

Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE BUS INDUSTRY

As Wi-Fi usage soars, operators scramble to control costs

About six months ago, Ira Steinberg, co-owner of Brookfield, Conn.-based Coach Tours, thought somebody had figured out a way to tap into the Wi-Fi system on his coaches because the company's data use was soaring.

But that wasn't the case. Customers were just using more data — a lot more.

Late last year, "it started to creep up and then this spring, it just took off," Steinberg said.

"As things change and as more and more devices are Wi-Fi capable and they do more and more stuff, the data usage just took off and I've never seen anything like it before," he said.

Customers often carry more

than one Wi-Fi capable device, including smartphones, tablets, laptops, headphones and activity trackers.

And it's not just young people who want Wi-Fi. Seniors do, too, Steinberg said.

Coach Tours, with 22 buses, isn't alone in seeing Wi-Fi usage increase.

"They're all talking about it," Tom Ready, general manager of La Crescent, Minn.-based Ready Bus Co., said of fellow operators.

Ready said motorcoach operators need to cover their costs for providing ever more bandwidth to customers.

"The airlines charge you to sit in a wider seat now; it's the same

model," Ready said, adding that people are accustomed to paying for such things. "That's the model that we use and I would strongly urge all our members to do the same thing."

Customers expect Wi-Fi and will pay for it, he said, noting that about 75 to 80 percent of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11 ►

Bus company at ground zero in Canadian wildfire

FORT MCMURRAY, Alberta — Diversified Transportation LLC is in the business of moving workers between their homes in Fort McMurray and the oil sands mining operations to the north.

In recent weeks, however, the motorcoach company has been focused on evacuating those workers as a major wildfire rages through western Canada's Alberta province.

"Our buses are the first in and the last out," said Mark Hannah, oil sands vice president for Diversified Transportation, a division of Pacific Western Transportation.

Since the out-of-control forest fire started in early May, Diversi-

fied has used about 200 motorcoaches to move more than 80,000 workers from the mining camps to Edmonton and Calgary.

Diversified also has had to move its fleet out of the path of the wildfire, which often shifts direction unexpectedly, three times.

As of late May the company had suffered no losses.

"All of our employees are safe and accounted for and all of our equipment is OK," Hannah said, adding that the company has 700 employees, five maintenance and office facilities and about 600 buses. "We've had no asset damages."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 ►



Diversified Transportation LLC's motorcoaches were the first ones in and the last ones out to evacuate workers from the oil sands mining operations in Alberta, Canada, when a major wildfire threatened the area.

FMCSA pursuing 6-year-old fine against former operator

TULSA, Okla. — When it comes to cracking down on motorcoach operators, federal regulators sometimes just won't give up.

Take, for example, the case of KrafTours Corporation of Tulsa. In 2010, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration accused one of the company's drivers of operating without a license and levied a fine against KrafTours.

The company disputed the charge, arguing that the driver was unaware that his license had been

suspended. Since then, the driver has died of cancer and KrafTours has stopped operating.

That, it seemed, was the end of that.

Not so fast, says FMCSA, which recently renewed its 6-year-old effort to extract a fine from the company.

The case was resurrected earlier this year when FMCSA Agency Counsel Matthew J. Hardy issued a "Field Administrator's Reply to Interim Order" in the

docket matter concerning KrafTours Corporation. The notice renewed a "Notice of Claim" filed on September 21, 2010, for an alleged violation of federal safety regulations on August 13, 2010.

The action was described as vindictive and embarrassing by Michael A. Kraft, the carrier's operator and attorney, in a caustic response filed with FMCSA.

"Because any comment, even a whisper, about this matter has been non-existent for most of six

years, Respondent, KrafTours Corporation, is not so much surprised as disappointed that its government, while lamenting endlessly about budgetary shortfalls and increased responsibility nevertheless has found time, energy and resources to pursue a stale claim that might have rightfully faded into the deep recesses of the FMCSA's D.C. computer system but for a reawakening by Assistant Administrator, Mr. (John) Van Steenburg," his filing states.

FMCSA charged that the 2010 violation occurred when "Respondent knowingly allowed, required, permitted or authorized its driver to operate a CMV in commerce, from Oklahoma to Tennessee, at a time when that driver's CMV license had been suspended by the State of Oklahoma."

Kraft, serving as his own attorney, denied the accusation and insisted that neither he nor the driver was "knowingly" aware of the sus-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 ►

THE RIGHT PRE-OWNED COACH FOR YOUR NEEDS

ALL MAKES & MODELS AVAILABLE

<https://www.prevostrcar.com/pre-owned>

Contact for more information:

Eloy Torres
866-773-8678
CENTRAL U.S.

Carl Stevens
800-874-7740
EAST U.S.

Tom Crowl
800-421.9958
WEST U.S.

Michel Dery
800.870.2046
CANADA



PREVOST

PERMIT NO 1424
PHOENIX AZ
US POSTAGE PAID
PRESORT STD

Postmaster: Please deliver before or on June 15

CHECK US OUT ON

facebook®

VAN HOOOL

- **QUOTES & TRIVIA**
- **PARTS & SERVICE SPECIALS**
- **GIVEAWAYS**
- **LATEST EVENTS**
- **TRAINING TIPS & VIDEOS**
- **INTERESTING INDUSTRY PHOTOS**
- **WORDS OF WISDOM FROM OUR FOUNDER,
CLANCY CORNELL**



'LIKE US' TODAY
FIRST 50 LIKES RECEIVES A
CX35 DIECAST MODEL!*
[facebook.com/ABCbusCompanies](https://www.facebook.com/ABCbusCompanies)

GET ON BOARD

With



*Employees, vendors and suppliers not eligible.

Exclusive U.S. VAN HOOOL Distributor

Trailways ends yearlong search, names Eva Hotard CEO

FAIRFAX, Va. — Two well-known names in the passenger transportation industry — Hotard and Trailways — have joined forces as Eva M. Hotard takes over as president and CEO of the Trailways Transportation System, Inc.

Hotard succeeds Gale C. Ellsworth, who had retired last year after serving nearly two decades as president and CEO of Trailways, only to return as acting president when her replacement, Sheila D. Ryba, left the organization after fewer than two months on the job.

A search committee composed of Trailways board members unanimously selected Hotard from more than 400 applicants.

“Eva ran a very successful bus

company. She has been in the business for many years, worked her way up through the ranks and has a wonderful reputation as a talented business leader,” said Trailways Chairman Ron R. Moore, president of Burlington Trailways in West Burlington, Iowa.

“She knows all of the trials and tribulations that independent bus companies go through,” Moore said. “Eva clearly understands everything about the industry. We selected her because of her experience and her leadership skills. Like Gale, Eva is passionate about the industry.”

Hotard, who spent nearly 30 years with her family’s business, Hotard Coaches, most recently

worked as a management consultant and executive coach.

The Hotard family has been in the bus business since 1935, when Etienne Hotard launched a line-run service between the Eastbank River Parishes of Louisiana and New Orleans. In 1960, Eva’s father started Hotard Coaches as a one-bus operation offering scheduled service between Vacherie, La., and New Orleans. It later became known for its charter transportation services.

Eva Hotard, one of nine siblings, all of whom worked in the



Eva Hotard

family business at one point, started her career with Hotard Coaches in 1977. She was named general manager in 1984 and president and CEO in 1993, a position she held until 2004.

Hotard had overall responsibility for the operating entities, two leasing entities and a partnership with land holdings. Under her leadership, Hotard Coaches grew from a three-vehicle operation to a fleet of more than 100 vehicles. It became one of the largest travel services companies in the Gulf South, with offices in New Orleans and Baton Rouge, La.; Biloxi, Miss.; and Washington, D.C.

During her leadership tenure, the Hotard family businesses ex-

panded to include a destination management company for large themed events and meetings, purchased a receptive tour operator, and gained 50 percent ownership (in partnership with the New Orleans Steamboat Company) of Gray Line of New Orleans, a sight-seeing company.

She also led company initiatives to develop a customer-service monitoring system, customized operating and fleet management software, convention sales systems and a system for training drivers.

In 2005, Hotard drew upon her experience hiring and training key managers to execute growth strategies when she became a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13 ►

UMA’s enhanced website offers more content, functionality

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — There is good news for United Motorcoach Association members: UMA has launched its new website.

The new site (the Web address remains www.uma.org) is extremely user friendly and features much more content and functionality than the previous version.

The site is well-organized and frequently updated with news, industry information and social media.

UMA’s goal with the new site is to provide a more functional and interactive place for members and the general public to learn about the motorcoach industry and have access to resources.

There also is a dedicated portion of the site for members, who can log in and download important documents and find other helpful resources. With the revamped website, the momentum following the recent successful UMA Motorcoach EXPO and Capitol Hill Days can easily continue online.

As members explore the site, they will see that they now have a hub to get operator guides, training and other documents. The members-only section is packed with resources and benefits to help UMA members run their businesses.

“We want to create another avenue for our visitors and members

to easily connect with the association,” said UMA President and CEO Victor Parra.

“It is important that our members stay knowledgeable and well trained. This revamped website is another example of UMA doing everything possible to ensure that our members are successful.”

SERVICE
CLAIMS
SAFETY

COVERAGE THAT REVOLVES AROUND YOU

INTEGRITY
INNOVATION
EXCELLENCE
STABILITY
RELATIONSHIPS
EXPERIENCE



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Protective Insurance Company, rated A+ (Superior) by A.M. Best, has been providing specialized insurance policies to the transportation industry since 1950. Our hands-on approach to insurance allows us to understand the needs of our customers and form long-standing partnerships. We have a strong safety culture, a tenured Claims Department and superior customer service standards.

Here are just a few of the benefits Protective offers:

- Outstanding cash flow payment options
- Superior claims service
- Ability to package all lines of coverage, including auto liability, general liability, physical damage and workers’ compensation
- Dedicated Loss Prevention & Safety Services Team that specializes in the transportation industry

 **Protective**
Insurance Company

protectiveinsurance.com

FOR COVERAGE THAT REVOLVES AROUND YOU, CONTACT STACY RENZ: (800) 644-5501 x2570

EXCELLENCE IN: FLEET TRUCKING | PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION | WORKERS’ COMPENSATION | INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

THE DOCKET

Millions of workers will soon qualify for overtime pay

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Labor has unveiled a long-awaited rule that will make millions of American worker eligible for overtime pay.

The rule, which will take effect Dec. 1, will double the threshold at which executive, administrative and professional employees are exempt from overtime pay to \$47,476 from the current \$23,660.

That's expected to make 4.2 million additional workers eligible to receive time-and-a-half wages for each hour they put in beyond 40 a week.

Labor Secretary Thomas Perez said the current overtime threshold was originally intended to exempt high-paid executives but instead has denied overtime to low-level retail supervisors and entry-level office workers who often toil 50 to 70 hours a week.

"Too few people are getting the overtime that (federal law) intended," he said. "It's simply not right."

Vice President Joe Biden called the change a critical part of the White House's goal of "restoring and expanding access to the middle class. The middle class is get-

ting clobbered."

Middle-class wages

The rule represents the Obama administration's most prominent initiative to lift middle-class wages. President Obama's call to raise the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to more than \$10 has been stymied by Republicans in Congress.

The share of full-time workers who qualify for overtime has fallen from 62 percent in 1975 to 7 percent today, according to the administration. Under the new rule, 35 percent of workers will qualify.

While some businesses welcome the measure, many say it will simply force them to reshuffle salaries to get around the regulation. Others fear it will mean demoting white-collar workers and altering workplace cultures.

Many companies expect to convert salaried workers to hourly employees who will need to punch a clock and track their hours, hurting morale in some cases because salaried, exempt positions are often considered more prestigious, even if they aren't high-paying positions.

Some companies will likely maintain the status of salaried em-

ployees, but will still have to monitor their hours and net the extra pay for when they log more than 40 hours.

Others will lift workers' base pay to the new threshold to avoid paying overtime.

Part-time help

Many small businesses say they can't absorb the added cost and will instruct employees to work no more than 40 hours a week, bringing on part-time workers to pick up the slack, said Dan Bosch, head of regulatory policy for the National Federation of In-

dependent Business.

Perez said that will still be a plus because it will restore leisure time to overworked employees.

Some businesses plan to cut base employee pay to offset the overtime, effectively skirting the requirement.

