

## Enforcement of music, movie licensing is stepped up

NEW YORK CITY — The three organizations that license bar, elevator and motorcoach operators to play recorded music, videos, DVDs, CDs and tapes for their customers have stepped up enforcement of federal copyright laws.

Motorcoach operators across the U.S. have been sent notices re-

mind them if they play recorded music or show movies or television programs for their onboard customers they must pay a licensing fee.

The notifications to coach operators have come from ASCAP, BMI and Motorcoach Movies which handle licensing of music,

movies and television programs for artists, writers, and studios.

The notices have been so widespread the United Motorcoach Association has been inundated with calls from members with questions about the licensing.

UMA issued an electronic flyer to members, providing them with a

primer on music and movie licensing.

The association pointed out that music and movies are like all property: they belong to the people who created and own them. To legally play recorded music or show movies to the public, operators must, by law, obtain permission

from the license holder.

“By playing pre-recorded music (and movies) to the passengers on your coach, you are essentially providing a public performance of that (material),” UMA points out.

It doesn't matter if a passenger brings the music or movie onboard;

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## NW operators embrace rival to Sen. Murray

SEATTLE — Motorcoach operators here may have found a candidate they can support in their effort to defeat their No. 1 political enemy: Democrat U.S. Sen. Patty Murray.

He's two-time gubernatorial candidate Dino Rossi, one of the state's top Republicans, who has officially entered the Aug. 17 state primary.

“I'll be supporting him because he'll have the best chance of winning in the general election,” said Thomas C. Casazza, president of the Northwest Motorcoach Association.

Operators in the state have vowed to work to unseat Murray because of legislation she authored last December that exempts King County from the federal charter service rule.

Her measure prohibits the Federal Transit Agency from spending any money to enforce the rule in King County, which cleared the path for King County Metro Transit to operate charters in the Seattle area.

The agency currently is running parking lot shuttles for the city's professional baseball and soccer teams and plans to do them for the Seattle Seahawks football team in the fall.

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## Pitching In

Dallas-area motorcoach companies volunteered buses to transport hundreds of people last month for the funeral of Jack Colley, chief of the Texas Department of Public Safety Division of Emergency Management. During his tenure, Colley helped coordinate statewide emergency services throughout Texas, many involving bus evacuations. See story Page 6.



## Unbelted bus drivers are courting trouble

Motorcoach drivers hear it from their bosses all of the time: “Be sure to buckle up.”

When they're driving a loaded bus, they usually heed the call. After all, they may have 50 pairs of eyes watching them.

But, when their buses are empty, they sometimes ignore it. And that, safety experts warn, can lead to big trouble.

Not only does it put them at odds with federal safety regulations and possibly jeopardize their jobs, but if they have an accident it can have devastating results. Motorcoach drivers who are not wearing their seatbelts are much more apt to suffer serious injuries or even death in an accident.

“It's a terrible idea to drive without your seatbelt, even when

you're driving an empty bus,” says Robert Crescenzo, vice president of Lancer Insurance, who advises the motorcoach industry on driver safety issues and accident prevention. “We don't drive our personal cars that way, so why should we drive a bus without using our seatbelts.”

The issue has surfaced in the wake of the fourth recent fatal accidents involving motorcoach or

school bus drivers who were not wearing seatbelts while driving empty buses.

The latest occurred in Utah last month when a 55-year-old school bus driver lost control of her empty bus while coming down a slight incline. The bus ran off the road and crashed through a series of fences before spinning around and ejecting

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## Operators cautioned about having trip permits in D.C.

WASHINGTON — Charter operators planning trips here this summer better make sure their buses display up-to-date District of Columbia trip permits.

If they don't, chances are pretty good they'll be ticketed and fined.

That's the word from the D.C. Metropolitan Police, which reports an increase the past three months in the number of commercial buses without valid permits, and if the trend continues over the busy summer season the rise in the number of citations issued could be substantial.

According to police records, officers issued 97 tickets in March, April and May of this year, compared with 63 during the same three-month period in 2009. During last year's peak months of June, July and August, police wrote 111 tickets.

Tickets for trip-permit violations carry a civil penalty of \$500.

In addition to the increase in tickets, the D.C. Department of Motor Vehicles reports that the number of trip permits issued to carriers has declined substantially.

During the first six months of

the current fiscal year, the agency issued only 9,337 permits, well below the pace to reach the 29,001 that were issued during fiscal 2009.

Officials in D.C. aren't sure what's behind the drop, although the economy is certain to be a significant factor.

Additionally, some operators reportedly have stopped going into D.C. and, instead, begun dropping off passengers at METRO rail stops in Virginia to avoid having to pay the trip fee.

Operators also have com-

plained in recent weeks they have had difficulty purchasing permits and reaching the DMV by telephone, although DMV officials say they have not heard such complaints or experienced any major problems.

They acknowledged there was a problem in May with the online purchasing system for permits, but they say that issue has been resolved.

The DMV said the permits, which cost \$50 for each bus and are good for six days, are available online. For details, go to [www.dmv.dc.gov](http://www.dmv.dc.gov), and click on "business" under services and then click on "trip permit."

Operators purchasing their permits online can print them and have them available immediately. Those who do not want to pay online can mail a check to the DMV and the permit will be mailed within 15 days.

Permits also may be picked up in person, or purchased at the DMV information desk at 95 M Street SW, which is open 8:15 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

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## November reopening for Opryland; restoration expensive

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center plans to reopen Nov. 15, after spending tens of millions on restoration.

The giant hotel and meetings complex has been closed since early May when a series of storms caused historic flooding throughout Middle Tennessee.

