

# Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE BUS INDUSTRY

## MCI to distribute Setra coaches in deal with Daimler

### U.S., Canada prove to be tough markets

What is it about the North American bus market that has made it impossible for the world's largest bus manufacturer to flourish here?

That is just one of the questions many in the industry are pondering after it was announced late last

month that Daimler AG, the world's biggest commercial bus and coach manufacturer and corporate parent of Mercedes-Benz and Daimler Trucks, is turning over North American sales of Setra coaches to Motor Coach Industries and shutting down its Orion Bus Industries manufacturing plants in Canada and the U.S.

Ending weeks of industry spec-

ulation, Daimler revealed it had signed a letter of intent that would transfer distribution and servicing of Setra coaches to MCI. The deal is expected to be completed by the end of this month.

At the same time, Daimler said it will close its Orion manufacturing operations in Mississauga, Ontario, and Oriskany, N.Y., which have been hemorrhaging red ink

because of the cutback in transit bus orders across the U.S.

In announcing the tentative deal with MCI, Daimler said its "strategic relationship with MCI will carry forward Setra's proud tradition in North America, and also take it to the next level — through increased local presence and enhanced customer services for Setra."

For MCI, the deal would seem to be something of a windfall. It loses a competitor, albeit a relatively weak one; it potentially gains a bunch of service work, additional parts business and warranty coordination; it has an inside track on building or rebuilding relationships with Setra customers, and it adds two products to sell at

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## New bus sales climb for fifth straight quarter

Deliveries of new motorcoaches continued to surge upward during the first quarter of 2012, posting a double-digit increase over year-ago sales.

A total of 349 new coaches were sold during January, February and March, compared to 282 coaches delivered during the first quarter of last year, a gain of nearly 24 percent.

This year's first-quarter sales jump marked the fifth quarter in a row of increasing sales, the best first quarter since 2009 (when 372 coaches were sold), and the fourth quarter in the past five during which sales have risen at a double-digit rate.

Sales increased 24.2 percent, 3.5 percent, 46.7 percent and 35.7 percent during the four quarters of last year.

The coach sales numbers were compiled by *National Bus Trader* magazine, which has published annual motorcoach industry sales figures since 1985, and issued quarterly sales reports since 2001.

The magazine tracks sales of new models produced and sold by Motor Coach Industries, Prevost Car, Van Hool/ABC, Setra and Temsa, plus the Mexican-built

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## Congressmen urge industry to target senators

By Josiah Daniel Ryan

WASHINGTON — The United Motorcoach Association hosted key members of Congress at a Capitol Hill event late last month prior to the start of negotiations that could yield a new federal highway and public transportation law that likely will include critical safety regulations for the motorcoach industry.

Lawmakers who addressed several dozen UMA attendees at the Capitol reinforced the critical nature of the moment, encouraging the association to take advantage of election-year politics and fight the 31 regulations proposed for the industry in the Senate-passed transportation bill, S.1813.

Rep. John Shimkus, R-Ill., who addressed the meeting, signaled in a conversation with *Bus & Motorcoach News* that at least some of those regulations, considered by many in the industry to be onerous and unworkable, could still be removed in the upcoming conference between negotiators from the Senate and House.



Rep. John Shimkus, R-Ill., left, with Magda Dimmendall, president of the National School Transportation Association, and UMA Chairman Bill Allen, urged UMA members to contact their U.S. senator.

"Can we remove some of those regulations to ease the burden?" asked Shimkus. "The answer is yes. But that's why this association has to especially work members on the Senate side to agree to whatever the House may bring to the table on some of these reforms."

The alternative legislation proposed by House Republicans, in H.R. 7, also includes

new rules for the bus and motorcoach industry but does so in a measured manner, said UMA Chairman Bill Allen, owner of Amador Stage Lines in Sacramento, Calif.

"The House bill addressed scientifically the issues the Senate addressed just by picking solutions out of their hats," said Allen. "[T]he

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## Creditors to become Coach America's owners

NEW YORK CITY — Coach America Group Holdings apparently is going to survive its trip through bankruptcy largely intact, operating under new ownership as a slimmed-down company but still the largest tour-and-charter operator in the U.S.

The path for the company that filed for Chapter 11 financial reorganization in January was chartered at a court-managed, closed-

door auction here late last month in which its bank lenders appear to have successfully filed a credit bid for the company.

The buyout by creditors requires approval by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Wilmington, Del., and it's possible for that decision to be appealed to federal court by other creditors. That is rare, however.

A "credit bid" allows the first-

lien, secured creditors to bid up to the amount they are owed without having to put up any out-of-pocket money to take ownership of the business.

Such bids are typically a quicker way for a business to emerge from bankruptcy court than if it were to adopt a financial reorganization plan.

Full details of the transaction are not publicly available because

the auction was closed to the public and company executives, attorneys, creditors and others involved in the court case declined to discuss it.

"We cannot comment at this time," was all Coach America would say about the sale.

However, it was learned that in addition to the sale of the company to creditors, two pieces of Coach

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## Featured Auction Items:

### LOT 1

Mixture of Hankook - 13/32, Firestone - 11/32-16/32, Michelin - 12/32-38/32



### LOT 13

Michelin - 12/32-38/32



### LOT 10

1997 Van Hool T2145: DET/ALL, Non-lift, VIN #43000



### LOT 20

Proheat Furnaces (3) - Fits all Van Hool Models



### LOT 19

1999 Van Hool T2145: DET/ALL, Non-lift, VIN # 43763



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## Expo '13 registration opens with mega deal for operators

ORLANDO, Fla. — OK, here's the Deal of the Week:

For five days, starting May 14, operator members of the United Motorcoach Association can register for UMA Motorcoach Expo 2013 for the rock-bottom price of \$200. That's a minimum saving of at least \$100.

UMA is offering this one-time special between May 14 and 18.

Yes, Motorcoach Expo '13 is eight months away, but a \$200 registration fee for UMA operator members may just be too good a deal to procrastinate over.

"Operators can get ahead of the curve and save at least \$100 on their registration," said UMA Meetings and Operators Manager Maggie Masterson.

The \$200 fee will give registrants all-inclusive access to Motorcoach Expo activities, including education sessions, the trade show floor, networking opportunities, and banquets. Registration also includes food and beverages at scheduled events.

The Expo '13 trade show floor will feature wares and services

from more than 150 companies.

"In fact, the 2013 Expo show floor is almost 70 percent sold and it has only been three months since Motorcoach Expo 2012 in Long Beach."

Registration for next year's show also buys something no other Expo registration ever has — a co-located trade event.

UMA Motorcoach Expo 2013 will be located along side the annual convention of NTA (formerly the National Tour Association). The combined shows are being called Travel Exchange.

Motorcoach operators will have access to hundreds of tour operators — each one a potential customer.

"Operators will be able to meet and network with NTA attendees," said Masterson. "One of the exciting networking events will be the Welcome Reception/Ice Breaker, which will be at the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex.

"Operators also will have access to NTA's Mall where they can

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## 'Transplant' buddies recovering well

SAN FRANCISCO — California motorcoach operators and good buddies, Mike Waters and Tom Giddens, are recovering well at home from kidney transplant surgery they had here last month.

Giddens, who donated a kidney to his long-time friend, was released from University of California Medical Center four days after the April 17 surgery and Waters was released three days later.

Both are doing well, according to family members who have kept friends advised of their progress through e-mails and social media postings.

Waters, who had been undergoing dialysis treatments three times a week for three and a half years, was on the medical center's



Tom Giddens

Mike Waters

long waiting list for a cadaver kidney when Giddens stepped forward and volunteered to donate one of his. (See May 1 *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

Extensive testing showed Giddens was an acceptable match — a 1-in-10,000 shot for a nonfamily member.

Waters, vice president and general manager of Coach America/

Franciscan Lines here, and Giddens, president of Coachways Charter Services Inc. in Garden Grove, Calif., became good friends through their 20-plus years' involvement with the California Bus Association. Giddens is the current president and Waters is a past president.

"Mike and Tom are two of CBA's bright and shining stars," noted Suzie Petersen, executive administrator of the trade group. "CBA would not be what it is without them."

She urged operators and others in the industry around the state and across the country to continue to include the two in their prayers.

"You can never have enough prayers," she said.

## CVSA Roadcheck 2012 will be June 5-7

GREENBELT, Md. — Mark your calendar — the CVSA Roadcheck 2012 will be June 5-7.

Roadcheck is the largest targeted enforcement program of commercial vehicles in the world, with roughly 14 trucks and/or buses being inspected, on average, every minute from Canada to Mexico during the 72-hour safety blitz.

Each year, approximately 10,000 Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance-certified inspectors at 1,500 locations across North America perform the bus and truck inspections.

CVSA is made up of local, state, provincial, territorial and federal motor-carrier safety officials and industry representatives

in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

CVSA sponsors Roadcheck with participation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators, Transport Canada, and the Secretariat of Communications and Transportation (Mexico).

Learn more at [www.cvsa.org](http://www.cvsa.org).

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# THE DOCKET

## Study: CARB policies will result in \$6.69 diesel fuel in California

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — A new study says that fuel policies being pushed by the California Air Resources Board will drive up the price of diesel fuel in California to \$6.69 a gallon.

The report, titled *The Impact of the Low Carbon Fuel Standard and Cap-and-Trade Programs on California Retail Diesel Prices*, traces the impact CARB regulatory actions will have on future diesel prices.

The study, prepared for the California Trucking Association by Stonebridge Associates Inc., finds that by 2020, CARB's Low Carbon Fuel Standard, in combination with the AB 32 Cap-and-Trade Program, could increase the price of diesel fuel by \$2.22 per gallon.

