

Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE BUS INDUSTRY

Motorcoach Council wins strong association support

DENVER — The Motorcoach Council, the fledgling organization set up to promote motorcoach travel throughout North America, has gotten a major boost from two state motorcoach associations.

The Tennessee Motor Coach Association and the North Carolina Motorcoach Association joined the council and made financial contributions many times larger than the

\$2,000 “founding partner” fee. The boost from the associations came in the wake of appeals made by the council at two national trade shows in January.

The Tennessee Motor Coach Association responded to the excitement the council generated at the UMA Motorcoach Expo and the ABA Marketplace and joined the organization just weeks later

with a \$25,000 check — more than 12 times the founding partner rate.

And, just days later, the North Carolina Motorcoach Association sent in a membership application with a check for \$10,000, five times the founding member fee, and indicated that amount was just a start.

“The energy and excitement about the Motorcoach Council was astounding following the ABA and

UMA tradeshow, and for this reason we wanted to keep that momentum alive and strong,” said Bill Gentry of Gentry Trailways in Knoxville, Tenn.

Gentry and Chris Levering of Gray Line Nashville, jointly asked their association’s board to join the council and to spend \$20,000 to do it even though the group could have become a founding member for as

little as \$2,000. The directors not only bought the idea but upped the contribution by another \$5,000.

At the same time, the Tennessee group issued an industrywide challenge for other states to join the group and match its contribution.

The North Carolina association was the first to respond, agreeing to sign up for \$10,000, plus a commit-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 ►

New bus safety bill in Congress

Called most important legislation in decades

WASHINGTON — A Pennsylvania congressman whose industry-supported bus and motorcoach safety legislation stalled in Congress last year has introduced an updated version of his proposal again this year.

Rep. Bill Shuster (R-Pa.) said he’s optimistic his Bus Uniform Standards and Enhanced Safety Act will have a better run this year.

“We hope the introduction of this legislation rekindles the debate over motorcoach and bus safety,” he said.

Ken Presley, vice president of the United Motorcoach Association, called the measure — H.R. 1135 — the most important piece of legislation affecting the bus and motorcoach industry in decades, and he urged operators from around the country to support it and urge their congressional representatives to do so, too.

Although the new version of the bipartisan legislation has some key changes, it again emphasizes establishing safety measures that come from extensive government studies and testing rather than federal mandates, a critical element that helps assure it the



continued support of much of the industry.

“It is essential that the traveling public is protected with safety requirements that are based on science rather than government mandate alone,” stressed Shuster.

Under the proposed legislation, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration would be required to conduct studies to determine what safety measures might be needed, including possible requirements for seatbelts, stronger roof construction, improved win-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ►

State registration proposal would double fleet charges

WASHINGTON — The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration will soon be considering a proposal that would more than double state bus and truck registration fees paid under the two-year-old Unified Carrier Registration Agreement.

The board that oversees the UCRA, which replaced the old Single-State Registration System in 2007, voted last month to recommend that the FMCSA overhaul the UCRA fee structure, boosting fees for 2010 by more than 100 percent.

The proposed increase has outraged bus and truck industry associations, and appears to be another example of where companies that are doing the right thing will be penalized because states are incapable of coping with the scofflaws

that don’t pay the fees.

“Any increase seems premature inasmuch as it appears enforcement of the UCRA fees has been lax at best,” said Ken Presley, vice president of industry relations at the United Motorcoach Association.

Bob Pitcher, vice president for state laws for the American Trucking Associations and vice chairman of the UCRA board, told a leading trucking publication the new structure unfairly punishes carriers who have been complying with the registration requirements.

“We think that in the case of... most of the states, the effort in enforcement has been lacking,” he said, “and without a decent effort at enforcement, it certainly sends the wrong signal to carriers and brokers who have not been paying the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 ►

A little straight talk: Why we would print ‘a union view’

By William Allen

Opinion

For the March 1 issue of *Bus & Motorcoach News*, the editorial committee selected an op-ed piece from the president of the Amalgamated Transit Union National Local 1700 because of its thought-provoking content, with the goal and responsibility of raising mem-

ber awareness of how others envision the future of the bus and motorcoach business.

Judging by the calls we have received — it worked.

While it is clear the author is a

hardcore union man, it’s his vision of economic regulation that should trouble the entrepreneurs who populate the bus and motorcoach industry.

It is very likely the majority of bus and motorcoach companies in business today did not exist 25 years ago. Many operators may not even know that it was the economic deregulation of the industry that

Operators Repond Turn to Page 8

made their businesses possible.

Of course, there are those bus and motorcoach companies whose owners were bus and motorcoach drivers before deregulation, and any dream they had of owning their

own company would have remained just that — a dream.

Imagine a government system that decides who gets the opportunity

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11 ►



William Allen

SETRA - A BRAND OF DAIMLER

Daimler - the world's largest bus manufacturer, committed to the industry and ready for the road ahead.

SETRA

800.882.8054 | sales@dcbusna.com

INNOVATION • QUALITY • PARTS • SERVICE

1999-2000 Van Hool T2145s

Sale Ready starting at **\$150,000**
Lease Rates starting at **\$2,495**



- Detroit Series 60/B500 or Cummins/B500
- 57 Passenger
- 5 Monitor Video
- Aluminum Wheels
- 3 available

ALSO AVAILABLE:

2003 J4500 \$240,000
Detroit S60 / B500 / 55 Passenger

2005 J4500 \$285,000
CAT/ZF / 54 Passenger



Used vehicles sold "as-is." Actual coach may vary from photo.
No warranties expressed or implied. Financing and special lease rates available to qualified customers.

Call for more details
1-800-222-2875

- **Pete Bachrach, x30114**
- **Randy Angell, x30115**
- **John McFarlane, x30116**



Exclusive U.S.  Distributor

MIDWEST	NORTHEAST	SOUTHEAST	SOUTHWEST	WESTERN	CANADA
800-222-2875	800-222-2873	800-222-2871	800-222-2877	800-322-2877	800-345-1287

View hundreds of other pre-owned equipment at www.abc-companies.com

'Green certification' program aimed at coach industry

COLCHESTER, Vt. — Motorcoaches are often said to be the most fuel efficient form of passenger transportation, leaving planes, trains and vans in their wake.

But while that is likely the case, darn few consumers make a strong connection between riding a motorcoach and fuel-efficient, environmentally-sustainable travel.

So, what can be done about the disconnect?

The University of Vermont has embarked on a multi-year research project to develop, test and evaluate standards and protocols for a

"Green Certification" program for the motorcoach industry and other transportation modes.

"Certification" would not only raise the industry's visibility but also substantiate and validate its "green" claims.

To achieve the program's aims, however, the university needs coach operators willing to participate in an 18-month field test of the plan the researchers have formulated for the bus industry.

The deadline to sign up for the pilot is March 25. The United Motorcoach Association is encourag-

ing its members to participate.

To be eligible to participate in the test, and receive the initial "Green Coach Certification" designation, an operator must comply with at least one of the following requirements:

- Operate a coach that has a 2007 or newer EPA-compliant diesel engine
- Meet or exceed the industry average of 148 passenger miles per gallon
- Run on B-20 (or higher) biodiesel fuel 80 percent of the time
- Offset carbon emissions by

80 percent through an endorsed carbon-trading program

As a participant, operators will have use of the program's green-certification logo, which can be placed on the sides of buses, within marketing brochures, and used in other promotional materials.

In exchange, operators will need to be available from time to time to participate in surveys and interviews with researchers from the university.

Among other things, the researchers want to gain an understanding of the impact of the program on consum-

ers, suppliers and operators.

The information gathered during the research will be used to develop a final

set of standards for the motorcoach industry to be used for a permanent green certification effort.

To learn more, and possibly sign up, contact Dave Kestenbaum at the University of Vermont at (802) 656-9141, or by e-mail at David.Kestenbaum@uvm.edu.



