

# Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE BUS INDUSTRY

## Motorcoach drivers unsung heroes of hurricane responders

ANNISTON, Ala. — News reports during Hurricanes Harvey and Irma raved about the brave first responders and volunteers who rushed to Texas and Florida to help evacuate residents and deliver food and water.

But they rarely mentioned bus drivers, who dodged flooded highways, survived on peanut butter-and-jelly sandwiches and slept on makeshift beds in their vehicles' luggage bays to transport people out of harm's way.

"You pack like you are going to be camping. That is how we survive and stay as long as we are needed," said Phyllis Kinnison,

who drove motorcoaches in response teams for both hurricanes.

One night last month she spoke from a motel room as she handled transportation for emergency responders working out of the Center for Domestic Preparedness, a branch of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in Anniston.

While assisting evacuation teams in Texas and Louisiana following Hurricane Harvey, she spent nights in her motorcoach.

"I have been on the road for a month now," said Kennison, who drives for Empire Coach Line in Orlando, Fla. "When we were

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Hundreds of motorcoaches and drivers from across the United States assisted in evacuating thousands of people from areas stricken by the high winds and flooding caused by Harvey and Irma. Drivers often received little recognition for their assistance.

## UMA announces candidates for its board of directors

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — The United Motorcoach Association has announced candidates for seven open seats on its board of directors. Ballots will be mailed to primary operator members in October and must be returned by November 1.

The candidates are:

### Region 1 (the West) Two open seats

**Tom Giddens** — Owner, Pacific Coastways Charter Services, Inc., Garden Grove, Calif.

Giddens, a member of UMA since 1993, wishes to be a voice for the motorcoach industry at the federal and state levels so UMA can continue to promote its agenda to shape the future of the industry. He served as president of the California Bus Association for six years, has attended every UMA/United Bus Owners Association (UBOA) Expo since becoming a member and has participated in UMA's Capitol Hill Days (Fly-In) and Safety Management Seminars.

**John Grzywacz** — Owner,

CIT Signature Transportation (CIT Charters), Ames, Iowa

Grzywacz joined UMA in 2002 and has owned his company since 1997. He has participated in Fly-In, attended and spoken at UMA Motorcoach Expo and was a 2017 Vision Award recipient. He believes his experience in the school bus, transit and motorcoach industries will bring a diversity of knowledge that can serve as an enhancement to the UMA board and help the industry successfully face future uncertainty and adversity.

**Tom Ready** — General manager, Ready Bus Line, Le Crescent, Minn.

Ready has been a member of UMA since 1971 and a board member for the past 27 years. He served as board chairman from 1993-95 and again from 2010-12. He has served on the executive committee and chaired the finance and bylaws committees. Ready wishes to continue to serve UMA as an active board member by using his experience as an industry advocate to guide the association and

the industry into a safe, relevant and thriving future.

**Jeff Rogers** — Co-owner, First Class Tours, Inc., Houston

Family-owned First Class Tours has been a member of UMA since 1998, and Rogers and his family continue to support UMA by participating as panel members and speakers at various events. He is chairman and president of the Motorcoach Marketing Council and is active in local and regional motorcoach and travel associations.

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## CHTC exceeds sales goals, plans third-generation buses

CHINO, Calif. — Since entering the U.S. market in 2016 with the first-generation version of its HT35 and HT45 series buses, Chinese Hi-Tech Corporation (CHTC) has exceeded its sales goals.

"The company and its products have come a long way in a relatively short period of time," said Scott Thorpe, vice president of CHTC Bus Group, the company's U.S. subsidiary based in Chino.

"We are excited about the suc-

cess we've had in 2017 and look for even greater things in 2018," Thorpe said. "We've ramped up production in anticipation of increasing sales in the last quarter of 2017 and the first quarter of 2018."

He said during its first year in the U.S., CHTC focused on getting the motorcoaches out to potential customers for evaluation and comments. With the help of those customers, the company released its second-generation version of the

coaches.

The third-generation CHTC buses will be released in January at the United Motorcoach Association Expo 2018 in San Antonio.

CHTC paid special attention to the appearance and amenities of the newest models. They include leather seating in tan or black, a larger lavatory and wood accents gracing the interior.

To enhance the passenger experience, there are larger video

monitors, better speakers, Wi-Fi and multi-media offerings. The third-generation buses also boast surveillance, DVR, multi-cameras and a black box as standard equipment.

The CHTC Bus Group realizes that one of the biggest obstacles that its customers face is hiring drivers. Focusing on comfort, the driver's area has been enlarged, and the seat has all the bells and whistles to give the most comfort-

able ride possible.

"We feel that we can partner with our customers by offering new products that will help recruit drivers," Thorpe said. "By offering these buses at a cost far below our competition, we allow our customers a greater return on our investment."

"Our retail price point is less than our competitor's late model used buses. Our buses have over 70 percent U.S. content and use

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# UMA to offer ELD pavilion, education session at Expo

SAN ANTONIO — With the deadline fast approaching for motorcoach operators to adopt electronic logging devices and lingering confusion over the mandate, the United Motorcoach Association is responding by offering an ELD pavilion at Expo 2018.

The pavilion will include companies that offer ELDs, panel discussions and loads of information to help operators deal with the federal ELD mandate that takes effect Dec. 18.

Although the mandate will be in place by the time UMA Motorcoach Expo 2018 convenes on

Jan. 6, information offered at the pavilion will help operators that have already converted to ELDs but that might not understand how to use all of the features on the units.

There also are a number of operators purchasing automatic on-board recording devices, or AOBRDs, so they can have more time to implement ELDs. Companies that are using AOBRDs as of the Dec. 18 deadline will be given two more years to convert to ELDs.