That would represent a more than a 50 percent increase in the price of diesel fuel and \$6.69 per gallon price at the pump. The average price difference between California and neighboring states would be \$2.33 per gallon, including taxes.

According to the study, between 2015 and 2020, these higher "California-only" diesel fuel costs will result in the loss of

thousands of jobs, \$68.5 billion in lost state domestic product, \$21.7 billion in lost income and \$5.3 billion in lost state and local taxes.

CARB's program design also will put California's transportation sector at a significant competitive disadvantage, the study notes.

"(The California Trucking Association) is supportive of the production and use of alternative fuels, but the cost gap between CARB's Low Carbon Fuel Standard and the diesel fuel that the other 49 states will continue to use is unacceptable," said Scott Blevins, CTA President.

"This is a serious setback for any business dependent on diesel fuel for its operations.

"State regulators need to step down from their 'ivory tower' and understand the impact of these unfair policies..." said Blevins.

"CARB's blind pursuit of policies that will drive many California-based trucking companies out of state or out of business should be of great concern to all Californians."

The report can be found at <http://caltrux.org/>.

## NLRB 'employee rights' notice halted

WASHINGTON — Following conflicting decisions at the federal district court level, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals has temporarily enjoined the National Labor Relations Board's controversial rule requiring the posting of employee rights, which had been scheduled to take effect April 30.

(See May 1, April 1, Oct. 15 and Oct. 1 issues of *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

The National Labor Relations Board said that "in view of the D.C. Circuit Court order, and in

light of the strong interest in the uniform implementation and administration of agency rules," it was ordering its regional offices to not implement the rule pending the resolution of the issues before the court.

In March, the D.C. District Court found the agency had the authority to issue the rule.

The NLRB supports that decision, but plans to appeal a separate part that raised questions about NLRB enforcement mechanisms.

However, the agency disagrees with and also will appeal a decision last month by a South Carolina district court, which found the NLRB lacked authority to promulgate the rule.

NLRB Chairman Mark Gaston Pearce said of the recent decisions: "We continue to believe that requiring employers to post this notice is well within the board's authority, and that it provides a genuine service to employees who may not otherwise know their rights under our law."

## FMCSA lets sleep apnea proposal slip out

WASHINGTON — The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration jumped the regulatory gun last month when it proposed to adopt the recommendations of two advisory panels for tougher sleep apnea guidelines for bus and truck drivers.

The panels say the agency should tell medical examiners that drivers with a body mass index of 35 or more must be evaluated for sleep apnea.

In a *Federal Register* notice posted last month, the agency asked for comments on that and a number of additional recommendations

concerning apnea screening, evaluation and treatment.

However, on the same day the notice was published, the FMCSA announced it was withdrawing the proposal.

"The agency is still in the process of carefully reviewing the recommendations submitted by the Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee and Medical Review Board," the FMCSA said in a statement.

"The initial publication was a clerical error. We anticipate requesting public comment on the recommendations later this year."

Yet, by prematurely publishing the guidance, the FMCSA let the cat out of the bag on what sleep apnea testing for bus and truck drivers could eventually look like.

Here are key points included in the initial publication, providing a credible glimpse at what regulatory guidance the FMCSA has in mind:

- Drivers with a BMI of 35 or greater would be certified for 60 days pending sleep study and treatment, followed by a 90-day certification if they're compliant during first 60 days, followed by a one-year certification.
- Clinicians may cite any combination of possible factors to require or recommend sleep labs.

For example, drivers who are male and postmenopausal females with a BMI of 28 or greater, who have experienced a single-vehicle crash or have a 17-inch neck (male) or 15.5-inch neck (female) should be prepared to prove they don't have sleep apnea.

Other factors include being 42 or older, family history, and having a small jaw or airway.

• Commercial drivers diagnosed with apnea may not be unconditionally certified medically to receive their CDL, and must instead use a CPAP (breathing machine) at least four hours a day for 70 percent of days.

Any driver who reports excessive sleepiness during "the major wake period," or experiences a crash associated with falling asleep, or has been found to be non-compliant in using a CPAP should be disqualified or immediately denied certification, according to the premature proposal.



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# Long-awaited federal rule on medical examiners issued

WASHINGTON — Nearly seven years after Congress adopted legislation requiring the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to establish a national registry for certified medical examiners, the agency has issued a rulemaking setting up such a system.

The rule requires medical professionals who examine commercial bus and truck drivers to receive training on driver health issues and be registered in a national database.

Bus and truck drivers would be required to use medical examiners listed in the database to obtain their medical cards.

The final rule, which was released late last month, not only requires medical professionals to receive training but they also must demonstrate proficiency on truck- and bus-driver issues by passing a test.

The requirements have a May 2014 deadline.

The rule is intended to improve knowledge among those tasked with examining drivers to make sure the drivers they are checking are healthy enough to engage in interstate commercial work.

But critics say the rule might have the unintended consequence of driving some doctors, nurses, physician assistants and others out of the work, thereby raising the price of the required exams, and making it harder for individuals in some areas, particularly rural areas, to find a registered examiner.

Congress passed legislation in 2005 ordering the FMCSA to develop a medical registry, and the agency started work on the rule in December 2008.

“This new rule will ensure that health-care professionals conducting Department of Transportation medical exams fully understand all of the demands required to operate large trucks and passenger buses safely,” said Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood.

“Truck and bus drivers deserve highly trained medical examiners that think safety first,” said FMCSA Administrator Anne Ferro. “By holding medical examiners accountable to high standards of practice, we raise the bar for safety and save lives through increased commercial driver and vehicle safety.”

Some critics contend the rule will result in fewer options for drivers, which will translate into higher costs and have other unintended consequences.

If a family physician, who was used by a driver for his or her USDOT physicals stops providing the service because of the new rule, the driver will have to find a new examiner who will know nothing about his or her history.

That might mean additional tests and added costs, plus losing the value of a provider who knew the individual’s history, critics note.

The FMCSA said in the rule — which is available online via the Federal Register — that 40,000 examiners are expected to take training and get posted in the registry when it be-

comes mandatory in May 2014.

The FMCSA also anticipates that about 3 million drivers a year will be tested, as drivers usually must get a certificate every other year — but sometimes more often.

“A new medical specialty has been created. Some examiners will specialize in doing just this and

they’ll do a lot of it,” predicts Michael Megehee, a Pendleton, Ore., chiropractor and president of Team-CME, a national network of certified medical examiners for transportation workers.

Once the rule becomes effective in May 2014, operators must make sure the medical professionals ex-

amining their drivers are listed on the FMCSA registry.

The FMCSA is expected to develop a related rule that would allow for online entry of medical reports into a national database. Some believe such a system would greatly reduce the possibility of fraud related to medical certificates.

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Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett, seated center, signs that state's CDL self-certification law. Joining him were Selina Pittinger of the Pennsylvania School Bus Association, top left; Elaine Farrell, executive director of the Pennsylvania Bus Association, top center; lobbyist Kim Sokoloski of Buchanan Ingersoll, top right; Larry Althouse, Althouse Transportation and president of the Pennsylvania School Bus Association, left, and state Rep. Will Tallman, right.

## 'Self-certification' process begins

HARRISBURG, Pa. — In February, motorcoach drivers across the U.S. began receiving letters from their state licensing agencies informing them they had to bring in a copy of their medical examination certificate.

The letters also told drivers that if they ignored the mandate they could be at risk of losing their commercial driver's license.

The new requirement resulted from a rule adopted by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration four years ago that went into effect at the end of January. (See Nov. 15 and Dec. 1 issues of *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

The feds are giving states and drivers two years in which to fully comply with the rule.

Most states reportedly plan to require drivers to submit their cer-

tificates based on when their current CDL expires, which will allow the states to stretch out the filing over the full two years. Otherwise, state agencies could be overwhelmed by drivers bringing in their certificates.

The process of a driver taking his or her medical certificate to a state licensing agency and getting it recorded is called self-certification.

The requirement applies to all CDL holders who drive interstate. Drivers who never drive outside the state in which they are licensed don't have to self certify, but they must provide evidence to the licensing agency that they only drive intrastate.

Some states, like Pennsylvania, have had to adopt legislation to permit the self-certification process.

Last month, Pennsylvania Gov.

Tom Corbett signed legislation that cleared the way for that state to begin implementing the self-certification program. Pennsylvania has more than 400,000 CDL holders who must be certified no later than Jan. 30, 2014.

The Pennsylvania Bus Association and other state transportation-related associations worked with the general assembly and political leaders to get the self-certification legislation passed on a timely basis so PennDOT could meet its implementation goals.

"The Pennsylvania Bus Association is proud to have been a part of the legislative process that made this happen and to have been invited to Gov. Corbett's signing of HB 1458," said Elaine Farrell, executive director of the Pennsylvania Bus Association.

## Three more 'hot fuel' settlements

KANSAS CITY — Three companies with thousands of retail fuel pumps have agreed to settle lawsuits accusing them of shorting consumers with "hot fuel" — gasoline and diesel fuel sold without adjusting its volume for temperature.

Attorneys for Wal-Mart and its Sam's Club subsidiary, along with Valero Energy Corp. and Casey's General Stores Inc., told the U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Kan., that each has reached an "enforceable settlement agreement" with the plaintiffs, according to chief judge, Kathryn Vratil.

Vratil still has to approve the settlements, but if she does they will apply to dozens of hot-fuel lawsuits filed across the country.

The *Kansas City Star*, which has been probing the hot fuel issue for a half-dozen years, estimates hot fuel costs consumers roughly \$3.5 billion annually.

Gasoline and diesel fuel ex-

pands in warmer months, so a gallon of fuel contains less energy than what consumers pay for at the pump. Hence, the basis for the lawsuits and the term "hot fuel."