"Although we still have months of work ahead of us, we have already made significant progress in our remediation and restoration ef-

forts," said Kemp Gallineau, senior vice president and chief sales officer, at Gaylord Opryland.

"We have manually inspected and tested every aspect of our mechanical, electrical, (information technology) and power-generating systems. It is these systems that will make up the bulk of our restoration work and have defined our timeline to reopen," Gallineau added.

Gaylord Entertainment Co. says it expects the total remediation and rebuild cost for its properties in Nashville, by the record flooding to be between \$215 million and \$225 million.

The costs include approximately \$165 million to \$172 million for Gaylord Opryland, \$16 million to \$17 million for the Grand Ole Opry, \$7 million to \$8 million for attractions, \$7 million to \$8 million for administrative buildings and \$20 million for contingencies.

Offsetting these costs are business interruption and property insurance proceeds of \$50 million and a federal tax refund of approximately \$30 million.

Also, since the hotel is located in a federal disaster area, the company will be permitted to amend its 2009 federal tax return and carry-back the flood casualty loss against its taxable income in 2007.

Additionally, the company said it continues to work with the state and local government on other potential tax relief.

The estimated net cash impact of the flood, including all project costs, offsetting items, and \$20 million in contingencies is approximately \$169 million to \$179 million. This excludes the cost of pre-flood planned enhancement projects.

The company has cut more than 1,700 jobs at its Opryland hotel due to the long restoration process. It expects to begin rehiring employees at the Opryland six to eight weeks before it reopens in

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# THE DOCKET

## Feds set record straight on new system, fix timeline

WASHINGTON — The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has released an updated timeline for the roll out of its safety enforcement system overhaul, called CSA 2010, and addressed “myths” that already have developed concerning the program. (See May 1 *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

One of the prevailing myths is that FMCSA developed its Comprehensive Safety Analysis 2010 program to remove 175,000 drivers from the road. The agency asserts it does not have the authority to take away CDLs.

“CSA 2010 does not give FMCSA the authority to remove 175,000 drivers from their jobs and cannot be used to rate drivers or to revoke a CDL. FMCSA does not have the authority to take those actions.

“Only state agencies responsible for issuing licenses, CDL or otherwise, have the authority to suspend them. CSA 2010 does in-

roduce a driver safety assessment tool to help enforcement staff evaluate drivers’ safety as part of motor carrier investigations,” agency officials stated in a flyer about the program.

The agency also took aim at third-party software purporting to give motor carriers an insider glimpse into CSA 2010 compliance.

The agency even goes so far as to remind stakeholders that the program is still in development and third parties do not have access to the data.

## Oil to reach \$108 a barrel by 2020, USDOE predicts

WASHINGTON — Rising demand will push oil prices past \$108 per barrel during the next decade, the U.S. Department of Energy has forecast.

The improving world economy will swell demand, which will continue to climb pushing prices to \$133 a barrel by 2035, DOE’s En-

ergy Information Administration said in its yearly International Energy Outlook.

“While some third-party vendors are developing and marketing CSA 2010 driver scorecards, consumers should know that these companies do not have access to the driver violation histories in FMCSA databases — despite some claims that they do,” agency officials said.

“FMCSA has not and will not validate any vendors’ scorecards or data. Also, keep in mind that CSA 2010 is still a test and the (system) may change prior to its launch in response to the test results.”

In recent weeks, crude oil has been selling for around \$72-\$75 per barrel.

In presenting the report, officials stressed that many other scenarios are possible. In alternative

The agency also released the following updated timeline for the rollout of CSA 2010:

- Now through Nov. 30 — Motor carriers can preview their own data by seeing their roadside inspections/violations and crash events organized by behavior analysis and safety improvement category (BASIC).

- June 30 — The operational model test will end.

- July — The four “50/50” test states — Colorado, Georgia, Missouri and New Jersey — will join

scenarios, oil could cost as little as \$51, or as much as \$210 per barrel by 2035.

Meanwhile, the average price of diesel fuel in the U.S. dipped back below \$3 a gallon early this month. During much of May, diesel was above \$3 a gallon, with a peak of \$3.13 a gallon.

the five 100 percent test states in implementing the program.

- August — Motor carriers will be able to see an assessment of their violations based on the new Carrier Safety Measurement System (CSMS) which will replace SafeStat later in the year.

Fall/Winter 2010:

- SafeStat will be replaced by the CSMS. It will be available to the public, including shippers and insurance companies.

- FMCSA/states will prioritize enforcement using the CSMS.

- FMCSA will begin issuing warning letters to carriers with deficient BASICs.

- Roadside inspectors will use the CSMS results to identify carriers for inspection.

Winter 2010:

- Safety fitness determination notice of proposed rulemaking is scheduled to be released.

2011:

- Interventions start.

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## Rockslides are costly in southeastern U.S.

WASHINGTON — Two major rockslides last fall in southwestern North Carolina and southeastern Tennessee caused significant economic losses to the affected areas by closing segments of two Appalachian highways, according to a new study.

The first landslide, which occurred in late October in Haywood County, N.C., resulted in the closure of a section of Interstate 40 near the Tennessee border. (See Nov. 15 *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

The second rockslide, which occurred Nov. 10 in Polk County, Tenn., closed a section of U.S. 64.

The study, undertaken by HDR Decision Economics for the Appalachian Regional Commission, assessed the loss to businesses in the areas directly impacted by the road closures. It also assessed the increase in transportation costs.

Overall, according to the study, business activity in the affected areas decreased by as much as 25 to 30 percent. Specifically:

- Revenue decreased by 50 to 80 percent for hotels, motels and inns.
- Restaurant and retail business fell 30 to 90 percent.
- Gas stations pumped up to 25 percent less fuel.

