



Palmetto Progress

Motorcoach Association of South Carolina

P.O. Box 474, Columbia, SC 29202

888.376.1150 FAX 866.376.1156

Winter/Spring 2009

President's Letter









Walter Bryant, Jr.

Bryant Tours, LLC
North Charleston, SC

Spring is here and one can see the evidence. Trees are budding or already blooming and turning green. Flowers are showing their colors and the April showers are here. As I write this message, the rain is coming down. But, that's a good thing. There is little to compare to spring after a rain. Everything seems clean. Spring is the time for renewal and for that reason, may be my favorite season. We all need renewal at times, don't we?

As for MCASC, the Association is continuing to grow and in that growth, the board continually considers how to better serve the membership. Exactly what is the benefit of membership? The hard part of defining benefits is that, for the most part, they are intangible. Sure, we have things we can see, touch and feel such as the full-color **directory**, **newsletters**, and other communications to keep us up to date on various issues. There is also the **web site**, which we try to keep updated. There you will find your listing if you are a member of the association. For some members, these tangibles are sufficient. Some members are content to say, "I belong to the South Carolina motorcoach association." Others need more evidence of benefit. That's where the intangible stuff comes in play. Perhaps the greatest benefit is that **members use members**. We can promote that, but sometimes it just doesn't work out that way. I may have a charter scheduled to go tomorrow. That charter customer has already planned where the group is going, what they are going to do, and what they're going to eat. I may have little influence on that trip to recommend members. What I can do is try to keep my charter members informed based on my communication with members. I can recommend hotels, attractions, restaurants, and destinations. Another benefit is **education**. But, one has to participate in MCASC events in order to benefit from the education sessions provided during our **operator meetings** and our **annual meeting and market place**. At the same level of importance, if we're prioritizing benefits, is **networking**. There again, one has to participate

to network. I cannot begin to tell you how much that has benefited my company. Seeing folks face to face has a great deal of influence on how one responds when help is needed. Many times at MCASC events, out-of-state operators attend. That's like icing on the cake. How many times have you been on the road out of state and needed help? One question I ask when I am called upon to help an out-of-state operator is, "Are you a member of your state motorcoach association? Are you a member of UMA or ABA?" When an operator responds, "yes" to that question, that tells me something. It tells me he is an operator who is more than likely a good risk for payment for service rendered. That operator cares enough about his operation to join industry organizations to take advantage of the benefits I have discussed. The intangible benefits include:

-  Promoting safety among operators in the industry
-  Training and education for members on issues that impact our industry
-  Networking to build business relationships
-  Promoting public awareness of the motorcoach industry
-  Creating a forum for sales and marketing
-  Creating unity for common goals
-  Promoting cooperation among operators and associates
-  Advocating legislation that positively impacts the motorcoach industry

I hope each member can add something else to that list, either tangible or intangible. Membership may mean one thing to one member and something else to another member. But, belonging to a group with common interests and common goals is priceless.

MCASC just held its 6th roadeo in Myrtle Beach hosted by the Myrtle Beach CVB, Country Inn & Suites, Hard Rock Café, Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville, and Ripley's Aquarium. Other Myrtle Beach partners and MCASC members also contributed to the success of the roadeo. *Please see article in this newsletter.* I personally want to thank everyone who attended, sponsored, or otherwise contributed to the roadeo.

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In This Issue



**Southeastern Regional
Motorcoach Operators
Meeting January 19-21, 2009**



MCASC Roadeo Review

President's Letter

Continued from Cover

Now, we're getting very serious about the annual meeting and market place which will be held at the Marriott Gwinnett in the Atlanta area August 24-27. Gwinnett CVB is host and Cricket Elliott-Leeper is working hard with the CVB partners to make this a memorable event for MCASC members. I hope you have marked your calendar and have made plans to attend.

The MCASC Board of Directors and staff welcome your comments or questions. Help us to help you. Is there something that MCASC can do that would make membership more beneficial to you? Please contact Linda at 888-376-1150 or any board member listed on the back cover of this newsletter.

Happy Spring and Safe Travels!

Walter Bryant, Jr.

MCASC Board of Directors Endorses Mission of First Observer Program

The First Observer Program replaces the Highway Watch Program and is administered by HMS Company who received a grant from Homeland Security for this purpose. For more information, go online to www.FirstObserver.com.

New Members

ASSOCIATES

ATTRACTIONS

GEORGIA AQUARIUM

225 Baker Street, NW

Atlanta, GA 30313

404-581-4173

FAX 404-581-4303

Email: jmaxwell@georgiaaquarium.org

Web: www.georgiaaquarium.org

Jeni Maxwell Flowers, Mgr. Group Sales

HOTELS

COMFORT SUITES SUGARLOAF-SUWANEE, GA

2945-A Lawrenceville- Suwanee Road

Suwanee, GA 30024

678-714-7707

FAX 678-714-9677

Email: pk30342@yahoo.com

PK Kukreja, Director of Sales

COUNTRY INN & SUITES OF MYRTLE BEACH

3516 Waccamaw Blvd.

Myrtle Beach, SC 29579

843-236-4500

800-456-4000

FAX 843-236-4501

Email: countryinns@sc.rr.com

Web: www.countryinns.com

Sandra Morgan, Director of Sales

EXCEPTIONALHOSPITALITY.COM

1852 Rockbridge Road

Stone Mountain, GA 30087

678-514-1913

FAX 678-514-1912

Email: katak Patel@exceptionalhospitality.com

exceptionalhospitality.com

Web: www.exceptionalhospitality.com

Kataki Patel, DOS

Additional Listings:

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS, STONE MOUNTAIN

1790 East Park Place Blvd.

Stone Mountain, GA 30087

770-465-8847

Email: cx_stmt@countryinns.com

COMFORT INN, STONE MOUNTAIN

5355 Stone Mountain Hwy.

Stone Mountain, GA 30087

770-465-1888

Email: atlsm@exceptionalhospitality.com

HAMPTON INN

7050 Hwy. 21

Port Wentworth, GA 31407

912-966-2000

FAX 912-966-2001

Email: Kyenna.hamilton@hilton.com

Web: www.hamptoninn-savannah.com

Tommy Beyer, General Manager

Kyenna Hamilton, Regional DOS

HAMPTON INN BRUNSWICK

230 Warren Mason Blvd.

Brunswick, GA 31520

912-261-0002

FAX 706-243-4619

Email: michelle.livingston@hilton.com

Web: www.brunswick.hamptoninn.com

Michelle Livingston, Director of Sales

Lynda Washington, General Manager

HOLIDAY INN ATLANTA NORTHEAST

2001 Clearview Ave.

Atlanta, GA 30340

770-455-3700

FAX 770-986-9977

Email: fbaker@imperialinvestments.us

Faith Baker, Regional Sales Manager

Imperial Investments

HOWARD JOHNSON PLAZA & SUITES

9956 Hawaiian Court

Orlando, FL 32819

407-351-5100 OR 800-826-4847

FAX 407-352-7188

Email: sales@orlandohowardjohnson.com

Web: www.orlandohowardjohnson.com

Vasant Patel, General Manager

Stephanie Whyte, Director of Sales

SUPER 8 GATLINBURG DOWNTOWN

417 Historic Nature Trail

Gatlinburg, TN 37738

865-436-2222 OR 866-436-2228

FAX 865-436-2264

Email: info@super8gatlinburgdowntown.com

downtown.com

Web: www.super8gatlinburgdowntown.com

downtown.com

Linda Wilson, General Manager

SALES, SERVICE & PRODUCTS

BUS & COACH INTERNATIONAL

11262 Bogy Creek Road

Orlando, FL 32824

407-615-0647

FAX 888-875-5883

Email: jhatch@bcibus.com

John Hatch

**CAIO NORTH AMERICA/
COLONIAL EQUIPMENT
COMPANY**

1310 Bailes Lane
Frederick, MD 21701
301-698-5100 OR 800-GO-BY-BUS
FAX 301-698-5117
Email: ken@thebusplace.com
Web: www.thebusplace.com
Craig Combs, General Manager
Tom Clare, Sales Associate

GALLIVAN, WHITE & BOYD, P.A.

P.O. Box 10589
Greenville, SC 29603
864-271-9580
FAX 864-271-7502
Email: drheney@gwblawfirm.com
Web: www.gwblawfirm.com
T. David Rheney, Shareholder- Attorney
Stuart Mauney, Shareholder- Attorney

TOURISM AGENCIES

ATLANTIC CITY CVA
2314 Pacific Ave.
Atlantic City, NJ 08401
609-449-7151
FAX 609-345-2200
Email: hcolache@accva.com
Web: www.atlanticcitynj.com
Heather Colache, Director, Tourism

**NORTH CAROLINA'S
NORTHEAST COMMISSION**

119 West Water Street
Edenton, NC 27932
252-482-4333 OR 888-872-8562
FAX 252-482-3366
Email: info@ncnortheast.com
Web: www.visitncne.com
Hannah Jones, Regional Assistant
Vann Rogerson, President/CEO

Former Member

**ASSOCIATE
RESTAURANT**

COLLIER RESTAURANT GROUP
2772 Florence Drive
Pigeon Forge, TN 37863
865-774-8004 OR 800-933-4245
FAX 865-428-4592
Email: adrew@smokymtn
restaurantguide.com
Web: www.smokymtnrestaurantguide.com
Diana Fuller, DOSM
Amy Drew, Sales Manager

Changes

OPERATORS

5 STAR TRANSPORTATION, LLC
1053 Mandella Road
Bonneau, SC 29431
4 Coaches Operated
FAX 843-825-3937
Email: fivestar1348@aol.com
Web: www.5startransportation.vpweb.com

GREEN'S TRAVEL COACH, LLC
843-753-7325 OR 843-754-3192

JEAN'S BUS SERVICE, INC.
Email: wayne@jeansbussvc.com
Wayne Horton, Charters and Tours
Email: karyn@jeansbussvc.com
Karyn Matteson, Outside Sales
John Cauley, Jr., Technical Engineer
Jean Cauley, President/Tour Mgr./Owner
16 Coaches Operated

MAJESTIC TOURS, INC.
Web: www.majesticbustours.com
9 Coaches Operated

SUNWAY CHARTERS AND TOURS
Email: waddell.thompson@yahoo.com

ASSOCIATES

More changes have been made than space allows in this newsletter. Please check the web site listing for correct contact information for the following associate members:

ATTRACTIONS

**ALLENBERRY RESORT
INN AND PLAYHOUSE
BILTMORE ESTATE
BOOTH WESTERN ART MUSEUM
BROADWAY AT THE BEACH
DOLLY PARTON'S
DIXIE STAMPEDE
FUN FACTORY IN THE SMOKIES
HARD ROCK PARK
NORTH CAROLINA BLUMENTHAL
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
RIVER STREET RIVERBOAT
COMPANY
SOUTH CAROLINA NATIONAL
HERITAGE CORRIDOR
THE FUN FACTORY
TURNING STONE RESORT
AND CASINO**

HOTELS

**CHRISTMAS PLACE AND THE
INN AT CHRISTMAS PLACE
HESS HOTELS GROUP
IP CASINO, RESORT AND SPA
JHM HOTELS
MAINSTAY SUITES
NORTH POINT HOSPITALITY
GROUP, INC.
RAMADA MAINGATE WEST
SKY HOTELS AND RESORT
THE BREAKERS RESORT**