David Kestenbaum

Upscale competition: Classic Coach buy changes dynamic

BOHEMIA, N.Y. — Classic Coach, the charter-and-tour company owned by one of the industry's most colorful operators, Bill Schoolman, has purchased Hampton Luxury Liner.

The transaction, which was completed last month, potentially presages one of the most interesting competitions in the motorcoach industry: Hampton Luxury Liner, operated by Schoolman, versus Hampton Jitney, the Southampton, N. Y.-based operator that has been providing Long Island bus services

for the past 35 years.

"This one is gonna be fun to watch," said one long-time coach industry executive.

For most of the past decade, Hampton Luxury Liner and Hampton Jitney have gone head-to-head in what is believed to be the only competing luxury-commuter-coach operations in the U.S.

The two companies operate high-end coaches between Manhattan and the upscale communities at the eastern end of Long Island, a region known as the Hamptons.

Both Classic Coach/Hampton Luxury Liner and Hampton Jitney are downplaying the rivalry, however.

Bill Schoolman said he has "enormous respect" for Hampton Jitney and his only interest is to "offer something different."

A spokeswoman for Hampton Jitney told a Long Island newspaper it was business as usual.

"We will continue to do what we do," Jennifer Friebely was quoted as saying, "and that's to offer service from the East End of Long

Island 18 hours a day. We've been offering the best prices and service for 35 years, and we will continue to do that."

Michael Schoolman, vice president of sales and marketing for Classic Coach and son of Bill Schoolman, called Classic's purchase of Hampton Luxury Liner a "multimillion-dollar investment in the Hamptons' travel market."

The Schoolmans bought Hampton Luxury Liner from Doug and Greg Slayton.

In addition to purchasing the

business, the Schoolmans set up a joint venture with the Slaytons to provide marketing, advertising and promotional services for Hampton Luxury Liner.

Not included in the purchase were the coaches the Slaytons used for Hampton Luxury Liner. Classic is buying six 44-seat Prevost X3-45 coaches that are being put into service this month for the daily Manhattan-to-Hamptons runs.

"Prevost has done a fabulous job of reconfiguring the coaches"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 ▶



WiFi In Motion

Internet. For Those Who Roam.

AS YOU MOVE, SO DO WE.

www.wifiinmotion.com



getonthebus@wifiinmotion.com • 866.959.WIFI (9434)

THE DOCKET

LaHood eyes drug-testing database

WASHINGTON — U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood says a federal rule establishing a national drug and alcohol testing database is moving forward and he anticipates publishing a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking later this year.

He said the proposal would be included in the upcoming reauthorization of the multi-year federal highway and public transportation funding bill.

"There is no room on our highways for CDL drivers who don't comply with the drug and alcohol

testing rules," LaHood told a meeting of trucking executives.

"This rule would close a loophole that allows drivers to simply switch employers following a positive test."

LaHood provided an update on other regulatory issues. He said:

- The Medical Certification Rule that combines the medical certificate and the commercial driver's license went into effect Jan. 30 as scheduled.

- The New Entrant Rule, after review, was allowed to proceed as scheduled and went into effect

Feb. 17 without any delay.

LaHood said he realized many in the commercial vehicle industry are interested in strengthening an aspect of the New Entrant Rule, establishing knowledge standards of safety regulations for new carriers seeking operating authority, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration is looking into the issue.

- The Electronic On-Board Recorder Rule is still under review.

"We want to make sure it (the EOBR rule) is the best rule we can possibly put out," LaHood said.

Challenge to D.C. permit continues at a slow pace

WASHINGTON — The \$50 trip permit that motorcoach operators have been forced to buy during the past 18 months when they've brought tour groups here won't be disappearing any time soon.

Although the United Motorcoach Association and others in the industry filed a legal appeal more than five months ago, after losing the first round of a court effort to force removal of the fee, the case is not expected to be heard for several more months.

David Burton, a Virginia attorney handling the D.C. District Court of Appeals' case for the industry, said it's likely lawyers will not deliver oral arguments — if they are permitted by the court — until sometime in the summer.

It then could take several more months before a decision is made.

In the meantime, motorcoach operators will have to continue to purchase the six-day permits for each of their buses that enter the district, or buy annual apportioned registration tags for them.

Despite the slow pace at which

the case is progressing, Burton said he's confident the industry will come out on top in the legal dispute.

"I feel good about our prospects, although nothing is certain in court," he said. "We have a very strong case and I am optimistic."

UMA, the American Bus Association and the National Tour Association sued the district in Superior Court last year, claiming the trip permit fee that was put in place in August 2007 was unconstitutional under the commerce clause of the U.S. Constitution and in conflict with the Interstate Registration Plan. However, the court ruled against the trade groups, prompting the appeal.

Burton argues in his appeal that the fee not only is unconstitutional because of its interstate travel implications, but it violates district law that honors the federal Interstate Registration Plan. He maintains the Interstate Registration Plan trumps local statutes, including the trip permit fee.

Adoption of the fee triggered a rash of complaints from industry executives and coach operators, who said they saw it as nothing but a money grab by the district because of the thousands of buses that bring tens of thousands of tourists to the area every year.

The district sold about 3,000 of the permits for the presidential inauguration in January, a \$150,000 bonanza on top of the permits purchased by operators who run charters to the area throughout the year.

Two states have IRP plate delay

California and Kansas have requested other International Registration Plan jurisdictions to delay enforcement on their carriers' 2009 IRP credentials.

It seems the two states are having trouble getting the plates and tags to carriers on time.

For more information on the Kansas extension, which runs through April 1, call (785) 271-3243; for California, which runs through March 31, call (916) 657-7971.

NYC to block sections of Broadway

New York — Officials in New York City are banning traffic from seven midtown blocks of Broadway in Manhattan, including the areas around Times Square and Herald Square.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg said the experimental program would block vehicular traffic on Broadway from 47th to 42nd streets, and 35th to 33rd streets in an attempt to reduce congestion and give pedestrians more space.

The revamped traffic pattern

on Broadway, which cuts through midtown Manhattan diagonally, will reduce travel times throughout the borough, city officials say.

The five blocks of Broadway between 42nd and 47th streets that include Times Square, also known as the Great White Way, will become a pedestrian zone with benches, tables and landscaping.

Farther south, two blocks of Broadway at Herald Square, home of Macy's flagship store, will get a similar treatment.

Construction for the pilot program will begin Memorial Day weekend and be completed by September. It will be tested for the remainder of the year and could become permanent. Broadway's diagonal path across Manhattan's street grid forms odd-shaped blocks at the heart of Times Square, creating monumental traffic jams where three streets meet.

"It's pretty hard to argue we could do anything to make it worse," Mayor Bloomberg said.

DUMP VALVE PROBLEMS? YOU'RE NOT USING...



MANY OPERATORS ARE EXPERIENCING THIS PROBLEM.
CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION AND FREE SAMPLES.

UNIT CHEMICAL CORP - (800) 879-8648 - (702) 564-6454 - www.unitychemical.com

Alexandria, Va., considers coach registration scheme

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — This ancient community spread along the banks of the Potomac River, across from Washington, D.C., is considering a plan that would require motorcoach operators to register before driving their buses on the city's historic streets.

The city has been wrestling for years with how to deal with 45-foot coaches that "clatter their way through 18th-century streets that were originally designed for horses, knocking down tree limbs, ripping down telephone wires and upsetting many neighborhood residents," according to the local newspaper.

About a year ago, the city manager created a task force to study the issue. Last month, the task force presented a plan that would create a registration system for motorcoaches bringing tourists to

Alexandria.

"We really don't regulate this industry in any meaningful way right now," said Rich Baier, the city's transportation director. "So, we see these short-term recommendations as a first step."

The 128-page report submitted by the task force to the Alexandria City Council recommends spending \$50,000 to create a regulatory framework for motorcoaches. The plan was scheduled to be considered at a public hearing on March 14.