Earlier last month, BP Products North America, ConocoPhillips Co. and Shell Oil Products reached hot-fuel settlements, although details were not disclosed. (See May 1 *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

Details of the Wal-Mart, Valero and Casey's settlements also were not disclosed, but observers say they could further advance the day when fuel pumps in the U.S. start adjusting for hot fuel. Those three companies own all or some of their stores that sell fuel.

Judy Dugan, research director for Consumer Watchdog, a California public interest group, said that selling fuel in a fair manner by adjusting it for temperature appeared to be nearer, at least in some locations.

But Dan Gilligan, president of

the Petroleum Marketers Association of America, which represents retailers, said his group remained firmly opposed to temperature-adjusted fuel and would continue to fight it. The association has maintained that the switch won't be worth it, weighing the cost of switching pumps against the scope of the problem.

A Valero subsidiary already sells temperature-adjusted fuel in Canada, where it has been done for decades. The oil industry embraced it in Canada since "cold fuel" cost them money there.

The volume of fuel is pegged to a 60-degree standard, at which the 231-cubic-inch American gallon puts out a certain amount of energy. If the temperature of that gasoline rises to 90 degrees, though, it expands to more than 235 cubic inches — but a gallon still gives the consumer 231 cubic inches, which at the higher temperature contains less energy.

## Bill seeks to require USEPA to consider impact of rules

WASHINGTON — A bill that directs the president to establish an interagency committee to study certain EPA rules and actions that impact the price of diesel fuel and gasoline has been introduced by Rep. Ed Whitfield, R-Ky., chairman of the House Subcommittee on Energy and Power, and Rep. John Barrow, R-Ga.

The Gasoline Regulations Act is aimed at ensuring the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency considers the cumulative impact, including costs to consumers, before it issues a regulation that could lead to increased fuel prices.

The bill also asks that President Barack Obama place a pause on "three of the most problematic regulations until the study is complete." The three regulations are:

- New source performance standards for greenhouse gases from refineries
- TIER 3 standards (amount of sulfur in refined products)

## Canada to get greenhouse gas regs

OTTAWA, Ontario — Canadian officials have proposed regulations that would align that country with the greenhouse gas emissions standards for heavy-duty trucks and buses the U.S. published last year. (See Sept. 1, 2011 *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

"Canada and the United States have a deeply integrated automotive industry, and there are significant environmental and economic benefits to aligning our emission standards for new on-road heavy-

• Tightening of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone

The bill also would require EPA to consider the cost of a new NAAQS ozone rule.

"Because the courts (*Whitman v. American Trucking*) decided that the Clean Air Act does not allow EPA to consider costs and feasibility when setting an ozone standard, this provision is commonsense and will protect consumers and the economy," a news release from Whitfield's office said.

"Over the past three years, prices at the gas pump have more than doubled, and that is unacceptable," said Whitfield.

"Today, I introduced commonsense legislation that will ensure that the federal government doesn't add to the pain at the pump by implementing regulations without first understanding the full costs they will have on consumers, jobs, and economic growth."

duty vehicles," Environment Minister Peter Kent said in a statement announcing the proposal.

Similar to the U.S. rules, Canada's emissions limits for new commercial vehicles would phase in starting in 2014, ratcheting up to model year 2018.

The rules would reduce greenhouse gas emissions from heavy-duty vehicles by up to 23 percent in 2018, compared with 2010 levels, Environment Canada said in a statement.

## Illinois to tackle bottleneck

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Gov. Pat Quinn announced a major reconstruction project to add "much-needed capacity to the Circle Interchange in the heart of Chicago."

A traffic congestion list developed by the American Transportation Research Institute and the Federal Highway Administration identified the Circle Interchange as one of the worst bottlenecks in the nation.

According to the study, the Circle Interchange operates at well below ideal speeds for more than 14 hours a day. More than 300,000 vehicles use the interchange daily.

Preliminary analysis by the Illinois Department of Transportation estimates that building additional lanes on some of the key ramps in the Circle Interchange will reduce congestion by as much as 30 percent.

## I-70 toll proposal stalls

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — A controversial plan to turn part of Missouri's Interstate 70 into a toll road has stalled in the Missouri Legislature.

The bill, Senate Bill 752, would implement tolls through a public-private partnership to make needed repairs on a 200-mile stretch of I-70 through the middle of the state.

The Missouri Department of Transportation says that converting I-70 to a toll road would cost from \$2 billion to \$4 billion. Senate Bill 752 would authorize a private group to finance, rebuild and operate the highway — recovering its investment from the tolls.

The measure has stalled in the Senate Transportation Committee, apparently because of lack of support.

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# Feds offer update on safety compliance initiative

WASHINGTON — Top officials of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration participated in a Small Business Administration Transportation Safety Roundtable here to tout the Compliance, Safety, Accountability program's impact on safety.

The session provided agency officials with an opportunity to "correct rumors and myths." Here are key points made during the session:

- The Safety Measurement System (SMS) assesses the relative safety of motor carriers, which allows FMCSA "to efficiently and effectively prioritize enforcement resources" on motor carrier safety issues.

- SMS is one of three web-based systems where the public can find information about motor carriers.

The other two are the Safety and Fitness Electronic Records System ([www.saferys.org](http://www.saferys.org)), which provides registration data and safety ratings, and the Licensing and

Insurance Online Website (<http://li-public.fmcsa.dot.gov/>), which allows users to confirm that a motor carrier has active operating authority and adequate insurance.

- CSA's SMS has enough data to assess about 200,000 of the 525,000 active interstate motor carriers in at least one Behavior Analysis and Safety Improvement Category (BASIC); these 200,000 carriers are involved in more than 90 percent of all interstate commercial motor vehicle crashes.

- The Unsafe Driving and Fatigued Driving (Hours-of-Service) BASICS have strong relationships to future crash risk. An independent evaluation by the University of Michigan's Transportation Research Institute found that carriers with either one of these two BASICS above FMCSA's intervention thresholds had crash rates three times greater than those without BASICS exceeding FMCSA's intervention thresholds.

- CSA "is improving safety performance." FMCSA says road-

side inspection violations declined by 9 percent in the 12 months after the SMS launch.

- Roadside inspections documenting violations of regulations

**'CSA is improving safety performance.'**

related to the Unsafe Driving BASIC are triggered by observed driving behaviors and not by a carrier's percentile rank in the Unsafe Driving BASIC.

- CSA provides motor carriers with opportunities to improve their BASIC percentile ranks by demonstrating they have improved their roadside performance either through reduced crashes or clean inspections; in fact, over 1 million of 3.5 million roadside inspections conducted annually are inspections with no violations.

- CSA's SMS identifies about the same number of small carriers that SafeStat did. And, of the carrier population with sufficient data

to be assessed, SMS identifies a proportionate number of small, medium, and large carriers for CSA interventions.

- FMCSA does not formally "rate" drivers.

- The Pre-Employment Screening Program (PSP), which is mandated by Congress, provides prospective motor carriers with driver inspection, crash, and violation history upon driver release.

- SMS has tools that enable enforcement personnel to identify and address driver safety performance problems during a carrier investigation.

- FMCSA and its state partners have made "great strides" in improving roadside uniformity and data quality over the past several years.

- Since 2004, FMCSA and state partners have logged more than 27 million crash and inspection reports.

- Less than 0.5 percent of these have received a Request for Data Review (RDR).

- FMCSA recently revised its DataQs user guide in conjunction with the states and that guidance is helping to improve DataQs further.

- FMCSA publishes a monthly evaluation of the completeness, timeliness, accuracy, and consistency of state-reported data.

- FMCSA works closely with the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance to establish and implement policies for consistent and uniform data collection at the roadside.

- FMCSA is modifying roadside inspection software to align with CVSA's recommendations, again, in an effort to make data collection more consistent and uniform.

A copy of the presentation that FMCSA gave at the SBA Transportation Safety Roundtable on CSA is posted on the CSA Outreach Website.

The website is the official resource for information about CSA. It can be found at <http://csa.fmcsa.dot.gov>.

## Study: Returning soldiers involved in more auto crashes

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — A new study suggests that motorcoach companies and others looking to hire veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan as drivers need to proceed cautiously.

U.S. military personnel have 13 percent more car accidents in which they are at fault in the six months after returning from overseas duty than in the six months prior, a study by USAA reveals.

USAA, a major insurer that specializes in insuring members of the armed forces and their families, based its study on 171,000 deployments by 158,000 of its

members over a three-year period ending in February 2010, when combat operations were still under way in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

In many cases, USAA found, soldiers took the driving style that kept them alive on the streets of Baghdad and Kabul and applied it to suburban roads at home.

The results were most dramatic for returning members of the Army and Marines, whose accident rates rose 23 percent and 12.5 percent, respectively.

(Rates were up 3 percent for the Navy and 2 percent for the Air Force.)

Not surprisingly, given the experience many soldiers had with improvised explosive devices and other roadside obstacles in combat zones, USAA found "objects in the road" to be the most cited of the 13 accident causes it studied.

The insurer also found a direct correlation between the number of deployments and the rate of accidents — those deployed three or more times had 36 percent more incidents, those deployed twice had 27 percent more and those deployed only once had 12 percent more accidents.

A 2009 military study found

that, since 2001, deployments for reservists had averaged from 8 to 14 months in duration.

There also was a correlation by age (soldiers under 22 were involved in more wrecks than those over 29) and by rank (the more senior a soldier the lower the number of accidents).

One motorcoach industry executive who examined the USAA report said that while operators shouldn't be dissuaded from hiring a qualified veteran, the report suggests that anyone hiring veterans as drivers should make sure those individuals receive "good training

and even better supervision."

