



Foundation Building. Motorcoach Expo 2005 in February will feature more than a dozen educational sessions designed to help operators build a stronger foundation for business success. Descriptions of the workshops are on Page 10.

Task force proposes ABA-UMA union, directors to consider

HARTFORD, Conn. — A joint task force has come up with a framework for unifying the United Motorcoach Association and the American Bus Association, with the proposal to be presented to the boards of both organizations early this month.

The 10-member ABA/UMA Unification Task Force met here for two days in mid-November and “reached a framework for a unified industry association.”

One member of the task force called the meetings “very grueling; intense and tiring.”

Members of the task force agreed they would not discuss the proposed framework other than to

say they were delighted and excited to have a plan they could present to the two boards on Dec. 7 in Orlando.

The meeting of the boards has been tightly structured by the task force to give both sides an equal opportunity to hear and consider the unification proposal. The plan will be presented at a joint meeting of the boards, after which each board will caucus separately to consider the proposal.

If the boards approve the framework, then the next step will be to present it to the members of both organizations in February.

One person close to the meet-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ►

Someone is Watching System tracks real-time driver errors

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — A Silicon Valley company has launched a high-tech system that allows owners and managers to monitor the behavior of their drivers as they roll down the highway.

The system tracks and reports driver errors and violations in real time.

The sophisticated Telemetry Information System and Vehicle Safety Manager from Acculeon Inc. can record speeding, tailgating, unsafe handling on curved roads, rapid acceleration, sudden stops and frequent lane changes.

“We’re finding the majority of fleets currently (pilot testing) the product are using it not only to identify which drivers need more training but they’re using the system as a driver reward tool,” said Mahesh Chowdhary, chief technology officer and co-founder of

Acculeon.

The system consists of three components: In-vehicle TIS hardware (or black box), a communications infrastructure, either cellular or WiFi communications link (or both), and Web-based VSM analysis and report generation software.

The TIS hardware captures and records driver events through the use of inertial sensors, a GPS receiver and an onboard geographical map database.

A gyroscope tracks frequent lane changes at high speeds and turns that are taken too tightly. The built-in accelerometer tracks rapid acceleration, sudden stops and tailgating events.

A proprietary compact onboard map database provides information about road geometry and speed limits, while the GPS receiver tracks

the vehicle location where unsafe driving events occur.

The system’s software enables operators and managers to view and generate all sorts of reports. The software even provides specific recommendations to help correct driver behavior problems.

Acculeon says the system should reduce insurance premiums for companies that use it.

Some of the basic reports that can be generated by Web-based VSM software include: total fleet performance during any specific period; ranking of all drivers based on unsafe driving behavior for any period, by class of vehicles or by specific event types, and performance of an individual driver over time and in comparison with the rest of the fleet.

For more information go to www.acculeon.com.

Wheelchair lift grants going to 74 operators

WASHINGTON — Seventy-four motorcoach companies in 26 states are receiving grants from the Federal Transit Administration to help make their fleets more accessible to individuals with disabilities.

The FTA announced last month it was awarding grants totaling nearly \$6.91 million to private coach operators, with \$5.2 million going to intercity companies and \$1.7 million to charter, tour and commuter operators.

Most of the money will be used to defray the cost of installing wheelchair lifts in new coaches and retrofitting lifts in existing coaches. In total, the fiscal 2004 grants will pay for the incremental cost of adding lifts to 79 new coaches, retrofitting 110 vehicles, and providing

Complete List, Page 6

\$172,839 for training.

The grant program, which is called the Over-the-Road Bus Accessibility Program, has awarded \$24.3 million to private coach operators during the past five years.

Greyhound Lines of Dallas was again awarded the largest grant, totaling just over \$2.6 million, or roughly 38 percent of the total. The smallest grant, \$12,600, went to a tour and charter operator in Texas.

Others receiving sizable grants this year were Peter Pan Bus Lines, Adirondack Trailways, and Martz Trailways.

Large line-run operators are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 ►

Cruise with MCI!

Going further with your year-end purchase.
Call today to learn more about MCI's travel promotion.*
1-800-468-5827 *Some restrictions apply

MOTOR COACH INDUSTRIES

PRE-OWNED COACH INVENTORY SALE

★ From the #1 Pre-Owned Dealer in the U.S. ★

Van Hool Pre-Owned!



New Jersey Vin 29401
1997 T945 **\$169,900**



Minnesota Vin 43867
2000 T2145 **\$255,000**



Florida Vin 29499
1998 T945 **\$190,000**



California Vin 24822
1994 T845 **\$114,000**



Texas Vin 28437
1995 T845 **\$130,000**



Florida Vin 29468
1998 T945 **\$190,000**



New Jersey Vin 24934
1994 T845 **\$127,900**



Texas Vin 24819
1994 T845 **\$114,000**

**Contact your Account Executive
for Selection & Delivery Today!**

Inspect hundreds of premier pre-owned coaches at the all new www.abc-companies.com!



Exclusive U.S.  Distributor

MINNESOTA | NEW JERSEY | FLORIDA | TEXAS | CALIFORNIA
800-222-2875 | 800-222-2873 | 800-222-2871 | 800-222-2877 | 800-322-2877

www.abc-companies.com

Virginia operator makes commitment to Highway Watch

RICHMOND, Va. — Drivers for James River Bus Lines will soon be hitting the highways with a little wider view than they've had in the past.

The company's 53 drivers are in line for special training so they can serve as observers in the federal government's Highway Watch program, joining truck drivers from across the U.S. who are on the lookout for unusual activity on the nation's highways.

James River is believed to be one of the few — possibly even the only — motorcoach company active in the program, which began six years ago as a road safety pro-

gram for truckers, but has been greatly expanded during the past year to include security in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and other potential terrorist threats in the United States.

The American Trucking Association, which administers the program under a contract with the government, is unaware of any other motorcoach operators that have joined the program, although it believes there probably are some involved, says spokesman John Willard.

"We certainly would encourage bus and motorcoach drivers to join the program by giving us a call," Willard adds.

James River signed on in October after its safety director attended a training session conducted by the Virginia Trucking Association. "I was the only bus driver there," said Robert Strutton, who calls himself a safety fanatic.

He said he is unsure why other motorcoach carriers have been slow to respond to the call by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to join the program that includes about 15,000 volunteer truck drivers nationwide.

"I really don't know why they're not getting involved," said Strutton. "Motorcoach drivers have a very tight fraternity and they have

a tendency not to associate with other drivers."

The Department of Homeland Security, which began an earnest expansion of the program in March with a \$19.3 million grant, allocated \$21 million more in October in hopes of drawing in many more drivers. One of the largest trucking companies in the country, Con-Way Transportation Services of Ann Arbor, Mich., has announced plans to encourage its 13,000 drivers to participate.

Strutton, who became a certified Highway Watch instructor after attending the training session, said he plans to begin holding two-

hour sessions for James River drivers when business at the company slows in late December and early January.

Once trained, the drivers will begin looking for unusual activities on the road and report suspicious goings-on to a national information center in Herndon, Va., which receives an average of 200 calls a day, about 10 percent of which are security related.

"They know the usual things that happen on the highways all of the time so they'll be able to recognize things that are not normal and phone them in," Strutton said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ►

2004 results mixed at Greyhound Lines, big 'oops' revealed

DALLAS — The financial travails at Greyhound Lines show little sign of easing. In fact, they accelerated during the three months ended Sept. 30. The company was hard hit by the end-of-summer hurricanes in the Southeast, reduced travel by lower- and middle-income customers, increased competition in the Northeast and higher fuel costs.

Some of those factors, plus reduced passenger counts, fewer revenue miles, revamped price structure and cost-cutting moves are reflected in Greyhound's financial results for the 12 months and quarter ended Aug. 31.

Greyhound's corporate parent, Laidlaw International, reported last month that gross earnings at Greyhound were higher for all of fiscal 2004 but substantially lower for the final quarter of the fiscal year.

Laidlaw does not report net income for Greyhound and its other subsidiaries. Instead, it reports EBITDA — earnings before interest, income taxes, depreciation, amortization and a handful of other accounting adjustments.

Companies like Laidlaw offer up EBITDA (pronounced e-bit-da) because they believe it provides useful information regarding their ability to service or incur debt.

For Greyhound, EBITDA in fiscal 2004 was \$87.4 million, versus \$67 million in fiscal 2003. For the final quarter of fiscal 2004, Greyhound EBITDA was \$49.1 million, compared to \$61.2 million

during the final three months of fiscal 2003.

To give you an idea of the difference between net income and EBITDA, Laidlaw reported total net income of \$61.7 million for fiscal 2004, while its EBITDA was \$504.7 million. In fiscal 2003, Laidlaw had a net loss of \$1.22 billion.

Nine days after Laidlaw released its numbers, Greyhound President and CEO Steve Gorman notified employees that because sales remain stagnant, there would be companywide layoffs during the first week of December.