The Expo pavilion will offer those operators valuable information about choosing the best ELDs and the features that will work best



for their needs.

UMA also will be offering an education session on ELDs during Expo that will focus on the upside of ELDs and their benefits, from reduced human error to overall efficiency.

Operators seeking more information on ELDs should check out

UMA's podcast featuring LaTonya Mimms of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. To listen to the podcast, go to [www.busandmotorcoachnews.com](http://www.busandmotorcoachnews.com) and click on "Motorcoach Minute."

The UMA board's technology committee also has compiled a brochure with questions operators should ask when looking at purchasing ELDs. The brochure is available at [www.uma.org/elds](http://www.uma.org/elds).

In addition, this year's UMA Safety Management Seminar will have a strong focus on ELDs, with representatives from FMCSA on hand to answer participants' ques-

tions and offer guidance to help operators comply with the new regulations.

Seminar participants will learn what's next in terms of enforcement of the ELD mandate and what might happen during compliance reviews. In addition, they will get important insight into what their drivers can expect at destination and roadside inspections.

Mimms of FMCSA is a scheduled speaker.

The seminar will be held Dec. 6-7 at the NTSB Training Center in Ashburn, Va. For information, go to [www.uma.org/safety](http://www.uma.org/safety).

# Longtime Utah operator Lewis Stages suddenly closes

PARK CITY, Utah — All Resort Group Inc., a large, long-established Park City transportation firm that included Lewis Stages, is out of business.

The company, which also operated All Resort Express and Park City Transportation, had filed for bankruptcy in the spring but was expected to remain in business. Instead, it shut down suddenly last month.

Gordon Cummins, a minority

owner of All Resort Group and the firm's vice president, told the *Park Record* that the closure affected several hundred employees, including drivers and office workers.

"We're deeply disappointed and we feel for our employees. We wish our employees well," Cummins said.

The company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in April, listing between \$10 million and

\$50 million in estimated assets and an equal amount of liabilities owed to between 200 and 999 creditors, including a leasing firm, a Las Vegas touring firm and an Ohio petroleum company.

A Phoenix investment group had been expected to acquire All Resort but backed out recently. Cummins told the *Park Record* that he was hoping another firm would acquire the company's air-

port service.

The bankruptcy apparently stemmed from the company owing hundreds of thousands of dollars in attorney bills tied to lawsuits and was filed despite All Resort experiencing its strongest first quarter in four years.

The company got its start in 1913 when mining was big business in the mountains near Salt Lake City. Miners, most of them

immigrants, enjoyed traveling to the city to blow off steam.

Fourteen-year-old Orson Lewis recognized an opportunity and bought a Model-T Ford touring car to haul the miners to town.

The company, Lewis Bros. Stages, grew over the years to include modern motorcoaches, school buses and other vehicles offering line runs, tours, charters and student transportation.

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# THE DOCKET

## Politicians pile on charter industry after deadly crash

NEW YORK — City officials are vowing to crack down on what they call the “exploitive” and under-regulated charter bus industry after a deadly crash in Queens last month.

Even before inspectors started the long work of sorting out details of the crash between a charter bus and a city transit bus, politicians were flooding the media with calls for stricter regulations on the industry.

“From what I can see, it’s an exploitative industry that needs to be reined in,” New York Mayor Bill de Blasio said. “I fear what’s going on here is an industry that is really unfair to its workers and exploitative and forces workers to work unusually long hours without additional benefits.”

City Councilman Ydanis Rodriguez, chairman of the city

council’s Transportation Committee, also chimed in, saying he would draft legislation requiring that city-based charter bus companies make driver records publicly available.

“We need to be sure that those charter companies, before they get a permit or renew their permit, they are to have a guarantee that all the drivers...have a clear record before they are driving in the city of New York,” Rodriguez said.

Even labor unions weighed in. “These buses are sweatshops on wheels,” said Larry Hanley, the international president of the Amalgamated Transit Union, a labor organization representing bus drivers. “There is rampant fatigue in the industry caused by low wages ... it’s a third world form of transit that exists in the

United States.”

Surveillance video from a nearby business appears to show a Dahlia bus running a red light and plowing into a transit bus. The bus apparently was speeding.

Three people died in the crash, including the charter bus driver, a passenger on the transit bus and a pedestrian.

The politicians and labor official commenting on the crash focused on the fact that the driver of the empty charter bus, Raymond Mong, had previously worked as a New York City transit bus driver but was fired in 2015 after an arrest in Connecticut for driving under the influence.

Mong apparently held a valid commercial driver’s license, but critics contend that he should not have been legally allowed to drive a bus.

They also pointed out that the owner of the charter bus, Dahlia, has a poor safety record. The company has received seven unsafe driving violations from FMCSA since Sept. 5, 2015, two for drivers traveling more than 15 miles above the posted speed limit.

However, the company’s last compliance review apparently revealed no violations that would result in fines.

Motorcoach industry officials, while conceding that the crash was tragic and offering sympathies to the families of the deceased, said New York officials should have waited for the completion of the investigation before running to the media to criticize the charter bus industry.

“First and foremost, our thoughts and prayers are with the

individuals that sustained injuries and the families that lost loved ones,” said Ken Presley, vice president of industry relations and COO of the United Motorcoach Association.

“While motorcoach crashes that result in a loss of life are very rare, no doubt every company and safety official in the country shudders when these happen as they know it could happen to them.

“While it is tempting to speculate and all too often overreact to these incidents, true safety professionals all know that we must be patient while the experts investigate the accident and determine the probable cause and contributing factors. Of course, there will be detractors chiming in, exploiting the tragedy in an effort to advance their disparate causes.”