"The Obama rule puts a huge cost and regulatory burden on employers, who will face pressure to cut back on benefits and full-time employees," said Trey Kovacs, policy analyst with the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

But U.S. Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif., said it's "long overdue," adding that "millions of employees are working long hours without fair compensation."

Concessions made

The administration, which initially proposed the rule last summer, did make concessions in response to the 270,000 public comments it received. For one thing, it lowered the new salary threshold to \$47,476 from the proposed \$50,544.

It also is allowing employers to apply bonuses and incentive payments to up to 10 percent of the new salary threshold. The threshold also will be updated every three years instead of annually, rising to \$51,000 on Jan. 1, 2020.

Perez said the new rule also clarifies the types of duties white-collar employees must perform to be exempt. That potentially makes eligible an additional 8.9 million workers now misclassified, he said, such as certain administrative employees who don't supervise anyone.

The Labor Department proposed the new rule last July and accepted comments from interested parties through September 4. The more than 270,000 comments it received helped shape the final rule.

Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse delayed

WASHINGTON — The projected publication date for the proposed Commercial Driver's License Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse has been pushed back 13 days, from August 16 to August 29, according to the Department of Transportation's monthly regulatory update.

The rule would establish a database of CDL holders who have failed or refused a drug test and would require carriers to upload

the information to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration annually.

Carriers also would be required to check the database when hiring drivers.

One other pending regulation that would require speed limiters on large commercial vehicles, which has been awaiting Office of Management and Budget approval for a year, is expected to be published before the end of

June.

FMCSA also reminds operators that the congressionally mandated Unified Registration System that became effective last December for new entrants will also apply to existing registrants beginning on September 30.

Another proposed rulemaking that is expected to be published early next year would include MAP-21 enhancements and other updates to the URS.

RESORTS CASINO HOTEL IN ATLANTIC CITY



Enjoy the hottest slots and table games, Atlantic City's largest standard rooms, exceptional dining, retail shopping and great entertainment! The fun is here at Resorts Casino Hotel in Atlantic City!

Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville entertainment complex featuring a year-round LandShark Bar & Grill on the beach, new Margaritaville restaurant just off the casino floor, themed Margaritaville slot area, retail shops & more.



ARRIVE FOR THE DAY OR AN OVERNIGHT STAY!

RESORTS
Casino · Hotel
The Fun is Here

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION
MEG LEWIS: 609-340-7715

YOU CAN ALSO EARN & USE
YOUR COMP DOLLARS AT



A Mohegan Sun PROPERTY

Facebook /ResortsAC | ResortsAC.com | 1.800.772.9000 | Bet with your head not over it. Gambling Problem? Call 1.800.GAMBLER.

ARE YOU MOVING? RETURN TO SENDER. UNDELIVERABLE MAIL WILL BE RETURNED TO THE POST OFFICE.

Don't miss a single issue!

Call 866-930-8421 or email changes to: ebalm@busandmotorcoachnews.com

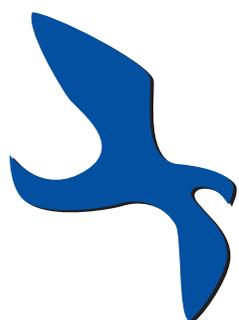
Financing & Leasing Since 1978

Not Just a Resource ... But Resourceful



Coach Financing and Leasing Specialists

- Coach and School Bus Financing Terms Up to 84 Months
- Balloons and Skip Monthly Payments Available
- 100% Financing Available to Qualified Credits
- Low Fixed Rate Equipment Refinancing
- Fleet refinancing
- Used Equipment Financing
- Trac Leases Available



Shore Funding Ltd.

1161 Broad Street, Suite 214, Shrewsbury, NJ 07702

www.shorefundingltd.com

800.542.7467

info@shorefundingltd.com

732.389.7500



Casino charter crashes prompt government regulations

WASHINGTON — Even before a charter bus headed to a casino crashed in Texas recently, killing eight people, casino-bound buses were on the federal government's radar.

That one-vehicle rollover last month near Laredo has raised questions — and a possible lawsuit — about whether casinos that hire charter buses are responsible when those operators skirt safety rules.

Similar lawsuits have been successful in the past. Last month, for example, a Dallas County jury

ordered the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma to pay \$11 million to the families of two women who were killed in 2013 when a chartered bus crashed on the way to a casino.

Even before the Texas crash, the U.S. Department of Transportation issued new rules aimed at further stemming the tide of bus crashes, some of which have occurred on trips to and from New York and Mohegan Sun Casino in Uncasville, Conn.

The rules are aimed at keeping

riders within the confines of a bus after a crash, or “mitigating occupant ejection,” as the DOT put it in a press release.

In 2013, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration stipulated that new buses must have seat belts beginning later this year. And, in 2014, NHTSA directed bus lines to improve structural integrity so windows and emergency exits don't pop out and become “ejection portals” during a rollover.

The rules issued last month are performance requirements for

windows and roof panels, as well as testing guidelines that include propelling an “impactor” weighing 57 pounds toward a bus window at 13.4 mph.

To pass, windows would have to stand up to projectiles measuring four inches, or displacement of 6.9 inches if the test glass is pre-broken.

Emergency exit latches would have to prove functional after a crash and be designed so as not to hinder exit.

Bus crashes have been a source

of concern in Connecticut because of two instances of accidents on routes to and from New York City and the casino.

In 2011, a bus returning from the casino careened off a Bronx roadway and killed 15. The driver, who had been accused of falling asleep at the wheel, was acquitted of manslaughter charges.

Earlier this year, a bus heading to the casino hit a guardrail and flipped in the snow on Interstate 95 in Madison. A total of 36 passengers were injured, some critically.

Trucker association asks for delay in sleep apnea rule

GRAIN VALLEY, Mo. — The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association has requested an extension to submit comments about the obstructive sleep apnea advanced notice of proposed rulemaking so it can properly review results from a yet-to-be released survey.

OOIDA Executive Vice President Todd Spencer submitted a letter to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Scott Darling and the Federal Railroad Administration's Sarah Feinberg requesting an extension until August

to file comments.

Spencer said the American Transportation and Research Institute initiated a survey that will provide a comprehensive look at the impact of obstructive sleep apnea screening and treatment within the motor carrier community, which is beyond the information that any one carrier can provide.

The results of the survey are expected to be released this month.

“With this data in hand, OOIDA will be able to present a better analysis of the information requested

by the advanced notice of proposed rulemaking,” Spencer wrote.

“Immediately upon release of the study, OOIDA staff will begin our evaluation of the data. We then require the opportunity to compile our findings and share those with our members, as well as time to elicit feedback from our members. OOIDA members consist of individuals who have very full schedules on a daily basis. To complete this process properly and provide useful feedback to the Agencies, we require sufficient time.”

FMCSA and FRA published the advanced notice of proposed rulemaking about a potential sleep apnea regulation on March 10. Since then, the agencies have solicited comments from members of the trucking, motorcoach and medical industries about the issue. Public listening sessions on the topic took place in Washington, D.C., Chicago and Los Angeles.

Spencer said any rule regarding sleep apnea testing would strongly affect OOIDA's members.

“OOIDA's members are pri-

marily small business owners, and they collectively own and operate more than 200,000 individual heavy-duty trucks,” Spencer wrote. “They will be greatly impacted by any rule relating to screening and treatment for obstructive sleep apnea, along with the majority of truck owners. With 90 percent of carriers being comprised of six trucks or less, this concern is substantial. As such, we have the responsibility to thoroughly assess all data available on obstructive sleep apnea.”



Quality Pre-Owned Vehicles

Looking for a Volvo?

2010 Volvo 9700s available from CH Bus Sales!



\$159,500

- Volvo powertrain
- 6-like models available: Orlando, FL
- New white paint
- Low mileage
- 54 passenger with restroom
- 4 flip-down monitors

Financing Available. Actual mileage and additional options may vary by VIN

Call 877-723-4045 or contact your CH Bus Account Executive to order!

www.chbussales.com/pre-owned-coaches



Highway 83 seen as future driverless vehicle corridor

BISMARCK, N.D. — An 1,885-mile stretch of U.S. Highway 83 that runs through the Midwest from Canada to Mexico is being envisioned as an “Autonomous Friendly Corridor” for driverless vehicles.

North Dakota technology talk show host Marlo Anderson and the Central North Trade Corridor Association have been working since 2014 on the project.

The corridor, which Anderson calls “underused,” runs through North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. It crosses the northern border into Manitoba and touches the southern tip of the United States, ending at Mexico.

Under the current plan, the autonomous highway would be the first in the United States to allow driverless vehicles to transport cargo and passengers.

“Our areas are all kind of landlocked,” Anderson said. “Our country was founded east to west so, generally speaking, trying to go north-south is really, really difficult.”

While a vehicle driving itself isn’t unheard of — Google, for example, has been using autonomous cars since 2009 — a specific highway for the technology to share the road with human-operated vehicles is new.

The Central North Trade Corridor Association, a volunteer organization, is not alone in its thinking. In January, U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced that President Obama proposed \$3.9 billion over the next 10 years to develop innovations for self-driving vehicles. The proposal has not yet gone through Congress.

U.S. Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, spoke last month at a committee hearing about the potential benefits of driverless vehicles.

“Full, self-driving cars will be here sooner than we think,” Thune said in his opening remarks. “We are facing an opportunity to expand (vehicle technology) while also making it smarter and safer.”

Anderson’s ideal test run would be driving — or rather not driving — from Bismarck, N.D., to Pierre, S.D., on Highway 83. He hopes for a test run in 2017.

“That’s what we’re going for, but there’s a lot that has to be ironed out between now and then,” he said. “But it’s possible. The technology is there.”

Only seven states have legislation regarding autonomous vehi-

cles. North Dakota approved a measure last year allowing a study about which, if any, laws need to be changed to accommodate automated vehicles and to research how they could reduce traffic accidents and congestion and improve fuel economy.

Autonomous vehicles would obey the laws of driving, Anderson said. “So it stops at stop signs, goes the speed limit,” he said.

While that might mean safer roads, it also means that “Americans need to be comfortable being passengers in their own vehicles,”

as Thune put it.

Anderson, who has been a passenger in 20 or so autonomous vehicles said, “It’s like getting in the car with a new driver. It’s a little uncomfortable at first, but when you see how good they drive, you relax.”

Anderson and the corridor as-

sociation are working toward creating a coalition of the six states and Canada.

“It’s pretty strong now between Canada and North Dakota,” Anderson said. “This will set a footprint for the rest of the country to follow.”

TO HELP YOUR BUSINESS, IT GOES TO GREAT LENGTHS. AND HEIGHTS.

Three heights. Three lengths. Three engine choices. Transit has the most vehicle configurations in its class.* Not to mention best-in-class cargo height in the high-roof Transit.** No wonder it's America's best-selling full-size commercial van.†

THE 2016 FORD TRANSIT
/// FORD.COM

BUILT Ford TOUGH

Medium roof shown. Available features and aftermarket equipment shown.

*Class is Full-Size Vans based on Ford segmentation. (Based on body type, body length, wheelbase and roof height.) **Class is Full-Size Van based on Ford segmentation. †Based on total U.S. reported sales (2015 CY).

Independent hotels have their sites set on Millennials

By **Stephanie Ricca**
Hotel News Now

Independent hotels and Millennials just may be a match made in heaven, thanks to the popularity of authentic local experiences among today's travelers.

And while unique experiences aren't reserved for Millennials alone, independent hoteliers are noticing that this valuable cohort is more and more tuned in to experiential travel, so they're offering specialized marketing in the form of themed promotions and other content designed to attract them.

The Little River Inn in Mendocino, Calif., had Millennials specifically in mind when it launched its "Meet Mendocino" website last summer to showcase what general manager Cally Dym calls "truly, our 'favorites' list around the region."

Meetmendocino.com developed out of Dym and her team's desire to share curated itineraries with younger, newer guests who might not know the area.

"We've been around a very long time, and one of the happier challenges we have is figuring out how to keep evolving and updating and keeping current, while still not appearing to change," she said. "Millennials are the upcoming travel group and we want to capture them now, so they build memories here."

The itineraries and recommendations on the site include things like hiking trails, wine bars and sports. Many of the recommendations are destinations at the hotel, like the Little River Inn Bar, but they're not limited only to the hotel's venues and activities, nor are they limited only to partners the hotel has relationships with.

That's on purpose, Dym said.