USAA said it has shared its research with each military branch's safety center commanders.

USAA also shared the study with academics and traffic safety experts and has taken steps to make USAA members aware of the behind-the-wheel risks for returning troops.

The company had 8.8 million insured individuals as of the end of 2011.

The USAA survey adds to the growing body of data on the psychological and physical effects of deployment to war zones.

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# Will new Atlantic City megaresort be a game changer?

ATLANTIC CITY — It's not for those who arrive here in motorcoaches, but Atlantic City boosters hope the new \$2.4 billion Revel will help turn around the image of this gaming Mecca, making it more attractive as a destination for all gamblers.

To say the Revel megaresort is unlike anything ever seen in Atlantic City is no exaggeration.

The ultra-contemporary, curvy glass-and-steel oceanfront complex — the most costly resort built here — aims to rise above the competition and attract a more upscale clientele to Atlantic City, a gaming and entertainment destination that is undergoing a much-needed face lift in a bid for survival.

Revel began opening last month at the southern end of the Boardwalk, with 500 of its eventual total of 1,898 rooms. When complete, it will occupy 6.3 million square feet of space.

The 47-story edifice boasts guestrooms with floor-to-ceiling windows that give everyone a coveted water view. There's a plush casino with burlesque stage and electronic table-game pit, plus a party pool run by a Las Vegas entertainment group.

Revel hopes to attract those who may not have considered vacationing or holding meetings in Atlantic City.

Grand opening is Memorial Day weekend, when all restaurants and shops are due to be up and running. A 300-room boutique hotel within Revel is planned next year.

## Expanding the market

There are 47 million adults within a six-hour drive of Atlantic City. The owners of Revel want to draw people who've never been to Atlantic City; people who crave "a weekend of luxury" at the beach.

Revel, whose name signifies enjoying oneself in the company of others, aims to please resort customers by ignoring casino-world customs. It's the only smoke-free casino resort in Atlantic City. There will be one smoking area outside a nightclub.

And, unlike virtually all other casinos, visitors won't have walk through the gaming area to get to their rooms, and Revel plans no bus programs for day trippers.

Neither will there be a buffet to feed gamers fast and reward them with free or discounted feasts.

Revel says it's less interested in doling out comped visits to gamers than attracting those interested in the spa, shopping, night spots and

restaurants.

Revel's roster of celebrity-chef eateries ranges from a steakhouse from Iron Chef America winner Marc Forgione, to a budget replica of a taco truck run by another Iron Chef, Jose Garces.

Pool food is from Michel Richard, who has two other eateries at Revel and a restaurant at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. Revel's main InOut Pool starts indoors and meanders outside; swimmers pass through see-through automatic doors.

Revel is coming to life after financing fits and starts. First, Morgan Stanley was involved. It withdrew after the crash of 2008 and wrote off more than \$1 billion as a loss to Revel's benefit.

## Lots of opulence

Little expense seems to have been spared. Polished and unpolished marble from Italy and China abounds. Arty mobiles of paper-thin, gold-colored rectangles dangle from an atrium entrance; rooms have brown leather desk chairs.

Guestrooms reportedly are as chic as any in Las Vegas, incorporating a neutral gray and tan color scheme, fabric headboards with embroidered bronze-colored drapings and 46-inch flat-screen TVs in standard rooms. Handheld tablet devices allow guests to control temperature, order spa treatments and room service. Introductory rates start at \$239 and will rise to the \$300 range after the grand opening.

Unlike other high-end resorts, not a jetted bathtub is in sight. According to executives, today's germ-conscious consumers think bacteria gets trapped in the jets. Suites do have deep soaking tubs.

The 130,000-square-foot casino has a "digipit" gaming area where players use electronic "chips" to play against dealers who flip "cards" using buttons. The pit is equipped with four poles, where dancers will entertain.

Revel aims to be "theatrical." It wants to give adults the same experience children have when they go to a Chuck E. Cheese, with its video games and birthday-party vibe.

Revel includes a 5,500-seat arena, where big stars will be booked.

As opening nears, Revel is raising something of a ruckus. The curious gawk at the tower with no name on it, just a 90,000-pound orb on top that has 250,000 programmable lights and is visible for

miles (no deep meaning; it's art).

## High hopes, we have...

What's the feeling in Atlantic City?

That "a rising tide lifts all boats," says Jeff Vasser, executive director of the Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Authority. Revel "is going to be a boat-raiser," he says.

The city has seen its fortunes fade as legalized gaming in neighboring states has siphoned business and the Miss America pag-

eant moved out. Still-seedy areas near the Boardwalk, with pawn shops, panhandlers and boarded-up buildings, are a turn-off.

Revel is redoing Connecticut Avenue so guests can cruise up without negotiating mean streets.

Part of a new tourist district master plan — initiated by New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie — is to clean up neighborhoods, put in parks, shops and more.

Other resorts also are stepping up their games.

Revel's closest competition,

'Little expense seems to have been spared. Polished and unpolished marble abounds.'

the popular Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa — with more rooms and gaming space — is undergoing a \$50 million renovation, including 1,566 of its rooms.


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# Village Tours of Wichita acquires Time Lines in OKC



## Partnership gets passengers from Ann Arbor to airport

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Ann Arbor residents and visitors have a new, seven-days-a-week shuttle bus service to get to Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport.

AirRide is a public-private partnership between the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor's Downtown Development Authority, the local convention bureau, and Michigan Flyer, a unit of Indian Trails Inc., a private motorcoach operator based in Owosso, Mich.

Michigan Flyer is operating AirRide.

It's a roughly 27-mile trip from Ann Arbor to Detroit Metro airport. Tickets cost \$12 each way, with walk-on commuters paying \$15. Seniors with advanced reservations pay \$6.

A \$10 introductory price is being offered through July 30.

AirRide is providing 12 trips daily from the downtown Ann Arbor Blake Transit Center and a local hotel. The University of Michigan's Central Campus Transit Center has four pick-ups daily.

The buses used for the shuttle are outfitted with comfortable, spacious seats and have Wi-Fi service, said Gordon McKay, president of Indian Trails.

McKay said "frequency is the key" to getting people to abandon their cars for the shuttle.

The total cost of the new service is expected to be \$1.2 million, with state operating assistance, passenger fares and private contractor contributions expected to bring the direct annual subsidy from the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority to \$303,400.

Reservations on the shuttle are offered at [www.MyAirRide.com](http://www.MyAirRide.com).

## Teens still texting, driving

Despite all of the publicity and campaigning against distracted driving, especially among younger drivers, a survey from State Farm Insurance indicates that many teens might still be ignoring the message.

The survey, conducted for State Farm by Harris Interactive, finds that just 43 percent of drivers ages 16 and 17 say they have never texted while driving — the same percentage as two years ago.

Yet, 76 percent of teens ages 14-17 agree that "if you regularly text and drive, someday you will be killed while driving," and 93 percent agree that "if you regularly

text and drive, someday you will get into an accident."

Harris Interactive surveyed 652 teens, ages 14 to 17, to examine their driving attitudes and behaviors.

The distracted driving message apparently isn't sinking in for some.

"Unfortunately, it has not in terms of the teens who say they're texting while driving," says Chris Mullen, State Farm's director of technology research.

The survey does show some progress: Fewer teen drivers say they "very often" text while driving, and more say they do it "rarely" than in the 2010 survey.

OKLAHOMA CITY — Village Tours and Travel of Wichita, Kan., has boosted its presence here with the acquisition of the city's second-largest motorcoach company, Time Lines.

The purchase not only dramatically expands Village Tours' existing operation here but it likely will heighten charter-and-tour competition throughout the state.

Currently, Oklahoma City-based Red Carpet Charters is the state's largest operator with more than 50 coaches.

"They are a very good competitor," Village Tours' co-owner Jeff Arensdorf says of Red Carpet. Village has had a presence in Oklahoma City for 23 years.

Arensdorf said that while he was not looking to expand the business, he became interested when he learned Time Lines' president and CEO, Bob O'Brien, was planning to retire and the business was looking for someone to run the company.

"I figured it was a good fit for us, so I asked if they would be interested in selling and we were able to work it out," said Arensdorf.

Time Lines was principally owned by Christian Keese, who is chairman of Kirkpatrick Bank in

Edmond, Okla., a suburb of Oklahoma City, and Kirkpatrick Oil Co., a private exploration and drilling company headquartered in the city.

O'Brien, a former sales executive with MCI, started and managed Time Lines for Keese.

The sale included Time Lines' administrative offices and maintenance facilities, as well as its fleet of 19 coaches, which have been added to the 30 coaches Village Tours had before the acquisition and which it has been using for its operations in both Kansas and Oklahoma. Both companies' fleets are predominately Prevost coaches.

Arensdorf said the Time Lines name has gone away and its buses gradually will be repainted with Village Tours' colors and logos. Also, he said the company is developing plans to expand its facilities in Oklahoma City and will shutter the Time Lines' office and garage once construction is completed.

"We have the land and only need to expand the facility," said Arensdorf, who owns Village Tours with his father, Norman.

Village Tours' offices in west Wichita also are being expanded. The acquisition by Village Tours is

its second in as many years. Last year, it purchased Salina Charter Coaches, a three-coach company in Salina, Kan., which is 90 miles north of Wichita. Arensdorf said he heard the owner of that company was retiring and he contacted him about a possible sale.

"I don't anticipate any further expansions at this time," he noted.

Village Tours has been operating since 1980, when it began running a one-bus charter service in Wichita during the summer months and an airport shuttle for snow skiers in Denver during the winter season.

It opened an Oklahoma City sales office and terminal in 1989 and then replaced it with a new building and service garage in 2007.