The first step would involve an expenditure of \$25,000 to conduct traffic counts. Following that, another \$25,000 would be spent from the city contingent reserves to create an online registration system.

The plan found one immediate critic.

"I can think of a better way to

Bill introduced to ban tolls on federal roads

WASHINGTON — A Pennsylvania congressman has introduced a bill that would prohibit tolling of federal highways, including Interstate 80 in Pennsylvania.

Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson, a Republican, introduced the Keeping America's Freeways Free Act, which was referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. U.S. Rep. Ciro Rodriguez, D-Texas, co-sponsored the measure, HR 1071.

In 2007, Pennsylvania legislators passed Act 44, meant to establish an inflation-sensitive, long-term funding stream to fix the state's transportation funding crisis. It would have provided more than \$116 billion over a 50-year period for transportation maintenance and improvements by converting I-80 to a tolled road, in-

creasing existing turnpike tolls and issuing monetization bonds based on future toll revenues.

Thompson noted that the U.S. Department of Transportation had rejected Pennsylvania's application to toll I-80 twice, and said state elected officials should reconsider Act 44 and leave tolling I-80 out of the equation.

"The American people currently pay for our interstates through gas taxes, the Highway Trust Fund and apportionment taxes on trucks hauling goods," he said.

"Tolling the Interstate Highway System would not only be a double tax on the American people but a dangerous step toward slowing the economic growth of Pennsylvania and the entire country during these trying times."

Pa. governor wants bridges fixed

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Pennsylvania Gov. Edward Rendell has proposed spending \$200 million for highway bridge repairs in the Keystone state.

"The number of structurally deficient bridges is staggering — nearly 6,000 in all — and it is important to the public safety that they be repaired," Rendell told state legislators.

Pennsylvania maintains 25,300 state-owned bridges and 39,872 miles of road.

The money Rendell proposed for bridge improvements would be in addition to the estimated \$450

million generated under Act 44. That measure allows toll revenues from the Pennsylvania Turnpike to be used for transportation improvements around the state.

Act 44 was crafted originally in 2007 with the idea that Pennsylvania could persuade the federal government to allow the state to charge tolls on Interstate 80.

The federal government, however, nixed the toll proposal last fall. So, to raise revenue for transportation, tolls were raised 25 percent on the Pennsylvania Turnpike in January and are to be raised 3 percent each year going forward.

Stimulus: Tax items may aid operators

WASHINGTON — More details from the massive \$789 billion economic stimulus law signed by President Obama, especially tax provisions that could impact motorcoach operators, are surfacing.

Of special note is an extension of net operating loss carrybacks for businesses that have averaged less than \$15 million in revenue during the past three years.

spend \$50,000," said Frank Fannon, a Republican candidate for

For 2008, qualifying businesses are permitted to carry back losses for five years, compared to two years under prior law.

Operators that qualify for this provision may be able to amend past tax returns for profitable years to claim refunds of taxes that could be used as current operating revenue.

The new law also extends for another year two provisions that

allow businesses to write off current expenditures for equipment up to \$250,000, and to take bonus depreciation on capital purchases.

Operators that are government contractors will be interested to know that the requirement for all levels of government to withhold 3 percent of contract payments to cover potential federal taxes has been moved back a year, to 2012.

the city council, adding he would oppose the plan if elected. "This is

more red tape and bureaucracy that will harm businesses."

BIG RIG COLLISION

YOUR ONE STOP SHOP FOR:

<i>Collision Repair</i>	<i>Frame Straightening</i>	<i>Fire Restoration</i>
<i>Mechanical Services</i>	<i>Graphics & Signage</i>	<i>Re-Finishing</i>

customer satisfaction is our top priority



contact us at:

1-888-848-8686
403-243-7400

24/7

availability for all
of your repair needs

NO HASSLE
North America-Wide
Lifetime
Warranty

NO CHARGE
ESTIMATES!

Family owned and operated for more than


25 years


www.bigrigcollision.com

Registration fees

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

fees and it simply encourages them to continue evading the fees.”

Pitcher said it was “well-established” that states were not collecting as much in fees as they had anticipated but they should be forced to do more to collect existing fees, rather than raising fees on fleets that have been honest about paying their fair share.

Presley agrees. “It would be better if they just sought payment from those who have failed to pay rather than increase the payments on those who choose to comply.”

Pitcher said ATA and other groups would oppose the new fee structure and were considering returning to Congress over the issue.

Presley said UMA would be among those lining up to oppose the fee hike. “This increase will face stiff opposition from the United Motorcoach Association when it gets around to rulemaking.”

It will be up to the FMCSA — through a formal federal rulemaking process — to develop the final version of the new fee structure.

But under the proposal adopted by the UCRA board, the fee for a bus or truck company with two or fewer vehicles would jump to \$83 from \$39, while the fee for a carrier with more than 1,000 buses or

trucks would go to \$82,983, from \$37,500.

The Unified Carrier Registration Agreement was set up by Congress to revamp the interstate registration system, extending it to trucking fleets and other companies that previously had not been covered by the Single-State Registration System.

Registration fees for for-hire truck fleets and interstate bus operators were intended to go down because the new system was supposed to be spread across a much larger base that included private fleets, freight forwarders and brokers. For example, the new system captured the huge trucking fleets operated by the likes of Coca-Cola, Wal-Mart and others.

States were expected to collect the same amount of money as the Single-State System provided because of the bigger universe of companies covered by the UCRA.

However, right from the start, states began having collection difficulties. Many states were simply overwhelmed by the number of new companies from which they were expected to collect fees.

Take New York, for example. The number of firms the new system requires New York to collect from is 10 times greater than the number under the old system.

Under the Single-State Regis-

tration System, New York collected from 3,000 fleets based in the state, plus another 2,000 fleets that listed New York as their home state but operated out of neighboring states and provinces.

For 20 years, New York believed it had a handle on those 5,000 companies.

Suddenly, the universe of New York-based carriers subject to UCRA jumped to 25,000, with another 25,000 from neighboring states and provinces. The state was overwhelmed.

Additionally, culling the UCRA list has been difficult. When fleets go out of business they often stay in the system, so states waste time trying to collect fees from defunct companies. In just the third quarter of last year, upwards of 800 trucking companies went out of business nationwide.

Some state officials agree they could do a better job of collecting fees but insist it is unrealistic to expect they could register 100 percent of the companies in the UCRA database. “What’s really at issue is how much states should be required to do,” said one state official.

Two other factors are at play in forcing the fee increase: A 2008 federal law that exempted trailers from the registration levy, and carriers, especially truckers, paying more attention to which of their ve-

hicles are actually used in interstate commerce and subject to the fees.

One state official said that since fleets often “back out” equipment not being used for interstate business, and are no longer required to register trailers, the new structure bumps fleets into lower brackets, thus holding down their fees and reducing the amount going to states.

This official estimates that the number of big trucking companies subject to the top-line fee has probably dropped from an estimated 800 carriers to about 250 or 300 because the truckers are only registering those vehicles running interstate and trailers are no longer counted.

Pitcher of the ATA said that on a per-vehicle basis, just adjusting for the change relative to trailers “would have caused the fees to go up 50 percent per vehicle; as it stands the proposal is for them to go up 115 or 120 percent.”

During the February UCRA board meeting at which the registration increase was considered, Pitcher said the private industry representatives pointed out that most states have done next to nothing to beef up their collection and enforcement efforts, and the increase will fall almost entirely on carriers that have been honest and paid their fees. “These points fell on deaf ears,” he observed.

Classic coach

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

for the 44-passenger seating arrangement, said Bill Schoolman.

The new coaches will operate under the Hampton Luxury Liner name, and will be outfitted with plush leather seats that recline further than ordinary coach seats, and entertainment centers that include DirecTV, free wireless Internet, seat-side charging stations, and multichannel stereo with headsets.

Each coach also will have a galley with snacks, drinks, magazines and newspapers.