In addition, transportation costs for businesses increased \$3,000 to \$60,000 per month, generally depending upon the size of the transportation-reliant business.

HDR valued the total increased transportation costs to the region at \$197 million. The study estimated that 47 percent of the costs were borne by trucks.

Motorcoach companies also were negatively impacted.

One operator based in Asheville, N.C., the closest large community to the I-40 rockslide, called the road closure a nuisance and inconvenience, but “not an astronomical aggravation.”

He said the landslide forced coaches going west and northwest

## Consumer confidence rises during May

NEW YORK — U.S. consumer confidence increased in May, according to the Reuters/University of Michigan monthly consumer sentiment index.

The final index for the month increased to 73.6 from a 72.2 in April. The figure was higher than economists’ forecasts and also higher than the preliminary index, which was 73.3.

An improvement in confidence may result in increased consumer spending, which accounts for 70 percent of the economy.

to travel 50 to 60 extra miles, incurring additional costs — increased fuel consumption, tire wear, drive time and similar expenses.

The closed segments of I-40 and U.S. 64 have been reopened.

## Landslide repairs on I-70 complete in Colorado

GLENWOOD SPRINGS, Colo. — Repairs have been completed to a stretch of Interstate 70 through Colorado’s rugged Glenwood Canyon that was battered by a rockslide in March (See April 1 *Bus & Motorcoach News*).

All lanes of the highway have re-opened.

Work by the contractor and state crews was finished ahead of schedule, earning the contractor \$31,000 in early-completion incentives. Overall cost of repairs totaled \$2.18 million.

The rockslide brought about 20 large boulders onto the interstate — one weighing about 66

tons — and punched holes as large as 20 feet by 10 feet in the elevated roadway.

The busy east-west route was closed for a few days, forcing traffic onto extended detours. Crews made temporary repairs, allowing one lane open in each direction eight days after the landslide.

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## Operators honor Texas DPS official

DALLAS — Jack Colley, who headed the Texas Department of Public Safety Division of Emergency Management during some of that state's largest disasters, public emergencies and incidents, died late last month after suffering a heart attack. He was 62.

During his 12 years at DPS, Chief Colley was involved with the Space Shuttle Columbia crash (2003), Hurricanes Rita and Katrina (2005), Hurricane Ike (2008), and numerous other catastrophic events.

In many of those incidents, motorcoaches were used to help evacuate citizens, transport workers and shuttle officials, making Colley a familiar figure to many coach operators.

Texas leaders said he was a national icon in emergency prepared-

ness. Gov. Rick Perry called Colley a remarkable man with a zeal for preparedness and protecting Texans.

Because he interacted with so many local, state and federal agencies and individuals, Colley's funeral and internment became huge events.

To handle all of the people, the Texas division of emergency management put out a call for local bus operators to help move attendees from the funeral site to the Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery.

"Four of our contingency contract operators, plus the Dallas County Schools, offered their services and resources in recognition of the chief and his past support in relying on the national bus industry as a team member in responding to emergency events within Texas," said Ted Maddry, state co-

ordinator for resources and logistics at the Texas division of emergency management.

"Given that the Dallas/Fort Worth-based bus operators were heavily committed in support of year-end school activities and the annual Byron Nelson Golf Tournament, among other weekend activities, we considered the contributions of the local operators a very significant action on their part," said Maddry.

"Without question, it was a very positive reflection on their civic pride and interest in serving their community and the state."

The four operators who provided a total of six coaches were Daystar Coach and Tours of Waxahatchie, Executive Coach of Irving, and Buses by Bill and National Tour Bus Service, both of Dallas.

## Motorcoach Network 2010 Invitational is next month

GLEN ALLEN, Va. — The National Motorcoach Network will conduct its annual Network Invitational 100 meeting here next month, with operators, suppliers and others from across the country coming to this community about a dozen miles northwest of historic

Richmond, Va.

The Wyndham Virginia Crossings Hotel & Conference Center in Glen Allen will host the invitational July 15-18. A special rate is available to network registrants.

The educational focus of this year's meeting will be planning for

the Sesquicentennial Commemoration (150th anniversary) of the Civil War. Richmond served as capital of the Confederacy, and Civil War history abounds throughout the region.

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

## Harrahs in North Carolina unveils spiffy coach lounge

CHEROKEE, N.C. — Harrahs Cherokee Casino & Hotel here has opened a lavish "motorcoach lounge," enabling the casino to accommodate greater numbers of group visitors.

The formal opening was attended by the presidents of regional motorcoach associations and owners/operators of area motorcoach companies.

The nearly 100-seat lounge provides a comfortable waiting area for motorcoach guests, state-of-the-art digital arrival and departure screens, and a large, well-appointed drivers lounge with seating, TV monitors, a desk for computers, and vending machines close by.

The motorcoach lounge, which also includes a dedicated "total rewards center," connects to the first floor of the casino's new eight-level parking garage, containing five motorcoach bays for pick-up and drop-off of passengers.

The new parking facility also has spaces for 2,311 automobiles.

The motorcoach lounge is a key element in the Earth/water-themed zone of the casino. The bi-

level structure features 460 new electronic games and a 15-seat, full-service bar with seven bar-top games. More than 100 games are designated as non-smoking. To reduce the effects of smoke throughout the casino, a new HVAC system that continuously pumps fresh air into the complex has been installed.

The motorcoach lounge, new parking garages, casino expansion and renovation, and the 21-story Creek Tower of guest rooms and suites are part of a \$633-million expansion.

Scheduled for completion in 2012, Harrahs says the expansion is the most significant hospitality development currently under way in the Southeast and one of the largest in the U.S.