RESTAURANTS

**CFC OF CHARLESTON
COLLIER RESTAURANT GROUP
STICKY FINGERS**

SALES, SERVICE & PRODUCTS

**ABC COMPANIES
BUS GROUP, INC.
DAIMLER BUSES
P.A. POST AGENCY**

THEATRES

**MEDIEVAL TIMES DINNER
AND TOURNAMENT
RAINBOW DINNER THEATRE
SAVANNAH THEATRE
SMITH FAMILY DINNER THEATER
WOHLFAHRT HAUS
DINNER THEATRE**

TOUR RECEPTIVES

**CHARLESTON CONVENTION &
GROUP SERVICES, INC.
SMOKY MOUNTAIN TOUR
CONNECTION, INC.
TOURCO**

TOURISM AGENCIES

**ALBANY CVB
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT —
TOURISM DIVISION
GREENWOOD REGIONAL
TOURISM & VISITORS BUREAU
MERCER COUNTY CVB
MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST CVB
MYRTLE BEACH AREA CVB
PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY/
MANASSAS CVB
ROANOKE VALLEY CVB
SOUTH CAROLINA PARKS,
RECREATION AND TOURISM
VALLEY FORGE CVB**

The Smiths Serve Up Dinner And A Show for 2009

Charlie, Jim and Charlie Bob Smith have always had a way with the guests at their Pigeon Forge music theater. Since 2004, the entertainers have delivered their unique brand of music and comedy in an intimate, familial style that makes audiences feel like they're



kicked back in the Smith family living room. But starting this season, audience members may also feel like they've pulled up a chair at the Smiths' dining room table.

That's because the boys are now serving dinner at their showplace, which charms visitors with a stage show heavily steeped in Southern music and culture. Now renamed the Smith Family Dinner Theater, the venue is complementing that experience with a mouthwatering Southern-style buffet. Generous portions of Southern favorites like fried chicken, pot roast, farm-fresh vegetables and homemade desserts are ensuring that no guest leaves hungry.

"We are so excited to be able to offer our many returning guests and newcomers great Southern dining to go along with our show," says Charlie Bob. "We discovered that dinner and a show has become what Pigeon Forge visitors are looking for, and we are happy to be able to provide that experience."

The 420-seat theater has been remodeled to accommodate the new dinner format, utilizing state-of-the-art facilities to deliver a satisfying dining experience and an uplifting, entertaining show in comfort and style.

In addition to the food, theater guests will be able to fill up on an evening of entertainment starring the Smiths, whose production has five times been named Best Show in Pigeon Forge. They have been a favorite among Smoky Mountain visitors and locals alike since the 1980s, building a loyal following thanks to their musical talent and sense humor. Their



eclectic blend of country, bluegrass, gospel, oldies rock-n-roll, clean family comedy and trademark repertoire of impressions have helped make their show one of the staples of the music theater community.

"We'll still do all the popular things our audiences like, but we'll throw in some surprises that we're looking forward to doing," says Charlie Bob. "But it will still be the Smith boys doing what everybody knows we can do, and we'll always have fun, no matter what."

Tickets to the Smith Family Dinner Theater are \$37.95 plus tax for adults and \$35.95 plus tax for seniors. Teen tickets are half price, and children 12 and younger are admitted free (each teen or child must be accompanied by a paying adult). For more information, call toll-free 866-399-8100 or go online to www.smithfamilytheater.com. Special rates are available for groups of 20 or more and for tour and travel-industry groups.

MCASC Bylaws Amendments Approved February 24, 2009

Article III. Membership

Section II. Operator Members:

E. Any member company, which is sold all or in part, and the new owner(s) take control of 50% or more of the company through sole proprietorship, partnership, LLC or corporate stock, becomes a new company for the purposes of membership in MCASC. Such company must re-apply for membership in MCASC and will be subject to the same requirements as any company seeking membership.

Article V. Meetings of Members

Section III: Notice of meetings: All notices of membership meetings shall be made by the Association Secretary in cooperation with the Executive Director.

A. Regular or normal meetings: Notice of such meetings shall be made to the membership, in writing, at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting. Such notice may be made by letter, fax or email, and must be verified by the Association Secretary.

B. Special meetings: Notice of such meetings shall be made to the operator members, in writing, by certified mail, at least twenty (20) days prior to the meeting. The notice shall include required information as contained in Article V, Section II.

ABC Companies: New Team Claude Payne and Steven Olesen

ABC's new collaboration we will be able to offer enhanced coverage of your business unit's territory by having access to two account executives.

Mr. Claude Payne and Steven Olesen are available for our customers in Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia.

We are happy to answer any questions you may have and invite you to contact us at our Winter Garden, Florida location. Please email or call if you have any questions, see contact information in this article.

Thank you for your continued business. We look forward to meeting your needs today and assisting you in your long-term growth and success.

*ABC Companies, Winter Garden, Florida location
407-656-7977 or 800-222-2871*

*Claude Payne, cpayne@abc-companies.com, Extension 77101
Steven Olesen, solesen@abc-companies.com, Extension 77108*

Photos from the 2009 MCASC Rodeo are
posted on the MCASC web site:
www.scmotorcoach.org

Southeastern Regional Motorcoach Operators Meeting January 19-21, 2009

We tried it! It worked! The Southeastern meeting was held in conjunction with the UMA Expo in Orlando. The Florida Motorcoach Association was host and provided financial support for the meeting as well as a good representation from the FMA members,

including **Andy Sasfai**, president. The meeting started with an excellent presentation by **Cynthia Witty**, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration on compliance regulations. **Jim**



Jim and Odette Harris, Cardinal Coach; with Tom Sullivan, Motor Coach Industries during an informative session.