Gorman said Greyhound had suffered an operating loss of \$23 million during the first nine months of this year.

Revenue at Greyhound for the 12 months ended Aug. 31, totaled \$1.23 billion, up slightly from fiscal '03 revenue of \$1.2 billion. The 2.2 percent revenue gain was due almost entirely to a favorable Canadian currency exchange rate.

During the final three months of fiscal 2004, revenue at Greyhound dipped to \$349.4 million, from the \$356.7 million reported for the three months ended Aug. 31, 2003.

In August, Greyhound launched the first phase of a massive program to redo its entire system. Because that action came late in fiscal 2004, its full impact is not reflected in the results for the year.

Other company actions begun during the summer of 2003,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ►

Get a lift from us



Why our installation is right for your MCI coach.



D-Series model with lift stowed.

- OEM approved installation
- Sliding-door and Ricon lift on MCI® D-Series models
- Stewart & Stevenson lift on MCI E4500, J4500 and G4500 models
- Structure and supporting gussets are welded in place using factory production line methods for body integrity
- One-year limited warranty on parts and labor
- Body work and other repairs also available
- On-time turnaround

Two convenient locations:

West Coast
10850 Portal Drive
Los Alamitos, CA
servicecenterca@mcicoach.net
800-777-4101

Midwest
520 N. Spring Street
Loudonville, OH
servicecenteroh@mcicoach.net
877-754-4404



MCI FLEET SUPPORT

Nobody knows your coach better.

THE DOCKET

FMCSA expands, renames bus technical advisory team

WASHINGTON — The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has expanded and renamed its National Motorcoach Technical Advisory Group, a key bus industry resource inside the safety agency.

The TAG team, as it's commonly known, has been renamed the Passenger Technical Advisory Group and its size was more than doubled, going from 6 members to 13, including a representative of the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance. The new members are:

Linda Morrow, who is based in Mississippi, and Manuel Gaona, based in Texas. They help cover states served by the FMCSA Southern Service Center in Atlanta. Phone: (404) 562-3600.

Michael Boyle, based in New York; Joe Muscaro, based in Virginia, and Bob Kettenheim, based in Pennsylvania. They help cover states served by the FMCSA Eastern Service Center in Glen Burnie, Md. Phone: (443) 703-2240.

Garth Lantz, based in Missouri.

He helps cover states served by the FMCSA Midwestern Service Center in Olympia Fields, Ill. Phone: (708) 283-3577.

Rodney Northrup, based in California, and Jim Stewart, based in Wyoming. They help cover states served by the FMCSA Western Service Center in Lakewood, Colo.

Tim Davis, based in Massachusetts. He represents the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance.

Continuing TAG members are:

Philip Hanley, FMCSA headquarters in Washington; Wesley Barber, FMCSA in New Jersey; Cynthia Witty, FMCSA in Florida, and Michael Isebrand, FMCSA in San Diego.

The FMCSA Passenger TAG is a field-based group designed to be a recognized resource to the agency's headquarters and division offices. Its members are expected to be experts on highway passenger transportation. A primary goal of the team is to foster strong working relationships with state agencies, the industry, and various FMCSA offices.

Last month, the new team met for four days in Glen Burnie, Md., for an orientation session. The meeting included briefings by three coach industry stalwarts: safety consultant Carmen Daecher, United Motorcoach Association Senior Vice President of Government and Industry Relations Norman Littler, and American Bus Association Director of Safety and Regulatory Programs William Mahorney.

Closing arguments set in Delaware River toll case

PHILADELPHIA — Closing arguments will be heard this month in a legal challenge to the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission's massive toll hikes that went into effect two years ago.

A three-day court trial was conducted here last month. At the conclusion of the court hearing, Senior U.S. District Court Judge Ronald L. Buckwalter asked the parties to submit post-trial legal memoranda and said he would hear closing arguments this month after the filings were made.

The American Trucking Associations is challenging the toll increases that began two years ago and ended in January of this year. The toll for a three-axle coach using most of the bridges governed by the commission went from \$3 to \$6.75, or \$2.25 per axle, on Nov. 30, 2002. Then, on Jan. 4 of this year, the toll increased to \$2.75 per axle, meaning a three-axle coach is now charged \$8.25.

The ATA told Judge Buckwalter that the commission had

raised truck tolls too much and too soon relative to any legitimate revenue need and had accumulated a large unrestricted and unnecessary cash reserve of about \$118 million.

ATA also argued that the toll increase that went into effect this year was unreasonable in light of the commission's cash reserves. According to ATA, the commission could fully fund all of its activities (including its capital improvement program) under the lower toll structure.

The trucking group contends the commission's excess cash should be spent on its capital improvement projects instead of borrowing money to finance them, and that retaining that level of reserves carried a large financial penalty because the commission is paying a higher interest rate on borrowed money than it is earning on its reserves.

ATA attempted to establish that maintaining a large cash reserve was not, as the commission had suggested, necessary for it to maintain its credit rating.

Three border crossings try security plan

Border crossings at Laredo, Texas; Douglas, Ariz., and Port Huron, Mich., began tests of the U.S. Homeland Security Department's increased border security technology last month.

The technology calls for fingerprinting, photographing and running checks on suspicious visitors. It has been in place at U.S. airports and seaports since Jan. 5, but officials want to pinpoint any glitches before the program is extended to the nation's 50 busiest land crossings in the coming months.

Business and political leaders in some border cities fought the system initially, fearing it could slow traffic and have a negative effect on local economies. But an infusion of federal money and personnel to the border could actually improve trade, some observers now believe.

TSA begins test phase for transportation ID

LOS ANGELES — The long-delayed testing of a federal identification card for ground transportation workers began here last month.

The Transportation Security Administration kicked off testing of the technology and business processes for its Transportation Worker Identity Credential (TWIC) Program at the Port of Long Beach Container Terminal. Testing of the prototype card system will expand to 34 sites in six states and will last seven months.

The TSA eventually wants everyone who drives a bus, shuttle or truck in and out of sensitive transportation centers, such as ports and airports, to have one of its credentials.

Basically, TWIC is a tamper-resistant card that contains biometric information about the holder that makes the card useless to anyone other than the rightful holder. Using this biometric data, each transportation facility can verify the identity of a worker and

prevent unauthorized individuals from accessing secure areas.

"TWIC is a significant enhancement that will prevent terrorists and other unauthorized persons from gaining access to sensitive areas of the nation's transportation system," said Under Secretary for Border and Transportation Security Asa Hutchinson. "Developing the prototype for this new technology is another step in TSA's continuing effort to enhance security in all modes of transportation."

Currently, many transportation workers, including bus drivers, must carry a different identification card for each facility they access. A standard TWIC would improve the flow of commerce by eliminating the need for redundant credentials and streamlining the identity verification process.

In the coming weeks, up to 200,000 workers from ground, maritime, rail and aviation modes of transportation are expected to participate.

New-engine financial incentives are gathering steam

WASHINGTON — Momentum appears to be building — in both government and the trucking industry — for plans to ask Congress to provide financial incentives to encourage truck and bus operators to buy vehicles that meet 2007 federal emissions standards.

A group of trucking industry representatives could be ready by early next year to ask Congress to provide the incentives.

James Whittinghill, senior vice president of legislative affairs at American Trucking Associations,

was quoted as saying that an industry group would "be up and running with a proposal by the time the new Congress is sworn in in January."

At the same time, the Environmental Protection Agency's top air-quality official says the agency may endorse an emerging congressional proposal for incentives to help buyers offset the expected higher cost of vehicles coming in 2007 that meet upgraded diesel-engine emission regulations.

Jeffrey Holmstead, EPA assis-

tant administrator for air and radiation, did not identify which members of Congress were at work on the proposal.

He said, however, that EPA acknowledged the certainty of another pre-buy of heavy-duty trucks before 2007, as fleets accelerate their purchases of the last of the trucks that do not have new engines that comply with the '07 emissions rules.

Several diesel engine and truck manufacturers, plus industry groups, reportedly are trying to reach a

consensus over what incentives they will seek from Congress.

States support U.S. standards

WASHINGTON — Environmental groups, fearful the trucking industry will attempt to delay the implementation of the Environmental Protection Agency's upcoming 2006/07/10 Diesel Rule, are encouraging states to adopt legislation paralleling the federal standards to assure the rule is not weakened or delayed.

The State and Territorial Air Pollution Program Administrators and the Association of Local Air Pollution Control Officials announced that at least 12 states and the District of Columbia have indicated their willingness to pass state legislation mimicking the federal rule.

Trucking industry spokesman have said STAPPA and ALAPCO continue to misinterpret the actions and intentions of the trucking industry with respect to compliance with the rule.

Chicago sets fines for dumping; Thanks, Dave Matthews Band

CHICAGO — The Chicago City Council has adopted an anti-dumping ordinance, containing stiff fines, in the wake of the infamous Dave Matthews Band dumping incident in August.