Classic Coach, which has been around for more than 30 years, provides a wide variety of transportation services, ranging from bus charters between Long Island and Atlantic City, to airport shuttles, college and football express services, wedding charters, commuter service, and corporate outings. It operates coaches, midsize buses, trolleys, vans, limousines and sedans.

Adding the Hamptons runs gives the company a broader customer base, said Michael Schoolman.

Hampton Luxury Liner, which has been running since 2000, previously operated out of facilities in Bridgehampton. The company has been moved to Classic Coach’s quarters in Bohemia.



ISO 9001: 2000 Certified



ISO 9001: 2000 Certified



Always
One Step Ahead

- In:
- SAFETY
- COMFORT
- INNOVATION
- TECHNOLOGY

AMAYA-ASTRON SEATING MEXICO
Roberto Fulton #6, Fraccionamiento Industrial San Nicolas Tlalnepantla, Estado de Mexico, MEXICO, Zip Code: 54030
Phones: (011.52.55) 53.10.10.46 / 53.11.50.00
Fax: (011.52.55) 53.17.41.11
Email: donovan@asientosamaya.com.mx

SALES REPRESENTATIVES FOR U.S. AND CANADA

<p>Darrell Niswander Phone: (419) 892.23.77 (888) 338.80.06 Fax: (419) 892.26.55 Email: darnis1@aol.com</p>	<p>George Farrell Phone: (214) 495.99.75 Fax: (214) 495.99.78 Email: gfarr007@aol.com</p>
--	--

SETRA - A BRAND OF DAIMLER

The benchmark in luxury coaches



- Exciting, distinctive European design
- A uniquely luxurious travel environment
- Incredibly comfortable Setra premium seating
- State-of-the-art entertainment electronics
- Interiors customized to suit your business needs
- A state-of-the-art safety package
- Backed by Daimler

Daimler Buses North America
6012-B High Point Road
Greensboro, NC 27407
800.882.8054
sales@dcbusna.com
www.setra-coaches.com

SETRA

Union official's comments stir motorcoach operators

Note: The March 1 issue contained an op-ed piece written by Bruce Hamilton, president of the Amalgamated Transit Union National Local 1700. As expected, Hamilton's views upset many Bus & Motorcoach News readers. Here's what some had to say about what Hamilton wrote.

Across the U.S., operators expressed views, ranging from incredulity to outrage, with union activist Bruce Hamilton's claims that — among other things — passenger safety had been a victim of bus industry deregulation.

Also challenged were Hamilton's statements that mobility, the ability of citizens to escape disasters and even to leave town, had been curtailed by deregulation.

An executive at a New York bus operation said Hamilton's claim that accidents had increased because of deregulation was way off the mark: "He did not cite any statistical material to back that. There's no basis for that claim.

"He made claims that service has deteriorated since 1982; again, he did not substantiate it in any form.

"Even if you can find a small town in Kansas that isn't serviced by Greyhound, it's impossible to identify the exact cause of the reduction of service."

This coach executive was uncomfortable releasing his name because of concern about possible backlash from unions.

About Hamilton's claim that — with deregulation — emergency evacuations had suffered: "Regulators never required operators to perform under natural disasters. The problem with (Hurricane) Katrina was there was no viable evacuation plan in place. It was not a transit issue. It was a planning issue. He's twisted that into an issue of deregulation," said the executive.

Hamilton also claimed that today's non-union drivers were working low-paying jobs and under more difficult conditions.

"The 10/15-hour rules have not been changed. If operators are forcing them to work beyond the required limit, they would have done it 20 years ago too," said the executive.

Show me the numbers

A Florida operator also asked where the numbers were to indicate accidents have increased because of deregulation.

"I'd like to see numbers that substantiate it; where are the numbers that prove it?" asked Brian Scott, president of Escot Bus Lines in Largo, Fla.

One of Hamilton's arguments was that the framework of transportation for the public had been damaged by deregulation. Said Scott: "I think you'd find his argument seriously flawed. If you look at the number of buses on the road prior to deregulation, and the number post-deregulation, I think you'd find his argument seriously flawed."

Scott noted that there is now a need, post-deregulation, for both the United Motorcoach Association and *Bus & Motorcoach News*.

"Talking to a company that came about post-deregulation, ... you wouldn't even be talking to me if deregulation hadn't occurred," said Scott, whose company was launched 26 years ago by his parents.

Greyhound: The solution?

About emergency transport: "Judging by the calls we get, the need is always out there but I don't see the need not being met. ... To say that Greyhound is the only solution, how does he justify that? How can Greyhound be everywhere at all times? He's basically saying Greyhound is a one-size-fits-all solution and that just isn't the case," said Scott.

About possible driver abuse under deregulation: "We have drivers who are well dressed; there are nice cars in the parking lot, we have young people choosing it as a career as well, we have a driver who will celebrate 20 years next year. And that's all post-deregulation. A majority of coach operators are family-run, small businesses," Scott added.

Larry Benjamin, CEO and principal owner of Northfield Lines in Northfield, Minn., wondered if many of the operator problems in the industry couldn't be ameliorated with better enforcement, rather than trying to re-regulate the industry with new laws.

"There aren't enough reserves of people to check on everybody," he says. "There are

people (operators) who haven't been audited (with a compliance review) since they went into business."

Of the U.S. transportation framework, Benjamin said: "I think the model of Trailways, Greyhound, it's a broken model. When megabus.com can run from Minnesota to Chicago in seven hours, and to jump on a Greyhound it takes 9, who in their right mind would want to do that?"

On poor wages and working conditions: "I think the failed model of scheduled service has had more to do with it than anything. These companies have not done well. Has it lowered the wages for chartered operators? I don't think so. Can you blame the nonunion companies for that? I don't think so. In a lot of cases, Greyhound is probably lower than nonunion companies.

Treating people right

"I have a lot of union drivers come in and have retired with me. People who came during strikes and chose to stay with me. We, as non-union companies, have an obligation to give good benefits, and good wages, and educate people if we don't want unions, That's what we have to do.

"I wouldn't ask someone to do something I wouldn't do myself. If I don't take care of people, I would be out of business. Bottom feeders drive down the prices and that's not good for anybody."

Bill Winkler, president of Peoria Charter Coach out of Peoria, Ill., says that "unions do serve a purpose. If the employer isn't treating the workers humanely ... they have a purpose. Deregulation was great for our company; it allowed us to grow, and it allowed other good companies to grow."

In 1941, Peoria Coach had 10 coaches. Today, it has 61. "We grew exponentially. It allowed us to go into tours, to go to California." Before deregulation, "the service was lousy."

About unsafe companies: "If you're not a safe coach company anymore, you're not in business. Insurance companies won't give you insurance. Deregulation makes customer service better," asserts Winkler.

About emergency transport issues: "The

federal government isn't paying for the services. They don't have the planning and the people to do the job. I think it's that the government doesn't ask us what works. We have solutions," notes Winkler.

Competition = Better service

Michael Neustadt, president of Coach Tours in Brookfield, Conn., said that the increased competition brought about by deregulation "has helped drive the vehicle improvements, as companies have had to compete by offering better service in better vehicles.

"The public transportation network in the U.S. has certainly been diminished. However the primary cause, I believe, is the desire by each American to own his or her own automobile; a desire that has been almost completely fulfilled over the past 50 or 60 years.

"I agree that our public transportation network should be improved for economic and environmental reasons. But the way to do it is not by re-regulation but by investment by private companies and the government in new highway infrastructure and new technology vehicles."

On the issue of emergency transport, Neustadt observes: "There is no direct correlation between deregulation and emergency transport. Our industry has shown during recent disasters that we can, in partnership with public transit agencies, provide needed service in an emergency.

Turning to the wage issue, Neustadt said: "There is no evidence that wages are lower because of deregulation. In fact, the ability of many bus companies to expand and grow without government interference has allowed them to grow financially stronger and afford to provide even better wages and benefits.