Harris, President of NCMA, presiding over the meeting conducted an assessment of topics of interest to those attending for later discussion. The evening was topped off by a mystery dinner performance sponsored by Sleuth's Mystery Dinner Shows, a real "who done it." No, it wasn't the butler this time. It was the Best Man at the wedding! He killed the groom! Appreciation is extended to Lance Lancaster with Sleuth's.

Tuesday was a day full of great topics and great presenters. After a breakfast sponsored by **Allen Insurance Group (Marion Kenney)**, a panel of coach technicians

fielded questions from the operators including engine information, seat belt status, and much more. **Scott Merriman (Scenic America-VA)** was moderator for this session keeping it going to the end. Appreciation is extended to panelists,



Ken Presley, United Motorcoach Association, gave a wonderful presentation about the Cost of Tours.

Marvin Borntreger (ABC Companies); Paul Conover (DaimlerBuses); Bryan Couch (Motor Coach Industries); Robert Hitt (Prevost), Frank Deutch (Trident Industries), and David Oldridge (Bus and Coach International). Other sessions included Cost of Tour/Charter Service presented by **Ken Presley, United Motorcoach Association;** Grants/How to Apply and What is Available presented by **Brandon Buchanan, American Bus Association;** and In-House Safety Program presented by **Tim O'Bryan, Service Insurance Agency.** These were excellent sessions giving operators information to take home and use. Appreciation is extended to **Peter Pantuso, CEO, ABA** for sponsorship of lunch and for bringing an interesting industry update. Tuesday evening's dinner was at Planet Hollywood and sponsored by **Motor Coach Industries (Vicki Bowman, Matt Clapp, Glen Collins, Mike Denny,**

Gene Hall, Tony Pederson, and Tom Sullivan) and **Planet Hollywood (Kerry Montgomery).** The meal was great! Appreciation is extended to **Bruce Bechard (Southern Coach-NC)** for introductions of the speakers and keeping everyone to the allotted time.



Planet Hollywood, host of Tuesday Dinner Event.

Breakfast on Wednesday morning was sponsored by United Motorcoach Association and **Vic Parra** provided an industry update. Both Pete (during the lunch session) and Vic shared that there were still many questions about the direction and policy changes of the new administration under new

President Barack Obama. Comments addressed the highway reauthorization funding, fuel tax increases, seat belt legislation and other industry concerns and



Picture left to right: Franklin Simmons, S&S Charter Services, South Carolina; Jim Harris, Cardinal Coach and Tim O'Bryan, Service Insurance Agency.

issues. The session conducted by **Bob Leitzel, Transportation Management Services** proved to be informative as he reviewed the process for hurricane evacuation. Operators were straightforward in their questions and concerns for lack of payment. Bob stated that he would take their concerns to the appropriate officials.

As the meeting evolved, most all topics suggested on the first day were covered in presentations; however, the group did ask that an advisory committee be formed as a liaison with the emergency management directors to act on behalf of the operators participating in hurricane evacuation or other emergencies. The first task assigned to the committee was to contact the Texas EMS director to seek any payments still pending.

The group also elected to accept Peter Pantuso's invitation to hold the 2010 meeting in conjunction with the American Bus Association Marketplace at the Gaylord National Hotel



Hurricane evacuation session conducted by Bob Leitzel, Transportation Management Services.

and Convention Center, National Harbor, MD. The Virginia Motorcoach Association Board of Directors has agreed to host the meeting. The date for the Southeastern will be January 13-15.

Annual MCASC Coach Rodeo hosted by Myrtle Beach

A rose is a rose, is a rose! I'm sure you've heard that expression, which to me means that one rose is just as beautiful as another. Well, let me say that cliché does not apply to the rodeo. Myrtle Beach, true to its reputation, hosted the annual coach rodeo in fine fashion. Who would have thought that the parking lot at Hard Rock Café would be the perfect place for a coach rodeo. It was! I have to admit I had reservations, not that the Myrtle Beach members could host a great rodeo, but



The Rodeo registration desk was managed by Cricket Elliott-Leeper, Atlanta's Gwinnett CVB and Marion Kenney, Allen Insurance Group.

we were going outside our box this time, no hotel parking lot, no convention center parking lot, but a parking lot at a restaurant, a popular one at that. My hat is off to **Sandy Haines (Myrtle Beach CVB)**, **Janice Duffy (Hard Rock Café)**, and **Stephanie Decatur (Broadway at the Beach)**. I also want to offer MCASC's gratitude to **Matt Harper (Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville)** and **Debi Shofner (Ripley's Aquarium)** for hosting the rodeo also. Matt sponsored dinner on Monday for the board members and others who arrived early to a delicious meal at Margaritaville including a sinfully delicious chocolate dessert. Debi sponsored a reception on Monday evening prior to dinner, and members were invited to tour the aquarium on their own. Debi's spread was delicious and was the perfect pre-dinner event. Debi also hosted the seminars held on Tuesday for operators and drivers. Thank you so much!

There are many "duties" to carry out a successful rodeo and members really stepped up to the plate to volunteer to serve as judges, scorekeepers, runners for the score sheets, test monitors, course set up, and registration. Speaking of stepping up to the plate, **Cricket Elliott-Leeper** even wore the Gwinnett Braves uniform shirt to promote the new stadium for the AAA Braves in Gwinnett County, GA, host for the 2009 Annual Meeting and Market Place August 24-27. Cricket and the CVB partners are getting ready to welcome MCASC members with great events. Mark your calendar



Pictured above: Sandy Haines of Myrtle Beach CVB, the Rodeo Host Location; Brian Pinckney, Daimler Buses; John Hatch, Bus and Coach International; and Rob Lambert, Daimler Buses.

and plan to be there! Cricket and Marion Kenny were the smiling faces greeting the operators, drivers and guests at the registration table for

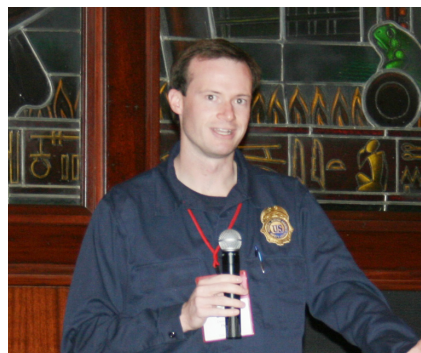


Driver Ricky Younginer, Capitol Bus Lines and Charles Derrick, Capitol Bus Lines, enjoy a great meal at Hard Rock Cafe.