Convention and visitor bureau sites often include content limited to paid partners, for example, which isn't always the most helpful to the traveler.

"On this site, we included exactly what we think is best," she said.

That might mean it includes a bar the chef likes or a hiking trail a team member recommends.

The site makes no overt mentions of the Little River Inn, and it also lists other hotels as well.

"The soul of the site really isn't about marketing; it's about what's cool here," Dym said. "We wanted to grow it organically."

With a growing number of young people traveling to the area, she said the site has been a success in reinforcing local experiences — something the hotel has always considered part of its DNA.

Often, content attractive to Millennial travelers is right in a hotel's backyard.

That was the case for New Mexico's Heritage Hotels & Resorts, which operates nine inde-

pendent hotels in the state. Maresa Thompson, Heritage's marketing and creative director, developed promotions around the TV shows "Breaking Bad" and "Better Call Saul," which just so happen to appeal to Millennial travelers, she said.

"Because the shows were filmed here, we thought it would be fun to put together some unique packages to target people interested in the shows, and we sell a lot of them," she said.

Authenticity is the backbone of all the company's promotions and PR campaigns at its hotels, and Thompson said that resonates particularly well with Millennials.

"We focus on psychographics and interests (when creating promotions and packages), but where we're moving, particularly with technology and the way we're marketing, is hitting more of that Millennial traveler," she said. "It's a way to make that person more of our audience and that's only going to grow."

The "Breaking Bad" and "Bet-

ter Call Saul" packages gain traction among Millennials in part because Heritage is pushing them out through social channels rather than more traditional paid marketing, she said.

Knowing what area attractions will bring Millennials to town helps with content, too.

Ingrid Summerfield, president of Filament Hospitality, which operates more than 15 independent hotels mostly located in California, Utah, Wyoming and Hawaii, said the company targets promotions to specific age groups when the situation warrants it.

"In Palm Springs, Calif., for example, there are reasons why a younger age group may come to our property (the V Palm Springs) at certain times, like during the Coachella (music festival)," she said. "So we'll create very specific packages that speak to that age group."

A hotel's price point is another factor that influences traveler profile, and independent hoteliers are developing content targeted to

Millennials at hotels that may be friendlier on their wallets.

"Price does factor in, along with general mood of the property," Summerfield said. "Millennials aren't going to go to a stuffy hotel."

She cited Filament's Basecamp hotels (with locations in Lake Tahoe and Tahoe City, with a Boulder, Colo., location opening soon), which offer bunk-style rooms and a cozy-cabin vibe, which attracts younger people to the area.

Thompson said Heritage also matches programming with a hotel's price point.

"We see our Millennial travelers are staying at our economy properties and they may be more price-conscious than our non-Millennial travelers, so that factors into our programming," she said.

Summerfield also said that across the board, encouraging community space at independent hotels is another way to attract Millennial and Millennial-minded travelers.

"We create public spaces and programming that allows for engagement and for people to hang out," she said. "It might be s'mores by the fire or ping pong by the breakfast room. Our properties are designed to encourage social interaction."

All three hotel officials stressed that while certain properties and promotions may have inherent appeal for younger Millennial travelers, independent hotels are designed to appeal to the Millennial mindset, whatever the traveler's age.

Stephanie Ricca heads the day-to-day operations for Hotel News Now's content initiatives. She has nearly a decade of experience in hotel trade journalism, most recently serving as editor-in-chief at Hotel Management magazine.

Responding to online hotel reviews is good — to a point

ITHACA, N.Y. — A new study from Cornell University suggests that hotel guests appreciate substantive responses to negative reviews, but operators should go easy on review responses.

The study found that revenue levels increase as the number of management responses increases, but only to a point. After about a 40 percent response rate, hotels seem to reach a point of diminishing returns.

The study, "Hotel Performance Impact of Socially Engaging with Consumers," was conducted by Chris Anderson, an associate professor at the Cornell School of

Hotel Administration, and Saram Han, a doctoral student.

"We see that hotel managers generally want to interact with guests who post reviews online, but the question remains of exactly how to do that," Anderson said.

"We ran several tests of what happens when the hotels respond to reviews posted on TripAdvisor. For one thing, simply encouraging reviews is related to an improvement in a hotel's TripAdvisor ratings, compared to competitors."

Anderson and Han found that the simple fact that managers respond to reviews leads to im-

proved sales and revenue when consumers click through from TripAdvisor to the hotel's listing at online travel agents.

"However, we found a cautionary situation," Anderson said. "It turns out that making too many responses is worse than offering no response at all, in terms of both ratings and revenue. So, managers should focus on making constructive responses to negative reviews rather than simply acknowledging positive comments."

The study can be read at <http://scholarship.sha.cornell.edu/chrreports/10/>.

How to contact us

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

E-mail: hmattern@busandmotorcoachnews.com

Fax: (602) 559-4153

Mail: 2235 E. Lincoln Way
Phoenix, AZ 85020

Call: (602) 535-5952

To subscribe or inquire about your subscription:

E-mail: ebalm@busandmotorcoachnews.com

Fax: (405) 942-6201

Mail: 3108 NW 54th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

Call: (866) 930-8421

To advertise: Interested in placing an ad, and new to Bus & Motorcoach News?

Call: Jamie Williams at (352) 333-3393

E-mail: JWilliams@naylor.com

Existing advertisers, or to submit advertising materials:

Call: Johnny Steger at (866) 930-8426

E-mail: jsteger@busandmotorcoachnews.com

Mail: 2200 N. Yarbrough, Suite B
Box No. 336, El Paso, TX 79925

To contact the United Motorcoach Association:

Call: (800) 424-8262

Online: www.uma.org

Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE UNITED MOTORCOACH ASSOCIATION

ISSUE NO. 309

Staff

Editor & Publisher: Victor Parra

Senior Editor: Hal Mattern

Sales Director: Johnny Steger

Industry Editor: Ken Presley

Associate Editor: Ellen Balm

Art Director: Mary E. McCarty

Editorial Assistant:
Maggie Vander Eems

Editorial Assistant:
Meghan O'Brien

Accountant: Ted Williford

Advisory Board

William Allen
Amador Trailways
Sacramento, Calif.

Brian Annett
Annett Bus Lines
Sebring, Fla.

James Brown Sr.
Magic Carpet Tours
Richmond, Va.

Dave Dickson
Elite Coach
Ephrata, Pa.

Gladys Gillis
Starline Luxury Coaches
Seattle

Bob Greene
Amaya-Astron Seating
Omaha, Neb.

Larry Hundt
Great Canadian Trailways
Kitchner, Ontario

Dale Krapf
Krapf Coaches
West Chester, Pa.

Joan Libby
Cavalier Coach Trailways
Boston, Mass.

Marcia Milton
First Priority Trailways
District Heights, Md.

David Moody
Holiday Tours
Randleman, N.C.

Michael Neustadt
Coach Tours
Brookfield, Conn.

Jeff Polzien
Red Carpet Charters
Oklahoma City

Tom Ready
Ready Bus Lines
LaCrescent, Minn.

Ray Sargoni
Gray Lines of San Francisco
San Francisco

Brian Scott
Escot Bus Lines
Largo, Fla.

Tim Stout
Stout's Transportation
Ewing, N.J.

Dennis Strief
Vandalia Bus Lines
Caseville, Ill.

Alan Thrasher
Thrasher Brothers Trailways
Birmingham, Ala.

Tim Wayland
ABC Companies
Faribault, Minn.

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

Traveling backwards through Washington with regulators

By Dave Millhouser

My buddy Johnny owned a sightseeing company in Washington, D.C. One night (many years ago so it's long past the statute of limitations), he got a phone call from a driver.

He said the automatic transmission in his MC8 had betrayed him and refused to engage any gear but reverse.

Johnny thundered across town in a spare coach to rescue the stranded customers. Once they were happily on their way, he climbed into the MC8's driver's seat and backed that jewel plumb across our nation's capital to his garage.

How would you like to be a driver stopped at a red light and have a bus butt pull up next to you, then roar off backwards when the light turned green?

Think this is about Johnny's unbelievable backing skills? Gotcha.

Consider other things that are being done backwards, and the dangers they present.

In business, you use creativity and sweat to provide services that people want to buy. If you are suc-

cessful, they pay you for them. The better you do, the more you make.

Wouldn't it be easier to do it backwards? Decide how much money you want, and require your customers to provide it. Then, if you feel like it, offer whatever level of quality you're in the mood for.

Instead of working at improving services or making them more efficient, pump all your effort into thinking up ways to demand more revenue and figure out ways to fool customers into thinking someone else is paying.

This backwards approach only works when the public has no choice (like with transit authorities).

Then, of course, there is the regulatory environment that supposedly makes businesses operate honestly and safely. Theoretically, elected officials make the rules, and we might assume they'd hire folks knowledgeable about the industry to enforce them.

Nah. Legislators delegate responsibility for rulemaking and enforcement to bureaucrats whose expertise is — bureaucracy. Those functionaries then try to learn the business they're responsible for

controlling.

When things go awry, officials we elected (and therefore can fire) cower behind layers of civil service employees who are difficult to discipline.

On the rare occasion when incumbents are "fired," the bureaucrats live on, hovering out of sight in the depths like prehistoric coelacanths.

In this backward approach, the public suffers as companies pour resources into compliance with regulations of dubious value rather than improving service, productivity or products.

Clyde Wayne Crews of the Competitive Enterprise Institute, in his annual survey of the state of federal regulation, posits that if the money spent in America on enforcing and complying with federal regulations was used instead to start a whole new country, that country would be a major economic player on the world stage.

A wizened friend said that "everyone wants a good economy, but it's been taken over by regulators and bureaucrats and Congress is scared to do anything."

We sometimes take a backwards approach to legitimate law

enforcement, working at making it easier to police people and industries.

Our Founding Fathers insisted on a Bill of Rights limiting government, in order to do the opposite. They'd seen how police power could be abused, and wanted to limit it. Even well-intentioned abuse is abuse (everyone thinks he or she is on the side of angels). Nazi Germany is an example of efficiency in making law enforcement simple and easy. A bit of sloppiness is a hallmark of a free society.

A regulatory agency whose statistics mulishly include traffic violations that were dismissed by the court system may be well intentioned, but the Founding Fathers would want to spank them.

That particular incident may be behind us (pun intended), but is symptomatic of a backwards approach in which regulators feel free to ignore "due process."

The garage phone rang and my friend, a mechanic, picked it up. A driver reported that he'd just started his engine and it was blowing oily dark smoke and going backwards when he stuck the transmission in first gear.

"Go back and shut that sucker

off," said my friend. When the driver came back on the phone and asked what to do next, he said, "Start 'er back up." This time all went well, and the driver thought my buddy was a wizard.

In ye olden days, sometimes if you punched the starter button (rather than hold it down), two-stroke Detroit Diesel engines could fire up backwards. You then had a bus with one forward speed and four in reverse — noisy, little useful power and belching black smoke out of the air filter. There's a metaphor in there somewhere.

Johnny from D.C. might like that, but it isn't very practical in the long run. In fact, if you didn't shut it down in time, it seized (the oil pump is pulling when it should be pushing).

Doing things backwards involves some real long-term risks.

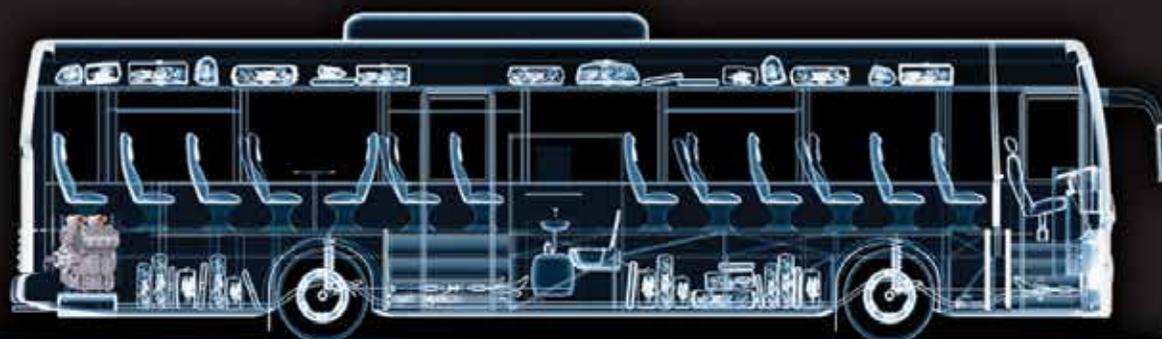
Dave Millhouser is a bus industry marketing consultant and freelance writer. Contact him by email at Davemillhouser@gmail.com.