Opening Labor Day weekend will be an events center, with performances by Hank Williams Jr. and Lady Antebellum. That will be followed by new entertainment and VIP lounges, an 18,000-square-foot spa, a digital poker room, Asian gaming room, and a variety of restaurant and retail outlets.

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



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# Tolling existing highways is a bad idea, dangerous too

By Dave Millhouser

It was the shortest of "micro naps," but the consequences were dramatic.

An Eagle, carrying an Ivy League college athletic team, was cruising south on the Connecticut Turnpike one rainy night when the driver momentarily lost focus, and was slow to interpret lights flashing in front of him.

The lights were a toll booth and the driver's sudden attempt to stop caused the coach to slide sideways, slamming into the piers protecting two booths, and ramming the bogey axle halfway through the bus body into the fuel tank.

Miraculously, no one was seriously hurt but the bus was totaled.

The driver, who had a fine record, was fired despite the fact there had been no hint of speeding or log violations.

Connecticut, in one of those rare instances where government actually learns from mistakes, stopped collecting tolls after a number of serious accidents at toll booths. Some were fiery and fatal.

Tolls kill...and they waste enormous amounts of fuel, while adding pollution to the environment.

A wizened (and real smart) transportation executive provided the following information.

In 2006, the National Transportation Safety Board determined:

- 49 percent of all Interstate accidents in Illinois were at toll plazas, and three times

as many people die in them as in accidents on the road itself

- 30 percent of all accidents on the Pennsylvania toll highway system happen at toll plazas

- 38 percent of all crashes on New Jersey toll highways are toll plaza accidents

Electronic toll collection makes the problem worse.

Mohamed Abdel-Aty, associate professor in the department of civil and environmental engineering at Central Florida University, studied the Orlando-Orange County Expressway system in Florida.

Between January 1994 and June 1997, 31.6 percent of all crashes on the expressway system occurred at the 10 main toll plazas and 46.3 percent at the 38 toll booth ramps, Abdel-Aty's research showed.

He found that introducing E-PASS electronic toll collection lanes beside the regular lanes increased the accident rate at the busy Holland-East Mainline Plaza.

Why then are politicians in several states (notably Pennsylvania and Virginia) looking to add tolling to several interstate highways?

Could it be revenue?

Ask yourself (and your elected officials) what would happen if any business decided to cut back on safety to improve profits? Remember the Ford Pinto?

That's exactly what adding tolls would do. Government would gain revenue, but at

the cost of increased highway mayhem. How many folks is it OK to injure or kill to fund the "greater good"?

The hypocrisy is breathtaking, and there isn't space here to go into the whole deal where they create problems, then solve them with our money, or tax us for one thing, and use it for another.

When private enterprise mucks up and hurts people, there are monetary settlements and sometimes jail terms. Government buries its mistakes in statistics.

It seems clear to many that the real crisis is not revenue, it's spending. (Again, I stole that, this time from New Jersey's new governor Chris Christie).

Instead of sneaking about, looking for more "acceptable" sources of revenue, if politicians REALLY believe they need more money, they should have the courage to raise existing fuel taxes.

Gee whiz, fuel taxes raise money efficiently (while a substantial percentage of toll revenue is used to pay toll takers), and also encourages economy and clean air. The folks who use the roads the most pay more. People who buy efficient vehicles pay less. Am I missing something?

The "real" agenda here is to somehow raise revenue without us seeing the big picture. Make it complex and "fair." There are no "business taxes," only hidden taxes. They will never really "substitute" one tax for another. If there is no added revenue, why

bother? It's always a shell game.

An honest approach would involve spending less and raising necessary (but visible) taxes.

That would be a risky position for a politician facing election. Too bad, but it shouldn't

be about their re-election. And guess what, despite what they think, the Republic will not collapse if it is deprived of the "service" of any of the current crop of elected leaders, of either party.

The Wizened Exec who helped with this column told me "tolls were usually a dime and they tore them down once the road was paid for. It is a very different world now. It is likely the era of highway tolling as a good idea for all the right reasons has passed.

"The politicians may say we need more money to build and maintain safe uncongested highways, but what we really need is a priority correction. That will not happen at a toll booth but rather the voting booth."

It seems that the ballot box is the way to stop this nonsense before more micro naps turn into dirt naps.

*Dave Millhouser is a bus industry marketing consultant and freelance writer. Contact him at: dave\_millhouser@hotmail.com.*



Dave Millhouser

## Operator's suit against NYMTA gains support of public official

SOUTHAMPTON, N.Y. — A private motorcoach operator who is suing the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority and several state officials over a new employers' tax has picked up an ally.

The Southampton Town Council has joined in the lawsuit that William Schoolman of Hampton Luxury Liner and Schoolman Transportation Systems filed in December in Suffolk County Supreme Court.

Schoolman claims in his suit that the tax New York MTA put into effect

in March 2009, is unconstitutional.

"It's a bad idea, with bad implications that could not have come at a worse time," said Southampton Councilman Christopher R. Nuzzi. "We're trying to do more with less; we can't afford to bail out the New York transit system."

He said the town already has paid \$155,000 towards the tax.

The tax, which impacts businesses in a dozen counties and boroughs where the MTA operates, requires employers to make annual payments of

.34 percent of their payroll. It was designed to rescue the financially strapped transit agency that was facing a budget shortfall of \$1.8 billion and numerous service reductions.

The court papers filed by the Southampton Town Council allege several violations of the state constitution, including a violation of town home rule powers to transact business without suffering an overly burdensome payroll tax.

Schoolman has maintained that the tax, which costs him about

\$200,000 annually, actually is being used to subsidize his competitors, including Long Island Rail Road, Metro North and several public bus systems.

"This tax hurts my ability to be competitive and profitable," he said when he filed the suit.