MCASC's rodeo. Sandy gave participants Myrtle Beach gift bags containing items sponsored by Broadway at the Beach, Carolina Opry, Dolly Parton's Dixie Stampede Dinner & Show, Hard Rock Café, Myrtle Beach IMAX 3D Theatre, Myrtle Beach Pelican's, Original Benjamin's, Palace Theatre, and SunCruz Casino.

A special thank you is extended to our coach sales representatives for providing coaches for the rodeo, **Rob Lambert and Brian Pinckney (Daimler Buses North America)**, **Bill Leonard (Prevost)**, **Claude Payne and Steve Olesen (ABC Companies)** and **John Hatch (Bus and Coach International)**. John provided transportation for the drivers and the operators from Ripley's Aquarium to Hard Rock Café, which helped tremendously. **Tom Sullivan, Mark Haake, and Dan Filan (Motor Coach Industries)** provided a coach especially set up for the mechanics skills test. **Tom Clare (Colonial Equipment)** also attended the rodeo.

MCASC always welcomes members of the SC Transport Police and FMCSA. **Gene Parnell (SCTP)** and **Devin Eakes (FMCSA)** gave a rules and regulations update at lunch, as well as served as judges for the rodeo. **David Sewell (SC Emergency Management Division)** also provided an



Devin Eakes from FMCSA gave an update on federal regulations.

update for evacuation preparedness. Jack Burkert, Industry Safety Consultant, conducted a session for operators titled **Training: What, Who, Why, How** and for drivers titled **Customer Service and Safety**.

This is just one of many opportunities offered by MCASC, which help to keep operators up to date

regarding industry rules and regulations, demonstrate that MCASC is working cooperatively with state agencies, and educate operators about various aspects of their operations. During the business meeting, a bylaws amendment was ratified by the membership. *See the bylaws amendment in this newsletter.*

After a lunch of hamburgers and grilled chicken with all the trimmings, the rubber met the road! Twenty-five drivers demonstrated their driving skills and **Robby Cauley**, the only mechanic, demonstrated his skills. When the scores were tallied, the top three drivers were **Geoff McCorquodale (Ionosphere Tours)**, **Jim Sweatt (Sunshine Travel &**

Express), and **George Davis (Sunshine Travel & Express)**. Robby received the mechanics top prize. Not only do the drivers and mechanics receive an award for their achievement, they receive cash prizes and a “get-away package.” ABC Companies, Daimler Buses North America, Motor Coach Industries, and Prevost sponsored the awards, cash prizes, and the commemorative T-Shirt, which is given to everyone who attends the rodeo. The wonderful get-away packages were sponsored by Myrtle Beach members including hotel stays, theatre tickets, meals, and attractions tickets. *See listing of these sponsors.*



David Sewell, South Carolina Emergency Management Division, provided information about Emergency Preparedness.

It was a good day to be in Myrtle Beach. It was sunny and just cool enough to keep everyone moving a little faster to keep warm. Special appreciation is extended to **Johnny Cauley (Jean’s Bus Service)**, chairman of the Rodeo Event



MCASC President Walter Bryant, Jr., Bryant Tours, talks with Gene Parnell of South Carolina State Transport Police during the driving skills test setup.

and committee members, **Bob Garrett, Brian Pinckney, Charles Palmer, Nick Nicholson, and Sandy Haines.**

Well done! If you missed the rodeo, plan now to participate next year. Anderson Convention and

Visitors Bureau will host the annual coach rodeo February 23, 2010. It is fun for the spectators. It is fun for those who serve in one of many areas of responsibility. It is fun and rewarding for the drivers and mechanics. It is educational, and it is a great networking opportunity. Don’t miss the next one!



Pictured left to right: Winning Mechanic: Robby Cauley, Jean’s Bus Service. Winning Drivers shown: Second Place, Jim Sweatt, Sunshine Travel & Express; First Place, Geoff McCorquodale, Ionosphere Tours. Not shown: Third Place, George Davis, Sunshine Travel & Express.

Coach Rodeo Prize Sponsors

Appreciation is extended to Coach Rodeo prize sponsors:

Grand Prize Get-away for First Place Driver

Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort – two night stay
 Prince Resort – two night stay
 Ocean Reef Resort – two night stay
 Alabama Theatre – two tickets and Grant Turner CD
 Carolina Opry – two tickets
 Legends in Concert – two tickets
 Medieval Times- two tickets
 Palace Theatre – two tickets – Le Grand Cirque
 Original Benjamin’s – two complimentary buffets’
 Hard Rock Café - \$50 gift certificate
 Brookgreen Gardens – two admissions passes
 Wild Water & Wheels – two all day waterpark admissions
 Myrtle Beach IMAX 3D Theatre – admission for two

Second Place Driver

Fairfield Inn Broadway at the Beach – two night stay
 Caribbean Resort – two night stay
 Brookgreen Gardens – two admissions passes
 Myrtle Beach IMAX 3D Theatre – admission for two
 Wild Water & Wheels – two all day waterpark admissions
 Hard Rock Café - \$25 gift certificate
 Carolina Opry – two tickets
 Legends in Concert – two tickets
 Palace Theatre – two tickets – Le Grand Cirque