Dave Millhouser

You Purchase "State of the Art" Buses...
Why not Demand a "State of the Art" A/C Compressor?

Bitzer



Demand a BITZER Compressor from Your Systems Provider

Some of the Many Features:

- Highest Reliability
- Lightest and most Compact Design in the World
- Highest Speed Range of any Transit Compressor in the World
- German Designed, American Built



BITZER U.S., Inc.

To learn more, visit www.bitzerus.com

Phone: 770-503-9226

Email: sales@bitzerus.com / mlish@bitzerus.com

Women motorcoach drivers respond to call of the road

NEW YORK CITY — “I am sitting in my office and have a pretty good view. I am not in a cubicle somewhere. I am looking at the spire of the Empire State Building,” said Shawnee Schreiber.

She spoke on her cellphone from her “office,” the driver’s seat of a motorcoach, while her passengers — a school group from Pennsylvania — enjoyed their end-of-year field trip.

Schreiber, a bus driver since 1987, joined Krapf Coaches in 1992 and has been a full-time coach driver for six years.

“I’ve enjoyed driving and being on the road since I was a kid. I always had an attraction to drive the coaches because of the challenge and because I could go beyond the local area and broaden my horizons,” she said. “The second part I like is the people I meet. I meet people from all walks of life, all religions, all backgrounds. It is so cool to converse with them and learn about them. It keeps you very open-minded.

“The hours are pretty good, the pay is generally good and I am sitting in New York City with a pretty

good view.”

As transportation industries face chronic shortages of drivers, especially for over-the-road service, women may be a relatively overlooked source of employees in a field traditionally dominated by men.

“Recruiting of drivers is always an issue and is escalating,” said Patricia A. Crowley, executive director of the Greater New Jersey Motorcoach Association. “Qualified drivers are qualified drivers, regardless of sex.”

Gary D. Krapf, president of Krapf’s Coaches in West Chester, Pa., said the company employs two full-time women coach drivers, “who are as good as anyone we have, driving our newest coaches.”

“Being that we operate other services like transit and school buses, we traditionally have had a lot of female drivers,” Krapf said. “Like the men, if they prove they are coach material they get a chance to move into charters.”

Tim Stout, president of Stout’s Transportation in Trenton, N.J., said the company has a female driver who has been there for more than 40 years.

“We are trying to reach out to more women, and just had a brainstorming session on such,” he said.

But, as operators and drivers agree, the factors that make it difficult to recruit and retain long-distance drivers may discourage women more than men.

“As you know it is a different lifestyle,” Krapf said. “Male or female, it is difficult to attract drivers to travel over the road.”

The call of the open road sings to women as well as men.

“It is a challenge. I love it,” said Nakita Jones, a driver for Panorama Tours of Clifton, N.J. “I get to travel and I get to meet new people.”

Xylina Steeples, who started driving a motorcoach last year after 15 years of driving school buses, said, “It makes me feel free and I am traveling to places I probably would have never seen if I had a normal job.”

“Right now I am in Philadelphia. Yesterday I was in Washington, D.C., and Virginia. Tomorrow I will be in New York,” said Steeples, also a former transit bus operator who now drives for Vandalia Bus Lines in Caseyville, Ill.



Xylina Steeples, who started driving a motorcoach last year after 15 years of driving school buses, said, “It makes me feel free and I am traveling to places I probably would have never seen if I had a normal job.”

“This job is fun — very, very fun. We meet so many great people and many of them want to keep in touch with us.”

About one-quarter of Vandalia’s drivers are women, said company Vice President Dennis Streif.

Jennifer Gossett has been driving Vandalia charters for seven

years. “I used to operate a transit bus. I feel like I have accomplished something. I never thought I would be traveling across the country in a big bus.

“I enjoy the freedom of being my own person and being responsible for handling things. You are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ▶

LCD MONITORS | AUDIO • VIDEO SOLUTIONS | RADIO • PA SYSTEMS | OBSERVATION SYSTEMS | LCD MONITORS

JENSEN
BUS ELECTRONICS

B.Y.O.P.
(Bring Your Own Popcorn)

JENSEN 15" LCD Bus Monitor

and now...

Buy 3 or more, get 1 FREE!

Promotion ends 6/30/16

www.BusElectronics.com
SAME-DAY SHIPPING | IN-HOUSE TECH SUPPORT | COMPETITIVE PRICING
877.378.2267 • Tim@RVCams.com

“Exceptional Value on Executive Class Vehicles”

15 Available

2004-2011 Setra S417
56 Passenger, Leatherette Seats, DVD, Low Miles- Detroit/Allison

5 Available

2012-2013 Setra S407
56 Passenger, Leatherette Seats, DVD, Low Miles- Detroit/Allison

2 Available

2013 Volvo 9700
54 Passenger, ADA Equipped Volvo D13 – Low Miles

Bauer's
Certified Pre-Owned

Pier 50 San Francisco, CA 94158
415-595-8164 * JasonR@BauersIT.com
www.BauersCertifiedPre-Owned.com

Financing Available: OAC
415-274-2995
Certified Pre-Owned Selection

Wi-Fi

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

company's 85 buses have Wi-Fi.

Even Southwest Airlines, which lets two bags fly free, charges \$8 per day, per device, for in-flight Internet access on Wi-Fi enabled aircraft.

Among hotels, which typically offer free basic Wi-Fi, some have tiered pricing with extra fees for faster service or more devices.

"You don't want it to be a red cost, a negative," Ready said. "Just raise the prices, they'll pay it. They're not going to not go with you if you're a good-quality guy. This is an add-on — you're already giving them a nice, nice bus and some healthy insurance and a skillful driver. This is one of those much-more deals."

Coach Tours is considering raising its per-bus Wi-Fi charge, now \$15 a day, to about \$30 or \$35 around mid-July to cover its rising data costs, Steinberg said. There also are costs for wireless routers and services attached to them.

Steinberg said Coach Tours had a 60-gigabyte-a-month plan with its wireless carrier, but that wasn't enough, so it bumped up to 80. Not enough. So it bumped to 100. Still not enough.

The company was at 341 gigabytes in May with four days left on its monthly plan, he said.

"The most we could buy was 100 gigabytes in a package plan and it was running us about \$1,100, \$1,200 a month for that much," he said. "But the average was \$15 a gig."

His carrier has been good about working with him to adjust his plan upward, he said, and the company now has settled on 281 gigs at \$2,500.

Coach Tours also has benefited from using Cradlepoint Inc. to manage content and speeds through wireless routers on the buses. It also can control when movies or videos are downloaded to prevent the consumption of large amounts of bandwidth all at once.

"If one or two people download a movie, it's not a big deal," Steinberg said. "If you've got 40 (people) downloading a movie, it's a horror show."

Cradlepoint's ability to restrict content also has been helpful in preventing inappropriate use, he said.

Motorcoach operators need a set of tools for control, said Lindsay Notwell, vice president of carrier and international business for Cradlepoint.

"All of our devices have ... built-in things like white-listing

and black-listing and also a couple of unique ones around rate-limiting," Notwell said of allowing or prohibiting sites and controlling speeds.

"So we can say, 'Only allow each Wi-Fi client so many bits per second of speed.' We also allow them to open everything up in terms of speed, but then eliminate video streaming if they (operators)

wanted to do that. So there's lots of ways to skin the cat here" to help operators manage their Wi-Fi.

Transportation is the fastest-growing segment of Cradlepoint's business, Notwell said.

Operators not only have to worry about where people are going online and how much data they're using, they also have to be concerned about malware, he said.

Cradlepoint works in conjunction with Zscaler, a leader in content filtering and malware protection, to solve those issues via the cloud, he added.

Cradlepoint operates as a gatekeeper of sorts. Its cloud-managed services give operators the ability to provide performance, control and security, Notwell said. The systems also help control costs.

Cradlepoint's enterprise-grade routers also allow seamless transition between cellular networks without interrupting customers' devices or apps, he said.

"It's table stakes now if you're operating any sort of passenger carriage that you need to offer Wi-Fi, otherwise people are choosing who they ride on based on the fact that they have Wi-Fi," Notwell said.

"I've never dealt with a better claims team – top to bottom – than Lancer's."



Joe Scott
President and
Chief Executive Officer
Easton Coach
Easton, PA
Lancer customer since 2005

"Ninety-nine percent of our company's claims come out of our pocket due to our high deductible, so nothing is more important than minimizing the level of our losses. Lancer knows that, and fights hard to get all our claims settled effectively and efficiently. When there's an accident, Lancer gets to injured parties and their families quickly, in an effort to mitigate a problem from the outset.

Every Lancer representative I have dealt with has had a really good understanding of the situation at hand and the nuances of our business. They also have what I think of as the Lancer style – get right on it, get the facts and try to get it settled for as little as possible."

If you want fair, proactive claims-handling from a passenger transportation specialist, ask your agent for a Lancer quote or call Lancer directly and get assigned to an agent.

To learn more, call
800-782-8902, x3264 or email
bus@lancerinsurance.com.



LANCER
INSURANCE
The Difference is Our Attitude.



370 W. Park Avenue, P.O. Box 9004, Long Beach, NY 11561 | www.lancerinsurance.com



Women drivers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

displaying your professionalism and courtesy and letting your clients see what it is like to be in the hands of a safe driver.”

Driving a motorcoach should not be a problem for a woman, especially if she has experience operating a school bus — as many charter candidates do.

“Some women have the idea that they can’t do it,” Steeples said. “A coach is much bigger. Other than that there is no difference.”

On the positive side, she added, “In a coach the ride is much smoother. And we have air conditioning and air brakes. It is just like driving a car, except larger.”

Males applying for driving positions may have more experience in vehicles larger than school buses, said Alan Thrasher, president of Thrasher Brothers Trailways in Birmingham, Ala.

“We have learned to filter carefully. When we can test-drive a female candidate, we can tell if she is more intimidated by a motorcoach than the school bus she drives,” Thrasher said.

For any potential charter driver there is the matter of being away from home for days or weeks.

“That is probably why more

women aren’t driving,” Steeples said. “They have children and family and can’t get away.”

Jones agreed, adding that she doesn’t see as many women driving charter buses as school buses. “Maybe they don’t want to travel that far, maybe they have family issues and don’t want to be on the road. For them school buses would be a good choice.”

Gossett said her children, who are older, “get along fine with my traveling.”

Schreiber said she could not have driven a coach when she was younger. These days she does not have to pick children up after school. “My kids are 31 and 35.”

Even the women behind the wheel disagree on the possible customer-service benefits of female operators.

“Most men are good at driving but women are more nurturing on the road,” Gossett said. “It is a pleasure to make people comfortable and happy.”

Schreiber agreed. “I don’t want to stereotype anyone, but I think women are more attentive to details and to accommodating people.”

Suzan Randall-Miner, who has been driving charters for the past three years for Red Carpet Charters of Oklahoma City, said it has



Suzan Randall-Miner, who has been driving charters for the past three years for Red Carpet Charters of Oklahoma City, said it has to do with personality rather than whether a driver is a man or a woman.

to do with personality rather than whether a driver is a man or a woman.

“If you treat people respectfully and have a big smile on your face, it is not any different,” Randall-Miner said.

Women drivers acknowledge that there is a bias among passengers — and even some male drivers.

“Some people tend to assume that you don’t have the same driving skills as a man,” Schreiber said. “You do have to learn when to stick up for yourself. It is more of an issue for a certain age group — some older men getting on the bus will say, ‘My, oh my. We have a woman driver.’”

“My goal is to convert them. Invariably at the end of the ride I hear, ‘Great job for a lady!’ I don’t

take it personally anymore.”

Randall-Miner expressed similar sentiments. “The biggest issue we have is trying to overcome that fact that men — usually older drivers and sometimes older passengers — don’t believe we should be driving coaches.”

But some passengers welcome the feminine touch, Gossett said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13 ►

TRANSLITE BUS GLASS DISTRIBUTORS
ENTERPRISES, INC. SINCE 1993

Proudly Celebrating 20 Years

Bus Glass and Windshield Distributors for Coach, Transit, School, Speciality Vehicles

Same Day Shipping • Customized Fleet Plans • Large Inventory
Superb Customer Service • Options for All Budgets

CALL TODAY!