The driver of one of the popular rock band's road coaches was accused of emptying a lavatory tank over a grated city bridge. The

foul waste rained down on a Chicago River boat tour passing under the bridge, soaking dozens of passengers. The coach driver denied the accusation.

Meanwhile, the City Council sprang into action, proposing an ordinance prohibiting dumping on public waterways, highways and elsewhere.

The council's Energy, Environmental Protection and Public Utilities Committee approved the ordinance at the end of October, with the full council making it law last month.

The ordinance contains the following fines:

- First Offense: A minimum of \$1,500, not to exceed \$2,500 per

incident.

- Second Offense and subsequent offenses: A minimum of \$2,500, not to exceed \$3,500 or imprisonment for no more than 6 months or ordered to perform 200 hours of community service or any combination thereof per incident.

- For every day that a dumped load remains, a minimum fine of

\$2,500 per load per day, not to exceed \$3,500, will be imposed.

The ordinance also provides that the offending motorcoach driver and owner will both be held responsible and the vehicle can be impounded.

The ordinance also provides for the city to pursue criminal charges against illegal dumpers.

Electronic data would be OK for proof of HOS

WASHINGTON — The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration wants to expand the types of information that can be used to verify drivers' hours-of-service logs to include electronic data.

The FMCSA issued a proposal last month aimed at clarifying the role of commercial carriers in proving the accuracy of driver hours-of-service logs. Included in the proposal is a call for the use of electronic data as legitimate supporting documentation for driver logbooks.

"FMCSA believes the use of electronic-based record-keeping methods in a supporting documents system is preferred over traditional paper records," said FMCSA spokesman Dave Longo.

Currently, approved supporting documents used to check the veracity of driver logs include dispatch records, bills of lading, call-in records, shipping and receiving records, toll receipts and a variety of other receipts "containing verifiable dates, times and locations that can be identified with a specific driver."

The FMCSA proposal was in the form of a supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking. Among other things, the proposed rule seeks to:

- Define "employee" to include independent drivers.
- Mandate a motor carrier's use of a self-monitoring system to verify the accuracy of hours-of-service and records of duty status.
- Ensure that each driver collects and submits to the employing motor carrier all supporting documents with the records of duty status.
- Set record retention requirements.
- Set driver and motor carrier violations for non-compliance with the proposed requirements.

Comments on the proposal must be submitted by Jan. 3. For information, go to: www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rulesregs/fmcsr/rules2004.htm#proposedrule.

Because It's the Getting There that Matters...

And how.



It's easy to find a bus to take you from point A to point B. What's hard is finding one that does it reliably, comfortably and affordably. We understand our customers' needs and deliver much more. More choices, more options, more styles. We offer buses in dozens of sizes and hundreds of configurations. And every bus is backed by DaimlerChrysler, the largest commercial vehicle manufacturer in the world.

We can take you anywhere you want to go.

DAIMLERCHRYSLER
Commercial Buses North America



DaimlerChrysler Commercial Buses | 1.800.882.8054 | www.dcbusna.com

THE DOCKET

2004 Bus Accessibility Grants

All Aboard America — Mesa, AZ	\$20,715
Arrow Stage Lines — Phoenix	\$35,955
Pacific Coast Sightseeing — Anaheim, CA	\$39,780
Antelope Valley Bus — Long Beach, CA	\$180,540
Pioneer Coach Lines, Inc. — Chicago	\$27,000
Robinson Coach — Evanston, IL	\$28,875
Colonial Coach Lines — Mt. Prospect, IL	\$27,000
Burlington Trailways — W. Burlington, IA	\$89,283
Hotard Motor Coach Services — New Orleans	\$36,000
Wilson's Luxury Tours, Inc. — District Hgts., MD	\$39,600
Eyre Bus Service Inc. — Glenelg, MD	\$26,105
Elegance Bus Tours Inc. — Suitland, MD	\$27,000
VIP Tour and Charter Bus Co. — Portland, ME	\$40,492
Cavalier Coach Corp. — Boston	\$36,000
Peter Pan Bus Lines — Springfield, MA	\$264,650
Seniors Unlimited Inc. — Pontiac, MI	\$26,550
Ready Bus Line — La Crescent, MN	\$25,200
Jefferson Lines — Minneapolis	\$50,400
K-T Contract Services — Las Vegas	\$71,910
Ryan's Express — Las Vegas	\$23,337
Showtime Tours — Las Vegas	\$35,910
Concord Coach Lines Inc. — Concord, NH	\$49,800
Dartmouth Transportation Co. — Concord, NH	\$22,400
Trolley Tours Inc. — Forked River, NJ	\$22,950
Shortline (Hudson Transit) — Mahwah, NJ	\$150,039
Suburban Trails Inc. — New Brunswick, NJ	\$22,500
Coach USA/Cape Transit — Pleasantville, NJ	\$39,150
Stout's Charter Service Inc. — Trenton, NJ	\$25,650
Brown Coach Inc. — Amsterdam, NY	\$35,429
Private One of New York LLC. — Brooklyn, NY	\$22,500
Trans Express Inc. — Brooklyn, NY	\$59,420
Utica Rome Bus Company — Clinton, NY	\$40,500
Syracuse & Oswego Motor Lines E — Syracuse, NY	\$40,500
Adirondack Trailways — Hurley, NY	\$290,500
Allen AME Transportation Corp. — Jamaica, NY	\$71,000
Blue Bird Coach Lines — N. Tonawanda, NY	\$45,000
Hampton Jitney Inc. — Southampton, NY	\$31,827

Paradise Travel Inc. — West Hempstead, NY	\$40,000
Angelic Tours and Shuttles — Fayetteville, NC	\$40,000
Morgan & Sons Week-End Tours — Greensboro, NC	\$33,300
Carolina Trailways — Raleigh, NC	\$198,909
Lakefront Lines Inc. — Brook Park, OH	\$27,900
Croswell Bus Lines Inc. — Williamsburg, OH	\$24,416
Franklin Motorcoach Charters — Sapulpa, OK	\$39,600
Trans-Bridge Lines — Bethlehem, PA	\$90,000
Butler Motor Transit — Butler, PA	\$45,000
Carl Bieber Tourways — Kutztown, PA	\$113,000
Sun Coach Lines, LLC. — McKeesport, PA	\$28,000
Lenzer Tour and Travel — Sewickley, PA	\$45,000
Martz Trailways — Wilkes-Barre, PA	\$148,000
Bonanza Bus Lines — Providence, RI	\$104,784
Lancaster Tours Inc. — Lancaster, SC	\$40,000
Americoach Tours — Memphis, TN	\$38,250
Si Texas Tours — Bandera, TX	\$44,345
Greyhound — Dallas	\$2,609,512
Valley Transit — Harlingen, TX	\$99,453
El Espresso — Houston	\$78,000
Gulf Coast Transit — Houston	\$36,000
TNM&O — Lubbock, TX	\$99,453
Kerville Bus Co. — San Antonio	\$87,800
San Antonio City Tours — San Antonio	\$36,000
Central Texas Trails Inc. — Waco, TX	\$12,600
Bristol Tours Inc. — Bristol, VT	\$30,659
Vermont Transit Co. — Burlington, VT	\$132,606
Premier Coach Company Inc. — Colchester, VT	\$30,240
Lamoille Valley Transport — Morrisville, VT	\$25,192
Scenic America, Inc. — Broad Run, VA	\$39,600
Abbott Bus Lines Inc. — Roanoke, VA	\$39,600
Wickkiser International Co. — Ferndale, WA	\$44,759
Northwestern Stage Lines — Spokane, WA	\$40,050
Lamers Bus Lines Inc. — Green Bay, WI	\$47,000
Van Galder Bus Company — Janesville, WI	\$95,000
Riteway Bus Service, Inc. — Richfield, WI	\$29,250
Wisconsin Coach — Waukesha, WI	\$74,250

FTA grants

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

facing an ominous deadline for complying with USDOT Americans with Disability Act accessibility requirements. By October 2006, one-half of their fleets involved in fixed-route service must be wheelchair-lift equipped. Greyhound revealed this month it is clearly behind the eight ball in meeting the deadline. As of Aug. 31, about 18 percent of its fleet was equipped with lifts. That translates to roughly 525 buses out of a U.S. fleet total of 2,900 coaches.

To meet the 50 percent requirement, Greyhound must replace or retrofit 818 of its buses during the next two years, assuming no change in the size of its fleet.

However, as a result of Greyhound's ongoing program of weeding out unprofitable routes and the extensive system makeover it began just over three months ago, the company fleet is expected to decline significantly. In fiscal 2004, before the system makeover began in earnest, Greyhound "retired" 194 buses, while adding only 46 new ones.

Still, Greyhound appears to face an uphill struggle to meet the October 2006 deadline.