Third Place Driver

Compass Cove – two night stay
 Brookgreen Gardens – two admissions passes
 Hard Rock Café - \$25 gift certificate
 Carolina Opry – two tickets
 Palace Theatre – two tickets – Le Grand Cirque

Operators:

FMCSA Driver Tips

FMCSA has recently released a compilation of online driver training tips at: <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/about/outreach/education/driverTips/index.htm>

DC DOT Web Site

The DC DOT has launched a new Web site just for bus operators featuring the latest motorcoach information for any bus operator planning to bring tourists to Washington. Please visit: <http://ddot.dc.gov/ddot/cwp/view%2Ca%2C1250%2Cq%2C562054.asp>

Trip Permit can be requested online by registering with the DC DOT at: https://public.dmv.washingtondc.gov/BusinessPages/TripPermit/TP_Home.aspx

Rep. Shuster Reintroduces Science-Driven Bus Safety Bill

Rep. Bill Shuster (R-Pa.) has reintroduced his science-based motorcoach safety bill for the new 111th Congress, and it's already got bipartisan support—as well as a new name.

H.R. 1135, the “Bus Uniform Standards and Enhanced Safety (BUSES) Act of 2009,” is historic in its first-ever call for a comprehensive National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) study to determine what, if any, motorcoach safety requirements should be modified.

Additional co-sponsors of H.R. 1135 include Reps. John Mica (R-Fla.) and John Duncan (R-Tenn.). Shuster, a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, was ABA Legislator of the Year in 2008, along with Rep. John Olver (D-Mass).

CTIS Also Means “Critical To Increasing Success”

More than 60 participants gathered in Charlotte at this year's Marketplace to celebrate their coursework completion, graduation and professional designation as Certified Travel Industry Specialists – among them ABA President & CEO Peter Pantuso, CTIS.

The program includes courses in customer service, sales, advertising, business writing, personal organization and effectiveness, among others. Each CTIS participant is required to take five IUPUI correspondence courses and attend eight Marketplace Education Seminars to graduate. The program is designed to be completed in 12 months but can be extended without any additional enrollment fees from ABA.

Final Rule For OBD Emissions Monitoring

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will issue a final rule April 27 requiring manufacturers to install advanced onboard diagnostic systems (OBD) to monitor emissions controls and alert drivers and service technicians when malfunctions necessitate repairs. The rule will also require manufacturers to make available information that will be necessary to complete those repairs on OBD systems, as well as on other engine components affecting emissions. For more information, visit www.epa.gov.

Industry Leaders Panel Shares Outlook For Group Travel In 2009

Defying the economic downturn affecting nearly all sectors of the travel industry is the top challenge facing the motorcoach, tour and travel industries, Marketplace 2009 Industry Leaders Panelists agreed. Each panelist concurred that when budgets are tight, sales and marketing budgets should be made more robust, when the natural instinct may often be to do the opposite.

Despite economic uncertainty, customer service is always critical, Mike Butts emphasized. “People do business with people they know and like,” he added. “They go where they're liked.” Mike is the Executive Director of Visit Charlotte.

Oberstar Wants June House Action On \$500 Billion Highway Bill

House Transportation Chairman Rep. James Oberstar (D-Minn.) has vowed quick Congressional action on the 2009 Highway Reauthorization bill, which he said would have a price tag of as much as \$500 billion.

Oberstar called the highway bill's ambitious scope “transformational,” adding it could win House approval the first week of June, nearly four months before current programs expire. Staff for the Transportation Committee's Highways and Transit Subcommittee have said to be “furiously working on” the draft measure, BNA reported.

The \$500 billion sticker price Oberstar gave for the six-year highway bill matches what Transportation ranking member John Mica (R-Fla.) has cited. The current surface transportation authorization, which expires Sept. 30, spent \$286 billion over six years.

But Oberstar cautioned that the Senate could slow the progress on a multiyear reauthorization.

Travel & Tour Groups, Operators Unite To Fight NY Gov's Tax Plan

Academy Bus, Coach USA, and Peter Pan Bus Lines united with the Broadway League, Carnegie Hall, the Hospitality and Tourism Association, the Hotel Association and NYC & Company to show solidarity among bus operators and New York attractions as ABA President & CEO Peter Pantuso, CTIS, and Policy Manager Daniel Hoff told the Motorcoach Travel & Tour Industry Round Table the damaging effects Gov. David Paterson's (D) proposed tax hike would have on travel and tourism in New York.

All charter bus tours, including buses that are hired or rented as a charter, beginning and ending in New York State, will be taxed unless service terminates out of state. If passed, the bill is slated to take effect June 1.

Bloomberg Plans To Slice Big Apple Streets In Core Area New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg will close traffic lanes along Broadway starting Memorial Day, saying the routes will be torn up and transformed into pedestrian plazas until at least the end of 2009, but will improve bus times on the affected streets for the more than 750,000 daily bus passengers.

The \$1.5 million pilot program will discontinue all vehicular traffic from 47th Street to 42nd Street and from 35th Street to 33rd Street—connecting Seventh Avenue through Times Square, where it is currently bisected by Broadway, and improve traffic flow on Sixth Avenue through Herald Square.

Make Sure You Know WHTIs Required Before June 1 Deadline

The U.S. State Department and Department of Homeland Security are recommending travelers apply now for the U.S. Passport Card that will be required at all land or sea border entry points effective June 1, 2009. Under the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, U.S. citizens will be required to present a government-approved document that denotes both citizenship and identity when entering the United States. The U.S. Passport Book and the U.S. Passport Card are the premiere documents that denote both citizenship and identity.

ID Required For U.S. Entry

DHS has issued a final rule under the WHTI requiring U.S. citizens crossing the borders back into the country after traveling to Canada, Mexico, Bermuda or the Caribbean to present a passport or other authorized form of ID to obtain admittance. The ruling goes into effect for land and sea travel June 1. More information is available online at www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/ and www.getyouhome.gov/.