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# Unified Carrier Registration fees could drop in 2018

WASHINGTON — The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has announced a proposed rule to reduce annual Unified Carrier Registration fees for commercial motor carriers.

The reductions, spelled out in a *Federal Register* notice last month, would total 9.1 percent in 2018. They would rise slightly in 2019 but would still be 4.55 percent below current levels.

In dollars, the reductions would range from \$7 to \$6,749 below the current fees per operator next year and from \$3 to \$3,375 in

2019, based on the number of vehicles in an operator's fleet.

The more vehicles a company operates, the higher the reduction would be.

Here are the proposed fees compared with the current amounts:

- Fees for two or fewer motorcoaches, currently \$76 a year, would be \$69 in 2018 and \$73 in 2019.
- Fees for three to five vehicles, currently \$227, would be \$206 in 2018 and to \$217 in 2019.
- Fees for six to 20 vehicles, currently \$452, would be \$410 in

2018 and \$431 in 2019.

- Fees for 21 to 100 vehicles, currently \$1,576, would be \$1,431 in 2018 and \$1,503 in 2019.

- Fees for 101 to 1,000 vehicles, currently \$7,511, would be \$6,820 in 2018 and \$7,165 in 2019.

- Fees for 1,001 or more vehicles, currently \$73,346, would be \$66,597 in 2018 and \$69,971 in 2019.

UCR is a federally mandated, state-administered program for registering and collecting fees from operators of commercial vehicles engaged in interstate travel.

It requires motor carriers, motor private carriers, freight forwarders, leasing companies and brokers based in the United States, Canada and Mexico to pay fees through their base states on behalf of all participating states.

Federal regulations require FMCSA to reduce the fees for all motor carriers if the total fees in the previous year exceed the amount necessary to satisfy the revenue entitlements of the participating states and the UCR plan's administrative costs.

The Unified Carrier Registra-

tion Plan board recommended the reduction to the Department of Transportation in March after total revenues collected in 2016 exceeded the entitlements of \$107.78 million distributed to the 41 participating states, plus \$5 million established for administrative costs to operate the plan.

FMCSA accepted public comments on the proposed reduction through Oct. 1 and could change the rule based on those comments.

"FMCSA may issue a final rule at any time after the close of the comment period," the agency said.

## \$55 million in FTA emissions grants

WASHINGTON — The Federal Transit Administration has announced \$55 million in grant selections through the Low or No Emission (Low-No) Vehicle program, which funds the development of transit buses and infrastructure that use advanced fuel technologies.

Fifty-one projects in 39 states will receive a share of the funding.

"The projects selected through the highly-competitive Low-No program all demonstrate strong value to American communities," said FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams. "As transit providers nationwide face a backlog of maintenance needs, it is imperative to replace aging buses near the end of their useful life with newer, cleaner models that are also more efficient to operate and maintain."

Eligible projects included those that replace, rehabilitate, lease and purchase buses and related equipment as well as projects to purchase, rehabilitate, construct or lease bus-related facilities, such as buildings for bus storage and maintenance.

Projects can also include

workforce development components to train the next generation of transit employees.

Some examples of selected fiscal year 2017 Low-No projects include:

- The City of Lubbock, Texas, and local transit agency Citibus will receive funding to purchase Proterra fast-charge electric buses and charging infrastructure that will be used on the Texas Tech University campus. By replacing diesel buses that have exceeded their useful life with battery electric buses, Citibus will reduce overall fleet energy consumption, maintenance costs and emissions.

- The Jacksonville Transportation Authority will receive funding to replace diesel buses with battery electric buses and chargers for an expansion route, which will serve a Park-n-Ride and a new logistics and distribution center that employs over 1,500 Jacksonville residents. Because the charging stations will utilize Jacksonville Electric Authority's Solar Smart Power program, the buses will truly have zero emissions.

- The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

will receive funding to purchase battery electric buses, associated charging infrastructure, and a backup generator to maintain bus service in disaster situations. Juneau, the capital of Alaska, has a clean, renewable source of energy in local hydropower. Transitioning the bus fleet to all-electric will eliminate emissions from diesel buses, as well as eliminate the costly shipping of diesel fuel from more than 900 miles away.

Eligible recipients included transit agencies, state transportation departments and Indian tribes. Projects were selected on a competitive basis using evaluation criteria such as community needs, project benefits and local technical and financial capacity.

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, passed by Congress and signed into law in December 2015, restored FTA's competitive Bus & Bus Facilities Program, authorizing it through 2020.

For a list of grant recipients, go to: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/fiscal-year-2017-low-or-no-emission-low-no-bus-program-projects>

## N.Y. offering \$2.2 million in clean emissions rebates

ALBANY, N.Y. — New York State is providing \$2.2 million in rebates from the Environmental Protection Fund for municipalities to purchase or lease electric (plug-in hybrid or battery) or hydrogen fuel cell vehicles and for installation of public charging or fuel cell refueling infrastructure.

"New York is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector, just as we have already significantly reduced emissions from electric power," Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo said.

## Electric bus sets distance record

BURLINGAME, Calif. — In what could be the future of motorcoaches, battery powered bus manufacturer Proterra has claimed a world record for driving one of its electric buses more than 1,100 miles on a single charge.

The private company, which is led and staffed by ex-Tesla employees, said the long-range test of a 40-foot Proterra Catalyst E2 transit bus at truckmaker Navistar's proving grounds in New Car-

lisle, Ind., is the farthest any electric vehicle has ever traveled on a single charge.

The rebates will total \$1 million for electric vehicle supply equipment infrastructure, \$1 million for hydrogen fuel cell infrastructure, and \$200,000 for clean vehicles.