A total of 96 U.S. coach operators applied for \$23.9 million in federal wheelchair grant money last year; \$11.2 million requested by intercity operators, and \$12.7 million requested by tour, charter, airport and commuter services.

The number of applications involved in fixed-route service rose 14 percent this year. Most of the increase appears to have come from tour, charter, airport and commuter services; these types of operators requested only \$7.1 million in fiscal 2003, compared to \$12.7 million this year.

A total of 22 operators were not selected for funding for fiscal '04. Those companies not selected will receive a letter that explains how funding decisions were made.

Generally, the FTA says it bases its selections on "each applicant's responsiveness to statutory project selection criteria, fleet size and level of funding received in previous years."

Operators wanting specific information about the bus accessibility program should contact the FTA regional administrator in their area. A list of administrators is available at www.fta.dot.gov. Or, those needing general information about the program can call Blenda Younger at the FTA Office of Program Management in Washington at (202) 366-2053.

Get The

PennTex

INDUSTRIES, INC.

HIGH EFFICIENCY ALTERNATORS AND MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICES


NEW

PennTex introduces an efficient air-cooled solution to an old problem... oil leaks and premature failures. The PX-833 also eliminates the possibility of engine oil contamination. Contact us today for immediate answers to your questions.

PX-833 Advantage!

- ✓ **330A/24V, more than 200 amps at idle.**
- ✓ **High temperature bearing grease and seals.**
- ✓ **Increased fuel economy due to air-cooled efficient design.**
- ✓ **Utilizes all existing hardware, electrical components, and pulleys.**
- ✓ **Oil-to-Air conversion program available.**

Complete Equipment and Parts Catalog Available. Can be downloaded from our expanded Web Site: penntexusa.com

PennTex products are proudly manufactured in FORT WORTH, TEXAS, USA.

PennTex

INDUSTRIES, INC.

PennTex Industries, Inc.
202 Plaza Dr.
Manchester, PA 17345

Sales and Technical Toll Free: 877-590-7366
Sales Fax: 817-590-0505

E-MAIL: penntex@swbell.net

Going further!SM



MCI[®] COACHES, PARTS AND SERVICE. NOW THE SKY'S THE LIMIT.

You work hard to take your business as far as it can go. At MCI, we work hard to help you take it even further. Our customers have always depended on us for well-built, reliable motor coaches. Today, we're doing even more. We've strengthened our after-sale service network by expanding our locations and increasing our technical support. Made more parts more readily available. And taken a close look at all of our models to offer you more choices and provide you with the best all around value. It's our way of showing you that wherever you're going, MCI has what it takes to put you further ahead.

HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE WAYS WE'RE GOING THAT EXTRA MILE FOR YOU:

-  **NEW LONGER WARRANTIES**
Enjoy the industry's longest warranties on our premier models—three years on our luxurious MCI E4500, and 30 months on our best-selling J4500. So you can go the extra mile too.
-  **EMERGENCY ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE**
Need help fast? Just call 800-241-2947. Our MCI technical support experts are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to help diagnose the problem, arrange any needed services and monitor your situation until you're back on the road.
-  **ONLINE PARTS & WARRANTY TRACKING**
Now you can check your parts order or warranty claim online anytime.

Call 1-800-RIDE MCI (1-800-743-3624)

www.mcicoach.com



MOTOR COACH
INDUSTRIES

Going further!SM

OPINION

Target: Soon-to-be Seniors

There's a common fear among many in the motorcoach industry. It holds that ... tomorrow's seniors won't take to coach travel like recent generations of older Americans.

The fear is largely based on recognized traits of today's pre-65-year-olds. That is, these soon-to-be seniors are:

- Generally not group travelers.
- The first generation to become air travelers in huge numbers, and are comfortable with getting on a plane and flying thousands of miles to vacation.
- Looking for more adventure than the typical motorcoach tour offers.
- Not "joiners" like their parents. They're more independent with a smaller circle of friends and would rather strike out on their own with just a spouse.
- Not bus aficionados. Most likely they've never been on a modern motorcoach and haven't ridden a bus for any distance since they were in high school.

Not an encouraging picture. But before writing off this group of potential customers, it might be useful to give them a second look.

Writing in *USA Today*, author Marc Freedman and Experience Corps' CEO John S. Gomperts offer valuable insight into today's 60- to 64-year-olds and, at the same time, they provide food for thought for those who are challenged to market to this group and the Baby Boomers following them.

First, the obvious: Today's 60- to 64-year-olds are not elderly, frail, tired or retired. They are vital, vigorous and still want to change the world. Here are some other notable characteristics:

Those who will be 65 this year can expect to live longer. Their expected life span is 83; that's up six years in the past dozen or so years.

In 1950, the number of Americans over age 55 totaled 25.6 million, or 23 percent of the population. By 2030, that number will have mushroomed to 108 million, or 31 percent of the population.

It was common a generation or two ago for someone to retire at 65 and within a few years get sick and die. That is rare today.

In the 1950s, 35 percent of older Americans lived in poverty. Today that figure is 10 percent.

In the past 30 years, the percentage of Americans with a high school diploma or higher has jumped from 28 to 70 percent. Nearly one-third of Americans at 60-64 are estimated to be involved in some form of adult education. More and more Americans are retiring to communities with a university or community college because they want the stimulation.

Almost two-thirds of those approaching retirement age say they feel younger than their actual age, and 80 percent say their retirement will be different than that of their parents.

Research by AARP has found that nearly 80 percent of those approaching retirement expect to continue working in some capacity during their "retirement years." Some will need to work; many want to work to stay active.

The AARP also found that 54 percent of the soon-to-be-seniors crowd says that doing work that helps others is very important to them and half expect to devote more time to community service and volunteering.

So, what's to be made of all of this?

No. 1: The potential market is huge. And, it's diverse. It is not homogeneous. Yes, there are more nongroup travelers and travelers with a propensity to fly, but there remains millions and millions of others who might be considered more "traditional." These individuals are joiners or enjoy traveling with others, and they are probably willing to consider motorcoach travel. The key is to dig deeper, locate them, uncover their hot buttons and market to them.

Because this group is generally healthier than preceding generations, that suggests operators should be developing still more trips and tours that are filled with activities, adventures and challenges.

And, because they have a pronounced interest in health and fitness, operators ought to be looking into partnerships with health organizations, spas and fitness farms that conduct seminars or activities for adults who want to enjoy better and healthier lives. Health screenings, walks and other activities could be elements of such "tours."

The increased interest in education may present other unusual opportunities for operators. Bus companies in smaller communities might investigate partnering with a college or university in a nearby city that offers night or continuing education classes. Operators could provide regular shuttle service, plus assistance with registration to encourage participation.

Major art museums also conduct educational programs.

Trips to state capitals during legislative sessions could include a number of educational components, including attending hear-

Quebec operators see the future of travel

MONTREAL — The Québec Bus Owners Association has come up with five criteria that should be applied to all group travel products offered by motorcoach companies.

The list is based on research by the association that confirmed what most operators have learned anecdotally. That is, that group travel customers are no longer an easy target, requiring little effort to be sold. Instead, this clientele has changed and evolved, and now demands high-quality products adapted to their needs.

"Because demands in group travel are changing so much, the industry must be at the forefront in developing new products," says association president Hugo Gilbert. "It is no longer sufficient to offer an attractive journey; we must make it educational, fill it with adventure and elements of surprise, and promise unforgettable experiences."

Gilbert said individuals polled

by the association identified five main criteria which should be part of any group travel outing in the future:

Uniqueness: Make it impossible to be realized on an individual basis.

Exclusivity: Design it so only a group can have access to this experience.

Inaccessibility: Make it more advantageous to live the experience in a group.

Specialized guides: These individuals give the group the advantage of intelligent and interesting comments and descriptions.

Freedom: Group travel members can come and go as they please once the destination is reached.

The Québec Bus Owners Association, or Association des Propriétaires d'autobus du Québec, is a 78-year-old organization created by bus transportation pioneers in Québec. It represents 220 companies.

ings, meeting with legislators, arranging presentations by lobbyists, and touring historical buildings and sites.

Operators could tap into the do-gooder nature of the about-to-become seniors by organizing groups that participate in community clean-ups, river and stream rehabilitation projects, archeological digs, Habitat for Humanity developments, and other civic or charitable endeavors.

Keep in mind, too, that by 2010, the majority of the population is going to be minorities. Probing for seniors among minority

groups in your area may uncover unserved or underserved populations. Marketing to these groups may require different approaches, though.

And don't overlook the power of the Internet when it comes to marketing to the 64-and-under crowd. Millions of pre-seniors are computer literate and Web savvy.

Finally, keep an eye on the generation right behind the 60-64 group. Fast approaching retirement age are the Baby Boomers, that hodge-podge of 77 million Americans who grew up on fast music, fast cars and fast times.

