The declining value of the U.S. dollar is cutting in different directions for motorcoach operators.

This year's steady slide in the dollar's value, which accelerated last month, has resulted in U.S. greenbacks reaching one-to-one parity against Canadian dollars for the first time in 30 years and hitting a new low against the 13-nation European currency.

You have to go back to November 1976 for the last time the U.S. dollar and the Canadian dollar reached parity.

The half-point cut in U.S. interest rates last month, while aimed at shoring up U.S. credit markets, also

had the effect of further weakening the dollar versus other currencies by reducing the cash yield on dollars.

However, a lower dollar also can make travel to the U.S. seem like a bargain to Canadians and other foreigners, which could boost the business of some coach U.S. operators, but at the same time it poses the risk of making imported buses and other foreign-made goods more expensive over time.

Yet, lower interest rates in the U.S. can make financing a new or used coach much easier.

When the euro topped the \$1.40 barrier against the dollar last month, it solidified its position on

world currency markets, giving it momentum toward becoming a reserve currency of choice — a position long held by the dollar.

Meanwhile, many financial analysts are predicting further increases in the value of the euro — versus the dollar. As the euro rises

it could dampen exports, particularly to the United States, making European-made products more expensive for American buyers.

Lenzner gets NMN marketing award

SEWICKLEY, Pa. — Lenzner Coach Lines has received the Motorcoach Marketing Excellence Award presented by the National Motorcoach Network Inc.

The award recognizes Lenzner for 15 years of marketing excellence as a member of the network, a leading coach industry marketing organization.

Lenzner Coach Lines has been serving the Pittsburgh and surrounding area since 1939. It employs more than 190 people and has a fleet of more than 75 vehicles, including motorcoaches, mid-size buses and sightseeing trolleys.

Lenzner is a member of Coach USA but is independently managed and operated.

megabus.com ends two-city service

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — megabus.com has suspended service to Louisville, Ky., and Pittsburgh.

It is the first significant cut-back in service since megabus.com began running in April of last year.

The megabus.com runs from Chicago, Indianapolis and Colum-

bus, Ohio, to Louisville and Pittsburgh began in May of this year but did generate enough passengers.

"We've not seen the volume that substantiates the service," said Dale Moser, who heads both megabus.com and Coach USA.

Some Introductions,

Simply Need No Introduction



The all-new Dodge Sprinter shuttle bus from DaimlerChrysler Commercial Buses has the versatility you have been looking for, only now with a refined look and overall increase in length and height. It can now comfortably seat up to 15 - plus driver, and provides superior ride and handling. With its roomy passenger cabin with plenty of standing room, effortless passenger boarding, and other optional onboard amenities, the Dodge Sprinter shuttle bus will become one of your most demanded shuttles in your fleet.

Continuing to lead the way, the all-new Dodge Sprinter shuttle bus offers extended maintenance intervals and provides exceptional fuel savings, making this the vehicle of choice. All-in-all, it opens new opportunities with endless possibilities — contact us today to discover the all-new Dodge Sprinter shuttle bus.

Shuttle Bus Leasing

"Your Solution For Shuttling & Fixed Route Contracting"

Leases Terms Available From 3 Months to 2 Years

High Quality, Transit Shuttle Buses

Over 1000 Buses In Inventory

22' To 60' Models Available



Parking Lot Shuttles ~ Seasonal Coverage
Employee Shuttling ~ Peak Demand Coverage



Top Quality Transit Buses Also
Available for Sale

800-287-7253

1863 Service Court, Riverside, CA 92507
www.ShuttleBusLeasing.com

DAIMLERCHRYSLER
Commercial Buses North America

SPRINTER

contact us: 800.882.8054 | sales@dcbusna.com | www.dcbusna.com



WE GO TO GREAT LENGTHS SO YOU CAN GO THE DISTANCE.

At PrevoSt we do whatever it takes to ensure your satisfaction.

The red carpet leads to PrevoSt. Here, everyone receives the same outstanding service. We care for your vehicle as if it were our own. We take just as much pride in caring for you, too. You'll see it in the details. From our newly remodeled customer lounges to our



highly qualified factory trained technicians, it's our dedication to quality service that gets you back on the road without delay.

That's the PrevoSt Red Carpet treatment: Part corporate policy, part constant reminder that someone is always looking out for you.

To learn more please visit prevostcar.com. **THE ULTIMATE CLASS**

With PrevoSt Action Service System, enjoy 24/7 access to call center personnel specialized in providing immediate assistance to motorcoach drivers.



The PrevoSt Service Network:
Six PrevoSt-Owned Service Centers
A Team Of Field Service Managers
Over 150 Strategically Located Independent Repair Facilities

United States: New Jersey 1 800 223-0830 • Florida 1 800 874-7740 • Tennessee 1 877 299-8881 • Texas 1 866 773-8678
California 1 800 421-9958 • Canada: Quebec 1 866 870-2046 • Order parts online www.prevostcar.com