Applications for rebates will be accepted through May 31, 2018.

The total distance of 1,101.2 miles was 83 percent farther than the 603 miles Proterra achieved in a long-range test a year ago.

Company officials said the Catalyst was poised to make a significant impact on the transit market because of its low operational cost per mile compared with conventional fossil fuel powered buses.

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# If insurance is doubled, the number of sharks will, too

By Dave Millhouser

“Isn’t your car parked in front of your apartment?” asked my buddy. I had taken a break from my highly lucrative job (digging ditches in south Florida) to drive for a former employer and was about seven states away.

When I said “yes,” my pal said “not anymore.”

Long story short: someone had broken into the apartment, loaded all my stuff into the trunk of my beloved 1971 MG Midget, and disappeared forever.

For the uninitiated, Midgets were tiny, with a trunk about the size of a milk crate. You can probably imagine that, if all my things fit into it, I was poor.

Fortunately my dad had recommended that I maintain “comprehensive” insurance, and (gasp) I actually took his advice.

The insurance company coughed up \$3,000, which was a miracle because I’d only paid \$2,792 for the car. Despite the emotional scarring caused by the loss, I lived happily ever after.

Insurance can be a blessing, but as with so many things, I am of

two minds (some would call it schizophrenia).

For the time being, we’ve beaten back the forces that press for higher mandatory insurance coverage for buses. A seemingly draconian solution to a nonexistent problem, you’d think it would die. The trouble with bad ideas is that they’re extraordinarily resilient.

Proponents point out that damages from a major accident could exceed current minimums. So could damages from a meteor strike. Litigants are free to go after other assets in either event (although suing the Supreme Being has some risks).

The other side of the coin is that operators are free to buy more than the minimum policy, and it might even be a good idea. If there is a significant accident, when the insurance coverage is exceeded, lawyers come after the carrier’s assets for the difference.

Buying extra insurance may save your company and even your home. I checked — they can’t take your children.

In addition, some companies have used higher coverage as a marketing tool. They point out to

customers that, in the event of a tragedy, they have extra resources to help recovery. This can be very effective with schools and organizations sensitive to risk.

If extra insurance is a good thing, why not make it mandatory? As a general rule, if government gets involved in anything, its cost goes up. Education and health care leap to mind.

It’s no accident that when all sorts of money became available in the form of government loans and scholarships, colleges started to charge more (heck, they ain’t stupid).

When the government got involved with health care (Medicare, in the 1960s) costs began to spiral upwards. Both have far exceeded inflation.

I’m for both health care and education, but they offer insight into what may happen if more insurance is forced on the industry.

There is no evidence I’m aware of that added insurance makes us safer. It won’t save lives.

Once the legal community finds out that coverage has doubled, they’ll miraculously discover that the damages are — double.

The more blood in the water, the more sharks.

Logically the extra insurance must have increased the danger, rather than limiting it.

Don’t misunderstand. Some mandatory insurance is necessary, but mostly because it can be denied. When a badly behaving bus line can’t get coverage and is forced out of business, that’s a good thing. Insurers are excellent at identifying risk, and they have a real financial interest in safety.

No sensible person thinks a driver’s license denotes competence. It’s something that can be taken away for bad behavior. Extra coverage won’t enhance safety, but withholding insurance entirely might.

Perhaps I’m missing something, but it seems that the only group that benefits from higher mandatory insurance limits is the lawyers (perhaps that’s why they push it).

When a seller knows you must buy their product, there’s minimal incentive to keep the cost down. If they think you are considering extra coverage they will price it differently than if they’re sure you have to buy it. Insurers aren’t evil, but they aren’t dumb either.

It’s now possible for a customer to check a carrier’s coverage online. In a free marketplace, clients who care about things like insurance and safety can look them up.

Bus companies that invest heavily in training and supplemental insurance need to recoup those costs. If price is the major criteria for customers, a free market allows them to go elsewhere.

Like buying a non-refundable airline ticket, they save money in return for accepting added risk. They shouldn’t whine when the risk doesn’t work out.

One guy sought to beat the system by buying \$1,000 worth of fire insurance on a cigar. He figured he could torch that baby off, enjoy a smoke and collect \$1,000.

Who’d a thunk that was arson? Apparently the insurance company did.

Dave Millhouser is a bus industry marketing consultant and freelance writer. Contact him by email at [Davemillhouser@gmail.com](mailto:Davemillhouser@gmail.com).



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# UMA SAFETY

Managing Electronic Data | FMCSA Update

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## 2017 SEMINAR SCHEDULE

### Wednesday, December 6

- 8:00 a.m. Shuttle Bus Departs Hotel for NTSB
- 8:30 a.m. – 9:10 a.m. Welcome & Introductions
- 9:10 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Managing Electronic Data
- 10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Networking Break, sponsored by **PROTECTIVE INSURANCE**
- 10:15 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Update  
*Presenter: Peter Chandler, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration*
- 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Back to Basics: Facility Safety & Compliance  
*Presenter: Jeff Petrunak*
- 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Lunch, sponsored by **ABC Companies**
- 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. ELDs: Enforcement/Phase II  
*Presenter: LaTonya Mims, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration*
- 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. TWA Flight 800 Presentation **or**  
Fatigued Driving: Do ELDs Solve the Problem?
- 3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. Breakout Groups Solution Session
- 3:45 p.m. – 3:55 p.m. Networking Break, sponsored, **Transportation Insurance Brokers**
- 3:55 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. Knowledge & Solution Sharing
- 4:45 p.m. Shuttle Departs NTSB Training Center for Hampton Inn Dulles Cascades  
Dinner on Your Own