800.934.3450 • www.translitebusglass.com • info@transliteent.com

**We STAND BEHIND Our Product
So You Can STAND SAFELY UNDER Yours!**

Offering the latest innovations in mobile lifting technology, SLEC lifts come in capacities of 12,000lbs and 18,000lbs per column/48,000lbs and 72,000lbs set of four. With more than 30 years in the mobile lift industry we have proven that our lifts are built tough and to the highest quality. See for yourself at slec.com

SLEC

slec@slec.com
1.800.826.3486 ext. 105
www.slec.com

Women drivers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

“When I get behind the wheel I hear people say, ‘We have a woman driver! Thank you!’”

Rick Whipple, safety and training manager at Red Carpet Charters, said women do a very similar job as men.

“We do not have a preference whether we hire men or women,” he said. “We need more drivers. Gender does not matter.”

School buses are a good place to start a driving career, said Elaine Evans, a Vandalia Bus Lines driver for 13 years.

“School bus companies have a high turnover rate and they are willing to train people,” she said. “Consider riding a coach to a couple of destinations to see how situations work out, how people interact with the driver, how the driver handles the road.”

Evans spoke from a Chicago park on Lake Shore Drive while her passengers, the Saint Louis University baseball team, played nearby. She does not believe all women are cut out for motorcoach work.

“Everybody has issues in their life, whether it is family or a boyfriend or whatever. I don’t know if I would recommend it to all



Shawnee Schreiber, a full-time coach driver for Krapf Coaches for six years, said, “I’ve enjoyed driving and being on the road since I was a kid. I always had an attraction to drive the coaches because ... I could go beyond the local area and broaden my horizons.”

women.”

However, Jones said, “Give it a chance. You can always go back to school buses.”

A good support system at home is key to a driver’s success.

“I have a lot of support — my children are 20, 18 and 13 years old,” Randall-Miner said. “They are good kids and they do fine. If a woman has a good attitude and is a good driver, there is no reason she shouldn’t drive a motorcoach.”

Trailways

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

management consultant and executive coach. She formalized her consulting business as High Performance Quest, LLC, in 2010.

With emphasis on leadership development and clear growth strategies, she focused on working with owners and CEOs of small and medium-size businesses to transform their companies into high-performance organizations.

Hotard was trained in executive coaching by renowned leadership coach Lee Thayer. She participated for 10 years as a member of The Executive Committee, a CEO development organization.

“It’s a challenging transition for companies to grow from an entrepreneurial-style organization to a well-managed-style organization,” Hotard said. “I enjoy working in that area. You have to be really strong in your systems and strategies and diligent in your management. That’s what makes you a strong competitor.”

“My passionate purpose is helping people journey from who they are to who they ought to be to lead high-performance organizations,” she added. “Leadership

mastery is a journey like no other; it brings true meaning to life. Great leaders create a better future for their organizations. The Trailways board is open to new opportunities. I’m looking forward to being of service to them.”

Hotard has held numerous leadership positions in industry associations over the years. She was a founding member and first chairman of the International Motorcoach Group (IMG) and has served on many organizational boards and committees for organizations including the National Motorcoach Network, the American Bus Association, Gray Line Worldwide, the Mississippi Gulf Coast Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the New Orleans Convention and Tourism Bureau.

In 2000, Hotard was honored with the *METRO Magazine* Motorcoach Industry Achievement Award “for her service to the industry’s associations and for her example and leadership as a successful provider of safe and high-quality passenger service.”

Her career has not been limited to the passenger transportation industry. From 2003 to 2005, as a partner in a start-up ready-mix concrete company, Baker Ready

Mix Concrete & Building Materials in New Orleans, Hotard served as financier and played a key role in the planning process for all aspects of the business.

Hotard said that in her new position she plans to build on the already formidable Trailways brand.

“A strong brand helps everyone on the Trailways Team,” she said. “The companies in the Trailways system are exuding optimism to grow and to embrace the future. They work very well together.”

Safety and driver performance also will be areas of focus for Hotard.

She has been collaborating with the Alliance Safety Council to introduce the program to the motorcoach industry to improve driver performance and to support company owners in risk mitigation.

Ellsworth was praised for postponing her retirement to help guide Trailways through its longer-than-expected leadership transition.

“Gale did an excellent job,” said Moore, chairman of Trailways. “We really can’t thank her enough and truly hate to see her leave — but wish her much happiness in her new phase of life.”

AMAYA
ASTRON
Seating Co.

- Committed to Safety, Comfort, and Durability!
- Engineered and Designed to Meet Tomorrow’s Seating Demands Today!
- Proudly Serving The United States and Canada for over 25 Years!

• AMAYA-ASTRON SEATING MEXICO
Phone: +52 (55) 5881 2007
email: donovan@amaya-astron.com.mx
f Grupo Amaya-Astron
t @asientosamaya

• SALES REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE U.S. AND CANADA
George Farrell
Phone: (864) 895 4127
email: gfarr007@aol.com
Bob Greene
Phone: (402) 639 4454
email: bgreene45@cox.net

www.amaya-astron.com.mx

Ontario spending \$20 million on roads and bridges

TORONTO — Ontario is providing \$20 million in 2016-17 to municipalities across the province through the Connecting Links program to make roads and bridges safer, create economic growth, and create or sustain jobs.

Premier Kathleen Wynne announced the funding in Barrie with Transportation Minister Steven Del Duca. The City of Barrie will receive \$675,000 to rehabilitate part of its connecting link on Highway 26 — a one-kilometre section of Bayfield Street from

Livingstone Street to the city limit.

Connecting links are municipal roads or bridges that connect two ends of a provincial highway through a community or to a border crossing. The province is providing \$20 million to 23 municipalities to repair these connecting links. Funding for the program will increase to \$25 million in 2017-18 and \$30 million in 2018-19.

Ontario is making the largest investment in public infrastructure in the province's history — about \$160 billion over 12 years for proj-

ects such as roads, bridges, transit systems, schools and hospitals. This investment is supporting 110,000 jobs every year across the province.

In 2015, the government announced support for more than 325 projects that will keep people and goods moving, connect communities and improve quality of life.

Investing in infrastructure is part of the government's economic plan to build Ontario up and deliver on its number-one priority to grow the economy and create jobs.

The four-part plan includes investing in talent and skills, including helping more people get and create the jobs of the future by expanding access to high-quality college and university education.

The plan is making the largest investment in public infrastructure in Ontario's history and investing in a low-carbon economy driven by innovative, high-growth, export-oriented businesses. The plan is also helping working Ontarians achieve a more secure retirement.

Quick Facts

- There are about 217 miles of roads and 70 bridges along connecting links in 77 municipalities across Ontario.
- The Connecting Links program was launched last November, with funding starting in the spring.
- Connecting Links funding covers up to 90 percent of eligible project costs, to a maximum of \$3 million.
- A recent report found that investing \$1 in public infrastructure in Canada raises GDP by \$1.43 in the short term and up to \$3.83.

Canadian fire

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

There have been close calls, however. At one point, when the winds shifted and pushed the fire away from the oil sands operations, Diversified began moving workers back to the area. But they were forced to turn back halfway up the highway when the wind changed course and the fire began moving back toward the oil fields.

Hannah said that because oil production accounts for a major portion of Canada's economy,



Diversified Transportation LLC has had to move its fleet three times out of the path of the wildfire, which often shifts direction unexpectedly.

there is pressure from the government to get the mines up and running.

"But we won't put anybody in

harms way," he said.

Hannah said that because the company's buses are in the middle of the action, drivers have heard

plenty of heart-wrenching stories from people being evacuated. "It's very emotional," he said.

Some Diversified employees have lost their homes in McMurray, which has been devastated by the fire. It was hoped that people would be allowed back into the community to survey the damage earlier this month.

"We are looking at a plan to re-enter the community," Hannah said. "We want to ensure that we have counselors for our employees. For us, that's as big a deal as anything, making sure our employ-

ees get through this. There will be a lot of emotion."

He said a major concern is that many people will not return to Fort McMurray after the fire because they lost their homes and the town is heavily damaged.

"It's a beautiful community, but it is quite transient," Hannah said. "A lot of people go there to make a bunch of money in the oil fields. But many of them may feel it is too devastated to return to."

"I saw on the news that 17 percent of the town's businesses will go bankrupt because of this."

RELATIONAL BUS SYSTEMS

Charter & Tour Software

g^oChart

Charter Management System

g^oTour

Tour Management System

g^oChart: Features include customer and contract management, vehicle inventory, scheduling and dispatch, accounts receivables, and numerous accounting and operations reports. Additional modules include: Prophesy Mileage and Routing, g^oMile (IFTA reporting). Driver Duty (payroll and time management), Email, Advanced Accounting and Advance Dispatch management and reporting; and more!

Web Manager Module: Provides online credit card processing, integrated quote requests, online access to Drivers' schedules and other custom g^oChart data access via the web.

Data Backup and Recovery: Remote services includes daily, scheduled backup of RBS data files over a secure connection.

g^oTour: Our browser based tour management system designed specifically for the motorcoach industry. Manages reservations, itineraries, receivables, payables, produces management reports and escort, driver and customer documents for group and retail tours. Real time, fully integrated credit card processing is available using a secure and reliable gateway service. Accessible from any computer with internet access. Hosted at RBS secure data facility. RBS professional staff manages server hardware and software and performs all updates and daily backups.

New release coming soon! Visit www.rbs2000.com for the latest news, timeline, features, and more related to g^oTour version 3.

Call us today at 1-800-448-7001 or visit www.rbs2000.com to request an evaluation of g^oChart or g^oTour

www.rbs2000.com

Odor Control Guaranteed! Proven Performance!

ASK ABOUT OUR FREE FREIGHT PROGRAM.

CALL FOR YOUR FREE SAMPLE TODAY!

Visit us on the web at www.worldwidemonochem.com and like us on Facebook

Request your catalog today at 512-267-5190
or email us at inquiry@worldwidemonochem.com

Toronto allows Uber to operate legally — with regulations

TORONTO — After years of operating in the city without rules — and infuriating taxi companies — Uber is now legal in Toronto.

But the popular ride-hailing service must adhere to a regulatory framework passed by the Toronto City Council.

“The bottom line is we have a popular service being used by hundreds of thousands of Torontonians but it’s not regulated,” said Mayor John Tory. “That is not satisfactory.”

Tory, who introduced 20 pages of regulations, described them as a compromise that will help the taxi industry compete and give consumers what they want.

The new rules will help the taxi industry “survive and thrive” by lifting the regulatory burden placed on it over the years by the city council, the mayor said.

“I believe it represents the best possible way to do the two things I talked about: regulate the companies that have come into the mar-

ketplace and make sure that the cab industry can transition itself and stabilize itself,” he added.

Uber Canada general manager Ian Black said the company is pleased with the new regulations. They want time to review the changes made at the meeting, but overall, can live with the regulations.

“Now we’re excited to get to the work of continuing to innovate transportation in Toronto without the constant regulatory debate,” he said.

Critics on the council complained bitterly that the regulations open the taxi industry to a takeover from a foreign company and compromise safety.

“Yes, there is a more level playing field between the millionaires and the billionaires, but for the consumer the level playing field goes down,” Council member Gord Perks said. “The drivers lose, the public loses, the billionaires and the millionaires win.”

Among the new Uber

regulations:

- Drivers must hold \$2 million in liability insurance and provide proof to the city.
- Drivers must provide a background check to the city
- Uber will charge a minimum fare price of \$3.25.
- Uber vehicles can be no older than seven model years.
- Taxis can charge surge pricing, like ride-sharing services, if rides are booked through a smartphone app.

Canadian activist pushes higher speed limits on roads

TORONTO — The Ontario government is being urged to begin raising the highway speed to 130 kilometers per hour (about 81 mph) from the current limit of 100 (62 mph).

Chris Klimek of Stop100.ca said the perfect place to conduct a pilot project on higher speed limits would be the new Highway 407 East extension, a section of which is scheduled to open this year.

In a letter to the government, Klimek said he has 40,000 supporters for the proposal to raise

speed limits to 120 to 130 km/h on the 400 highway series, including elected officials.

As a pilot project, the government should try out the higher speed limits on the brand new 407 extension, he said.