Meanwhile, New York news outlets continue to issue reports of seemingly outlandish practices and spending by New York MTA.

One report last month revealed that 8,074 MTA employees earned \$100,000 or more last year. Fifty MTA

employees earned more than \$200,000. And salaries continue rising even as New York City and the state struggle with gaping budget deficits and pile on more billions in debt.

At the same time, MTA is cutting costs by reducing service and may remove cars to save electricity.

Now, New Yorkers who live in the MTA region and drive motor vehicles must pay a new fee when they buy new license plates. An MTA transit surcharge of \$50 has been tacked onto auto registration fees.

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## Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

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# Tax worries seen delaying multi-year highway bill

WASHINGTON — The chances of a long-term highway and public transportation bill winning congressional approval this year are slim, say key Capitol Hill staff members, with several adding that if a bill isn't passed early next year then it may be dead until after the next presidential election.

Trying to write a bill when you can't get a fix on the dollar amount because you don't know your funding source gets to be a difficult thing, said Tom Lynch, staff director of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee's transportation subcommittee.

Currently, there is not a great deal of support (on the Senate finance committee) for doing the things that a lot of people in the transportation community want, such as increasing the fuels tax, said Lynch, who works for the Senate Finance Committee chairman, Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont.

In the absence of something that can supplement or replace the fuel tax, we would have to deal with increasing revenue, and I don't think there's a majority of senators who support that, especially those who perceive an election benefit, Lynch said.

Lynch spoke at the Coalition for Americas Gateways and Trade Corridors annual meeting here.

John Drake, a member of the Democratic staff on the Senate Commerce Committee, said that "despite a lot of talk about getting something this year... I think realistically the conversations for this bill will certainly be next year, when hopefully a lot of the hesitation about how you finance this bill will have subsided."

From the House side of Capitol Hill, Rep. John Mica, R-Fla., top Republican member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, was similarly pessimistic about the chances of Congress agreeing to a fuel tax increase or passing a bill in 2010.

"Let me be candid: There's probably not going to be a transportation bill this year," he said, explaining that raising taxes to pay for it would result in Democrats' defeat at the polls. "If you passed a gas tax now, not only would I be chairman, but there'd be no minority members on the committee."

(UMA's CEO, Victor Parra, agrees there is no appetite for a tax hike.)

Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore., chairman of the House highways subcommittee, said that without an increase in funding, there's not

likely to be a bill, and it has been difficult to even debate funding.

The bottom line is there is a substantial need for an increase in direct investment in the U.S. transportation system on a multimodal basis and that means the t-word, he said, referring to taxes.

"Republicans don't mention

the t-word, nor do they down at the White House... between Republicans and the White House, we aren't able to have a meaningful discussion."

Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., a member of the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee, said he thought, unless there was a deal

quickly, the debate probably would drag on well beyond 2010.

"Unless we get real about how we're going to finance this going forward... we're going to lose not just another construction season, we're going to lose another (session of) Congress," Blumenauer said.

"I'm not particularly sanguine

if this is pushed into the next cycle where it's going to be resolved, with six months to go before a presidential election."

Mica agreed, saying there was probably a five- to six-month window (in 2011) to get stuff before presidential politics made it impossible to pass major legislation.

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## Unbelted drivers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the driver out the door of the bus.

Another occurred just over a year ago in North Carolina and involved a driver in his early 40s who was returning an empty coach from Virginia to a dealer in Florida.

A truck coming in the opposite direction clipped the rear of a passenger vehicle during a lane change, sending the car shooting across the median and into the opposite lane where it was struck by the bus. The bus then veered off the road and smashed into a tree, ejecting the driver out the windshield.

A third took place in Tennessee two years ago. A 63-year-old driver, with more than 30 years experience, was headed for the garage after completing a charter when a semi merged onto the highway in front of him and the two vehicles collided. The collision knocked out the front windshield of the bus and ejected the driver.

Also, three years ago, an unbelted driver, who was described as his company's safest driver, was killed in Louisiana when his empty bus was involved in an accident.

Safety personnel at the bus companies involved in the accidents used the fatalities to emphasize why their drivers must buckle

up whenever they get behind the wheel — regardless of whether they are carrying passengers or driving an empty coach.

"The common excuse that the seatbelt restricts them just doesn't cut it," noted one of them.

The companies have distributed special notices reminding their drivers of their "buckle-up" policies and conducted refresher safety classes to underscore the point. One even displayed a photograph of the bus showing the bent steering wheel and busted windshield where the victim was ejected.

The owner of one of the companies was so concerned he installed

accident recorders on his buses so he could monitor seatbelt usage.

"We wanted all of our drivers to be aware of what can happen when they don't wear their seatbelts," said one operator.

Federal transportation regulators believe seatbelt usage by drivers is so important they have adopted a no-nonsense rule requiring drivers to wear them whenever they get behind the wheel of a commercial vehicle. The rule applies to motorcoaches and trucks, regardless if any passengers or cargo is aboard.

"Whether it is a trucker alone in his or her cab, or a motorcoach

deadheading to the depot, the driver is required by federal regulation to always be buckled up," emphasized FMCSA spokesman Duane DeBruyne.

Insurance executive Crescenzo said while drivers are covered by workers compensation insurance and not a company's main insurance policy, the fact that one of them is not wearing a seatbelt can impact an insurance claim.

For instance, he said, if a bus is legally stopped for a traffic light and is hit from behind, the driver of the other vehicle likely would be at fault.

However, if the impact pushes

the bus forward and the driver is unable to control the bus because of not wearing a seatbelt, then some culpability could go to the driver if someone on the bus or outside of the bus were injured.

"Not wearing a seatbelt certainly could be contributory to the injury," he added.