How to contact us:

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

E-mail: BusNews2003@aol.com
Fax: (877) 510-5598 or (877) 510-5602
Mail: 4930 W. Glendale Ave., Suite 6
Glendale, AZ 85301
Call: (623) 930-8423

To advertise or to mail advertising-related materials:

Call: Johnny Steger
(602) 980-0840 or (623) 930-8422
E-mail: Redboots44@aol.com
Mail: 4930 W. Glendale Ave., Suite 6
Glendale, AZ 85301

To complain:

Call: (623) 930-8421
E-mail: BusNews2003@aol.com

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
Upload: www.jezac.com/uploads

To subscribe or inquire about your subscription:

Call: (623) 930-8421
E-mail: BusNewsSubs@qwest.net
Fax: (877) 510-5602
or (877) 510-5598
Mail: 4930 W. Glendale Ave., Suite 6
Glendale, AZ 85301

Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE UNITED MOTORCOACH ASSOCIATION

ISSUE NO. 43

Staff

Editor & Publisher Victor Parra	
Sales Director Johnny Steger	Senior Editor Bruce Sankey
Government Editor Norman Littler	Associate Editor Ellen Balm
Editorial Assistant Tara Sheehan	Editorial Assistant Amy Stalknecht
Accountant John Giddens	Editorial Assistant Melissa Harden

Art Director
Mary E. McCarty

Advisory Board

Alex Allen Amador Stage Lines Sacramento, Calif.	Todd Holland Ramblin' Express Colorado Springs	Jeff Polzien Red Carpet Tours Oklahoma City
Bob Brisman West Point Trailways Vails Gate, N.Y.	Robert Hume Travel Mates Trailways Harrisonburg, Va.	Robert L. Quick Quick-Livick Inc. Stauton, Va.
David Brown Holiday Tours Randlemann, N.C.	Daryl G. Johnson J & J Charters Crosby, Texas	Tom Ready Ready Bus Lines LaCrescent, Minn.
Bob Foley ABC Companies Faribault, Minn.	Godfrey LeBron Paradise Trailways West Hempstead, N.Y.	Bill Rohrbaugh Bill Rohrbaugh's Charter Services Manchester, Md.
Steve Haddad Carl R. Bieber Tourways Kutztown, Pa.	Joan Libby Cavalier Coach Boston, Mass.	Brian Scott Escot Bus Lines Largo, Fla.
Rick Hillard Tri-State Tours Galena, Ill.	Warren Miller Pacific Coach Bus Service San Francisco, Calif.	John Silvanie Suburban Charter Services White Plains, N.Y.
		Alan Spachman National Interstate Insurance Co Richfield, Ohio
		T. Ralph Young Young Transportation Ashville, N.C.



We Know Your Equipment Like the Back of Our Hand.

Our number 1 ranking in pre-owned sales, also makes ABC the foremost expert in servicing most every coach make and model on the road. With Certified Service Centers nationwide and world-class vendor partners like Allison, Amaya, Carrier, Caterpillar, Cummins, Detroit Diesel, ProHeat, REI, Ricon and ZF, it's no wonder fleet owners rely on our team of expert technicians to pinpoint and resolve equipment issues before they become major problems.

*For hands-on fleet maintenance, drive in or call any ABC Service location nationwide. Plus, now convenient parts purchasing is right at your fingertips at **ABC Parts Source** online at www.abc-companies.com*

SERVICE SPECIALS

All bus makes & models. Valid through January 31, 2005:

Transmission | Service
Oil & Filter Change | Air Dryer

- ✓ *The most qualified, highly-trained technicians available*
- ✓ *State-of-the-art facilities nationwide*
- ✓ *Advanced vehicle systems and diagnostics*
- ✓ *Comprehensive parts inventory in-stock*
- ✓ *Easy, online parts ordering and tracking*

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



Exclusive U.S.  Distributor

www.abc-companies.com

MOTORCOACH EXPO 2005

Expo sessions will focus on strengthening operators

LAS VEGAS — One of the most valuable aspects of each year's Motorcoach Expo is the Solution Sessions, where operators and industry partners address their most pertinent problems and discuss practical solutions.

The Solution Sessions at Expo 2005 will carry the theme: *Building a Strong Foundation*. The goal is to provide information that will help operators build a foundation solid enough to withstand any difficulty and support all aspects of their businesses.

Timely topics to be covered include finance, operations and marketing. The focus by industry colleagues and experts will be on issues motorcoach operators deal with on a daily basis.

"This will be a great opportunity to problem-solve with industry peers facing similar challenges and gain valuable guidance from experts who have helped hundreds of businesses around the world," said Victor Parra, president and CEO of the United Motorcoach Association.

Here's a complete schedule of the Solution Sessions to be presented Feb. 23-24 at Expo 2005 in Las Vegas. "It's an early opportunity for operators to start planning their schedule — while at Expo, so they can be sure to attend the sessions that are particularly vital to the health of their business," said Parra.

Wednesday, Feb. 23**9–10 a.m.**
Building a Strong Industry Foundation

Setting the tone for Expo 2005, this session will consider where the industry is now and how we can establish a solid foundation for the future. Industry experts will provide an overview of the pertinent issues for establishing a strong business framework, including marketing, finance and operations.

10–10:45 a.m.
Legislative and Regulatory Update

The current legislative and regulatory environment will be discussed, as well as how these issues impact the industry on both the federal and state levels.

Topics will include:

- The Transportation Worker Identity Card Program. Currently a pilot project in Florida, the TWIC card is a security measure that will change how motorcoach operators gain access to port and other sensitive locations.

- How Washington Works. Learn how to use Washington to your advantage to influence regulatory and legislative measures to benefit your business.

11 a.m.–Noon / Concurrent Sessions**Marketing: Selling 101—The Sales Process**

Learn how to increase sales by improving your selling process. This session takes the sales process and breaks it

down to fundamentals, focusing on the specifics of taking a product, selling it and gaining revenue from the process. Learn how to improve your sales process from the inside out.

Finance: Raising Your Rates

Want to raise your rates without hurting sales? This unique presentation explains how to establish profitable rates from cost-based and market-based pricing. You will walk through the process of raising rates and learn how each time your coach moves, you can turn the profit wheel.

Operations: Instilling a Safety Culture

It is simply good business to make the safety of your customers and drivers a top priority. Focusing on safety reduces insurance costs, cuts expenses from injuries and maintains the appearance and performance of equipment. Learn how to instill a safety culture with a top-down commitment to safety. Making safety a top priority not only saves money but helps maintain an outstanding reputation.

Noon–2 p.m.**Operator Luncheon****Marketing Lessons from Other Industries**

Discover new ways to reach customers. Effective marketing is a key part of building a solid foundation. Many marketing strategies cross over from industry to industry. Learn innovative marketing approaches for attracting new

customers and maintaining a strong customer base from an experienced marketing executive.

2–3 p.m. Concurrent Sessions**Marketing: How to Get the Phone Ringing Using Cost Effective Marketing Channels**

Generating leads for small businesses can be tough. Learn how to integrate all of the available marketing channels to reach out to new markets, as well as expand your existing customer base. By incorporating new marketing channels, such as direct mail, the Internet and other methods of promotion, you can maximize your marketing dollars to increase sales and profits.

Operations: Securing Contract Work

Contract work can be valuable for a company for many reasons, including utilization maximization and helping ensure a steady cash flow. Contract work provides high margins, as well as access to new markets. Learn how to go about finding and securing contract work and how to manage the process successfully.

2–4:15 p.m.**Finance: Profit Power**

How do you maximize profits? This session will cover innovative ways to increase cash flow. Achieving greater and more predictable profits will increase the stability of your business, ensuring a stronger foundation.

3:15 – 4:15 p.m.**Marketing and Sales: Making Your Web Site an Integral Part of Your Marketing and Sales Effort**

Web sites are not just an asset but an essential part of running a business. Find out how to use your web site most effectively, by making it an integral part of your marketing scheme and not a separate tool.

Operations: Recruiting and Training New Drivers

One of the industry's top concerns continues to be driver shortages, retention, and competitive salaries. This panel session will discuss issues related to driver shortages and the most successful ways of solving this problem. Be a part of the discussion on the most effective human resources practices to get drivers to stay with your company.

Thursday, Feb. 24**8:30 – 9:30 a.m.****Breakfast: Trends in Group Travel: What They Mean for Motorcoach Operators**

This session should be a top priority. The focus will be on current trends in group travel, with an industry panel discussing what these trends mean for the industry. Learn the best way to update your tours to accommodate changing trends.

9:30 – 10:30 a.m.**Marketing and Sales: What Operators Want in Vendor Relationships**

Operator-vendor relationships are essential to running a solid motorcoach business. The common goal of customer satisfaction should be regarded at all times in the relationship. This session will consider the issues between vendors and operators, as well as the best ways to form a mutually beneficial relationship.