The Arensdorfs acquired the company in 2000.

In 2005, Village celebrated its 25th year with a 13-coach tour to Branson, Mo., and St. Louis that drew more than 550 people.

With Keese's backing, O'Brien started Time Lines 10 years ago. The company positioned itself as an upscale operator with black-liveried coaches equipped with galleys, power ports and plush seating.

## Canadians are flocking to U.S. in record numbers

The United States welcomed a record number of Canadian travelers in 2011, receiving 21 million overnight visits, with Canadian motorcoach operators participating in the bonanza.

U.S. Department of Commerce data shows that more than one third of the record 62 million foreign visits to the U.S. last year originated from north of the border, reaffirming Canada's position as the biggest source market for American tourism ahead of Mexico (13.4 million visits) and Great Britain (3.8 million).

Taking advantage of the strong loonie last year, Canadian travelers also generated an unprecedented \$24 billion in tourism spending in the U.S., up 15 percent from the year before.

And with a new trade agreement expediting the cross-border process between the two nations, visitor numbers to the U.S. from Canada are expected to rise even more.

Doug Switzer, president and chief executive of Motor Coach Canada and the Ontario Motor Coach Association, confirmed that Canadian motorcoach opera-

tors have been seeing an increase in trips to the U.S.

"The relative parity of the Canadian and U.S. dollars, the overall better economy, and renewed interest in travel and tourism by people after years of restraint because of job uncertainty are all contributing to increased Canada-U.S. travel," Switzer told *Bus & Motorcoach News*.

"Hopefully, with recent changes like the increase in the duty-free allowance for Canadians coming back from the U.S., which was just announced, and with improved efficiency and reliability in the process for crossing the border, we'll see even more growth over the next couple of years," Switzer added.

On June 1, travelers returning to Canada from the U.S. after 24 hours away will be able to bring in \$200 worth of goods free of duty or taxes, a substantial increase from the current \$50.

Travelers gone more than 48 hours will be allowed \$800 in duty-free goods. That's double the current \$400 allowance. There will no longer be any specified seven-day limit on duty-free purchases.

The changes are designed to harmonize levels with those of the United States.

The higher limit on duties is expected to cost the Canadian government \$13 million during the current fiscal year and \$17 million in fiscal 2013-14.

The number of Canadians visiting the U.S. in January increased 8.7 percent, compared to the same month last year.

The new travel data comes just weeks after a survey found that Americans' sentiment toward Canadians is at an all time high.

Ninety-six percent of respondents in the annual Gallup poll said they held "very favorable" or "mostly favorable" views of Canadians, the highest rating measured for any country since the question was first posed 25 years ago.

Canadians also made more overnight trips to Mexico in 2011 than in any other year.

According to statistics provided by the Mexican Embassy in Ottawa, 1.5 million visits were made to Mexico by Canadians in 2011, reflecting an increase of 7 percent over 2010 and 29 percent over 2009.

# Fullington Bus runs out of Fullingtons, Berzas steps in

CLEARFIELD, Pa. — For the first time in its 104-year history, Fullington Auto Bus Co./Fullington Trailways has someone other than a family member at the helm.

Jonathan T. Berzas, a long-time transportation executive who joined the company as chief executive a year ago, has been given the additional title of president, succeeding Aerial Fullington Weisman, who served in the position until her death earlier this year (see February *Bus & Motorcoach News*).

His appointment by the company board marks the first time the top executive is someone other than a Fullington family member.

The company has been Fullington run since 1908, when it was founded by Mrs. Weisman's great-grandfather, Emerson. Her parents, J. Richard and Tillie Fullington, took over the business in 1956, and she rejoined the company herself in 2003, following a career in medicine, including years as a specialty nurse.

Early signs a younger Fullington might not continue the string of family members being at the helm surfaced three years ago,

when the family sold 51 percent of the business to Ratp Dev, the U.S. subsidiary of the French bus, tram and rail company, RATP.

Although the family retained the top management positions after the sale, Mrs. Weisman hinted that no family heir appeared interested in taking over the business.

Two years later, Mrs. Weisman brought Berzas into the company, hiring him as chief executive after putting him through a grueling interview that lasted more than four hours.

"It was a great opportunity for me," said Berzas, a former executive with American Airlines and Greyhound Lines and former owner of his own motorcoach and tour businesses.

He said he was told the hiring decision not only was based on his extensive experience but his views on retaining a family culture of providing outstanding service and treating employees properly.

"I was able to work with Aerial for seven or eight months and learned from her the perspective of the family culture," he noted.

Bertz said the French owners



New Fullington Trailways President Jonathan Berzas has experience at American Airlines, Greyhound and running his own motorcoach company.

not only support a family culture but provide the company with a successful corporate culture as well.

"We have the best of both worlds," he said.

Although a Fullington no longer is the company's top executive, family members — by both blood

and marriage — remain on the management team.

Michael J. Fullington, the brother of Mrs. Weisman, is chief operating officer, and his wife, A. Lory, is vice president of the tour division. Also, Mrs. Weisman's widower, Milton Weisman, is vice president

of intercity coach services.

The company has a broad reach in the industry, with both charter and line-run operations utilizing 56 motorcoaches; school transportation for four districts with 140 buses; limousine service with 10 vehicles, and tour and travel services.

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## MCI-Daimler

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

zero development cost.

Were that not enough, senior MCI management sees the arrangement with Daimler as being a huge strategic plus.

“The proposed transaction would allow MCI to expand its luxury motor coach offerings in the North America marketplace, while establishing a strategic partnership with one of the world’s leading manufacturers of buses and motorcoaches,” said MCI CEO Rick Heller.

“If consummated, we would intend to fully leverage the capabilities of MCI’s marketing and distribution networks on behalf of the world-renowned Setra brand.

“We expect the partnership would also allow MCI access to Daimler’s world-class engineering and manufacturing capabilities,” added Heller.

But while MCI and Daimler will be consolidating Setra sales, service and parts into MCI “to realize efficiencies and other benefits,” MCI said it is the “strategic intent of the proposed transaction to maintain the integrity of the MCI and Setra brands, parts and services.”

Explained an MCI spokeswoman: “Setra customers should expect to see improvements to the level of service the combined organization will be able to offer. The proposed transaction will enhance Setra’s distribution and service networks in the U.S. and Canada.”

As part of the deal, Daimler is acquiring a minority interest in MCI — widely reported to be 10 percent ownership, while MCI is getting distributorship of Setra S 417 and S 407 coaches.

“MCI is excited by the prospects of partnering with Daimler and the long-term stability we expect Daimler’s ownership position to provide,” said Heller.

Added Patricia Ziska, MCI vice president of new coach private sector sales: “We look forward to welcoming the Setra brand to the MCI lineage of best-selling models. Our dedication at exceeding customer expectations with the strongest, most reliable service and support infrastructure in the industry will apply to Setra customers who would benefit from this new venture.”

All MCI has to do now is sell Setra coaches at a profit, and help customers keep them running.

### Daimler’s long struggle

Off and on for more than 35 years, Mercedes-Benz/Daimler/Setra have tried to become major players in the North American mo-

‘We look forward to welcoming the Setra brand to the MCI lineage of best-selling models.’



MCI’s coach line includes a wide variety of models



The flagship Setra model is the luxury S 417 Top Class

torcoach industry but have fallen short despite the seeming benefits of German engineering, European styling, recognized expertise, and lots of resources.

In the mid-1970s, Mercedes coaches and small buses were introduced in the U.S., but before the decade was out they were gone.

Then, in the mid-1980s, Setras were introduced but with modest success. Even the pace-setting and stylish Setra S 417, introduced with great fanfare about 10 years ago, failed to catch on in great numbers.

In the *National Bus Trader* magazine annual “hit parade” of popular coach models, Setra typically has finished near or at the bottom of the list.

But Daimler is not the only European bus builder that has found the North American motorcoach market a tough sell. Bus graveyards are littered with the hopes and dreams of such manufacturers as Neoplan, Tam, MAN, LAG, Irizar, Dina and others.

### Down the road with MCI

Now, Daimler is pinning its hopes for sustaining a presence in North America on the partnership with MCI.

“We’re excited at the prospect of this partnership with MCI, which is a leading manufacturer of coaches in North America with top-flight distribution and service networks in the U.S. and Canada,” said Hartmut Schick, head of

Daimler Buses.

“Under a Setra-MCI partnership, customers will continue to enjoy the same state-of-the-art technology, quality German engineering, and best total cost of ownership in the market.

“A strategic relationship with MCI will carry forward Setra’s proud tradition in North America, and also take it to the next level — through increased local presence and enhanced customer services for Setra.”

But, is that enough? Speculation continues to swirl throughout the industry regarding the true nature and intent of Daimler’s long-term strategy vis-à-vis the U.S. market and its relationship with MCI.

In its announcement of the partnership, Daimler said the transition of sales, service, parts distribution, and other customer service aspects would take place over a “period of several months” following the execution of definitive agreements and the closing of the transaction.

Meanwhile, says Daimler, MCI will be evaluating operations related to Setra in North America and, where appropriate, “integrate such operations with existing MCI facilities which will permit MCI and Daimler Buses to realize significant operating synergies.

“This planned partnership will allow Daimler Buses to better serve its customers through a broader service network, while

‘This planned partnership will... strengthen Setra’s presence in North America.’

strengthening Setra’s presence in North America.”

Major customers of Setra reportedly are being told by top executives of both Setra and MCI that the “transition will be so seamless as to be unnoticed.”

Not included in the deal is an arrangement for MCI to sell Mercedes-Benz Sprinters, which have become a popular small shuttle with many motorcoach operators. Daimler Buses North America marketed Sprinters to motorcoach operators.