“After this we would keep pushing for speed limits that do not criminalize safe driving,” Klimek told the *Toronto Sun*. “Because currently drivers who are doing 110, 120, 130 km/h — and they have been doing this for decades — are all considered law-

breakers and violators and this is what we believe is wrong.”

Other jurisdictions have moved to higher speeds on divided, wide highways with no negative impact on safety, he said.

The Ontario government has yet to embrace the idea.

Bob Nichols, a spokesperson for the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, said the top speed allowed on the Hwy 407 East extension would be 100 km/h.

Transportation Ministry officials routinely review polices and

practices to determine if they are current with research and “best practices” around the world, Nichols said.

“This includes periodically reviewing Ontario’s speed limits to make sure they are appropriate, taking into account factors such as road design, traffic volumes and collision trends,” Nichols said. “In 2012, speed limits on 400-series highways were reviewed in detail. At that time, the decision was made not to raise speed limits.”

Nichols pointed out that On-

tario has one of the strongest road and highway safety records across North America, ranked first or second for the past 13 years.

Klimek said that the province’s strong record of safety proves his point — motorists have been largely ignoring the posted speed limit and traveling safely at between 110 and 130 km/h for decades on Ontario’s major highways.

“Our highways are top-quality world-class highways and they have been designed for 120 km/h, not for 90 or 100,” Klimek said.

Low Mileage

2006 SETRAS FOR SALE



3 TO CHOOSE FROM:

- (2) 28 passenger (1) 52 passenger
- All have Galleys and will be available in March
- The 28 passengers are used for Sports Teams ... **could be promoted as Sports Team Coaches**
- One has a rebuilt transmission and they all range from **190,000 to 210,000 original miles** since new

\$139,000 each / OBO

For more information please call **757-494-1480** or e-mail **jimmy@venturebustours.com**

Nothing is cooler than converting customers to clients

By Christian Riddell
Motorcoach Marketing Council

One of the most important questions a business can ask itself is: Do we have customers or clients?

While people in both categories purchase things from you, there is a dramatic difference between the two.

For those who don't know me well, I am an avid boater and fisherman. If I have any time, ever, I choose to spend it with my family, on the water, chasing fish. This means that, over the years, I have purchased more than my fair share of gear.

Having five kids means that most of my gear purchases are preceded by looking at the best of the best, and then purchasing something far more affordable, with the exception of one thing: My coolers.

Coolers are an interesting study. All of them are about the same: white rectangles of various sizes whose sole purpose is holding ice and keeping stuff cold.

While this seems simple

enough, the surprising truth is that while you can buy a 25-quart cooler at about any sporting goods store for \$25, just around the corner on the next aisle you will find a comparably sized cooler selling for around \$300.

A company called Yeti has figured out how to sell coolers that start at \$300 and go up to more than \$1,400. Does it hold ice? Yes. Is its size based on how many cans can fit in it? Yes. Does it hold ice for a remarkably long time? Yes.

But is it worth more than 10 times what its competitors are worth? If you ask me and other loyalists, yes it is.

Recently, however, I was introduced to a new entry in the cooler market, a company that has blatantly copied the design and product line of Yeti coolers and is now selling its products for half of Yeti's prices.

Based on my gear-purchasing history, my budget constraints and my desire to keep my catch icy cold, I bet you know exactly what I did next. I went out and bought myself a new, shiny, ice-holding Yeti cooler.

Marketing Minute GoMotorcoach It's the Smart Move

The reason why is a study in the difference between a customer and a client, and it's a model we should all strive to replicate in our own businesses.

Why did I pay twice what I could have paid for a product? Why did my loyalty to a company and its brand keep me from doing what I do in almost every other purchase in my life?

And, most importantly, how do my cooler purchases have anything to do with selling more charters, to more people, for more money? Let's begin by tackling that first question.

Why did I pay twice what I could have paid for a product?

I know that this may sound crazy to some people, but we all do it. Why do you buy the Advil brand headache medicine instead of the store brand when your head is throbbing?

No matter who you are, there comes a moment when you are buying something and price is not the key motivator. In my case, I already own a lot of Yeti products, not just because of the brand but because they work really well.

They have never let me down, I have never had an issue with any of their products, and I own a lot of them. Some people would say that I have "drunk the Kool-Aid," but the truth is that ever since I first purchased a cooler from them, they have earned my business.

I can't say that I would ever purchase another brand of cooler — ever. I am a client of Yeti; I no longer shop when I purchase a cooler. I just go and buy another tried and true.

I was recently talking to an operator who told me about something that had happened in her market where a competitor was targeting her customer base. She got a call one day from a client who said, "This guy called and offered a super-discounted rate to book with them. We're not going anywhere, but I thought you should know."

That is a client. The low rate didn't entice them; rather, it was about a relationship they had with a company.

Why did my loyalty to a company and its brand keep me from doing what I do in almost every other purchase in my life?

Some may argue that I did it because they are the best coolers out there. While I do believe that they are an exceptional producer of coolers and it is truly amazing how they manage to hold ice for so long, they are not alone in that space.

Since they revolutionized cooler technology, many companies, including huge names like Coleman and Cabela's, have brought products to market that do just about the same thing and cost less. The truth is that loyalty goes far beyond product. In the past, I have talked a lot about the fact that when we sell "product," we are doing ourselves a disservice by commoditizing what we do.

At the end of the day, whether we sell coolers or motorcoach charters, there is always someone

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17 ►



Wash Fast & Easy

Coaches, Sprinters or Vans in a few minutes.

Bitimec bus wash machines are advanced, affordable, powerbrushing systems delivering positive ROI to bus fleets worldwide. A single operator can wash up to 40 buses in one shift; each unit in 6-8 min.

Available in Electric for fixed washbay or Battery and Diesel for wireless use.



1-877-637-1900

info@wash-bots.com

SAVE THE DATE

UMA MOTORCOACH EXPO 2017

February 26–March 2, 2017 • St. Louis, MO

Marketing Minute

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

else who does it just about as good as we do and is willing to charge less, sometimes way less.

Loyalty that converts someone from a customer to a client is about building a relationship with the company that you are buying from. In my case, it was not about going to a factory or even ever talking to the owners. It was about feeling like the company culture was something that I could get behind. It was about feeling like they felt the same way about the outdoors that I do. It was about feeling connected.

I can tell you that this was not an accident. In fact, I'm sure it represents a big part of their intentional campaign. I have often thought about the meetings they must have had as they started to launch their coolers.

"Ok, so here's what we are going to do. We are going to manufacture a cooler that does a great job of being a cooler, but we are going to sell it for 10 times what anyone has ever paid for a cooler before. Cool? Cool. Let's get started."

Imagine the looks on the faces of the marketing and sales teams.

In our industry, we find ourselves constantly "sharpening the pencil" to try to whittle off a few percentage points here and there to compete with our local market on price. I did it when I sold charters because that is the way it was done. But the truth is it doesn't need to be done that way.

So how do we take the lessons of a wildly successful cooler company that has transformed millions of people from cooler customers to hardcore brand-fanatic clients and put them to work for our charter businesses?

The first and most important step is to realize that price is not the only motivating factor when it comes to people choosing a transportation company. Often a relationship is worth far more than a few hundred dollars.

Next, ask yourself what you need to do to actually have a rela-

tionship with your customers. If you have high-value customers, what do you need to do to make them clients? Is it going to meet with them, thanking them for their business and asking what you can do to be a better provider? Is it taking them to lunch and talking about their kids? Is it sending them a thank you card?

Whatever it is, do it, and do it consistently.

Next, look at your company culture. Is everything you do, from social media to invoicing, representing your company in a light that will entice people to be your client? Or, are you just an easy, inexpensive company to buy things from?

Think about ways to better engage with your customers about things *they care about*. Make them feel like they are part of your family, and that you want for them

what they want for them.

I imagine that when Yeti came to market, the big players like Coleman and Igloo were sitting around laughing at a company that had the audacity to think it could sell coolers for such outrageous prices.

It is not hard to believe that companies that had competed on price for so many years would have thought that the folks at Yeti were off their rockers. Today, both companies have coolers that compete with Yeti's performance and, yet again, they are trying to compete on price.

We, as an industry, offer a remarkable product. We offer safety unmatched by any other mode of transportation. We are better for the environment than any other group transportation solution available, and we are priced at a point so far below our competition

that it is almost humorous.

It is time that we embrace the fact that the way it has always been done is not necessarily the way it will be done in the future. There is a groundswell of emerging energy that is going to change the way we market our products to the buying public in the motorcoach industry.

The future is bright and when we look back, we will see that this moment was the beginning for those companies that chose to become the Yeti of the motorcoach industry.

Customers pay the bills, but *clients* are our future. Look at your company and see what you can do to turn more customers into clients and you will find a brighter, more consistent and sustainable future.

For more information about the Motorcoach Marketing Council and its programs, go to www.motorcoachmarketing.org.

Calendar

June 2016

20-23 Pennsylvania Bus Association Annual Meeting, Gettysburg Wyndham Hotel, Gettysburg, Pa. For more information: www.pabus.org.

23-26 New England Bus Association Annual Conference, Essex Resort & Spa, Essex, Vt. For more information: www.newenglandbus.org.

July 2016

16-20 AMA-SCMA-GMOA Regional Meeting, Marriott Shoals

Hotel & Spa, Florence, Ala. Info: www.gamotorcoachoperators.org.

August 2016

8-9 Midwest Bus Association Annual Convention and Rodeo, Holiday Inn & Suites, Carol Stream, Ill. Info: www.mbmca.org/convention.

17-21 NCMA-VMA-MCASC Regional Meeting, Embassy Suites Charlotte-Concord Golf Resort & Spa, Concord, N.C. Info: www.scmotorcoach.org.

18-21 National Association of Motorcoach Operators Annual Meeting, Resorts Casino, Atlantic City, N.J. www.namocoaches.org.

Better Inventory. Lower Prices.
Call NOW: 985-605-1845

Alliance Bus Group



2002 MCI D4505
55 Passenger
Series 60/Allison
Clean Southern Coach
\$95K - NEW PAINT



2001 Vanhool C2045
57 Passenger
Cummins/Allison
Rebuilt Engine
\$84.5K - SEVERAL



2008 Setra 417
56 Passenger
300k Miles, 110V Outlets
Good Condition
\$195K - ONE IN STOCK



2012 CAIO G3400
38 Passenger
Just Off-Lease, Low Miles
Black Leather Seats
\$3,950/month, \$10K down

Also Available: 2000 Vanhool T2145 (3) • 2009 Setra 417 (1) • 2012 CAIO G3600 (2)

See More Inventory From All Eight Locations at:
www.AllianceBusGroup.com

ALLIANCE BUS GROUP

ALONG FOR THE WHOLE RIDE®

Arizona wildlife sanctuary future tour bus destination

KINGMAN, Ariz. — What started two decades ago as a humane effort to rescue tigers from Las Vegas magic acts soon could transform, with the help of a Las Vegas entrepreneur, into one of northwest Arizona's biggest economic-development projects.

Jonathan Kraft, a former Las Vegas magician who founded and operates an exotic-wildlife sanctuary along Route 66, has proposed a state-of-the-art animal park west of Kingman that he said could bring almost 200 permanent jobs and tens of millions of dollars in spending to Mohave County.

The \$36.3 million project also could lure tour buses from Las Vegas and attract hundreds of thousands of visitors a year.

"It's probably the most exciting thing to come to Mohave County in quite a while," said Jean Bishop, county supervisor for the district where the park is planned.

The proposed Wild Planet Animal Sanctuary, as envisioned by Kraft and his partners, including Las Vegas entrepreneur Bruce Perlowin, received zoning approval by Mohave County supervisors but a construction start date hasn't been set.

The zoning approval followed a recommendation by the county's planning and zoning commission to change the property from agricultural/residential to commercial/recreational, as Kraft's group requested. At 4,000 acres, the park would be among the largest of its type.

"It'll be a nice project out there," zoning commission member Krystal Gabrielson said during the hearing, referring to the site in Golden Valley northwest of Kingman. The sanctuary could open by 2018 or 2019.

Keepers of the Wild

Wild Planet would be the sequel to Keepers of the Wild, a 175-acre sanctuary operated by Kraft and set in a scenic, boulder-strewn canyon along Route 66 in Valentine, east of Kingman. It features retired Las Vegas show tigers, a bear, smaller wild cats, llamas and alpacas, primates, reptiles, birds, wallabies and other injured or rescued wildlife — even a wild hawk that lost an eye after getting bonked by a golf ball.