Crescenzo said the insurance industry's support of the use of seatbelts at all times, though, extends to protecting passengers on the bus and wanting drivers to obey all federal and state rules of the road.

"It's not really complicated," he said.

## Licensing

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

someone has to pay the licensing. Purchasing a DVD or CD only covers private listening or viewing. Once the movie or music is put on a coach entertainment system it becomes a public performance.

The penalty for playing copyrighted music or showing movies without permission can be stiff — very stiff.

U.S. copyright law provides that a court can assess damages from a minimum of \$750 for each work infringed, and require the operator to pay the copyright owners'

attorney fees and court costs, as well as enter an injunction against the violator.

For years, many coach operators have played movies and music without a license, ignoring the law and seemingly not worrying about getting caught.

However, both ASCAP and BMI have field representatives whose sole purpose is to search out businesses playing pre-recorded music publicly without a license.

ASCAP represents approximately 60 percent of all music labels and BMI represents the other 40 percent.

To assure operators are covered

for whatever music they play, it's best to be licensed by both.

A license must be obtained for each coach that plays pre-recorded music for passengers.

UMA has negotiated a 70 percent fee discount for its members with ASCAP and BMI. UMA collects the fees and license agreements from members and passes that information and payments along to ASCAP and BMI.

To inquire about ASCAP and BMI licensing, UMA members can call the association at (800) 424-8262.

Similarly, UMA has negotiated discounts for members with

Motorcoach Movies, which is the sole source of licensing for motorcoach public performances of motion pictures.

UMA members can contact Motorcoach Movies directly at (888) 416-2572 to obtain movie licenses.

It should be noted that even if a company only plays movies (and not recorded music) on its coaches, it still must have ASCAP and BMI music licensing.

That's because Motorcoach Movies only licenses the visual portion of a movie, while ASCAP and BMI licenses apply to the audio portion.

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# Prevost names top sales executive, new-coach team

STE. CLAIRE, Quebec — Prevost has a new top coach sales executive, Robert Goodnight, who joins the company after spending more than 20 years leading manufacturing and operations teams in the chemical and automotive industries.

Goodnight, whose title is vice president of new coach sales, will lead company sales' efforts for Prevost H-series and X3-45 coaches, as well as the Volvo 9700.

Most recently, Goodnight was director, North America diesel operations in the automobile catalyst di-

vision at Umicore/International Catalyst Technology. He was responsible for business development of Umicore's heavy-duty diesel emissions control market in North America.

He also has experience managing automotive/chemical manufacturing plants and engineering teams in the automotive catalyst field.

"Robert will be a great asset to Prevost as the industry moves forward," said Andrew Kankula, Prevost senior vice president for sales and marketing.

"Robert's engineering back-

ground and his dedication to quality and efficiency will lead the sales team in support of motorcoach operators," he added.

Kankula, who joined Prevost last year, also is a former executive at Umicore.

Goodnight holds a bachelor-of-science degree in chemical engineering from the University of South Alabama and an MBA from Business School Netherlands International. In addition, he earned an executive MBA from Vlerick Leuven Management School in Gent, Belgium.

Prevost also announced it had refined its new coach sales staff, which will be coordinated by Goodnight.

David Schmidt, formerly director of the new coach division, becomes regional sales manager responsible for Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, western New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

Recently appointed regional sales manager Ron Rogers will be responsible for Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin.

Other regional sales manager responsibilities as of July 1, include:

- Bill Leonard, sales in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina and Tennessee

- Eloy Torres, sales in Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas

- Tony Febbo, sales in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, and eastern New York

- Ward Hicken, sales in Alaska, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington.

- Keith Hayward, sales in Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, Montana, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

- Glen Gendron, sales in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Yukon.

- Serge Gonthier, sales in New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Quebec.

- Dann Wiltgen, formerly vice president of coach sales, remains vice president of seated coach key accounts, bus shell and pre-owned, a position he moved to last year.

- Goodnight will be based in Greensboro, N.C.

# ABC names G.M., account rep for Northeast

CAMDEN, N.J. — ABC Companies has named Mike Laffan as general manager of its Northeast region and rehired Frank Sorvino as senior account executive for the area.

Laffan began his career at ABC 10 years ago as account executive for New England. In 2003, he joined DATTCO where he worked as sales manager for the school and commercial bus division.

Early in 2007, Laffan returned to ABC as senior account executive for ABC's West region, responsible for sales and customer support in cen-

tral California, Arizona, Utah and Nevada.

Just over a year ago, Laffan came back to the Northeast as senior account executive, covering New Jersey, New York City and Long Island.

As general manager, Laffan will oversee the regional sales team and is responsible for all equipment sales and sales-related activities. He also will manage the day-to-day service and parts operations at ABC's Camden facility.

"I am excited to have this new op-

portunity and feel my expertise and background in this industry will prove beneficial to all of our customers in this region," stated Laffan.

"Mike's experience in our industry and knowledge of his customers' businesses will help provide solutions that meet or exceed their needs," said Dane Cornell, president and CEO of ABC.

Sorvino, who worked for ABC for 17 years before joining Trident, the bus distributor based on Georgia, has rejoined ABC as senior account executive for New Jersey, New York



Mike Laffan



Frank Sorvino

City, Westchester County and Long Island.

During his years at ABC, Sorvino was recognized for his achievements in sales on multiple occasions and for his commitment to customers.

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## Senate support

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

While Rossi hasn't talked about the charter rule yet, many in the industry say they're confident he would be much better than Murray.

"It's 'Anybody but Murray,'" stressed Casazza, who added that he plans to discuss the issue with Rossi as soon as possible, and will invite him to speak to association members at a meeting in July. "We'll push him on the charter issue."