Sales of Sprinters now will be handled by Mercedes-Benz dealers.

### Strategic reassessment

The announcement of the MCI-Daimler partnership came barely six weeks after Daimler Buses completed a comprehensive reevaluation of its worldwide business, called GLOBE 2013, where it concluded it had to “reconfigure” its bus business in North America.

But North America is not the only challenge facing Daimler. Its important Western European segment remains in a major slump because of the financial and debt crisis. Elsewhere, particularly in Latin America, business is booming. And the company sees big opportunities in India and China.

Still, despite its size and world presence, Daimler Buses is the least profitable division of Daimler AG. Last year, its return on sales fell to 3.7 percent, down a full percentage point from 2010. The company goal for 2013 is 6 percent. To achieve that, however, things had to change and that meant rethinking Setra and jettisoning Orion Bus Industries.

Orion is the smallest of the five largest transit bus makers in North America and is suffering — with others — from a double-digit fall-off in orders from public transit agencies.

As federal stimulus money began drying up in 2010 and disappeared last year, and municipal and state governments cut funding, transit bus orders dropped off the table. And what orders there were saw sometimes cutthroat bidding.

Daimler ultimately concluded that expectations for the transit bus business in North America were “low” and “likely to remain depressed over the next several years.

“As a consequence, Daimler has decided to exit the transit bus business in North America and to wind down production of Orion buses in the U.S. and Canada.”

### Phase out of Orion

Following the fulfillment of current production commitments over the next year, the Orion plant in Mississauga will be closed, while the facility in Oriskany will continue operations related to parts and field service only.

“Daimler clearly stands behind all current customer commitments and warranties, and will therefore continue to support all Orion customers’ warranty and service agreements through its extensive network of parts and field service representatives in the United States and Canada,” the company said.

“Daimler Buses considered all possible options for reconfiguring our transit bus operations in North America, but at the end of the day, Orion is facing a situation where the cost position is not competitive, the local market is in a continued slump, and growth opportunities are not available from selling the product overseas,” said Schick.

“Discontinuing production of Orion buses was a very difficult decision for us to make, but to secure our leadership position we must always strive to invest resources efficiently in support of our global strategy for growth. As part of our lasting commitment to all existing Orion customers, we will make sure a robust parts and service infrastructure continues to provide a high level of service and support,” Schick added.

Daimler intends to provide separation benefits to all eligible employees affected by the changes at Setra and Orion, including to those employees for whom such benefits are not otherwise required by law.

About 200 Orion employees reportedly are having their jobs eliminated, plus another 200 already on layoff.

Daimler has cut several thousand manufacturing jobs in Canada since the turn of the century. It closed truck plants in Kelowna, British Columbia and St. Thomas, Ontario, and a school bus plant in Woodstock, Ontario.

# New engines, idling laws make A/C upkeep more critical

By Dave Millhouser

I couldn't get out of bed. Every time I sat up, dizziness overwhelmed me and I flopped back down.

My wife figured it out...dehydration caused by an overzealous bus demonstration the day before.

The customer had called to say he'd be late and, crafty rascal that I am, it seemed like a good idea to let the demonstrator bake in the sun.

When the customer arrived I could show him one of these coaches' best features — its ability to cool down quickly.

The idea was good but the consequences weren't. I got baked, too.

So, remember the announcer man: Don't try this at home. Leave me to do the stupid stuff and report the results so you don't hurt yourself. Think "test dummy."

Still, the idea wasn't entirely without merit.

We live in times when idling the engine to cool down a coach is verboten. That's German for "no-no." In addition to laws limiting how long it's allowed, idling wastes fuel and invites the dreaded

"regen" in some modern coaches.

A coach that cools quickly is a good thing.

Some do better than others, but the one common characteristic is that a well-maintained HVAC cools faster than a neglected one.

You know the drill...filters, motors, belts and Freon checked. Clean condensers, ducts and return-air fixtures can significantly increase efficiency.

Another biggy is driver training.

It's important for drivers to understand why idling needs to be limited, and how the HVAC works on the model of coach they're driving. Each bus model has unique characteristics that, if understood, can make them more efficient.

For example, at least one coach has an HVAC system with a "superduper" blower speed that only works when it's first switched on. Messing with the manual settings turns the speed down for the rest of the day.

There are a variety of ways to finagle the inside/outside air mix, and there can be adverse interaction between the driver's A/C and the cabin unit. Each model works

differently and needs to be operated accordingly.

Generally, transit buses have a single on/off HVAC switch, operating only in an automatic mode. Most motorcoaches offer automatic and manual modes, with automatic usually being the best setting. In certain circumstances a skilled driver may make the unit perform better.

A couple of other things could be discussed with drivers, in addition to teaching them how the system functions. Opening vents or windows is never a good idea (unless the HVAC has truly kicked the bucket). These systems love to recirculate air; each time they cool it a bit more. Adding outside air is rarely helpful.

When addressing passenger complaints about cabin temperature, drivers should make tiny adjustments to the temperature control. Modern systems are powerful, and too much finagling can lead to the dreaded "sine curve," where a cranky HVAC system takes revenge by becoming alternately too hot, then too cold, staying JUST ahead of the unwary driver inputs.

A fake adjustment from time to

time might soothe both the passengers and the HVAC.

The sunny side will always be warmer than the "dark side," so drivers should make passengers aware of window shades — if the coach has them. Weaving is NOT an acceptable method of making temperatures even.

Parking a waiting coach in the shade is an obvious idea, and popping windows and hatches can vent some heat. Drivers will want to be sure to secure the windows before moving the bus.

Once again, I've been your test dummy on this, and apologize to whoever found the side glass that popped out of my bus on Interstate 5.

It's hard to come up with anything new on this topic. That's because it's so important that almost everything that can be said has been said.

What has changed a bit is the urgency.

The combination of 2010 and newer engines and their quirks, along with a growing number of anti-idling ordinances, have made HVAC maintenance more critical than ever. The refrigerants that

don't expand the "Ozone Hole" are less efficient, exacerbating the problem.

In an era of instant gratification, we want to do the best

we can to make sure our customers don't have to board a bus where the interior is so hot their spandex shrinks (or sticks to the seat covers). We old folks wilt easily.

Since running the A/C far in advance of boarding is not an option, it has become increasingly important that the HVAC be at peak operating efficiency; same for the charging system. Well-trained drivers can get the best performance out of the coach.

In case you're wondering, dehydration will NOT get you out of mowing the lawn at my house. Susan pumped me full of Gatorade, smacked me on the rump and aimed me towards the mower.

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



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## New: Wabco tire monitor system

CHARLESTON, S.C. — Wabco has introduced an integrated vehicle tire pressure monitoring system that provides drivers with real-time tire pressure information.

By using integrated vehicle tire pressure monitoring, Wabco says customers can maintain tire inflation at an optimum level that can reduce fuel consumption up to 2 percent and increase the lifetime of tires up to 20 percent.

Additionally, the integrated vehicle tire pressure monitoring system improves vehicle safety as correct tire inflation enables better road handling and shorter braking distance, said Wabco. It also detects slow leaks, which contribute to heat build-up, the cause

of the majority of tire failures.

“Wabco’s new and improved technology for tire pressure monitoring is the industry’s only tire information system of its kind for buses, trucks and trailers,” said Nikhil Varty, Wabco vice president, Americas.

“Our unique (integrated vehicle tire pressure monitoring) system enables vehicle manufacturers and fleets to benefit from Wabco’s newest advancements in vehicle safety and efficiency.”

The system uses external wheel-mounted sensors to constantly measure tire pressure and wirelessly transmit information to an electronic control unit. The ECU alerts the driver to tire pressure changes.

## Coach America

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

America — El Expresso and a transit contract in California — were sold separately at the auction.

An unidentified motorcoach company was the high bidder for El Expresso, a Coach America subsidiary based in Houston that has a national charter division and operates regular-route service to 25 U.S. cities in nine states.

El Expresso also provides line service to four cities in Mexico and has agreements with Mexican motorcoach companies for interline service to other cities in Mexico.

MV Transportation of Fairfield, Calif., which calls itself the largest American-owned passenger transportation contractor, providing paratransit, fixed-route, shuttle and commuter bus transit services, was the successful bidder for a five-year transit service contract that Coach America signed in January with the Los Angeles Department of Transportation.

The \$64.5 million contract is for the management of 27 neighborhood circular bus routes and seven daily commuter routes in Southern California’s San Fernando Valley.

MV already manages similar services in two other areas of Los Angeles.

The pending sale of the holding company and its remaining subsidiaries to the creditors means the streamlined Coach America will continue operating under the direction of Laura Hendricks, a former senior vice president who two months ago was named to replace ousted chief executive George Maney.

Roughly since the first of the year, Coach America has closed subsidiary tour-and-charter operations in Las Vegas, San Diego and Dallas, as well as a cruise industry shuttle service in Florida.

Now, as a result of the auction, it is giving up El Expresso and the Los Angeles transit contract.

However, it retains major operations in such places as California, Arizona, Texas, the southeastern U.S., Middle Atlantic states, and the Midwest.

It also has a new contract with Stagecoach Group/Coach USA/megabus.com to handle megabus’ expansion into Texas and Louisiana.

Still, it seems likely the banks that own Coach America will continue to try to sell selected operations or the entire company. Several competing motorcoach companies have expressed interest in some of Coach America’s operations.

Meantime, it was not known if the list of creditors that successfully bid for the company includes all or only some of the first-lien creditors.

In its initial court filing in January, Coach America said it owed \$318.7 million in first-lien loans to 24 financial institutions, \$30.5 million in second-lien loans financed by 7 lenders, \$39.5 million in secured motorcoach and equipment loans, and about \$15 million in unsecured vendor bills.