### Thursday, December 7

- 7:30 a.m. Shuttle Bus Departs Hampton Inn Dulles Cascades for NTSB Training Center
- 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Cybersecurity & Transportation Safety Administration Update
- 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Legal Issues in Transportation: Marijuana & Other Current Issues
- 10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Networking Break
- 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. National Transportation Safety Board Update
- 11:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Safety & Compliance Jeopardy
- 11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Wrap Up
- 12:00 p.m. Box Lunch Served
- 12:30 p.m. Shuttle Departs for Hotel & Dulles International Airport

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### Session Descriptions

#### Managing Electronic Data

Technology is pervasive in modern motorcoach operations. Whether a system is deployed to improve operations, serve customers better, or simply because of regulatory requirements, these electronic platforms have implications on safety management. This shift from blissful ignorance and paper-based systems to robust IT-driven solutions requires operators to develop new and consistent processes to manage the data available to minimize company exposures to regulatory non-compliance and risk.

#### Back to Basics: Facility Safety & Compliance

While vehicle-related hazards are the largest exposure for transportation companies, you might be – or unfortunately, might not be – surprised by potential costs associated with workplace injuries. Controlling workplace injuries is admittedly difficult, controlling the environment at your location is not. This session will review some commonly observed facility and workplace safety issues and provide insight into potential consequences using incident examples and citing applicable regulatory concerns.

#### ELDs – Phased in Compliance (Phase II)

ELDs are here and new to many carriers. With the required implementation comes many follow up questions: What is still required from carriers besides the ELD records? What enforcement will look like during compliance reviews? What is new for drivers at destination/roadside inspections? FMCSA representatives will be on hand to discuss these and other questions.

#### Breakout Groups & Knowledge & Solution Sharing

Attendees will break into groups and discuss topics of interest. Afterwards, each group will share their knowledge and solutions with the rest of the attendees.

#### Fatigued Driving: Do ELDs Solve the Problem?

Fatigued driving has been responsible for some of the most serious bus crashes in recent history and a concern always on the mind of passenger transportation operators. With the advent of objective hours of service recording via ELDs, has the concern been reduced?

#### Cyber Security & TSA Update

Internal data security and customer data security are just two increasingly common issues related to cyber security. Representatives from the Transportation Security Administration will review steps companies should take to avoiding becoming a victim or exposing their customers. An update on current TSA initiatives will also be included in this presentation.

#### Legal Issues in Transportation: Evolving Marijuana Laws and Other Hot Topics

Legalization of marijuana is sweeping the country. As legalization to varying degrees becomes more prevalent, so do the legal challenges, issues and concerns related to the workplace. While most transportation operators see the laws as cut and dried, this presentation may make you think again as to how this topic and other current hot topics affect your operation.

#### Safety & Compliance Jeopardy

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## UMA election

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

He proposes to utilize his industry knowledge to help UMA continue on its path of change and shape the future vision for the industry.

### Region 2 (the Midwest) Two open seats

**Brian Annett** — Owner, Annett Bus Lines, Sebring, Fla.

Annett has been a member of UMA since 1997 and has held many leadership roles within the association and the motorcoach industry.

He served for 10 years on the UMA board and was chairman from 2014-16, working with industry leaders and equipment manufacturers to strengthen the relevance and value they receive from UMA and its programs. He looks to remain on the board to help UMA protect and promote the industry and its members.

**James M. Brown Sr.** — Owner/operator, Magic Carpet Tour Bus Service, Inc., Richmond, Va.

Brown has been a member and avid supporter of UMA for over 20 years. He has been involved in many state and regional associations, was one of the founders of the National Association of Mo-

torcoach Owners (NAMO), and is president of the Virginia Motorcoach Association for the second time. He wishes to serve as a board member to help move UMA's legislative and regulatory agendas forward and grow its membership base.

**Ralph Young** — Chairman, Young Transportation, Asheville, N.C.

Young first joined UBOA in 1960, remained involved through its transition to UMA and has been a board member for 15 years. He has served on the North Carolina Motorcoach Association board since 1960 and was president seven times. He is a member of IMG and the North Carolina Transportation Hall of Fame. Young would like to remain on the board to help UMA through its leadership transition and implement new direction for UMA and the industry.

### Region 3 (the Northeast) Two open seats

**Joan Libby** — Owner/Operator, Cavalier Coach Trailways, Boston

Libby has been a UMA member since 1988 and was the first female elected to its board. She has led a number of UMA committees and routinely communicates

with her congressional delegation on behalf of UMA. As a continuing board member she wants to ensure UMA's position as an irreplaceable resource to the industry and as the only strong voice for small fleet operators in Washington, D.C.

**Scott Riccio** — Owner/president/founder, NorthEast Charter & Tour Co., Lewiston, Maine

Riccio joined UMA in 2004 and has been involved in its recent strategic planning efforts. He has been chairman of the Maine Motorcoach Network; served on the board and executive and legislative committees of Trailways; and is a member of the Motorcoach Marketing Council. He proposes using his knowledge of growing a motorcoach business from the ground up and his diverse network of industry colleagues to help UMA members overcome any challenges ahead.

**Tim Stout** — President, Stout's Transportation, Trenton, N.J.

Stout joined UMA in 1994 and has served on the board for three years. He feels that industry members can't complain about regulations unless they are actively involved in trying to change them. As such he is an active participant in Fly-In. He would like to contin-

## CVSA Operation Safe Driver Week planned for Oct. 15-21

GREENBELT, Md. — Law enforcement agencies throughout North America will engage in heightened traffic-safety enforcement and educational outreach during the week of Oct. 15-21.