ABA Testifies Before NY Senate For Fair Bus Policies

Motorcoaches perform the same benefits as transit buses throughout the Empire State and therefore should be treated the same way, ABA President & CEO Peter J. Pantuso, CTIS told key State Senate Transportation Committees last month in Albany.

Motorcoaches, Pantuso urged, should be “treated equally with transit buses” by being “exempted from tolls on the East River and Harlem River bridges.” It was the third time in the past month that ABA was the designated association voice for the industry.

ABA Forms New Premium Partnership with Monster.com

ABA is pleased to announce a new Premium Partnership with global online career and recruitment resource leader Monster.com that will provide special access to top motorcoach, travel and tourism industry talent through the latest online technologies. For an ABA members-only discount, both job seekers and employers seeking specialized talent for all segments of the hospitality industry will be able to utilize Monster.com’s powerful tools and career resources.

ABA members also have special discounts and offers, and can post jobs through the Monster.com.

Motorcoach Council Seeks Final Founding Partner Visionaries

Todd Holland (Ramblin’ Express), one of the diverse group of operators who helped form the Council, says, “People think they are powerless when it comes to travel. But they can take power today by getting on a motorcoach. They don’t have to deal with hassles and delays and lousy customer service that are rife among other travel choices. They can sit back, relax, enjoy the ride, and see America instead of flying over it – at a fraction of the cost and with luxury amenities.”

Holland added that there has never been a better time than now to launch a public awareness campaign touting motorcoach travel.

“Motorcoaches are the solution that’s here today,” Holland told the ABA Insider. “Any operator who gets a new rider aboard today’s motorcoach knows they will potentially have a loyal customer for life. But the key is reaching out to that future customer who isn’t aware of everything we offer. That’s the Council mission, and why we want to make sure no operator misses the chance to be part of making history as a Founding Partner.”

To become a Motorcoach Council Founding Partner, log on to the group’s web site, www.motorcoachcouncil.org.

Blunt, Farr will Co-Chair Hill Travel & Tourism Caucus

Rep. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) is joining Rep. Sam Farr (D-Calif.) as co-chair of the Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus for the 111th Congress. Blunt previously served as an active member of the caucus and has co-sponsored several bills supporting the travel industry.

The caucus, which had more than 100 members at the close of the 110th Congress, works closely with the travel industry to support legislation and foster communication between lawmakers and travel leaders.

“Employee Free Choice Act” Poses Industry Challenges

The proposed “Employee Free Choice Act” (EFCA) presents a number of potential changes in labor relations that affect the motorcoach industry, particularly because 80 percent of ABA bus operator members have fewer than 10 coaches in their fleets.

ABA’s Policy Committee has recommended that the organization adopt an official position opposing the EFCA, citing the undemocratic nature of any proposal that dispenses with the right of all employees to vote in secret. In addition, given that bus companies are primarily made up of small businesses, it is unlikely that these companies would be able to bear the burden of long, protracted negotiations with the larger labor organizations. ABA members interested in being active on this issue are encouraged to do so through organizations such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and National Federation of Independent Businesses.

Alexandria Police Begin Bus Enforcement Campaign

The Alexandria Police Department announced it will begin an active enforcement campaign focused on the idling, double-parking and unlawful loading/unloading practices of motorcoaches throughout Alexandria, Virginia. Police will focus on three particular violations. Idling longer than 15 minutes is prohibited by Virginia Code 46.2-1224.1 subject to a \$50 fine. Additionally, City Code 9-12-164 stipulates that buses parked in designated spots must turn off their motors when parked.

Double parking, as well as stopping so as to obstruct traffic, and stopping to load or unload passengers in the traveled portion of any street, are prohibited according to City Code 10-4-4, 10-4-5 and 10-4-15. The penalty is a \$200 fine. Tour and sightseeing buses may not use locations other than designated parking spaces according to City Code 9-12-162. The penalty is a \$100 fine.

Alexandria says it will remain a welcoming destination for visitors and tourism. However, the city adds it is working to manage motorcoaches and balance their operational needs with measures to limit intrusive effects on historic neighborhood and the quality of life in Alexandria.

State Registration Proposal Would Double Fleet Charges

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

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

“Any increase seems premature inasmuch as it appears enforcement of the UCRA fees has been lax at best,” said Ken Presley, vice president of industry relations at the United Motorcoach Association. Presley also stated, “It would be better if they [the states] just sought payment from those who have failed to pay rather than increase the payments on those who choose to comply.”

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

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

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

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

The states focused only on the fact that the UCRA program has not produced all the revenue many states had expected.

NYC To Block Sections Of Broadway

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

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

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

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

Farther south, two blocks of Broadway at Herald Square,

home of Macy’s flagship store, will get a similar treatment.

Construction for the pilot program will begin Memorial Day weekend and be completed by September. It will be tested for the remainder of the year and could become permanent.

Broadway’s diagonal path across Manhattan’s street grid forms odd-shaped blocks at the heart of Times Square, creating monumental traffic jams where three streets meet.

“It’s pretty hard to argue we could do anything to make it worse,” Mayor Bloomberg said in announcing the plan.

That remains to be seen, of course.

Commission Recommended Fuel Tax Hike

The National Commission on Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing will tell Congress that diesel taxes should be increased by 12 to 15 cents per gallon. It currently is 24.4 cents per gallon.

The panel also will ask Congress to raise the gas tax, currently 18.4 cents per gallon, 10 additional cents per gallon.

Both fuel taxes would be tied to inflation under the commission’s plan.

Roads and bridges need to be built and repaired, say commission members, but as Americans drive less and use more fuel-efficient vehicles, revenue from fuel taxes is falling.