A group of senior lenders also put up \$30 million in debtor-in-possession financing that was to help the company continue operating while in bankruptcy court.

Among the first-position lenders are JPMorgan Special Credits Group, Wells Fargo, Bank of America, Citigroup Alternative Investments, Prudential Investment Management and The Goldman Sachs Group.

Some of the financial institutions that hold first-position loans also have second-lien loans.

Coach America, which was purchased in 2007 by the New York investment firm of Fenway Partners, turned to the bankruptcy court after failing to get its investors to redo terms of its debt load.

For court documents and other information about the bankruptcy proceedings, go to: [www.bmcgroup.com/restructuring/site-disclaimer.aspx](http://www.bmcgroup.com/restructuring/site-disclaimer.aspx).

## Coach sales

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Volvo 9700 sold by Prevost.

While coach sales have trended upward during the past 15 months, they have yet to reach levels that were commonplace during the years 2001-09. During that nine-year stretch, first-quarter sales averaged 479 new coaches.

The first-quarter gains this year came via a variety of sources, including increased public sector orders, higher private sector sales lead by a trio of manufacturers, and an exceedingly rare phenomenon in recent years — an increase in conversion coach sales.

The biggest public sector deliveries during the quarter involved the last of 90 Prevost X3-45 coaches for New York MTA, and continuing deliveries of 40-foot, CNG-powered MCI Commuter Coaches to Los Angeles DOT.

Twenty conversion shells were sold during the first quarter of this year compared to 12 in the first quarter of last year.

However, the big sales surprise for the first-quarter of 2012, noted by *National Bus Trader* Editor Larry Plachno, was that only three manufacturers accounted for most of the increased sales for the period.

Sales gains were registered by Temsa, Van Hool and Prevost. Temsa sold 28 of its 35-foot coaches during the period.

Plachno also noted that during the past three years, the first quarter has seen the lowest quarterly sales totals of the year. From 2001 to 2008, the third quarter was typically the slowest period for new-

## Expo registration

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

see and meet with destinations, attractions, hotels and restaurants.

“All this means that — at Travel Exchange — UMA members will have all the value they’ve received from UMA Motorcoach Expo in the past, plus so much

## Growing tire rubber in Arizona

TOKYO — With demand for tires expected to increase, Bridgestone Corp. has announced plans for an extensive research project in the United States designed to develop guayule as a commercially viable and renewable source of high-quality natural rubber.

Rubber from guayule (pronounced why-u-lee), a perennial shrub, would be an alternative to the hevea tree, which currently is the primary source for tire rubber.

Guayule plants are native to the southwestern U.S. and northern Mexico.

Natural rubber can be taken from guayule bark and roots. The guayule rubber has almost identical qualities to the rubber har-

vested from hevea trees.

Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations is seeking land to establish a pilot farm and construct a rubber process research center in the southwestern U.S.

The facility is expected to be fully operational in two years, with trial rubber production starting in 2015.

“This is such an exciting and innovative project. It will not only help our companies meet the strong, anticipated growth in demand for natural rubber, but also constitutes a potential breakthrough for the rubber industry,” said Bill Niaura, director of new business development for Bridgestone Americas Inc.

coach sales.

The apparent shift may be due in part to the federal government’s bonus depreciation program of recent years that offers tax incentives for adding new equipment before year end. That may have prompted some operators to buy during the third and fourth quarters instead of during the first quarter.

The top selling coaches during the first quarter of this year were the MCI J4500, followed by the Prevost H3-45, Prevost X3-45, MCI D4500, and the Van Hool T2145. The MCI D4000 and Temsa TS-35 tied for 6th, followed by the Van Hool C2045.

During the first quarter of 2011, the most-popular coach was the MCI J4500, followed by the MCI D4500, Prevost H3-45 and MCI D4505. The Van Hool C2045 and Temsa TS-35 tied for 5th, followed by the Prevost X3-45, and Van Hool T2145.

The three best selling seated models represented a market share of 35.8 percent during this year’s first quarter. That is down from 39.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2011 and down even more from numbers ranging from 45.5 to 49.7 percent in the past year.

Plachno says this means buyers are increasingly spreading their purchases over more models, a practice he noted that is commonplace among European operators that have more diversified and specialized fleets.

There were 88 imported coaches — Van Hools, Setras and Temsas — sold in during the first quarter of 2012, up from 69 imported coaches delivered in the first quar-

ter of 2011.

“And, for one week, they can sign up to get it for \$100 less.”

For more information or to register, go to [www.motorcoach-expo.com](http://www.motorcoach-expo.com).

“The 2013 UMA Motorcoach Expo at Travel Exchange is shaping up to be something extremely exciting,” said UMA President and

CEO Victor Parra.

“We have been getting a lot of questions about the show so we have decided to open up registration earlier so you can make your travel plans in advance. Travel Exchange is the one show for the group travel industry with everything you love about Expo and more.”

The market share of imported coaches in this year’s first quarter was 25.2 percent, compared with 24.5 percent a year ago.

Plachno pointed out that while both numbers and market share are up over the same period in 2011, they are down modestly from recent quarters. For example, the import market share was 31.9 percent in the fourth quarter of 2011 and 27.3 percent in the third quarter.

New coach sales in Canada, traditionally around a 10 percent share of the North American market, came in at 17.8 percent during the first quarter of this year, which equaled 62 coaches.

The Canadian market share has fluctuated widely in recent quarters, falling below 5 percent in the third and fourth quarters of 2010 but climbing to 17 percent or higher in the first three quarters of 2011.

A few larger orders can play havoc with the Canadian numbers and frequently do.

Auto stick shift transmissions — the Volvo I-Shift and ZF AS-Tronic — were installed in 36 coaches, representing just over 10.3 percent of the total during the first quarter. That means Allison captured nearly 90 percent of the market for the quarter.

In a sidebar contained in his latest sales report, Plachno suggested that for genuine prosperity to return, the U.S. needs “to reduce spending and reduce taxation in order to encourage the jobs and business needed to improve our economy.”

For more information, contact Plachno by email at [lplachno@busmag.com](mailto:lplachno@busmag.com).



## Greyhound orders 60 Prevest X3s

DALLAS — Greyhound Lines is purchasing 60 more new Prevest X3-45 coaches, bringing to 250 the number of X3s in the Greyhound fleet.

Prevest announced late last month the nation's largest intercity carrier had signed an order for additional X3s, with deliveries to begin in June.

"Greyhound and Prevest share a commitment to providing safe, efficient transportation to passengers across North America.

"The combined efforts of these two industry-leading organizations will be a significant benefit to the transportation industry for the fore-

seeable future," said Prevest President and CEO Gaetan Bolduc.

The 60 X3-45s will be equipped with a slew of safety features designed to aid drivers, as well as encourage good driving habits. They are the:

- Prevest AWARE system that includes adaptive cruise braking, following distance alert, and stationary object alert
- Prevest electronic stability program
- Beru tire pressure monitoring system
- Automatic fire suppression system

The coaches also will have

dual inverters, powering 110-volt outlets and Wi-Fi Internet access.

Other equipment includes an Aesys electronic destination sign, Prevest wheelchair lift system, Volvo D13 engine, Allison transmission, and American Premier seating for 50.

"The motorcoach order is an affirmation of Greyhound's confidence in Prevest's ability to deliver a high-quality and reliable coach to our fleet," said Dave Leach, president and CEO of Greyhound Lines.

"We are pleased to continue our relationship with Prevest in a shared vision to pursue further reductions in the total cost of owner-

## Pensacola lighthouse, shore cleaned up by Tourism Cares

PENSACOLA, Fla. — Tourism Cares has issued a report card on its volunteer clean-up efforts at two tourism sites here.

The non-profit industry organization that works to preserve travel destinations for future generations attracted more than 200 volunteers during the last weekend in March to clean up and fix up the Pensacola Lighthouse and the shoreline on Bayou Texar.

Here's what the volunteers, who came from 80 different companies, accomplished at the Pensacola Lighthouse:

- Painted 4,000 feet of fence
- Painted 23 rooms covering almost 6,000 square feet
- Laid more than 1,800 square feet of sod
- Planted 660 jasmine and 48 azalea bushes
- Built 2,400 square feet of flower beds
- Mulched more than 5,000

square feet of flower beds

ship of the coach." Delivery of the X3-45 coaches is scheduled to be completed in October, an important month for Greyhound. That's because Oct. 29 is the deadline established by the federal government for when 100

- Cleared brush from an area covering 2,400 square feet

Pensacola Lighthouse has towered over Pensacola Bay since 1859 and is still in use today. And, at Bayview Park on Bayou Texar, they:

- Planted 2,500 native salt marsh grasses along 600 feet of shoreline to stabilize the park shore and protect it from pollutants and excess runoff
- Hand pulled a half-ton of root material from invasive reed grass
- Prepared an additional 500 square feet of intertidal area for planting by removing invasive reed grass along the shoreline

Along with the hands-on help, Tourism Cares awarded a \$5,000 grant to the Pensacola Lighthouse to continue the restoration work.

Tourism Cares' next project, which will be announced shortly, will be Sept. 28. For information, go to [www.tourismcares.org](http://www.tourismcares.org).

percent of Greyhound's fleet must be wheelchair-lift accessible.

Also, when the 60th coach is delivered, the X3 will be tied (with the MCI G4500) as second-most-popular model in the Greyhound fleet.

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# Making the industry case at *UMA Capitol Hill Days*



Cary and Gina Martin of Little Rock Tours & Travel meet with Sen. John Boozman, R-Ark.



UMA members Dale Krapf, left, of Krapf Coaches, and Brad Krapf, right, of Gregg's Bus Service, meet with Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del.