"The hours-of-service rules for bus drivers have not changed since long before deregulation. If anything has changed, it has been stepped-up enforcement of the rules, especially with regard to companies who have a poor safety history.

"Union, or nonunion, bus drivers' hours are limited by law. I am not aware of any statistics that show that union companies or drivers have a better safety record," said Neustadt.

How to contact us

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

E-mail:
bsankey@busandmotorcoachnews.com
Fax: (405) 942-6201
Mail: 3108 NW 54th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
Call: (866) 930-8421

To subscribe or inquire about your subscription:

E-mail:
ebalm@busandmotorcoachnews.com
Fax: (405) 942-6201
Mail: 3108 NW 54th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
Call: (866) 930-8421

To advertise or to mail advertising-related materials:

Call: Johnny Steger at (866) 930-8426
E-mail:
jsteger@busandmotorcoachnews.com
Mail: 2200 N. Yarbrough, Suite B
Box No. 336
El Paso, TX 79925

To send advertisements or photographs via the Internet:

E-mail: BMNews@jezac.com

To contact the United Motorcoach Association:

Call: (800) 424-8262
Online: www.uma.org

Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

ISSUE NO. 142

A PUBLICATION OF THE UNITED MOTORCOACH ASSOCIATION

Staff

Editor & Publisher: Victor Parra
Senior Editor: Bruce Sankey
Sales Director: Johnny Steger
Industry Editor: Ken Presley
Associate Editor: Ellen Balm
Art Director: Mary E. McCarty
Editorial Assistant: Amy Stalknecht
Editorial Assistant: Mark Gedris
Editorial Assistant: Maggie Masterson
Accountant: Ted Williford

Advisory Board

William Allen
Amador Trailways
Sacramento, Calif.

Brian Annett
Annett Bus Lines
Sebring, Fla.

Larry Benjamin
Northfield Lines
Northfield, Minn.

Dave Bolen
New World Tours
Bristow, Va.

Autumn Dipert Brown
Dan Diepert Coaches
Arlington, Texas

David Brown
Holiday Tours
Randleman, N.C.

James Brown Sr.
Magic Carpet Tours
Richmond, Va.

Steve Brown
Brown Coach
Amsterdam, N.Y.

Tira Wayland
ABC Companies
Faribault, Minn.

Gladys Gillis
Starline Luxury Coaches
Seattle

Dale Krapf
Krapf Coaches
West Chester, Pa.

Godfrey Lebron
Paradise Trailways
Hicksville, N.Y.

Joan Libby
Cavalier Coach Trailways
Boston, Mass.

Marcia Milton
First Priority Trailways
District Heights, Md.

Michael Neustadt
Coach Tours
Brookfield, Conn.

Jeff Polzien
Red Carpet Charters
Oklahoma City

Tom Ready
Ready Bus Lines
LaCrescent, Minn.

Brian Scott
Escot Bus Lines
Largo, Fla.

Michelle Silvestro
National Interstate Insurance Co.
Richfield, Ohio

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

EXCEEDING YOUR EXPECTATIONS WITH HIGH-END QUALITY PRODUCTS



H3 45

The Ultimate Touring Coach

- STRIKING NEW APPEARANCE
- UNPARALLELED DRIVING PERFORMANCE
- LARGEST CARGO CAPACITY
- LUXURIOUS INTERIORS AND SUPERIOR AMENITIES
- STATE-OF-THE-ART SAFETY OPTIONS

X3 45

The Ultimate Intercity Coach

- UNPARALLELED STABILITY AND ROAD HANDLING
- HIGHEST PASSENGER INTERIOR ENVIRONMENT
- DESIGNED FOR EASY SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE
- UNMATCHED ACCESSIBILITY FOR PASSENGERS AND DRIVERS
- STATE-OF-THE-ART SAFETY OPTIONS



FOR SALES INFORMATION:
USA 1 877 773.8678 CANADA 418 883.3391
Please contact your Prevost Regional Sales Manager for more information.



PREVOST®

The ultimate class.

Getting good advice and getting it inexpensively

By Dave Millhouser

"Them hogs are really traveling in comfort," said the truck-stop attendant as the Scenicruiser driver ordered a fill up.

Offended, the driver asked the pump jockey why he thought his passengers were piggish.

It turned out that an enterprising farmer had bought a similar ex-Greyhound and was using it to haul hogs to market. He frequently fueled at this truck stop.

I hear you all snickering out there. But this column is NOT about our passengers.

Looking for an efficient way to transport hogs, the farmer had spotted the old bus. It had been gutted, in someone's half-hearted attempt to build a motorhome, and was available for short money. With a little effort it was ideal as a piggy paddy wagon.

It was a clever way of using something intended for one purpose, to fill an entirely different need. (That's the end of our pig metaphor, for now.)

Have you thought about your board of directors?

Many companies are organized so they require a board, but often it's a formality. Other operators are set up so they don't need one. Many CEO's look at a board like it's a speed bump — necessary but irritating.

When properly done, it shouldn't be that way. If you have the right folks involved, either formally or informally, you can gain valuable insight into how other businesses and coach operators are making money and solving problems.

Unless your corporate structure demands it, you don't have to have a formal board, or even meet. But a group of trusted advisors, committed to your business' success, can't be a bad thing.

A number of operators make frequent phone calls to colleagues. They have a number of folks they informally poll when making important decisions. They use friends as a sounding board for ideas.

That's not much different than the farmer using a bus rather than a truck. Using friends in a larger and useful capacity is healthy (heck, they may even get some-

thing out of it).

Along the same lines, (and just as cheap), consider staying in touch with retirees who've worked for either your company, or ones like it. It makes us old geezers feel relevant, and once in a while we slip and say something useful.

There's another set of resources who REALLY want to help, and who cost nothing. The sales people who call on you regularly have a wealth of knowledge about all sorts of things. Every group has some good folks and some losers. By now you've figured out which are there just to sell you stuff, and which really want to contribute.

Use the best ones as resources. They can help you understand their product or service, but just as important, they can tell you what other companies are doing. The good ones want to be like Johnny Appleseed, planting good ideas along the way, helping their customers and industry grow.

Your vendors all talk to each other, sharing information about customers, market conditions, and creative ideas. You want to be in that loop. Your fuel vendor knows

a ton about engines, and your engine dealer has something to offer about fuel economy.

Chemical folks can tell you a lot about how other, related, industries resolve issues, and your accountant can give insight into how unrelated businesses handle things.

Coach sales people cover large territories, and talk to compatriots and competitors all over the country. It's likely that, whatever your problem, they (or one of their buddies) have seen it somewhere, and know potential solutions.

You want to be careful what you share (and who you share with), but these folks all have an interest in your success. When you do well, they'll get a chunk. Figure out who you can trust, and use them. They'll love it, and it offers extra value to whatever they're selling.

The ones you can't trust, why are you buying from them?

Cultivate honesty. Years ago a business book recommended that every company have a "Vice President of Bovine Organic Fertilizer," someone who had the courage to tell the CEO that his ideas were, well, manure. We all need someone



Dave Millhouser

like that (for me — it's my wife).

Any time you can get several of these people in the same room, treat it like a board meeting. Bounce ideas off them. You still get to be boss but if most of the folks you respect think an idea is bad, take a hard look at it.

Their primary function may be selling you the "stuff" it takes to operate, but why can't you do what the pig farmer did, and use them for something different but just as important?

Now, if only the farmer had taught the hogs to use the lavatory... this would have a happy ending (well, maybe not for the pigs).

Dave Millhouser is a bus industry marketing consultant and freelance writer. Contact him at: dave_millhouser@hotmail.com.