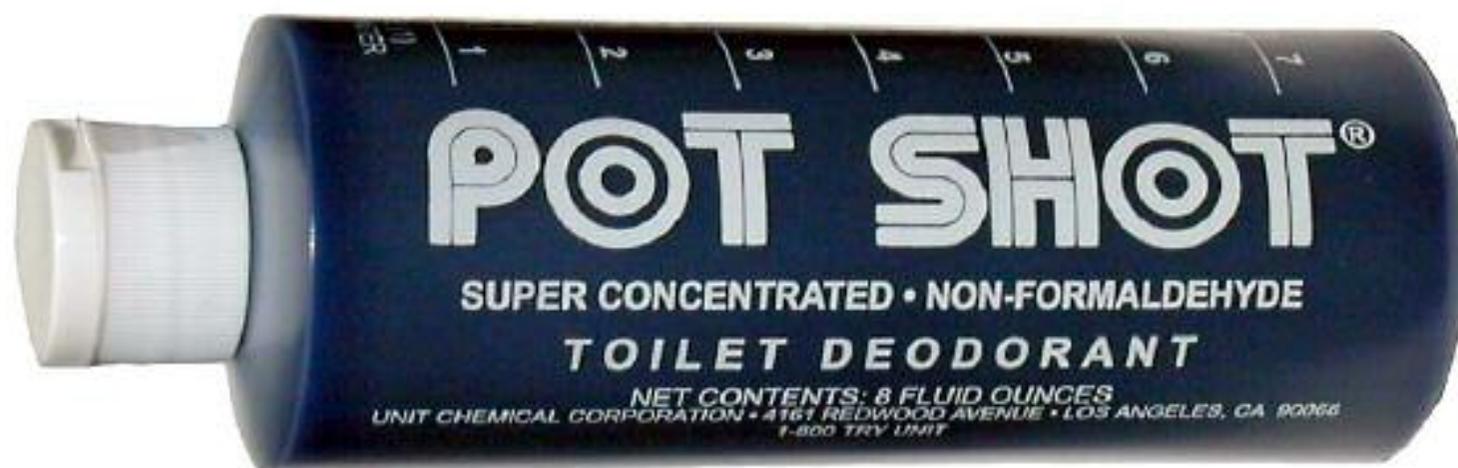
Finance: Margin Versus Markup Misconceptions

In building a solid business foundation, it is important to understand the difference between margins and markups. Discover the most effective way of marking up to increase your margins. By strengthening your finances, your company will be better prepared in the face of any economic downturn.

Mixed Panel: Airport Access Issues & Fees

This important session will feature a dialogue between airport management officials and industry executives on airport access issues and fees. Since 9/11, airports have become less bus-friendly. Both industries serve the same customers, just at different points in the traveling process. You will not want to miss this discussion.

RESTROOM COMPLAINTS? YOU'RE NOT USING ...



**CALL US TODAY TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN ENTIRELY ELIMINATE
SUMMER RESTROOM COMPLAINTS AND SAVE UP TO 50% OR MORE.**

UNIT CHEMICAL CORP (800) 879-8648 www.unitchemical.com

Turbo
IMAGES

CREATIVE GRAPHICS
by creative people



Exclusive technologies :

- 3DSS
- Marblex
- Neon Graphik
- PartSimplicity Program



www.turbo-images.com
customers@turbo-images.com

1.888.219.8872

10
YEARS
1994-2004

INDUSTRY NEWS

ABA-UMA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ings said a lot of work still remains to be done before the organizations can be joined.

Unification or consolidation of the ABA and UMA has been an on-again, off-again issue in the motorcoach industry for more than a decade. In the past, the major stumbling blocks have been over governance, organizational culture and, to a rather lesser degree, leadership.

The governance question typically has gotten hung up over issues related to a unified board, the process for selecting board members and the responsibilities of the board. Currently, the boards of the two organizations are chosen somewhat differently and they have slightly different roles. The UMA board is smaller and perceived to be more activist, while the ABA board is twice as large and has a strong executive committee between it and the staff. UMA board members are chosen through contested regional elections, while ABA board members are nominated by a committee and elected by members.

One source said the task force has come up with a plan that calls for competitively elected board members.

Representing UMA in the negotiations have been board members David Brown (UMA chairman), Jeff Polzien, Brian Scott, Godfrey Lebron and Rick Hillard.

Representing ABA have been board members Charles Zelle (ABA chairman), Ron Eyre, Don DeVivo, Doug Anderson and T.J. Morgan.

The chief executives of both organizations, Victor Parra of UMA and Peter Pantuso of ABA, also participated in the task force sessions.

Facilitating the meetings was Linda Shinn of Consensus Management Group of Indianapolis.

While some in the industry have characterized the proposed unification of ABA and UMA as a merger, it is not, and the two organizations and their negotiators have seldom, if ever, used that term.

Here's why: A "merger" is basically a legal term, meaning the union of two or more commercial interests or corporations, usually of similar size. In the corporate world, where mergers are an everyday event, a merger of two companies often produces a "winner" and a "loser." The union of two trade associations, which are at their heart political animals, is more accurately characterized as a unification or consolidation. It is important to both sides that there is no winner or loser.

Second, players in these sorts of unions like to push the perception that what will emerge will be a "new" organization — not a "merged" organization. It is likely that the ABA-UMA unification framework contains elements that will reinforce that perception.

Greyhound

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

however, are reflected in the information Laidlaw reported for Greyhound. For example, during the fiscal year, Greyhound reduced the number of:

- Employees to 14,200, from 16,000 at the end of fiscal 2003.
- Drivers to 5,600, from 6,500.
- Management and administrative staff to 2,400, from 3,500.
- Buses in its fleet to 3,600, from 3,700.
- New coach deliveries to 46, from 219.
- Destinations to 3,400, from 3,700.

As a result of the cutback in acquiring new buses, the average age of Greyhound's fleet increased to 8 years as of Aug. 31, compared to 7.6 years at the end of fiscal 2003. Greyhound purchased 56 million gallons of fuel in fiscal 2004, representing more than 6 percent of revenue.

Laidlaw also reported one major embarrassment for Greyhound; someone dropped a \$15 million ball.

In May 2001, a default judgment for \$11 million was entered by a state court in Georgia against Greyhound. The judgment stemmed from a 1995 judgment against a former consultant to Greyhound, Gary Jones.

Greyhound says it only learned in August of this year that there was a garnishment and default judgment, and because it was unaware of the situation, it "inadvertently failed to contest it.

"Had the garnishment been timely answered, Greyhound believes that the amount due in response to the garnishment summons would not have exceeded \$1,500." Now, because it failed to contest the garnishment and default judgment, the court says the company is on the hook for \$15 million — \$11 million for the default judgment, plus \$4 million in interest.

Greyhound has beaten a path back to the Georgia court, seeking to vacate the default judgment. The company says it doesn't think the judgment is enforceable.

Still, the matter is not to be taken lightly. The judgment potentially could upset Greyhound's revolving credit line. Until and unless the judgment is declared void, stayed, bonded or paid, it "could be deemed to be an event of default under the Greyhound (credit) facility," putting the company's entire financial and debt structure at risk.

And, under terms that allowed Laidlaw to emerge from bankruptcy last year, the parent company is not permitted to fund Greyhound. In other words, Laidlaw can't bail out Greyhound.

James River

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

In addition to joining Highway Watch, James River has received a grant under the Department of Homeland Security Intercity Bus Security Grant Program. It will use the grant it received in September to upgrade the satellite tracking system it has on its coaches and add a digital surveillance system on each bus.

The tracking system, which monitors

driver performance, includes an emergency alert button to notify dispatchers of a potential problem and identify the location of the bus. The digital surveillance system will provide video and sound recordings of driving and passenger incidents, and document any passenger actions that may impact safety or security on the motorcoach.

Operators wanting more information about the Highway Watch program can call toll-free (866) 821-3444, or go to www.highwaywatch.com.

Shuttle Bus Leasing

"Your Solution For Shuttling & Fixed Route Contracting"



*Leases Terms Available
From 3 Months to 2 Years*

*High Quality, Transit
Shuttle Buses*

22' To 60' Models Available

Over 1000 Buses In Inventory

Parking Lot Shuttles

Seasonal Coverage

Peak Demand Coverage

*Employee Shuttling To
and From Job Sites*



Top Quality Transit Buses Also Available for Sale



800-287-7253

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

AMADAS
COACH
American Manufactured • Advanced Design • Absolute Service



High Quality New Coach Conversion:

- Executive / VIP Coaches
- Luxury Commuter Coaches
- Motor Homes
- Entertainer / Star Coaches
- Command / Control Centers
- Specialty / Marketing Units

Full Service Retrofit & Repair:

- Full Interior Conversions
- Paint / Bodywork / Graphics
- Internet & SAT TV Systems
- Electrical Systems
- Plumbing Systems
- Call for a free estimate!