Tom Cook, co-owner of Silver City Charters and Tours in Silverdale, Wash., and one of the most outspoken critics of Murray, said he supported Rossi in his earlier campaigns and he'll do it again this time.

"If he wins the primary, I will be supporting him regardless," he said. "Anything to get her out of there."

Rossi, a former state senator who lost close gubernatorial elections in 2004 and 2008, is given an outstanding chance of surviving the primary, which is an open election in which the two top vote getters regardless of party move on to the general election. Former football player and tea party favorite

Clint Didier and Republican State Senator Don Benton also are in the primary race.

Although Washington voters have not elected a Republican to a U.S. senate seat since 1994, pundits say this could be the year they do it again, especially because of what is perceived as an anti-incumbent wave that is expected to help Republicans.

"If the wave is big, Dino Rossi is going to win. If the wave shrinks, he's probably not going to win," suggested GOP political consultant Chris Vance.

Murray, who was first elected to the senate in 1992, has not cracked 50 percent in a number of polls taken this year and two recent polls put Rossi within easy reach of her in a Nov. 2 general election showdown.

A University of Washington poll released two days before Rossi announced his candidacy showed Murray with 44 percent and Rossi with 40 percent, while an earlier Rasmussen poll had Rossi trailing Murray by just two points, 48 percent to 46 percent.

Vance, writing in a column on the Crosscut website, called Rossi a credible candidate who will energize voters.

"This year, Republicans were faced with the prospect of not having a top-of-the-ticket candidate with any statewide name familiarity or the ability to raise significant campaign money," he said. "That has all changed."

Rossi's campaign web site is [www.dinorossi.com](http://www.dinorossi.com).

### Sodrel loses primary bid

JEFFERSONVILLE, Ind. — Mike Sodrel has missed an opportunity to run again for the U.S. Congress.

The motorcoach/trucking industry executive lost in a three-way race for the Republican nomination for Indiana's 9th congressional district.

Sodrel, who was hoping to face off once again against Democratic Rep. Baron Hill, ran third with 30 percent of the vote. Todd Young was the winner with 34 percent.

Sodrel and Hill have faced each other every two years since 2002 when Hill was elected. Sodrel won the seat in 2004, but Hill won it back in 2006 and held on to it again in 2008.

The Sodrel family operates the Free Enterprise System, a motorcoach company, and Sodrel Truck Lines. Both are based here.

## Opryland

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

November.

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## D.C. permits

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

However, drivers who enter the district without a proper permit on their bus, even if they are headed directly for the DMV to purchase or pickup a permit, could be ticketed if caught by police.

The DMV said if a company needs to make a change to a permit while the driver is on the road headed to the district, revised permits can be faxed directly to the driver at a hotel or to printing or mailing stores that have fax

years," said Gallineau.

"We have chosen to move forward with these improvements now while the facility is closed so we will not need to further interrupt our business at a later date."

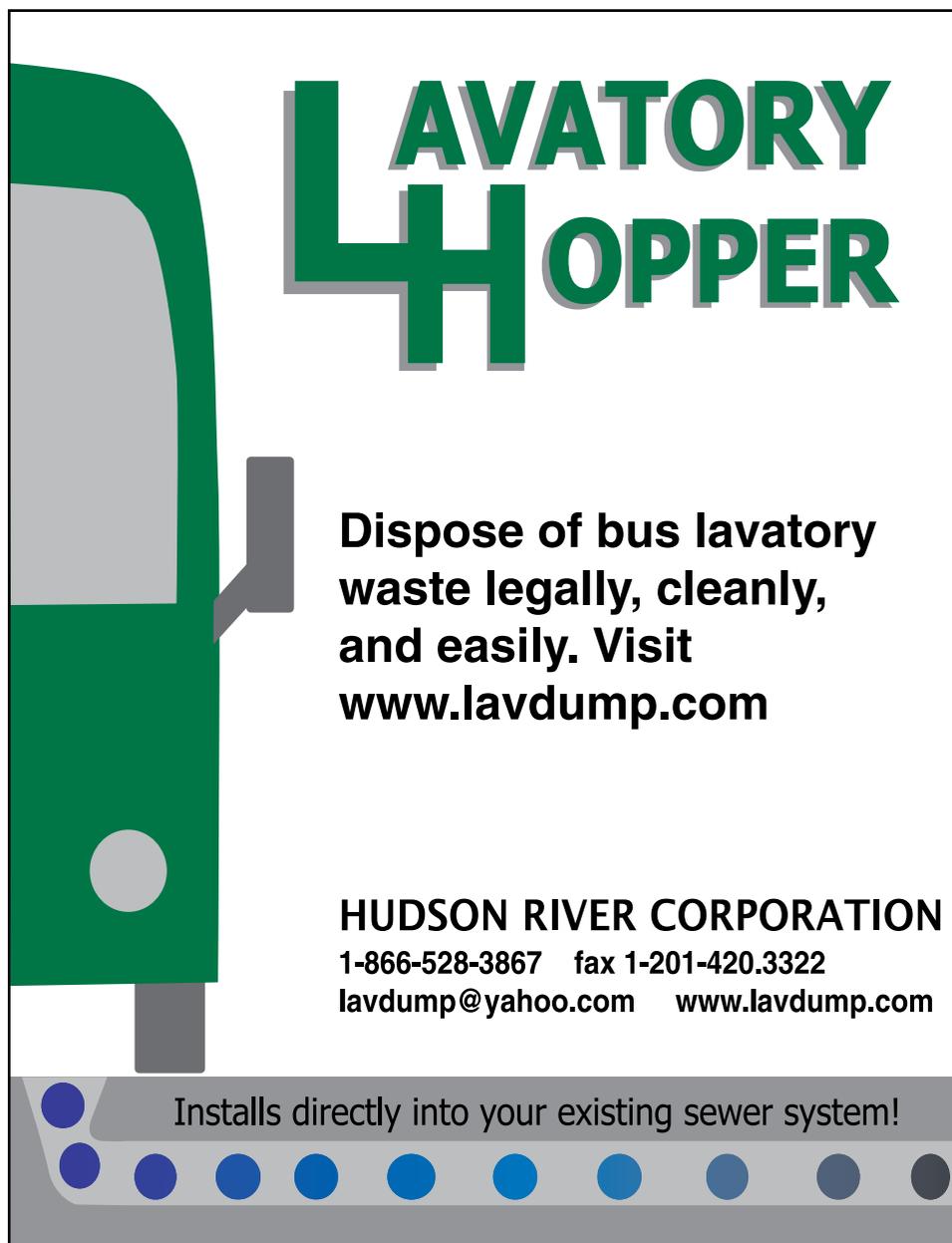
Reconstruction also has begun on the Grand Ole Opry House, the Gaylord Springs Golf Course, the Wildhorse Saloon, and the General Jackson Showboat. These facilities are expected to reopen in the months leading up to hotel's reopening.