RODES – ROPER – LOVE

INSURANCE AGENCY




WHATEVER ROAD YOU TRAVEL
RODES-ROPER-LOVE HELPS GET YOU THERE

- Commercial Auto Liability
- Truckers Liability
- Physical Damage
- General Liability
- Workers' Compensation
- Occupational Accident

- Property
- Cargo
- Excess And Umbrella
- Garage
- Garage Keepers Legal Liability
- Loss Control Services

ELIGIBLE CLASSES:

Public Transportation • Sedan Services • Airport Shuttle • Van Service • Limousine
Taxi • Coach • Trolley • Charter Bus • School Bus • Airport Van • Paratransit
Social Service • Trucks (Local/Intermediate/Long Haul) • Tow Trucks • Courier ...and more



RODES-ROPER-LOVE INSURANCE AGENCY
A Division of Euclid Insurance Agencies, LLC 

Phone: **800.333.7754** • Fax: **321.757.6182**
www.ropesroperlove.com

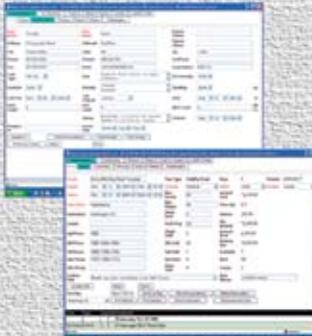


RBS, Inc.

Relational Bus Systems

GoTour Online

Browser Based Tour Management System



- ✓ Accessible with any Internet Connection
- ✓ Credit Card Authorization
- ✓ Management Reports
- ✓ Reservations
- ✓ Receivables
- ✓ Payables

GoChart2000

Complete Charter Management System

Off-Site Backup
Secure Backup and Disaster Recovery

GoMile 3000
IFTA Compatible Fuel Tax Reporting

DriverDuty 3000
Driver Payroll Module

Industry Partners




FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 800-448-7001
OR GO ONLINE TO WWW.RBS2000.COM

MCI employees in Winnipeg approve three-year contract

WINNIPEG, Manitoba — Union employees at Motor Coach Industries' Fort Garry bus manufacturing operation here have reversed themselves and approved a new labor contract with the company.

The business manager of Local 1953 of the International Association of Machinists, Wayne Relf, said 87 per cent of the employees who work in the Fort Garry facilities — and voted — accepted the three-year agreement.

Two weeks earlier, the workers had voted by a 93 percent margin to strike. At that time, the union said the major point of contention was job security, with MCI wanting to contract out many services and union members fearful of significant job losses.

"We wanted job security and we got it," Relf said following the ratification vote.

After the strike vote, the company and union met in government-assisted conciliation where the job security issue was addressed.

MCI said the new contract pro-

vides stability for its employees, customers and suppliers, many of which are also located in Manitoba. "The agreement with the union recognizes employees for their skills, contributions and service while maintaining significant operating flexibility required in the increasingly competitive global manufacturing marketplace," MCI added.

The contract approved by the MCI employees will increase wages by 8.5 percent over three years, expand vacation time, improve health benefits, and give each employee a \$1,250 bonus.

MCI had been eager to negotiate a contract with the Fort Garry workers because it said it would help in its efforts to emerge from Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

MCI had planned to emerge from bankruptcy by the end of February. However, negotiations to resolve disputes between its equity investor, Franklin Mutual Advisers, and its lenders providing exit financing were delayed as a result of the difficult capital markets. The new target date is mid-March.

ABA loses Lentzsch as chairman

WASHINGTON — Less than six weeks after being elected chairman of the American Bus Association, Craig Lentzsch has resigned the position.

ABA Vice Chairman Jim Jalbert has stepped in to serve as acting chairman while the ABA board and governance committee "take appropriate steps on a successor pursuant to the association's by-laws," the ABA said in a statement.

Lentzsch, who had been elect-

ed ABA chairman during Market-place in January, had served the previous two years as ABA vice chairman, and had been a member of the ABA board for years by virtue of executive positions at Greyhound Lines and Coach America.

When Lentzsch left Coach America as CEO in September 2007, he remained on its board of directors. However, he informed ABA last month "he would no longer be serving in that capacity,

and in accordance with ABA by-laws immediately tendered his resignation as an ABA board member and as ABA chairman," the association said.

The ABA board will be convening, followed by a meeting of the governance committee, chaired by ABA's immediate past chairman, Doug Anderson of Anderson Coach & Travel in Greenville, Pa., to discuss procedures for naming a successor to complete Lentzsch's term.

Straight talk

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to own and operate a bus and motorcoach company, not based on their commitment to safety and service but rather politics.

Imagine a system that decides your rates, even your routes. These were not rules that produced an innovative and an expanding passenger marketplace but rather a good ol' boys network where the fix was in...winks and nods, if you will.

Today, instead of lawyers, lobbyists and politicians deciding the fate of a bus and motorcoach oper-

ator, hard work, ingenuity and often tenacity decide success.

It is hard to conceive anyone would want to return to a system that seldom produced opportunities.

United Motorcoach Association members should know there are those who advocate economic re-regulation in an effort to eradicate competition.

There are those who do not believe you should have an opportunity.

This is not an issue of labor and unions; that is a different domain and one which will be addressed soon by Congress with looming legislation.

This is about the opportunities and those who capitalize on those opportunities to create jobs.

The absence of economic regulation should never be taken for granted and every owner of a bus and motorcoach company should be keenly aware of those in their midst who choose to argue for re-regulation.

William Allen is chairman of the UMA Legislative & Regulatory Committee, a director of UMA, and a member of the editorial advisory board of Bus & Motorcoach News. He also is principal of Amador Trailways in Sacramento, Calif.

Penntex Complete Line of Alternators



- The PX-833 offers higher output: 28 volts, 330 amps
- Increased fuel economy with air-cooled design
- Utilizes all existing hardware, electrical components & pulley



PX-4V SERIES

The PX-4V-220 is a drop-in upgrade for the 2005-2008 GM C3500, C4500, and C5500 Chassis with a gas or diesel engine. Our system has a plug-in harness and is rated at 14 volts, 220 amps maximum output. There are 6 high temperature 60-amp positive diodes and 6 high temperature 60-amp negative diodes for superior cooling by increased rectification and larger heat sink area.



PX-5 SERIES

The PX-5 Series is an extra heavy-duty upgrade for the Ford E-Series chassis equipped with a gas or diesel engine including 2008 OEM applications. Our system is rated at 14 volts, 200 and 250 amps maximum output. It uses 12 high temperature 60-amp positive diodes and 6 high temperature 60-amp negative diodes in heat sinks designed for superior cooling.

The Penntex Advantage!

- ✓ Alternators from 200 to 350 amps at 14 volts and 130 to 330 amps at 28 volts
- ✓ External regulator design for maximum performance
- ✓ Charging systems that deliver more amps at idle for all shuttle and transit bus applications

Penntex
INDUSTRIES, INC.

Corporate Office:

202 Plaza Drive, Manchester, PA 17345
Phone: 717-266-8762 Fax: 717-266-7803

Manufacturing:

7620 Flagstone Drive, Ft. Worth, TX 76118
Phone: 817-590-2818 Fax: 817-590-0505

Toll Free: 877-590-7366

www.penntexusa.com

email: sales@penntexusa.com

Manufacturers of High Efficiency Alternators and Mobile Electronic Devices

Bus safety bill

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

dow glazing, fire suppression equipment and enhanced emergency exits.

NHTSA has been conducting the first-of-its-kind bus crash and fire studies for more than a year and much of the work of the agency likely could be folded into other studies that might be done if the legislation passes.

More monitoring

New to the measure this year are provisions that would improve the oversight of motorcoach companies by subjecting them to increased monitoring by enforcement agencies, require enhanced driver training and testing to assure drivers are medically fit, and make certain that federal safety inspection requirements are effective.

"These are all important improvements to the legislation," Shuster said.

Addressing concerns that motorcoach operators could be forced to retrofit their existing buses to meet any new standards, Shuster said the idea is not to require retrofitting based on government mandates or one fix for all solutions. Instead, he said, a scientific study is

needed to show what improvements should be made and if there is a need or demand for retrofitting.

The proposed legislation won the immediate endorsement of several other lawmakers, including Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Texas, a cosponsor of the original bill that was introduced last year.