Corporate Headquarters
1007 Obici Industrial Blvd.
Suffolk, VA 23434
(757) 925-2862

PREVOST
THE ULTIMATE CLASS

Blue Ridge Facility
1024 Oak Drive
Moneta, VA 24121
(540) 297-5790

www.AmadasCoach.com

ABC Cos. grows RV maintenance

WINTER GARDEN, Fla. — ABC Companies is diversifying its maintenance services with a major expansion of the repair program it offers owners of recreational vehicles.

The expansion has been kicked off at ABC's coach sales and service center in Winter Garden and will be considered at other ABC regional facilities on a location-by-location basis. Potential demand, space and logistical issues will be factors in determining where the expansions occur.

"We'll look at each location and see if it is merited," said John Oakman, regional vice president and general manager of ABC's Winter Garden center in central Florida.

Hired to oversee the expansion program in Winter Garden is Steve Germaine, who has been appointed to the newly created position of RV service manager.

Germaine brings 23 years of service management experience in the recreational vehicle industry to ABC, including from-the-ground-up knowledge in both the mechanical and management aspects of an RV dealership.



Steve Germaine

Under his direction, ABC's Winter Garden center is expanding its RV services to provide complete chassis service and repairs, as well as many interior coach services.

ABC is an authorized service center for Workhorse RV chassis, and recently was named as a service location for Spartan chassis, another RV chassis builder.

Additional bays are being designated for RV service, and certified chassis mechanics have been added.

"ABC can now offer what 95 percent of all RV dealers do not — complete chassis and RV coach repair service all in one," said Oakman. "For all RVers, ABC sells service and only service," he added.

Oakman said the RV service expansion will compliment the company's extensive motorcoach and over-the-road bus maintenance program.

Letters to Congressman are urged

WASHINGTON — It's giving-thanks time of year and consultant Jim Seal of San Francisco thinks the coach industry ought to send hundreds of thank you letters to retiring U.S. Rep. Doug Ose of California.

"Letters of support to Congressman Ose on his valiant efforts to highlight federal bias against private-enterprise operators, requiring less federal tax dollars, would be appreciated," says Seal.

During the past year, Ose conducted two hearings at which speaker after speaker blasted the Federal Transit Administration for its failure to enforce federal charter regulations or seek compliance

with rules requiring public transit agencies to involve the private sector in transit planning and service delivery. Rep. Ose and his subcommittee on Energy Policy, Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs also investigated the FTA.

"The FTA's lack of enforcement of private-sector federal statutes and regulations is now receiving increased attention" — thanks in large measure to Rep. Ose, says Seal.

"Congressman Ose stated at the (Sept. 30) hearing that the torch will be passed on next session to further highlight failures to allow private enterprise to provide all types of bus services. It is always

helpful if those that benefit from these two hearings voice their support for continued reforms in Congress," Seal added.

Ose's Washington office address is 236 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, and his California office is at 4400 Auburn Blvd., Suite 110, Sacramento, CA 95841.

Or, individuals can write to him in care of his House Subcommittee on Energy Policy, Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs, B-377 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515.

Or, go to www.house.gov/ose/Forms/messageform.htm and send him an e-mail.

Focused on Safety & Security

Trust the Industry Leader in Audio/Video for Camera Surveillance.

Digital BUS-WATCH®

Benefits of a Quality On-Board Camera System:

- Reduce Litigation Risk, Insurance Costs and Theft
- Counter Terrorist Threats
- Reduce Vandalism and Sabotage by Passengers & Drivers
- Provide a Safe Environment for Both Passengers & Drivers
- Increase Driver Awareness

Digital BUS-WATCH® DVR





Desktop Viewing Station



REI

TOLL-FREE SALES
Monday - Friday: 8:00am - 5:00pm CST

1-800-228-9275

TOLL-FREE SERVICE
24 / 7 Technical Support & Troubleshooting

1-877-726-4617

Radio Engineering Industries, Inc.

www.radioeng.com

Why BUS-WATCH®?
Keep your buses, drivers and passengers safe with the most durable and reliable recording systems available today. BUS-WATCH® Systems provide the tools you need to reduce or eliminate risks inside and outside the bus and respond to situations as they occur with clean picture quality and clear audio.

REPAIR & MAINTENANCE SERVICE



Repairs & Services on ALL types of motorcoaches!

FREE ESTIMATES

- Undercarriage Work
- Mechanical Service
- A/C Service
- Framework
- Insurance Estimates
- Paint & Body Repair
- Long-term Service Maintenance Agreements

800-777-6902

www.martzgroup.com

National Coach
10411 Hall Industrial Drive
Fredericksburg, VA 22408
Ph: 540-898-6959
Fax: 540-898-5317



INDUSTRY NEWS

Bus charter proves it's not such a dog-eat-dog world

By Farley Davidson

LONG ISLAND, N.Y. — The trip began like so many school charters: A careful roll call, a bit of whining over seats, and some growling over riding in the rear of the bus.

There were a few differences, however.

Every passenger, male and female, wore a fur coat. All were barefoot and had beautiful white teeth. One of the chaperones carried a whiffle bat, and whacked the seat backs vigorously any time they got out of line.

If we needed proof the bus business has gone to the dogs, confirmation came during one recent early fall weekend.

You've doubtless guessed by now that the passengers weren't school kids, but dogs. Thirty-five of them embarked (pardon the pun) on a voyage from central Long Island, to their new home upstate in Boonville, 30 miles north of Utica, N.Y.

Al Papszycki is an accomplished dog trainer with a weakness. Dogs regularly turn up that, for various reasons, are not good candidates for adoption. They are too old, too large, too something. Rather than allow them to be put down, Al and his mother bring them home.

Home was a small suburban house, perfect for a dog or two. NOT the 60 he ended up with. Neighbors were reasonably sympathetic, but authorities were making serious noises, and Al feared for the dogs' future.

It was time for a canine Ark.

Barbara and Bill Schoolman are animal lovers, and had gotten to know Al. Bill Schoolman owns Classic Transportation, a motorcoach, shuttle, van and limousine operation based in Bohemia, N.Y., and felt he had to help. The Schoolmans helped form the Spirit Animal Sanctuary in Boonville, and assisted financially with the purchase of land, temporary animal shelters and quarters for a caretaker.

Coming up with an ark that could transport the dogs 300 miles from Long Island to upstate New York quickly surfaced as a major challenge. Schoolman, veteran transportation executive that he is, at first thought: "How hard can this be?"

After racking his brain, he concluded that a school bus would be ideal. Cleverly figuring that local school contractors would be reluctant to lend him one, Bill contacted Cliff Clare of Quality Bus Sales in New Windsor, NY. No one is



Bill Schoolman, left, of Classic Transportation erects temporary screens to separate passengers.



Snowball is last one off.

entirely sure what happened next. At the end of the conversation, not only did Quality loan Schoolman a bus, but Cliff offered to drive part way and brought his two sons to help. Long-time bus industry sales executive Dave Millhauser shared the driving and wrangling duties.

So, there they were, 8 or 10 folks, loading dogs into a big yellow school bus in a nice neighborhood. Like a modern Noah, Papszycki led dogs to the bus in pairs.

Finally onboard, the bus motored over the Throgs Neck Bridge — between Queens and the Bronx — and up the New York Thruway. Barbara Schoolman enforced discipline with an iron hand (actually a plastic bat). Clare's sons, Christopher and Patrick, helped with the dogs and pestered him to let them keep a couple. People in cars honked and waved. Toll takers smiled and actually said "thank you."

The bus stopped at a Thruway rest area to meet Al and his niece, Linda, who had another million dogs in his van. Folks couldn't resist coming to the bus windows to pet them. A few escaped but were quickly rounded up.

The bus and van arrived at the dogs' new home around midnight with not a word of complaint and minimal grumbling and growling. Everyone was clearly happy to be there.

From a driver's perspective, the trip was similar to a load of high schoolers, but with less hassle. No matter how tired you were, one look in the back of the bus and you couldn't help smiling.

Schoolman, who is passionate about safety at his company, report-



Woolfie, Bella, Logan and Goldie swap seats as they cruise the New York Thruway.

HELP WANTED ...

The Web site for Spirit Animal Sanctuary is www.spiritdogsanctuary.org, where more photos of the journey are available. If you would like to help with mounting food and veterinarian bills, send your contribution to: Spirit Animal Sanctuary, 2539 East Road, Boonville, NY 13309. For more information, call Barbara Schoolman at (631) 751-6156.



Barbara Schoolman and Bella revel in the ride.

ed there were no accidents — outside or inside the bus.

The dogs reportedly are content and healthy in their new digs (another pun ... sorry). Al cares for them and continues to search for adoptive homes. To cover help

cover expenses of the animal sanctuary, he does training and boards animals. Dogs that folks are reluctant to take because they are large, old or have been abused have a home for life.

The Schoolmans' commitment, along with Quality Bus Sales generosity (and Cliff's driving skill), also mean the dogs can live full, happy lives.