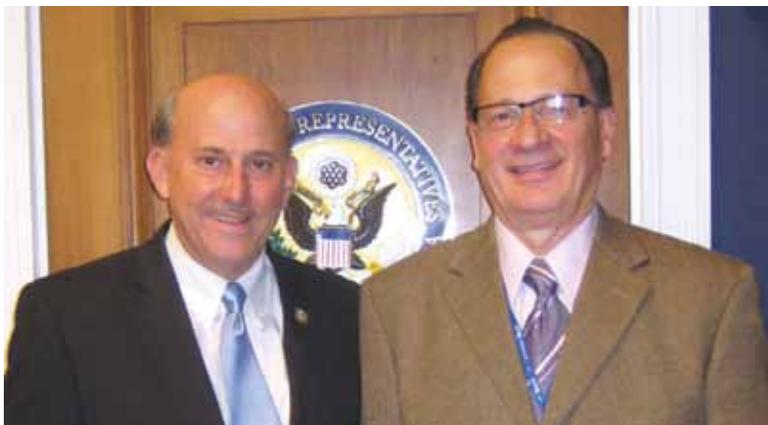
UMA member David Brown, left, of Holiday Tours meets with Rep. David Price, D-N.C.



Rep. John Mica, R-Fla.



UMA Chairman Bill Allen, left, of Amador Stage Lines talks with Rep. Bill Shuster, R-Pa.



UMA member Jim Pitstick, right, of Tri City Charter meets with Rep. Louie Gohmert, R-Texas.



Rep. Jimmy Duncan, R-Tenn.



Alan Thrasher, center, of Thrasher Brothers Trailways joins UMA's Ken Presley, left, and Vic Parra, right, at the start of their day on Capitol Hill.

## Meeting with lawmakers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

House was based on science, the other was based on smoke and mirrors. That is the problem.”

The proposed regulations also were foremost on the minds of many attendees.

Cary and Gina Martin, the president and vice president of Little Rock (Ark.) Tours, told *Bus and Motorcoach News* that the proposed rules could cost their small business nearly half a million dollars in compliance costs.

“This year there is enough at stake we weren’t willing to let the opportunity (to come to Washington to visit with their representatives) go by,” said Cary Martin.

“We are passionate about our

message — cool down on the regulations. They are killing the small bus operator and they are going to create an environment where only the biggest companies survive.”

Both Cary and Gina Martin noted, in a conversation near the conclusion of their visit, that their senators, Mark Pryor, D-Ark., and John Bozeman, R-Ark., had promised in individual meetings to work with them in the future to fight overregulation.

Despite expressing optimism that some changes could still be made to the provisions in the Senate bill, Shimkus acknowledged it will be an uphill battle since the Senate brings to the negotiating table legislation it has passed with a strong bipartisan, 74-22, vote, while House Republicans were un-

able to pass a highway bill.

“If we would have had them in law we could have taken those to a conference committee,” said Shimkus. “Per definition, it’s going to be more difficult. But the reality is a conference by definition is ‘anything goes.’”

While other lawmakers present at the UMA event, called Capitol Hill Days, declined to make predictions on what might happen in conference, Rep. Jimmy Duncan, R-Tenn.; Rep. Bill Shuster, R-Pa., and chairman of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Rep. John Mica, R-Fla., all indicated they were willing and ready to work with the industry to fight for its interests.

Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., who also addressed the group, offered a

slightly different take, saying he believed negotiations on the long-term transportation bill between the 33 House members and 14 senators, slated to begin May 8, would yield a long-term bill that would provide stability for road construction and motorcoach regulations for the foreseeable future.

“I am sure the House will have provisions and changes they want to make, but we need to get started, and the last thing we need is to use up this 90-day extension to kick the can down the road,” Carper said in an interview.

“At the end of the day, we may not gather together and say ‘kumbaya,’ but we will gather together ...and pass a strong bipartisan bill.”

Shimkus also said he thought it

was likely members would manage to forge a compromise capable of clearing both chambers.

“I think it will happen this year,” he said. “We know it’s going to be a two-year extension. We know it’s going to be the Senate’s funding numbers of \$109 billion. The question now is can we get some of the reforms?”

Either way, Allen said UMA members and operators in the industry must seize the moment to press their lawmakers.

“We all need to get out and vote and support someone who is pro-business,” said Allen. “This is definitely the time where it’s gone too far, and we can’t take it anymore.”

*Josiah Daniel Ryan covers the U.S. Senate for a major political newspaper.*

# Chicago operator ordered to rehire drivers, halt pestering

CHICAGO — A U.S. District Court judge has ordered a Chicago bus company to reinstate two drivers who were fired after signing cards in favor of a union election.

The court also ordered the company to stop questioning employees about their union activities, while a case involving the company moves through the National Labor Relations Board process.

Judge John F. Grady issued the temporary injunction at the request of the NLRB late last month, stat-

ing that “employees will suffer irreparable harm awaiting a ruling from the board, which may take many months...”

Latino Express Inc. operates a service that transports students to public schools and offers charters to the general public.

In the fall of 2010, drivers

began discussing grievances with each other and contacted the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Several drivers were seen by managers leaving a restaurant with union organizers in December 2010.

In the following days, many of the drivers at the restaurant were

summoned to meetings with company managers and asked about union support, and two were fired.

The union prevailed in a subsequent secret ballot election.

After an investigation of charges filed by the fired drivers and the Teamsters union, the NLRB Regional Office in Chicago issued a

complaint alleging numerous unfair labor practices.

In July 2011, NLRB Administrative Law Judge Michael A. Rosas found that Latino Express had violated the National Labor Relations Act. The company has appealed the decision to the board in Washington.

## National Interstate affiliate to provide bus driver training

RICHFIELD, Ohio — An affiliate of National Interstate Insurance Co. plans to provide the Driver Training Course, created by School Bus Safety Co., to insured school bus contractors.

The training program to be supplied by National Interstate's Safety, Claims and Litigation Services affiliate will be part of the company's loss control services package.

“School bus accidents can be tragic, and we continually look for proactive ways to help our clients prevent such tragedies,” said National Interstate Vice President Jim Parks.

“We have analyzed the Driver Training Course and are confident its use will make children safer while reducing the cost of risk to our customers.”

School Bus Safety Co. of Macedonia, Ohio, has trained school bus drivers for more than 20 years. According to the company, six of the eight largest student transportation contractors and more than 2,200 school districts use its training programs.

Jeff Cassell, president of School Bus Safety, said National Interstate and Safety, Claims and Litigation Services are going beyond traditional loss control to change the unsafe behaviors of drivers and ameliorate the cost of risk.

“Insurance premiums are derived from expected losses,” noted Parks. “By helping our clients reduce their loss costs and enhance their risk management programs, we are providing our customers the best tools to help control their insurance costs.”

“At the same time, we make transportation safer for the children, which is a win/win for everyone. We intend to provide the course to all school bus clients insured by National Interstate.”

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## People

FAIRFAX, Va. — Three members have joined the board of the **Trailways Transportation System**. They are:

- **Scott A. Riccio**, president/owner and founder of **NorthEast Trailways** in Lewiston, Maine.

- **Shawn Geary**, president/owner of **McCoy Trailways** in Kingston, Ontario.

- **Jonathan T. Berzas**, president/CEO of **Fullington Trailways** in Clearfield, Pa.

Riccio was appointed by the chairman of Trailways, *Anthony J. 'Tony' Fiorini*, to a board term through 2013.

Riccio, who also is vice president of both the **New England Bus Association** and the **Maine Tourism Association**, founded his company in 1999, primarily as a shuttle service for skiers. Today, it has a fleet of 18 vehicles.

The company provides charter services throughout the U.S. and Canada. Regular clients include such sports organizations as the Portland Sea Dogs baseball and the Lewiston Maineiacs hockey teams.

"Trailways is a strong and cohesive group of independent businesses, and I look forward to building on what we already do best — networking for business and helping affiliate companies succeed," Riccio said.

Geary was elected to a three-year term on the Trailways' board.

He began his 25-year career in the transportation industry with McCoy Limousine Service while a college student. He and his wife, Kristine, eventually bought the company. It now offers charter-and-tour services, has locations in Kingston, Belleville, and Ottawa, and has a fleet of 30 vehicles.

Berzas was elected to complete the three-year (2011-14) term of *Aerial Fullington Weisman*, former president of Fullington Trailways who died early this year. (See related story Page 11.)

He also is a member of the board of the **Pennsylvania Bus Association**.

Trailways is comprised of 88 independently owned/operated motor-



Scott Riccio



Shawn Geary



Jonathan Berzas



Wolfgang Winzer

coach companies. For more information, go to [www.trailways.com](http://www.trailways.com).

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — **Motor Coach Industries** announced that **Wolfgang Winzer** joined the company as vice president and general manager, aftermarket business.

In the new position, Winzer will lead **MCI Service Parts**, **MCI Service Centers**, and in-field technical support.

He will be based at MCI's Louisville parts, training and emergency roadside assistance center, and report to *Rick Heller*, MCI CEO.

"Wolfgang's accomplishments in leadership roles at similar businesses serving transportation and automotive will help us provide our customers with the most reli-

able service and support in the industry," said Heller.

"He is a leader with global experience and a track record for identifying opportunities and driving growth... We plan on tapping Wolfgang's expertise to lead our aftermarket business into our next phase of improvement and expansion," Heller added.

Winzer joins MCI after serving as president of **Champion Laboratories Inc.**, a leading manufacturer of filters and related services to the automotive, retail, fleet, and petroleum dispensing industries.

He also was president of **Webb Wheel Products**, which manufactures hubs, brake drums and rotors for buses, trucks and trailers.

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