"Motorcoach and charter bus transportation is very safe," she said.

"However, recent fatal motorcoach accidents have shown us that additional safety measures may be warranted. I believe this legislation is an important step in the process of determining what we can do to ensure that all motorcoach and charter bus passengers are as safe as they can be."

Important supporters

Rep. John Mica, R-Fla., of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and John Duncan, R-Tenn., of the Highways and Transit Subcommittee joined in support of the measure.

UMA's Presley said that Shuster and his proposed legislation recognizes that the over-the-road bus industry "is the safest form of surface travel in the nation and that further enhancements to occupant protection requires comprehensive testing

Lincoln General ratings downgraded

OLDWICK, N.J. — A.M. Best Co., the independent insurance and credit rating service, has again downgraded the financial strength and issuer credit ratings of Lincoln General Insurance Co., an insurer of motorcoaches.

The financial strength rating for Lincoln General was dropped to B- (Fair), from B+ (Good) in September, and the company's issuer credit rating was reduced to bb- from bbb- in September.

In issuing the ratings last month, A.M. Best noted that both ratings for Lincoln General remain under review with negative implications.

Best's financial strength rating is an independent opinion of an insurance company's financial

and sound science," he said. "Just shooting from the hip does not likely improve safety and may in fact endanger passengers."

He said the measure goes the distance in maximizing occupant protection and is a sensible approach because it requires any changes in standards be based on sound scientific research, testing and implementation.

"Every operator should contact their congressional representative

strength and ability to meet its ongoing insurance policy and contract obligations, while the issuer credit rating is an independent opinion of an issuer's ability to meet its ongoing senior financial obligations.

Best lowered its ratings for Lincoln General after its parent company, Kingsway Financial Services Inc. of Mississauga, Ont., announced it will take a huge loss for the fourth quarter of last year.

Kingsway Financial projected net losses for the quarter of between \$324 million and \$344 million, which Best said was "far in excess of information previously provided to A.M. Best."

The losses at Kingsway Financial and ask them to support H.R. 1135," he asserted.

Getting smart on issues

Presley also praised Shuster and Johnson for their efforts, saying they have distinguished themselves by taking the time to understand the intricate nature of motorcoaches and passenger safety.

"Both are truly interested in eliminating passenger fatalities and reducing injuries and the United

States primarily stem from write-downs of its equity portfolio, adverse loss reserve development at Lincoln General Insurance, and non-cash related charges.

Best's downgrading of the ratings at Kingsway Financial and its various affiliates, including Lincoln General, "reflects the significant deterioration in the parent company's financial condition and recognizes A.M. Best's assessment of the weakened overall capitalization of the entire organization," Best said in a formal announcement.

Only one Kingsway Financial subsidiary has a lower financial strength and issuer credit rating than Lincoln General.

Motorcoach Association is proud to support their efforts," he said.

Shuster said he feels good about the chances of the bill doing much better this time than it did last year when no action was taken on it.

"I am confident that Rep. Johnson and I can work with the leadership on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to have the measure folded into a larger highway reauthorization bill expected to come up later this year," he said.

CHIEF'S

MOTORCOACH REPAIR

Houston, Texas

**Repairs • Service
Wash • Dump**

281-987-9300

11930 Eastex Freeway

~All Major Credit Cards~

**Emergency Road Service
Available**

SUBSCRIBE

- Yes.** Start my one-year subscription (23 issues) to *Bus & Motorcoach News* for \$54* (only \$2.35 per issue).
- Save even more, 2 years for \$88.
- I'm a member of UMA, or a driver, and I want a subscription for \$44 (each).
- Charge my credit card.**
- My check is enclosed.**

*Rate outside U.S. is \$66 (U.S.) per year

**Photo copy this ad, complete it, and fax or mail to *Bus & Motorcoach News*.

Name _____

Title _____

Company _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

Credit Card No. _____

Visa Mastercard American Express

Expiration Date _____

Satisfaction Guaranteed

Our promise: If you are not satisfied with *Bus & Motorcoach News*, we will send you a refund on all unmailed copies. You may cancel at any time, for any reason.

Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

3108 NW 54th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73112

Fax to: (405) 942-6201

Questions: busnews@cox.net ... or call (405) 948-6555

Take Control of Your Costs and Odors!

Ultra PowrPak XL
Better than ever. Controls odors all week long.

New Formulation
Increased Fragrance
and Dye—Now with
Effervesce



chempace
corporation "the solution people"

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

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

NEW!!



- 18,000 lb. capacity
- Interactive touch screen pad
- Variable lift speed
- Fault finding diagnostics



SEFAC

Mobile Column Lifts

800.826.3486
www.sefac.com



NIMCO/Bus Division

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

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

VOLUME DISCOUNTS • PRIDE IN PERFORMANCE

DEEP DISCOUNTS!
on all Detroit Diesel & Allison
Transmissions

SAVE MONEY ~ SAVE TIME

We sell good running qualified bus components.

NO RISK PURCHASE PLAN

We unconditionally guarantee our customers satisfaction.

WE ALSO STOCK

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

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

LAVATORY 4 HOPPER

Dispose of bus lavatory
waste legally, cleanly,
and easily. Visit
www.lavdump.com

HUDSON RIVER CORPORATION
1-866-528-3867 fax 1-201-420.3322
lavdump@yahoo.com www.lavdump.com

Installs directly into your existing sewer system!

Bus & Motorcoach Academy announces newest graduates

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — The motorcoach industry's only comprehensive continuing education program, the Bus & Motorcoach Academy and the academy's Clarence Cornell School of Business, graduated individuals from all across the U.S. during its most recent academic year.

The following individuals completed the Clarence Cornell School of Business program and received their Accredited Passenger Transportation Operator designation:

- Derrick Boxrucker, Southwest Bus Service, Prairie du Chien, Wis.
- Gary Moody, Holiday Tours, Randleman, N.C.
- Alan Fong, Sacramento (Calif.) Regional Transit District
- Kristen Levering, Gray Line of Nashville (Tenn.)
- Ayanna Jackson, Gaten's Adventures Unlimited, Hammond, La.
- John O'Hear, Bedore Tours, North Towanda, N.Y.

The following individuals completed the academy's Motorcoach Operator/Driver Program and received their Certificate of Academic Achievement in Motorcoach Operations:

- Wayne Jenkins, Coach Tours, Brookfield, Conn.
- Rosa Kays, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Steve Pellicciotti, Coach Tours, Brookfield, Conn.

- Jason Moreno, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Robert Skowronski, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Genie Willcocks, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.

Clarence Cornell School of Business

These individuals successfully completed the following courses during the 2008-09 academic year.

Business & Marketing I

- Nathan Boor, Fun Tours, Virginia Beach
- Derrick Boxrucker, Southwest Bus Service, Prairie du Chien, Wis.
- Sylvester Iheanacho, KTC Tours and Charters, Charlotte, N.C.
- Sindy Lister, Teton Stage Lines, Idaho Falls
- John O'Hear, Bedore Tours, North Towanda, N.Y.
- Rex Tennyson, USA Tours, Rolla, Mo.

Business & Marketing II

- Nathan Boor, Fun Tours, Virginia Beach
- John Bowers, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Derrick Boxrucker, Southwest Bus Service, Prairie du Chien, Wis.
- Sindy Lister, Teton Stage Lines, Idaho Falls
- John O'Hear, Bedore Tours, North Towanda, N.Y.

North Towanda, N.Y.

- Bob Strutton, Sandston, Va.

Financial Management

- Sindy Lister, Teton Stage Lines, Idaho Falls
- Nathan Boor, Fun Tours, Virginia Beach
- Derrick Boxrucker, Southwest Bus Service, Prairie du Chien, Wis.
- John O'Hear, Bedore Tours, North Towanda, N.Y.
- Guy Wallace, Manassas, Va.