The business plan for Wild Planet is set on a grander scale, with more acreage, animals, amenities and potential impact.

The plan describes a place where people could view upwards of 1,000 animals — tigers, elephants, camels, kangaroos and many other species including those native to the Southwest — from elevated walkways. Visitors would be transported to viewing platforms on solar-powered trams or carts.

The park also would have a tropical bird aviary, butterfly garden and reptile house. It would feature an animal quarantine/recovery area, an RV park, restaurant, wine bar, memorial garden, wedding chapel, museum, campground and housing for staff.

"We give them a lot of space, which is why it costs so much to build these habitats," Kraft said.

The proposed sanctuary would be closer to Las Vegas, Hoover Dam, Laughlin, and the west rim of the Grand Canyon and Skywalk. It's seven miles west of U.S. Highway 93, which links Phoenix with Las Vegas.

The site features rolling hills, canyons and lush vegetation than the desert acreage along Highway 93.

Tourist opportunity

Kraft and his partners are pur-

suing the project not just to provide a refuge for abused and abandoned wildlife but because they sense a budding tourist opportunity in the lengthening economic shadows of Las Vegas.

The gambling mecca currently lures 41 million people a year, with many visitors favoring excursions from the city.

Zoos and wildlife parks in this country attract 175 million visitors annually, according to the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

The park's ambitious business plan projects more than 500,000 annual visitors, roughly one-third arriving in 10 or so daily tour buses. It estimates annual revenue of \$24.7 million from admissions, food/gift purchases, fundraising and other activities. That would exceed anticipated operating expenses of \$12.1 million, including a payroll of \$4.6 million.

Jobs at Wild Planet could include administrators, chefs, animal-care workers, gardeners, gift-shop attendants, janitors and security staff.

The anticipated 180 or so permanent jobs, along with hundreds more during construction, would be welcome in Mohave County,

where unemployment exceeds the statewide average. More than 350 people in the area lost jobs nearly two years ago when the Mineral Park copper mine closed.

Budget plans

The budget estimates \$36.3 million for construction of the 1,800-acre first phase. The biggest expenditure would be \$4 million for animal enclosures plus five miles of elevated walkways and viewing platforms.

Keepers of the Wild Park already welcomes visitors, who can glimpse tigers sunning themselves on boulders, wallabies skittering in and out of their house and a grizzly bear stretching for a back rub when Kraft walks by.

Both parks would be havens for retiring exotic-animal entertainers and the thousands of other creatures in private hands that often aren't well cared for or out-grow their enclosures.

Many get seized by authorities, who sometimes send primates and other animals to Keepers of the Wild.

Kraft wants to position Wild Planet to take in some of these

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19 ►

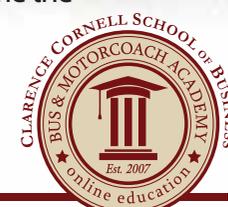
Help your company achieve success by increasing business and operational knowledge.

The road to success is long—with twists and turns

-ENROLL-
Today!
New Classes
Begin
June 29th

The United Motorcoach Association brings over 50 years of experience helping the nation's motorcoach industry become the model for the world. The Clarence Cornell School of Business and the Bus & Motorcoach Academy can help you navigate all of the twists and turns in your road to success.

The Clarence Cornell School of Business offers on-line courses in:
Business • Marketing • Financial Management • Human Resources • Safety & Compliance...



With the support of ABC Companies

www.uma.org/academy

Click - Learn - Succeed

Wild Planet

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

creatures and keep them out of “canned” hunts, where hunters shoot disoriented, often-injured animals that are accustomed to captivity and thus lack natural survival skills, with limited room to flee. Thousands of big cats alone are estimated to be in private hands.

“They need a place to go,” he told Mohave County officials at the zoning meeting. “We want to accommodate them.”

The use of animals in entertainment also is under greater scrutiny and, in some cases, declining. For example, Las Vegas magician Rick Thomas stopped using tigers and donated five to Keepers of the Wild.

The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is phasing out elephants from its shows by 2018, retiring its 13 remaining pachyderms to its Florida elephant sanctuary. SeaWorld Entertainment has come under criticism for using orcas in its marine acts, highlighted in the documentary film “Blackfish.”

Kraft gave up his entertainment career and switched to animal protection after witnessing the mistreatment of tigers and other creatures. He winces when recall-

ing the declawing injuries sustained by some big cats during their days as performers.

Keepers of the Wild will continue to operate as a separate attraction. It laid the groundwork for the larger proposed park, which would provide additional homes for rescued animals and more opportunity to educate the public on wildlife — another key objective.

Kraft founded Keepers of the Wild in 1995 in Las Vegas, moved it to White Hills, then transferred it to the current location in 2001. About two dozen people work there, along with a similar number of volunteers.

“He has a solid reputation in Mohave County,” Supervisor Bishop said.

Keepers of the Wild is accredited by the BBB Wise Giving Alliance, having met standards for governance, effectiveness, finances and more. It received a clean bill of health in its latest inspection by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which regulates animal welfare. Non-profit researcher GuideStar gives it a top mark for providing transparent information about its operations.

Helped by a donation of nearly \$1.6 million from Perlowin, Keepers of the Wild reported revenue of

\$3.6 million in 2014, up from \$1.6 million the prior year. Its surplus, or net income, swelled to nearly \$1.6 million from \$63,000 in 2013. Kraft credits a nationwide fundraising strategy focused around direct mail, and a stable of high-dollar donors, for the improvement.

Administrative costs account for less than one-fifth of the facility’s annual expenses, for which food and veterinarian care weigh heavily.

“We go through \$20,000 a month in beef,” Kraft said. A single tiger can require \$25,000 worth of food and medical attention in a year.

Even grazing animals, primates and smaller creatures can run up a sizable tab.

“When I shop for produce and dark greens, we’re averaging \$300 a week, and that’s just for the little guys,” said Tina Matejek, Kraft’s wife and co-director of the sanctuary.

Kraft’s salary of \$65,000 is below the \$97,000 median earned by executives who head non-profits of the same size as Keepers of the Wild, according to researcher Charity Navigator.

Lions roaring

Perlowin, a self-described former drug smuggler who spent nine years in prison, said he met Kraft

through common friends who share a passion for animal welfare. He now serves as chief executive officer of Hemp Inc., a company devoted to the use of industrial hemp in lawful products like clothing.

He founded and formerly served as CEO of Medical Marijuana Inc., the first company to enter the legal-marijuana industry. He was featured on the CNBC documentary series “Marijuana Inc.”

“As a kid, as a hippie, I decided I wanted to change the world,” Perlowin said. “But if I instead fund the people who are working to change the world, like Jonathan, my workload gets reduced by, like, 10,000 percent.”

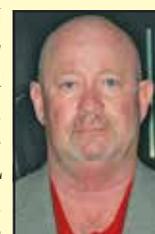
Perlowin, who donated land for the Wild Planet site and has holdings in the area, envisions more economic development along Highway 93 that could include retailing, hotels and housing.

A proposed campsite at Wild Planet could be especially interesting, he said. Informally dubbed “Snore and Roar,” it would allow tourists to listen to the sounds of wildlife in the park while drifting to sleep.

“A lion roaring is one of the most fascinating, incredible sounds you’ll ever hear at night,” Perlowin said. “What kids (or adults) wouldn’t want to experience that?”

People

HOUSTON — Ken Sellers has been named vice president, safety and compliance, for TBL Group, Inc., owner of the AFC|ECHO Transportation brands.



Ken Sellers

Sellers, who brings decades of safety and law enforcement expertise to the new position, will be responsible for the day-to-day supervision and management of the organization’s in-house safety department.

His duties will include oversight for all safety compliance and training, including driver training, as well as ongoing development and implementation of best-in-class safety initiatives.

Sellers also will serve as liaison to federal agencies and state legislators and will represent AFC|ECHO on applicable boards and committees within the industry.

He most recently served as DOT Compliance Manager for Dialog Wireline Services, LLC, where he was responsible for compliance with regulations.





The MotorCoach Tower Wash™

The MotorCoach Tower Wash™ system has been the industry leader in fast and economical bus washing for **25 years**. Reduce your costs on manpower, water and soap. Call us today to learn more!

WHY UPGRADE TO FOAM BRUSHES

Foam brushes are a great option for the MotorCoach industry as their dual use cleans and polishes, is lighter weight and lasts over 2 times longer than our standard Polyethylene brush. The Hybrid brush combines the fine cleaning of the Polyethylene brush and the polishing of the Foam brush for a unique clean.

NEW - SOAP SYSTEM: DIRECT INJECTOR

The Soap System: Direct Injector soap panel with pump is attached directly to the wall with a water line hookup - no electrical is required; the water pressure runs the system! To help keep the set up clean and organized the double rack system of super concentrated soap boxes sits beneath to feed the soap pump. The Direct Injector mixes the soap at 200 parts water to 1 part soap directly into the Tower Wash™.

FEATURES & BENEFITS

- **EXCLUSIVE**
- NEW » **Cut Out Mirror Frame - Protects Mirrors!**
- NEW » **110 Volt Electric Option**
- NEW » **Powder Coated Options**
- » **Water Activated Tilt Mechanism**
- » **Automatic Water & Control Valves on Handles**
- » **Brass Spray Nozzles**
- » **Steel Spray Pipes**
- » **Light-Weight Aluminium**
- » **Automated Metered Direct Injector Soap System**
- » **Complete Shield, Brush & Water Spray Tilting**

- Water Usage Less Than 12 Gallons Per Wash
- Durable Polyethylene, Foam and Hybrid Brushes Options
- Non-Marking Guide Wheels
- Standard Heights 12'6" and Custom Heights Available
- Footprint As Small As 32" x 39"





THE FASTEST, MOST ECONOMICAL AND CONVENIENT WAY TO WASH ANY VEHICLE

North America's
ONLY OEM

800-265-7405 • awashsystems.com

Saving money and the environment through bus washing

HAMILTON, Ontario — What is the most important element for washing vehicles in your company?

Company image? Driver satisfaction? Extending the life of equipment? Environmental impact?

All the above can be accomplished with great returns in many aspects of your business, but they still are generally ignored by most companies, which put little investment or thought into having a consistent wash.

In today's world of environmental concerns, the bus, motorcoach and transit industries have put serious thought into reducing their impact on the environment. They have analyzed ways to be efficient with tires, engines, fuel consumption, aerodynamics, etc.

How about doing an analysis of your vehicle washing?

A great wash of your vehicle can result in satisfied customers and drivers and reductions in both environmental impact and capital costs. Not many other maintenance items are as visible and impactful as having nice, clean vehicles every day.

Generally, the most popular automatic machinery to wash vehi-

cles consists of automated drive-through, rollover and walk-around units. These automated systems enable a bus to be washed and rinsed in less than five minutes.

Also available are water-reclamation and recycling systems to offset environment concerns and save on water costs.

Friction is the key to clean buses

HAMILTON, Ontario — Friction is in!

In the past month I have been to three tradeshow displaying our washing system to various industries. The same question is asked every hour: "Do the brushes scratch the paint?"

Unfortunately, there still are operators that use cheap products or the wrong materials and ruin the industry's progress in this field. We have thousands of customers washing thousands of vehicles every day with our products with no issues.

As a manufacturer that only sells friction washing equipment, we feel it is imperative for the industry to understand that there are

brush materials that have been used for millions of washes every year that do not damage paint, wraps or decals.

However, many operators are still using the manual pressure-washer and hand-brush scrub system, taking up to 30 minutes or more to wash and rinse.

Washing inside your building, in a majority of cases, means you are tapped into your municipal water and sewer system, so the

grey water is being sent to the local treatment facility. You are paying a big cost to the municipality to clean this water.

Are you paying for sewage discharge as well? Many companies do not realize that there is a water-in charge and in many cases a hefty water-out charge.

The secret to this brush is the structure; it is not round, it is a crucifix formation. This is where most of the issues of the past caused a bad reputation in the industry.

A round brush filament has very little coverage when touching a surface. Also, most round brush filaments are hollow, so they tend to slightly collapse and bounce when in contact with a surface.

The most common issue with polyethylene or polypropylene brushes is that customers do not change them after their life expectancy has expired.

Maintenance is the key to a perfect outcome.