During the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance's annual Operation Safe Driver Week, enforcement personnel will identify commercial motor vehicle and passenger-vehicle drivers who are exhibiting unsafe driving behaviors and issue warnings and/or citations.

Unsafe driver behaviors continue to be the leading cause of crashes. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's "Large Truck Crash Causation Study"

uses his work representing members' concerns and ideas while also finding ways to enhance UMA membership benefits and working to enhance the overall industry.

### Region 4 (Canada) One open seat

**Larry Hundt** — Owner, Great Canadian Holiday & Coaches, Kitchener, Ontario

Hundt has been an active mem-

ber and supporter of UMA since joining in 2005. He has served in various committee roles during that time, including as chair of the UMA meetings committee for five years.

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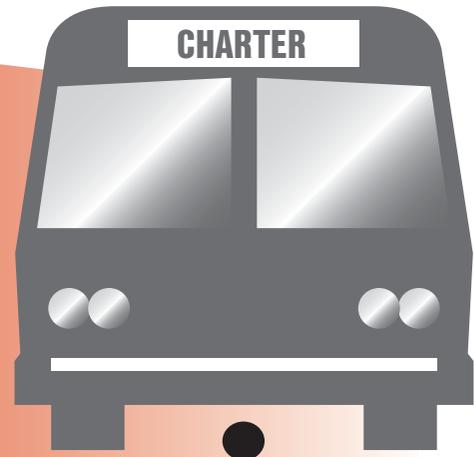
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## Hurricane drivers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

heading into San Antonio through the Houston area we ran into a lot of rain — enough to make the interstate quite dangerous.

“We saw a lot of flooding below the interstates — there were cars floating in the water. They usually sent us with a police escort to get us around the flooded areas,” she said. “That storm I spent nine nights on my motorcoach. It is part of what we do.”

Hundreds of motorcoaches and drivers from across the United States assisted in evacuating thousands of people from areas stricken by the high winds and flooding caused by Harvey and Irma.

Smaller numbers of vehicles remained on duty for weeks, returning displaced residents to homes and delivering emergency responders to areas in need of cleanup and utility repairs.

It wasn't an easy job.

### Bay beds

“Some of our drivers made beds in their luggage bays,” said Randal Steelman.

His companies, Lone Star Coaches of Grand Prairie, Texas, and Tri-City Charter of Bossier

City, La., dispatched 16 coaches to assist Harvey evacuations.

“We made hurricane kits for our drivers with things like air mattresses and ice chests, and gave them lists of things to bring,” Steelman said. “When they are out, they never know if they are going to have a chance to get into a motel or be stuck on their bus.

“The first nights, when there were hundreds of buses lined up, it was probably easier for them to stay where they were than try to find somewhere to go.”

Advanced features enhance the serviceability of motorcoaches as half-million-dollar campers.

“Some of the buses have electricity so we have our own coffee pots,” said Kinnison, who has been driving motorcoaches for 29 years.

“Usually food is provided to us, depending on the level of devastation at the area we are in, or we eat the MREs (military meals-ready-to-eat) that they give us. We buy peanut butter and jelly and bread. We pack our coolers and bedrolls and pillows and rain gear. I take a lot of water. We bathe on our buses or at truck stops,” she said.

When a motel room is available, drivers may need to share its plumbing fixtures before returning

to their coaches to bed down.

“Sometimes we have to try to take turns,” Kinnison said. “Everybody is in it to try to help — every driver and every company. It is part of our job. And I think there is great amount of pride in it. The drivers shared a lot of meals. I made a lot of friends.”

### Prepared for worst

While Hurricane Irma caused less devastation than feared, Harvey brought more suffering to the Gulf Coast than many residents could have imagined. Emergency management officials tend to prepare for the worst possible scenarios — such as by ordering lots of supplies and equipment. Then the storm's devastation can interfere with the deployment of all those resources.

“As with any event, they prepared for the worst and might have had 10 times as much equipment as they needed,” Steelman said. “Because of the flooding, the equipment couldn't get to a lot of people who needed to evacuate. By the time we would get in, most of them were gone. From what I heard from the guys it went well, but there was a lot of sitting and waiting.”

A Lone Star coach delivered

victims from Beaumont, Texas, to an airport where a military plane would evacuate them. The evacuees waited 15 to 18 hours for the plane, Steelman said.

Motorcoach drivers in emergency zones may feel overlooked, but they realize their hardships are temporary. They soon will be going home.

“You want to help these people,” Kinnison said. “Their homes are under water. For the most part they are really calm — I think that's because they are in shock.

“My impression is that most of them are poor,” she said. “They are carrying their possessions in plastic bags. They were in their home one minute, then the next minute their neighborhood was a lake. They didn't have a lot. Then they lost everything.”

### Thank-you briefing

Stelman's carriers gave drivers a “thank-you briefing” before sending them to emergency assignments. “We wanted to remind them to be safe, that we weren't going to be driving through water or do any of the bunch of things that people have died from in the past.

“We tell them they can't jeopardize their safety and their equip-

ment. The responders don't need anybody else to rescue, so investigate your routes, don't go into any risky situations, don't let the stress get to you. If you have to, take a break.”

Also, Steelman advised, “Put a smile on your face. You are trying to make the situation as pleasant as you can. I would imagine the bulk of the people on the buses were of limited means, but you may have someone who is struggling sitting next to a millionaire. Treat them like any other customer. Get them from Point A to Point B in a timely manner.”

Kinnison said everybody wants to help, “especially when people are down on their luck.”

She spent quite a bit of time with a passenger from Orange, Texas. “Now we are friends.”