Human Resources

- Nathan Boor, Fun Tours, Virginia Beach
- Derrick Boxrucker, Southwest Bus Service, Prairie du Chien, Wis.
- Melanie Evans, Astro Travel & Tours, Tallahassee, Fla.
- Gary Moody, Holiday Tours, Randleman, N.C.
- John O'Hear, Bedore Tours, North Towanda, N.Y.
- Bob Strutton, Sandston, Va.
- Ayanna Jackson, Gaten's Adventures Unlimited, Hammond, La.

Safety & Compliance

- Derrick Boxrucker, Southwest Bus Service, Prairie du Chien, Wis.
- Gary Moody, Holiday Tours, Randleman, N.C.
- John O'Hear, Bedore Tours, North Towanda, N.Y.
- Rex Tennyson, USA Tours, Rolla, Mo.
- Janet Sullivan, ABC Tours, Northford, Conn.

Motorcoach Operator/Driver Program

- Alan Fong, Sacramento (Calif.)

Regional Transit District

- Wayne Jenkins, Coach Tours, Brookfield, Conn.
- Rosa Kays, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Stacy Lawrence, Astro Travel & Tours, Tallahassee, Fla.
- Jason Moreno, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Robert Skowronski, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Genie Willcocks, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.

Security

- John Bowers, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Wayne Jenkins, Coach Tours, Brookfield, Conn.
- Rosa Kays, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Jason Moreno, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Steve Pellicciotti, Coach Tours, Brookfield, Conn.
- Thomas Silvers, Golden Ring Travel & Transportation, Baltimore, Md.
- Robert Skowronski, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Genie Willcocks, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.

Driver Qualifications

- Melanie Evans, Astro Travel & Tours, Tallahassee, Fla.
- Wayne Jenkins, Coach Tours, Brookfield, Conn.
- Rosa Kays, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Jason Moreno, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Robert Skowronski, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Genie Willcocks, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.

Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.

Safe Driving

- John Bowers, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Charles Brady, Land Jet Bus, Waterbury, Conn.
- Alan Fong, Sacramento (Calif.) Regional Transit District
- Wayne Jenkins, Coach Tours, Brookfield, Conn.
- Rosa Kays, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Jason Moreno, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Robert Skowronski, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Genie Willcocks, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Timothy Hoffman, Warco Transportation, Bloomington, Wis.

Vehicle Maintenance

- John Bowers, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Wayne Jenkins, Coach Tours, Brookfield, Conn.
- Rosa Kays, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Jason Moreno, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Robert Skowronski, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Genie Willcocks, Rolling V Bus Corp., South Fallsburg, N.Y.
- Timothy Hoffman, Warco Transportation, Bloomington, Wis.

The academy's spring classes begin April 1. For more information and to register, go to www.uma.org/academy/.

The academy was founded and is operated by the United Motorcoach Association.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING



(2) '97 Dina Viaggio 1000's
52 PAX + 1 Escort Seat \$50,000
w/tires - New Paint

All buses are Clean - Well Maintained - Excellent Condition
For more pics: <http://s259.photobucket.com/albums/hh298/amaralbus/>
Call Joe: 508-993-4503 or e-mail joe@amaralcompanies.com



(2) '99 Van Hool T-945'S
57 PAX, + 1 Escort Seat,
\$89,500 w/tires - New Paint



2000 MCI DL103, WESTERN COACH,
NEW TRANSMISSION, WHEEL CHAIR
LIFT, NEW PAINT, WEBASTO, GOOD
RUBBER 12.7 SERIES 60 DETROIT



2000 MCI DL103, SOUTHERN
COACH, FRONT END KIT,
WEBASTO, GOOD RUBBER,
ALCOAS 12.7 SERIES 60 DETROIT

Asking \$155,000 each or OBO - all fair offers considered
~ We have more on the way!! ~

Call 507-456-5310 or 507-583-4585 with any questions

REPOS FOR SALE
Variety of makes and models of
"Bank Repos" across the United
States and Priced to Sell!

1-877-737-2221 Ext. 716 for more information!

Motorcoach Council

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ment, depending on financial conditions, to reauthorize its membership with the same amount in each of the next five years.

"The board recognizes the value of the council," said Linda Morris, executive director of the North Carolina association.

The council was formed two years ago to promote the "green" aspects of motorcoaches, but expanded its focus last year to promote awareness of the many benefits of motorcoach transportation throughout North America.

In an effort to spark greater interest in motorcoach travel more quickly, the council developed a television commercial that it plans to air throughout the country. The commercial received good reviews from motorcoach operators who screened it during the UMA Expo and ABA Marketplace.

Council Chairman Todd Hol-

land of Ramblin Express in Colorado Springs, said joining the council should be compared directly to the other investments operators make to market their businesses.

"Your participation is not meant to be a replacement to anything you are already doing but to instead supplement and fortify those efforts," he said.

The council and its supporters say the time is ripe for the industry to promote and position itself as a viable travel alternative.

"With escalating fuel costs, environmental concerns and national events that have caused travelers to recoil from air travel, society is ready, almost begging, for alternative modes of transportation," notes one founding council member.

"Until now, the motorcoach industry was not prepared to present itself in a cohesive fashion to this newly emerged market. This is an opportunity to step up and do our job to re-educate the traveling public as to who we are and what we

have to offer as a solution.

"In this pivotal point in history, it is not possible for a fraction of the industry to get involved or to pull the weight of the group if we truly want to shift perceptions and change society," says this operator.

Gladys Gillis, whose Seattle-based Starline Luxury Coaches was an early member of the council, urges others to join, too.

"If we come together now as an entire industry, we can deliver a stronger, more consistent message that we are a unified front designed to serve our community and the environment," she said. "We want to educate the public and re-position the motorcoach as the safest, most convenient, economical, luxurious, and environmentally responsible mode of transportation available."

The council has raised more than \$150,000 and has about 65 members, including 50 motorcoach companies. The other members are manufacturers, national and state associations, and suppliers.

**“...the most valuable skill you can sell is your knowledge.
A good education is no longer just a pathway
to opportunity, it is a pre-requisite.”**

— President Obama in address to Congress, Feb. 24, 2009

The Bus & Motorcoach Academy's Clarence Cornell School of Business offers every bus and motorcoach company owner and/or manager an opportunity to improve their potential to meet today's business challenges. Courses are delivered online through the College of Southern Maryland and upon completion of five courses, learners earn an accreditation (Accredited Passenger Transportation Operator). Not only will you be better prepared to operate your business; by earning an accreditation you demonstrate your professional commitment to clients, peers, lenders and insurers.

The President of the United States has challenged every American to meet the economic challenge we all face today by increasing our potential through education and training. The Bus and Motorcoach Academy is prepared to help you meet that challenge. Visit www.uma.org/academy or call 800.424.8262 - Courses start April 1st so get started today.



Bus & Motorcoach Academy

College of Southern Maryland



THE NEW VOLVO 9700. UNIQUELY SAFE.



US AND
CANADIAN MARKET
VERSION

The new Volvo 9700 is the safest coach we have ever built. We would be able to fill this entire page with details of equipment and characteristics that contribute to high safety. Such as our ESP electronic stability program. Instead, we intend to focus on just a few important new features that we are alone among bus manufacturers in offering. Front Impact Protection is one example, Knee Impact Protection is another. Both considerably reduce the risk of the driver being injured in a frontal collision. What is more, the Volvo 9700 is equipped with the Front Underrun Protection System. It's there to protect the occupants in an oncoming passenger car if it is unlucky enough to collide with the coach. **Welcome aboard.**



FOR SALES INFORMATION

USA 1-877-773-8678 CANADA 418-883-3391
Prevost, 35 Gagnon Blvd., Ste-Claire QC G0R 2V0 CANADA
Volvo 9700 motorcoaches are distributed by Prevost,
a fully owned subsidiary of Volvo Bus Corporation. Please contact
your Prevost Regional Sales Manager for more information.

www.prevostcar.com

VOLVO BUSES. WHEN PRODUCTIVITY COUNTS