Today's technology allows for water-treatment systems at your wash bay that allow you to capture your water, clean it and reuse it for washing. There is zero discharge, thus saving money and the environment.

Whether you are washing inside your building or outside in your parking lot, the use and cost of water can be a major hidden cost. Do the analysis and you could find major savings, especially when you look at your cost per gallon of water.

After determining the cost of water, you will have to include the cost of labor, chemicals and supplies (brushes, cloths, etc.). Overall, bus washing has more impact than most operators take time to consider. There is a major effect on both the environment and the bottom line of every company.

Take time to consider your footprint on the environment.

These articles were submitted by Jack Jackson, president of Awash Systems Corp. He can be reached at jjackson@awashsystems.com or 800-265-7405. For more information, go to: www.awashsystems.com.

-ENROLL-
Today!
New Classes
Begin
June 29th



Prevost Prep is here to help you get your license, stay current, and be the best you can be!

Introducing the Bus & Motorcoach Academy's **Prevost Preparatory School for Professional Motorcoach Drivers.**

Developed to help new drivers prepare for their CDL, **Prevost Prep** also gives experienced drivers an opportunity to keep current on unique skills of a professional motorcoach driver.

Click - Learn - Succeed

www.uma.org/academy



For Professional Motorcoach Drivers

A clean bus is essential to an operator's prosperity

GREENWICH, Conn. — It happens every day, many times a day, at every bus or coach depot whether large or small.

Bus washing!

It's an image-setting function as important as a crisp chauffeur's uniform, courteous service or any of the many tricks of the trade coach operators employ to project a smart appearance.

And clean buses are as much the face of the coach or bus operation as any other feature operators use to maintain or improve their image.

Our best prospects are customers with clean buses. They are the ones who, no matter what, have prioritized a clean fleet into their doctrine, and they are the ones who best appreciate that the task at hand needs time and resources.

Our best customers are conscientious, hard-working people, many of whom have climbed up the ladder in a family business, where washing a bus was their "mail room."

And no matter how long the day had been, mom or dad needed that bus washed and often joined

in. Possibly some have never washed a bus in their life, but all of our customers have at some point or other recognized it's a tough job and it's a job that needs doing.

Tom Holden of Rose Chauffeured Transportation in Pineville, N.C., is a new customer and characterizes our average client.

Tom came up to us at a recent show with a simple need: "We need to wash a lot of buses at night and I have to make the job easier for my crew."

It always comes down to two things: One, recognizing that the fleet needs to be clean, and two, recognizing that it's a hard job to do by hand alone.

There is a long list of suppliers out there waiting for more operators to be infected with those two eureka moments. The job needs doing, and the job is tough.

Coach operators need to modernize with equipment equal to the task. You may need a small-footprint, economical system such as available from Awash or Bitimec starting at \$15,000, or a multiple-brush rolover machine for several hundred thousand such as are



A clean bus is an image-setting function as important as a crisp chauffeur's uniform, courteous service or any of the many tricks coach operators employ to project a smart appearance.

available from Balanger, Pseco, Westmatic or Whiting, or something in-between.

But unless you have five buses or less, you should recognize mechanization of the wash process

is the only smart way to maintain the clean-image — which is essential to your prosperity — and to eliminate endless turnover by having a happy wash-crew.

This article was submitted by

Bruno Albanesi, president of Bitimec International Inc. You can reach him at 203-637-1900 or info@wash-bots.com. For more information, go to: www.wash-bots.com.

D4505 FRONT MASK CONVERSION

Convert your D3/DL3 to have the look of the D4505 with upgraded headlights

Three Headlight Kit Options Available:

Headlight Kit (Halogen)

Headlight Kit (LED)

Headlight Kit (Hybrid LED Low Beam, Halogen High Beam)

Kit Shown in Picture

CTC-PWR-D4505-Halogen \$1,975.00

CTC-PWR-D4505-Hybrid..... \$2,385.00

CTC-PWR-D4505-LED \$2,795.00



 **Power**
Manufacturing, Inc.
www.coachtransitcomponents.com
www.power-mfg.com

Contact your local representative for details

Tulsa case

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

pension, so FMCSA should have dismissed the violation and what was then a fine of \$1,810.

The incident stemmed from a traffic ticket that a KrafTour driver — a 28-year veteran — received for running a red light in his private vehicle. The driver paid the fine then was assessed a \$50 license reinstatement fee but, Kraft asserted, without the driver's knowledge. When that fee went unpaid the state suspended the driver's license.

Kraft said the driver told him of the red-light ticket at the time and produced a receipt showing he had paid the fine, which both he and the driver figured took care of

the issue.

The license suspension came to light following a compliance review conducted by an Oklahoma state trooper who apparently ran the names of KrafTour's drivers through a database of license information that is available to state authorities but not motorcoach operators.

The following day, the trooper returned to KrafTours' office and cited the carrier for allowing the driver to operate a coach without a proper license.

When informed of the suspension, Kraft immediately contacted the driver, who was on the road 70 miles from Tulsa, and ordered him to park his bus. A car was sent with a replacement driver and returned the suspended driver to the office.

A few hours later the driver obtained a money order and immediately delivered it to the state to cover the reinstatement fee.

"We had no reason to believe that some unknown fee had not been paid and that it would lead to my driver having his license suspended," stressed Kraft at that time.

Hefty protest

Disturbed by the violation notice, Kraft carefully crafted a 13-page letter protesting the action against his company and sent it to FMCSA.

Among the many reasons he cited supporting his request for a dismissal were that the regulation requires that the operator "knowingly" allowed a driver without a license to operate a bus; that the rule is vague and over-reaching; that the safety history of the company defies any claim of danger to the public; and that regulators require so much paperwork a super-human effort is required to manage it.

"It is ridiculous and the height of folly to suggest that KrafTours management would knowingly violate any federal regulation when a simple remedy was available for only \$50," he wrote in his pleadings. "This response alone has cost our company at least a hundred times \$50 and has been a distraction from our focus on operating an extremely safe motorcoach fleet."

Kraft said he was particularly concerned that he was presented a preprinted form stating that KrafTours admitted to the violation. Kraft declined the trooper's request to sign the form.

"It was intimidating to be asked to sign such a form by someone carrying a gun and wearing a badge," Kraft noted.

Kraft also was distressed that FMCSA placed his company name and the violation on its website before the action was adjudicated.

Fast forward

The latest order from FMCSA recounts the history of the case, then announces, "The FA (field administrator) wishes to pursue prosecution of this matter."

The following paragraphs explain, "The FA's submission of argument and evidence asserts the standard of proof for a motion for final order...The FA's submission demonstrates there is no genuine issue of material fact in dispute in this matter...The FA has established, by a preponderance of the evidence, that Respondent violated 49 CFR 383.37(a)."

Due to the recent lack of revenue for KrafTours, "The Interim

Order holds the civil penalty will be no greater than \$820, the gross revenue cap set forth in the Uniform Fine Assessment program."

The government's order also notes, "On April 14, 2015, Respondent's operating authority was involuntarily revoked."

That claim requires clarification, Kraft responded.

"On March 6, 2015, when liability insurance coverage was set to renew, KrafTours' management made the VOLUNTARY decision not to renew its insurance and therefore to voluntarily cease operations...making even this faulty enforcement effort moot. The Assistant Administrator's order might lead an uninformed reader to surmise a more devious motivation by Respondent, KrafTours, other than exhaustion and disgust with what has become of what was once, and for a long time, a nice, friendly, purposeful industry."

Not a 'knowing' act

Kraft's filing also asserts that FMCSA's notion of "preponderance of evidence" ignores the rebuttal that KrafTour's action was not a "knowing" act.

"The Field Administrator seems determined to bootstrap his claim into one of strict liability without addressing or even recognizing affirmative defenses presented by the Respondent. Considering all the facts and circumstances surrounding this matter, it may well be the case that within the FMCSA's flavor of Administrative Law, the United States Constitution doesn't even apply.

"KrafTours has addressed the entire matter fully, more than once. The Field Administrator has not only failed to address issues raised by the Respondent, but has tortured the truth, manipulated the facts, ignored relevant issues and singularly caused delay that has resulted in irreparable harm to the Respondent, KrafTours...the Field Administrator has demonstrated either a vindictive and punitive demonstration to Washington that he really is doing his job, or he is demonstrating equally convincingly that he hasn't enough to do."

Furthermore, the response adds, "The Field Administrator does himself no favors by choosing to pursue this claim with all its flaws, and he woefully embarrasses himself and the agency by continuing to flagrantly violate Respondent's Constitutional protections...If the true purpose of the Claimant's agency is to promote highway safety, in this case it has proven nothing. In this matter, no danger to the public ever existed.

"By continuing its quest, Claimant is wasting limited taxpayer funds and agency energy which could be used for genuine good instead of creating only what has been referred to as 'Safety Theater,' the illusion of safety in order to continue a spiteful battle."

The delay in pursuing the case also is criticized in KrafTours' response.

"In the interim, (driver) Mr. Edward Boyd, the subject of this original debacle, died of liver cancer some years ago. He is therefore unavailable to testify in this or any de novo hearing on this matter."

In an interview Kraft said he was pursuing the case on behalf of other small carriers who are still in business.

"There are a thousand coach operators that have been fined for nothing but little issues but didn't know how to fight them," he said. "The enforcers flagrantly ignore the Constitution and other legal protections because they expect these operators not to know them. This time they ran into somebody who does know."

KrafTours "Moves for a Final Order and finding in its favor," its response concludes. If the case is prosecuted, the company "will surely address these shortcomings in an appropriate forum at even more expense and distraction to both sides."

No comment

An FMCSA spokesman declined to respond to Kraft's filing. "As the matter is still active I am unable to comment," said Duane DeBruyne, deputy director of communications.

DeBruyne did note that KrafTours maintains some appearance of remaining active. "Note its most recent correspondence on company stationery dated April 11, 2016, found in the docket."

While Kraft did use company stationery in his correspondence, he said KrafTours no longer participates in any travel business. He said he was within days of selling his four coaches and was planning to rent his shop.

The company website apparently was last updated in 2011, but visitors may still click to view the carrier's safety record on the U.S. Department of Transportation SAFER website.

The record shows that KrafTours still has a "satisfactory" rating and, within the previous 24 months, has experienced no crashes and had no vehicles or drivers placed out of service. The SAFER log also lists the carrier's operating status as "Not authorized."

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING**FOR SALE — 4 MCI E4500 COACHES**

2 — 2002 & 2 — 2004 models, 58 passenger, Carrier HVAC, Restroom, Detroit Diesel Series 60 engine w/Jake, Allison B500 trans, REI 6-monitor video, very good interiors, paint & body, aluminum wheels, mileage between 600,000 — 800,000. Florida buses...**NO CORROSION!** Priced to sell: 2002's — \$94,900, 2004's — \$134,900 Contact Brian Scott for info at (727) 545-2088 or brian@escotbuslines.com

2012 MCI J4500 * 100k TCM * OEM 3 Point Seat Belts!

Excellent Condition...none nicer! Cummins • B500 • 58 pax w/lav
Michelin Tires • Alcoa Rims • CD/DVD • Lots more options
Lower Price: \$369k • Partial Financing O.A.C.
Trade for MCI D or DL3 Considered • More available

Call or Email today for more photos and info!
808.832.6261
sales@royalstarhawaii.com

REPOS FOR SALE
• "Bank Repos" across the US • Priced to Sell
• Variety of Makes & Models
1-877-737-2221 x30716
www.Bus-Buys.com — View "Repo Inventory"

**To place a Classified Ad,
call 866-930-8426**



PREVOST

BEST VIEW FROM EVERY ANGLE.

PrevoSt coaches deliver the luxury experience that today's charter travelers are looking for. With their fuel-efficient powertrain and low-maintenance design, they're as comfortable on your balance sheet as they are for your passengers.

www.prevoStcar.com

THE SMART CHOICE



...FOR A LASTING PARTNERSHIP. Providing your clients with the right motorcoach is smart business. CH Bus Sales has the premier choices to help you succeed. Our products are impeccable, and our personalized service is unequalled. When you buy a Temsa, you become our partner in success and a part of our family.

We believe in relationships that last, and service that comes in first.

For more information, contact CH Bus Sales at:
877-723-4045 or visit www.chbussales.com



CH Bus Sales is the exclusive distributor of Temsa motorcoaches in the U.S.