Of the more than 329,900 room nights booked for convention travelers at Gaylord Opryland over the next six months, all but 63,000 room nights have been relocated to other Gaylord facilities or with outside companies.

capability.

The permits are bus specific. If a bus having a permit is switched at the last minute, a revised or new permit must be obtained. D.C. officials say this can be done online, via fax or by calling. Additional information and assistance is available at (202) 729-7083.

Operators that have apportioned tags, with the District of Columbia listed, do not need the permits or to purchase them. However, the cab card for that bus must be onboard when it is traveling in the district.



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MCI conducted open houses and a sale of used coaches late last month and early this month at its sales and service centers in the U.S. and Canada. Each location featured a barbecue lunch, service specials, and prizes, including footballs autographed by sports legend John Madden. Plus, there were plenty of ready-to-roll coaches, such as the ones (at top) at the MCI facility in Los Alamitos, Calif., for customers to purchase.



**Red River Coaches is new Trailways network member**

SHREVEPORT, La. — Red River Coaches of Shreveport has joined the Trailways network and, in the process, renewed a family business tradition.

As his family's third generation motorcoach owner/operator, Peter Ramsey, president of Red River, said affiliating with Trailways "is like returning home."

"My grandfather started a bus company in Shreveport back in 1922, and he affiliated with Trailways in the 1930s, right after it organized," he said. "By the end of World War II, he had grown the company to one of the largest independents in America."

Ramsey's grandfather sold the company shortly before his retirement in the 1940s, but family members continued in the business with other motorcoach companies in Arkansas and Missouri.

Ramsey and his wife decided to return to Shreveport in 2006, and pick-up where his grandfather started.

They organized Red River Coaches, which now has five full-

sized motorcoaches and a diversified business that serves church groups, schools, conventions and sporting events. The company also does charter tours across the U.S.

"The economy here in 'Arklatex' is doing well," says Ramsey, "largely because of the boom in natural gas activity. So, we are on-the-grow as well. Texas is only 20 miles away and Arkansas just 30."

"We feel it is a natural for us to affiliate with Trailways because of our own family history with the organization, and because it offers us a great network of other operators who can provide us with business advice and help — while on the road," said Ramsey, who has changed the company name to Red River Trailways.

He also looks forward to participating in Trailways' national transportation contracts and other initiatives.

"More than anything, we know Trailways gives us the respected name recognition my grandfather used to grow his company many decades ago."



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## Walking tour is announced for historic Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA — Uncle Sam's Walking Tours, a leading provider of New York City walking and specialty tours, has launched a "Trail to Independence" walking tour here.

The tour of historic Philadelphia highlights the more personal history of those who fought, worked, provided for and encouraged the American quest for independence, the company said in its announcement.

"What makes this tour unique," said Myron Baer, chief operating officer, "is that we cover the popular and not so popular folklore. For example, we talk about Washington, as well as Ben Bache, editor of the American Aurora and grandson of Ben Franklin, who wrote much against Washington and Adams and who would die in pris-

on over it. As our motto says, we like guests to 'to go home with a story,'" said Baer.

Sights along the tour include Independence Hall, Washington Square, the First and Second Bank of the United States, American Aurora, Carpenter Hall, Ben Franklin Court, the Franklin Post Office, Christ Church, the Betsy Ross House, and the Grave of Benjamin Franklin.

Trail to Independence tours last approximately 90 minutes and depart daily from the Independence Visitors Center at 11:15 a.m., 1:15 and 3:15 p.m.

The tour retails for \$20 for adults, \$16 for seniors, \$6 for children, and military free with ID.

For more information, call (888) 379-8127, or go to [www.unclesamsnewyork.com](http://www.unclesamsnewyork.com).

## Calendar

### JUNE 2010

**14-17 Pennsylvania Bus Association Annual Meeting**, Marriott Chesapeake, Chesapeake, Va. Info: [www.pabus.org](http://www.pabus.org).

**21-22 United Motorcoach Association Mid-Year Board Meeting**, Orlando, Fla. Info: Call (800) 424-8262.

**24-27 New England Bus Assn. Annual Meeting**, By the Bay Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center, Portland, Maine. Info: go to [www.newenglandbus.com](http://www.newenglandbus.com).

### JULY 2010

**25-27 Georgia Motorcoach Association Annual Meeting & Marketplace**, Chattanooga, Tenn. Marriott at the Convention Center. Info: go to [www.gamotorcoachoperators.org](http://www.gamotorcoachoperators.org).

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