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# Motorcoaches move from hurricane rescue to recovery

As responders to Hurricanes Harvey and Irma passed from emergency and evacuation services to long-term recovery, many of the hundreds of motorcoaches that assisted in rescue efforts continued to transport victims and support teams well into last month.

Residents evacuated from the path of Hurricane Harvey continued to return to their communities to assess their losses, while people who were transported out of the affected areas to the safety of shelters were being transferred to shelters closer to home by motorcoaches.

In Florida and other states struck by Hurricane Irma, cleanup and repairs also continued, and motorcoaches continued to transport government and private responders.

At the peak of the emergency response, 650 buses contracted through Transportation Management Services were at work in Texas, said TMS President Kevin O'Connor. They were provided by 89 carriers in 11 states.

Another 500 buses were deployed to South Carolina but quickly released when Irma caused fewer problems than feared.

Dozens to hundreds of the motorcoaches remained on the job last month.

"The evacuation and recovery work for the states has stopped. We are doing more limited support for FEMA," O'Connor said.

Buses contracted through TMS made up only a portion of those needed to serve the southeast, he added.

"A lot of operators independently met the needs of nursing homes, hospitals and power companies. Collectively, the industry met a huge demand for equipment at a time of year when there is a scarcity of buses."

Florida Power & Light continued using charter motorcoaches last month for transportation of repair crews, Florida operators said.

Hurricane Harvey made its first landfall at Texas on August 26 with winds of up to 130 miles per hour and 40 to 50 inches of rainfall

over four days. It bounced back over the gulf twice before making its third landfall on Louisiana on August 29.

The storm flooded hundreds of thousands of homes, claimed at least 82 lives and resulted in an estimated \$70 billion to \$200 billion in economic losses.

The Texas Division of Emergency Management reported that 122,331 people and 5,249 pets had been evacuated or rescued since the first landfall.

Hurricane Irma reached the Florida Keys on Sept. 10 with winds of 130 mph. It struck Marco Island and Naples and weakened as it continued northward over the Florida peninsula and the southeastern U.S.

The Florida Department of Emergency Management estimates that 6.5 million Floridians were ordered to evacuate ahead of the hurricane's landfall.

Irma resulted in about 50 fatalities in the U.S. and at least \$50 billion in property damage.

The Florida government does not arrange for a statewide evacuation fleet but businesses and institutions hired several buses, said Matt Brown, chairman of the Florida Motorcoach Association and general manager of Astro Travel and Tours in Tallahassee.

Southeastern-based motorcoach companies often faced their own problems while assisting others who were in the hurricanes' paths.

"The last two weeks have been a blur," said Brian Scott, president of ESCOT Bus Lines, which has facilities in Orlando and Largo, Fla. "Our office was without power for three days. We ran our office on Tuesday (September 12) off a generator to run our phones and a few computers. We had a bus pulled in front of the office to tap into the Wi-Fi."

The storm left a lot of debris, he said.

"The only damage we received was to the roll-up shop doors at our Largo facility. They were blown in and will need to be replaced."

Sports and tourism schedules in the Sunshine State obviously were obliterated, Scott said.

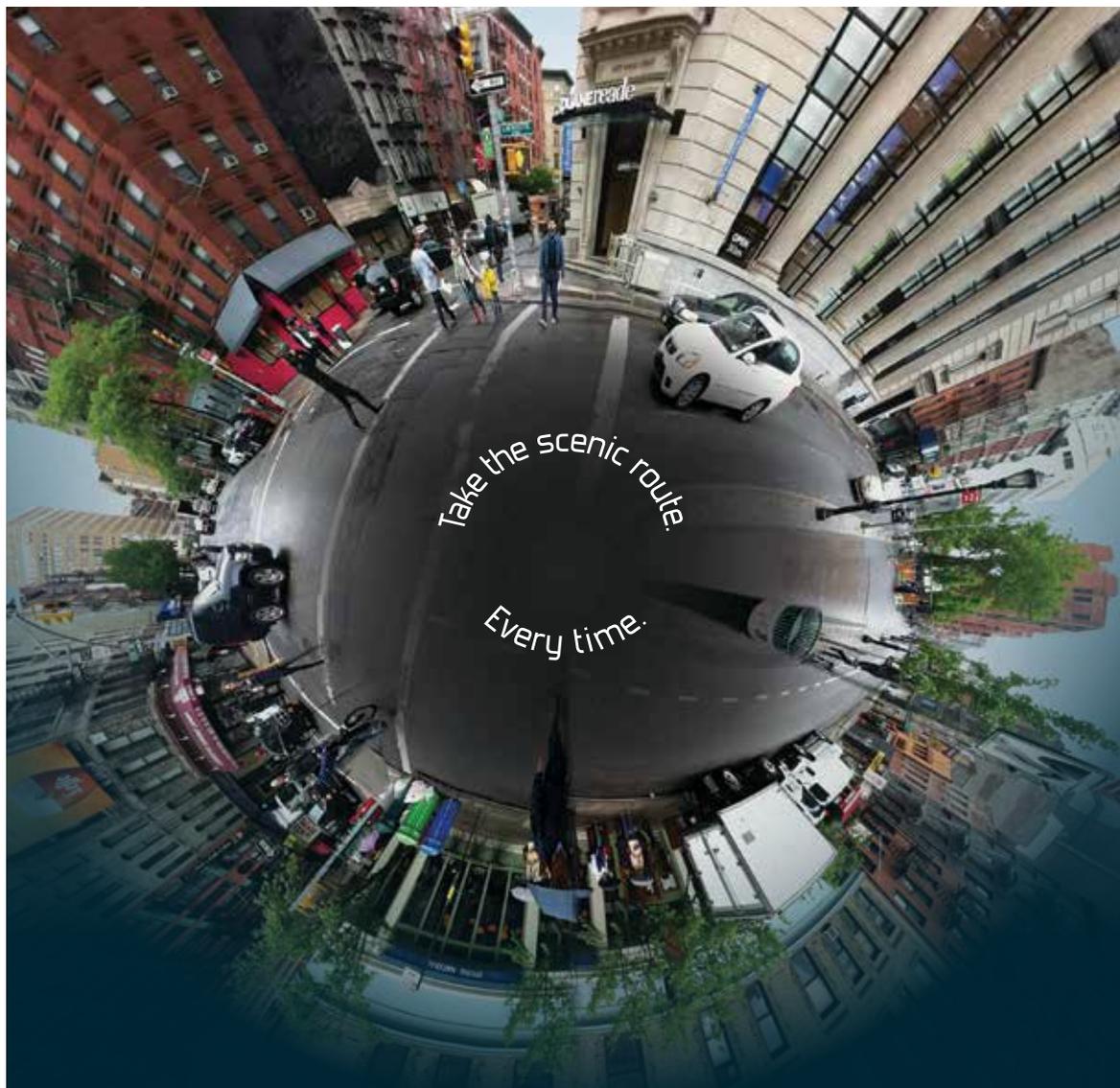
"We experienced a significant amount of cancelled and re-scheduled business. However, the emergency work more than made up for what was lost."