Going to the dogs isn't all bad.

People

Phil Loflin has joined *Motor Coach Industries* as a regional sales manager, based at MCI's office in Orlando, Fla. He's responsible for the Southeast region covering West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

Loflin comes to MCI after a 15-year career with *Thomas Built Buses Inc.*, of High Point, N.C., where he had been the Northeast regional sales manager for the past four years. He previously worked in engineering for Thomas Built.

At the same time, **Aram Nikitas** has joined MCI as a regional sales manager, based at the company's Des Plaines, Ill., sales office. He is responsible for Iowa, Kansas, the upper peninsula of Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North and South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

Nikitas joins MCI after a career as a motorcoach operator with *Chicago Motor Coach Co.*

PennTex marks 10th anniversary, progress noted

MANCHESTER, Pa. — PennTex Industries Inc. has celebrated its 10th anniversary by posting another record-breaking year.

"During the past decade, PennTex has achieved significant, steady growth based on market demand for its premium heavy-duty alternators," said company President Glen Stroud.

During most of its history, PennTex has specialized in supplying durable, high-output, 12-volt alternators for shuttle buses and other tough applications.

Last year, the company broadened its line of alternators by introducing a 24-volt, 330-amp, heavy-duty model, the PX-833, for the motorcoach and transit bus markets. The PX-833 is an air-cooled replacement for the oil-cooled 50DN.

PennTex high-amperage alternators and mobile electronic devices are manufactured at the company's 14,000-square-foot plant in Fort Worth, Texas. Corporate headquarters are in Manchester.

Stroud said the company plans to continue developing heavy-duty products to stay ahead of trends in the bus, industrial, emergency vehicle and marine markets.

For more information, go to www.penntexusa.com, or call (877) 590-7366.

Mike Kobussen of Kobussen Bus dies unexpectedly

OSHKOSH, Wis. — Michael L. Kobussen, vice president of Kobussen Buses Ltd., and an avid sportsman, died unexpectedly last month at Mercy Medical Center in Oshkosh. He was 60.

Mr. Kobussen joined the family bus company 38 years ago after spending three years in the Army.

He was a co-owner of the Kaukauna, Wis.-based charter- and school-bus company, and general manager of its location in Neenah, Wis., where he made his home with his wife of 33 years, Ann.

A nephew, Joe, is president of Kobussen Buses, while another nephew, Dan, is secretary-treasurer.

As a sportsman, Mr. Kobussen enjoyed hunting, fishing, shooting, spending time at his cabin, and traveling in his motorhome. His newest hobby was taking his four-year-old grandson, Hunter Michael, on four-wheeler rides daily.

He was a member of a number of gun, sportsmen and snowmobil-

ing organizations, plus the Wisconsin School Bus Association and the United Motorcoach Association.

Survivors include his widow; a son, Scott; two daughters, Michelle and Melissa; three brothers, James, David and John; two sisters, Marlene Juneau and Joan Andersen, and five grandchildren.



EXPO 2005 will be the biggest and best industry event ever! Including some exciting additions to this year's show...

- Industry leaders will gather at the first ever *State Association Summit*
- New Solution Sessions covering **sales, pricing, cost management, contract work, and marketing lessons** from other industries and much, much more!
- The *1st Annual Ray Dupuis Golf Tournament* in honor of one of our industry's leaders and a UMA founder
- Many exciting new products to see on the exhibit floor

PLUS

- The always popular *UMA Maintenance Interchange*
- And the highlight of last year's EXPO...the *2nd Annual UMA Awards Banquet!*

February 22-26, 2005 Las Vegas Convention Center • Las Vegas Hilton Attendee Registration Form Make copies for additional registrants.

First Name _____		Last Name _____		Badge Name (First or Nickname Only) _____	
Company Name _____					
Mailing Address _____		City _____		State _____ Zip _____ Country _____	
Phone _____		Fax _____		E-mail _____	

*Include Las Vegas Hilton confirmation number and receive \$25 off each registration! See below for details.

Please check only one:	Industry Role
<input type="checkbox"/> Operator ~ Motorcoach owner, operator, or staff person who is an active part of a motorcoach company recognized by the USDOT.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Travel Partner ~ Companies that are involved in the travel and tourism market- hotels, destinations, rest stops, etc.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Exhibiting Supplier ~ Companies that sell/supply to the motorcoach industry but are NOT exhibiting on the show floor at Motorcoach Expo 2005.	

		Registration Fees		*Save \$25 on each Expo 2005 Registration! By booking a room at the Las Vegas Hilton and providing UMA with the confirmation number, you'll receive \$25 off each Expo registration! Las Vegas Hilton - 1.888.732.7117 **Package Deals for UMA Membership and 2005 Expo! Includes UMA membership for one year PLUS two full registrations for 2005 Motorcoach Expo! *Only available for those who have NOT had an active UMA membership within the last 12 months.
		UMA Members Price (M) / Non-UMA Members Price (NM)	On-Site	
		Regular	after 1/31/05	
		until 1/31/05	after 1/31/05	
		M / NM	M / NM	
Operator		\$295 / \$350	\$325 / \$375	
Travel Partner		\$325 / \$375	\$350 / \$400	
Non-Exhibiting Supplier		\$600 / \$700	\$650 / \$750	
Spouse		\$225 / \$250	\$250 / \$300	
Child		\$100 / \$150	\$125 / \$150	
**Package Deal:		\$775	\$825	

CANCELLATION POLICY: There is a \$50 processing fee for all cancellations. This fee is assessed on a per person basis. There is no refund for cancellations made after 12/31/04. All refund requests are up to the discretion of Expo Management.

Payment Information	
<input type="checkbox"/> Check	Credit Cards: <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard <input type="checkbox"/> American Express
Card Number: _____	Expiration Date: _____
Cardholder's Name: _____	Signature: _____

Make Checks Payable to: UMA Motorcoach Expo
Fax Credit Card Payments to: 703-838-2950
Mail all others to: Motorcoach Expo, 113 South West Street, 4th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22314-2824
Comments? Questions? Call 800-424-8262 or e-mail us at info@uma.org

For further information, please visit our website www.motorcoachexpo.com

Motorcoach Expo 2005— it's all right here!

Schedule of Events

Sunday – Tuesday, February 20-22, 2005		
IMG Maintenance & Safety Forum		
Tuesday – February 22, 2005		
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM	State Association Summit	NEW
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Welcome Reception	
Wednesday – February 23, 2005		
9:00 AM - 4:30 PM	Maintenance Interchange	
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Motorcoach Industry Panel <i>(Building a Strong Foundation)</i>	
10:00 AM - 10:45 AM	Legislative and Regulatory Update	
11:00 AM - 4:15 PM	Education Sessions <i>(Concurrent Sessions)</i>	NEW
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Marketing and Sales: <i>Selling 101 - The Sales Process</i>	Finance: <i>Raising your Rates</i>
		Operations: <i>Instilling a Safety Culture</i>
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Marketing and Sales: <i>How to get the phone ringing using cost effective marketing channels</i>	Finance: <i>Profit Power</i>
		Operations: <i>Process of securing contract work</i>
3:15 PM - 4:15 PM	Marketing and Sales: <i>Making your website an integral part of your marketing and sales effort</i>	Operations: <i>Recruiting and training new drivers</i>
12:00 PM - 1:45 PM	Operator Luncheon	NEW
4:30 PM - 7:30 PM	Marketing Lessons from Other Industries Exhibit Hall Open - "Sneak Preview"	
Thursday – February 24, 2005		
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Networking Opportunity	
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM	Education Sessions <i>(Concurrent Sessions)</i>	NEW
Marketing and Sales: <i>What operators want in vendor relationships</i>	Finance: <i>Margin versus markup misconceptions</i>	Operations: <i>Airport access issues and fees</i>
10:30 AM - 5:30 PM	Exhibit Hall Open	
6:00 PM - 11:00 PM	Vision Awards Banquet	
Friday – February 25, 2005		
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Exhibit Hall Open	
Saturday – February 26, 2005		
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Ray Dupuis Memorial Golf Tournament at Silverstone Golf Club	NEW

OBEXPOS



YOU GREATLY IMPROVE YOUR ODDS

www.prevestcar.com

when you back the right horse.

Investing in a Prevost Coach is your assurance of outstanding curb appeal, impeccable road handling, delighted passengers and repeat business. Not to mention optimum resale value, minimum life-cycle cost and the best after-sales parts and service infrastructure to keep your fleet in tip-top shape.

It all adds up to the most dependable, attractive coach money can buy, backed by a company – **and assets** – you can count on years down the road. Because nothing safeguards your fleet investment over the long haul like **The Time Travelers®**.

www.prevestcar.com



PREVOST®

THE TIME TRAVELERS

Sales inquiries 877-873-8678

Service network across North America and Company-owned facilities in
Canada | California | Florida | Illinois | New Jersey | Tennessee | Texas