O'Conner of TMS said the response from the motorcoach industry "allowed us to collectively meet the needs we had."

TMS also wants the drivers to know their hardships were recognized.

"We are paying a stipend to

drivers for the nights they spent in their coaches," O'Connor said. "We are in the process of estimating that. I am thrilled with the response we had from the industry. I am also happy that we are collectively able to think about the needs of the drivers, too."



Mobile observation has finally come full circle with the SEE360 camera system from Voyager. This four-camera system gives you a seamless, 360° panoramic view around the entire vehicle. Because each individual camera offers an



unprecedented 190° wide angle view, the SEE360 provides increased awareness on the busiest city streets. Keep your passengers and pedestrians safe while you maneuver your vehicle with confidence.



Motorcoaches from All Aboard America and Lone Star deliver hurricane victims from Beaumont, Texas, to an airport where a C-130 military cargo plane from the Missouri Air National Guard could evacuate them.

## CHTC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Cummins engines, Allison transmissions, ZF suspensions, MCC air-conditioning, Alcoa wheels and Michelin tires.”

The company currently operates out of Chino and Orlando, Fla. Plans for 2018 include moving to a larger facility near Chino.

CHTC recently expanded a showroom and service center in San Francisco. In addition, it will be opening showrooms and service centers in Dallas, Chicago, Atlanta and New Jersey to better service its customers.

These locations will have sales, service and support personnel plus an in-house finance department. The goal is to always have 20 motorcoaches available for immediate sale and delivery.

“We’re dedicated to service after the sale,

and our new service centers show that CHTC is serious about that commitment,” Thorpe said.

Founded in 1998, CHTC Corp. has multiple worldwide operations, with the CHTC Bus Group being a major subsidiary. The company employs more than 50,000 people and operates 22 subsidiaries in 20 countries.

The CHTC Bus Group has developed an integrated approach to bus design, research and development, and manufacturing. All manufacturing is done out of a state-of-the-art 2 million-square-foot factory in Nanchang in southeastern China.

The company prides itself on designing safe and reliable buses, which it sells around the world. It is one of the largest exporters of buses to Australia and the European Union. The company launched a new website at: [www.chtcbusgroup.com](http://www.chtcbusgroup.com).



Since entering the U.S. market in 2016 with its HT35 and HT45 (pictured) series buses, Chinese Hi-Tech Corporation has exceeded its sales goals. The company’s third-generation CHTC buses will be released in January at the UMA Expo 2018 in San Antonio.

## Longtime ABC employee James Smith dies

APOPKA, Fla. — James Smith, who worked at ABC Companies in Florida for nearly 30 years, passed away last month. He was 57.

Starting with ABC in 1989, Smith performed a variety of jobs and in recent years had become a critical member of the company’s parts group.

One operator said Smith had become the “go-to guy when you had a question about anything on a Van Hool motorcoach. Customers

trusted him, and ABC’s service staff depended on him.

“He was mostly behind the scenes, but if James was involved, you knew things would work out,” the operator said. “We, and a lot of other operators, depended on him. He was one of the unsung heroes of the industry.”

Smith’s signature greeting was “Howdy Howdy,” and virtually every fellow worker used the phrase “older brother” in describing him.

“James always had a book in his hand — on break, or while waiting for his wife to pick him up in the afternoons,” remembered one friend. “He never stopped learning.”

Smith is survived by his wife, Nora.

He was born Aug. 16, 1960, and passed away on Sept. 13.



## Calendar

### October 2017

**15-17 California Bus Association Annual Convention & Trade Show**, Viejas Casino & Resort, Alpine, Calif. Info: [www.cbabus.com](http://www.cbabus.com)

**22-24 Bus Association of New York Annual Meeting and Marketplace**, Saratoga Casino Hotel, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. Info: [www.banybus.org/marketplace.com](http://www.banybus.org/marketplace.com)

**26 Greater New Jersey Motorcoach Association Annual Driver Safety Meeting**, Sands Bethlehem, Bethlehem, Pa. Info: [www.gnjma.com](http://www.gnjma.com)

### November 2017

**5-8 Ontario Motorcoach Association Annual Conference & Marketplace**, The Westin Harbour Castle Hotel and Conference Centre, Toronto, Ont. Info: [www.omca.com/event/marketplace](http://www.omca.com/event/marketplace)

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