Green Motorcoach Certification Program, a collaborative research project between the University of Vermont, ABA, and UMA

Over the next 18 months the first phase of this project will be conducted and companies from throughout North America are invited to participate in a field testing/pilot of the concept. The pilot Green Coach Certification program is based on the principles of transparency and voluntary participation. The program, as it moves forward, will be designed to evolve in sophistication over time. During the field testing period, operators are eligible for a pilot Green Coach Certification label/recognition for any motorcoach complying with at least one of the following:

- Meeting or exceeding the industry average of 148 passenger miles per gallon.

- Running an EPA 2007 compliant engine.

- Running an EPA 2010 compliant engine.

- Offsetting carbon emissions by 80 percent through an endorsed carbon-trading program.

- Running on an alternative fuel such as a blend of Biodiesel.

- Having a strict, documented, and verifiable energy conservation and recycling program.

- Incorporating other emerging environmental technologies as prescribed by the GCC.

For more information or to acquire a “Program Packet for Field Test Participants,” contact: David E. Kestenbaum Outreach Professional Senior, University of Vermont Office: (802) 656-9141 OR Mobile: (802) 782-4753 Email: David.Kestenbaum@uvm.edu

MCASC Newsletter Advertising Form

Putting your advertisement in the MCASC Newsletter gets you right in touch with motorcoach companies in South Carolina. We invite you to use this form to contract for your ad space. The costs are as follows:

One Issue:

	Black & White	Color
1/4 page:	\$150	\$275
1/2 page:	\$225	\$425
Full page:	\$350	\$650

Advertising is also offered at a yearly rate (4 issues):

	Black & White	Color
1/4 Page:	\$350	\$800
1/2 Page:	\$550	\$1250
Full Page:	\$1050	\$2150

The ad should be received as a .JPEG or .TIFF file with a resolution of 350 or higher, or a PDF file with embedded font files and Macintosh compatible. A disk is preferred and should be accompanied by a "hard copy." The disk will be returned only at your request. Ads may also be emailed to angie_g@embarqmail.com, with a hard copy mailed to the MCASC office. If there is a question about format please contact Angie at the MCASC office at 888.376.1150 or email angie_g@embarqmail.com.

Space Dimensions:

1/4 page: 3.5" wide x 4" tall
1/2 page: 7.5" wide x 4" tall
Full page: 7.5" wide x 10" tall

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Company: _____

Mailing Address: _____
City State Zip Code

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Make check payable to the Motorcoach Association of South Carolina and mail with hard copy to:
Angie Reynolds Glass, MCASC Office, 106 Main Street, Brookneal, VA 24528
Questions: 888.376.1150 or FAX: 866.376.1156 or Email: angie_g@embarqmail.com

Calendar

MCASC Annual Meeting & Market Place
August 24 - 27, 2009
Marriott Gwinnett Place, Atlanta, Georgia

2010 Southeastern Regional Motorcoach Operators Meeting
January 13 - 15, 2010 National Harbor, MD (Capital Region)

2010 American Bus Association Marketplace
January 15 - 19, 2010 National Harbor, MD (Capital Region)

MCASC Annual Coach Rodeo
February 23, 2010 Anderson, SC

2010 United Motorcoach Association Motorcoach Expo
February 23 - 27, 2010 Las Vegas, NV

2010 MCASC Annual Meeting & Market Place
August 24 - 27, 2010
Spartanburg Marriott at Renaissance Park, Spartanburg, SC

Board of Directors

Officers

President

Walter Bryant, Jr.
Bryant Tours, LLC
843-552-2811 FAX 843-207-0624
wbryjr8156@aol.com

Vice President

Pam York
Gray Line of Myrtle Beach
843-448-9483 FAX 843-626-1513
grayline@sc.rr.com

Secretary/Treasurer

Buddy Young
Capitol Bus Lines, Inc.
803-794-9661 FAX 803-739-1450
theyoungs@capiol-tours.com

Immediate Past President

Elaine Johnson
Cross Country Trailways, Inc.
864-253-9000 FAX 864-253-9001
ejohnson@crosscountrycharter.com

Directors

Bob Clemmer
Lancaster Trailways of the
Carolinas, Inc.
803-285-2027 FAX 803-285-5185
tourguide@lancaster-tours.com

Baldwin "Nick" Nicholson
Lakim Bus Service, Inc.
843-814-8787 FAX 843-572-4504
jenick@worldnet.att.net

Charles Coleman
See & See Friendly Tours, LLC
803-496-9394 FAX 803-496-9046
onesaviour2002@yahoo.com

Ada Perry
D & J Tour Service, LLC
803-487-8945 FAX 803-329-1460
dj_bustours@yahoo.com

Bennie Elliott
Carolina Transit of the Low Country
843-681-3970 FAX 843-681-3781
carolinatransit@yahoo.com

Willie Robertson
Hollywood Travel Agency, Inc.
843-889-6533 FAX 843-889-2174
hollywoodtravel1@aol.com

JoLynn Lott
Jean's Bus Service, Inc.
864-242-1673 FAX 864-242-2157
jollynn_jeans@charter.net

John Thomas
Eastside Transportation Service
864-609-5466 FAX 864-801-3636
john@eastsidelimo.com

Associate Representatives

Rob Lambert
Daimler Buses North America
407-973-1992 FAX 407-654-6639
rob.lambert@dcbusna.com

Louise Meyers
Capital City/ Lake Murray Country
803-781-5940 FAX 803-781-6197
louise@lakemurraycountry.com

Cricket Elliott-Leeper
Atlanta's Gwinnett CVB
888-494-6638 FAX 770-492-5033
celliott@gcvb.org

Claude Payne
ABC Companies
800-222-2871 FAX 407-905-7010
cpayne@abc-companies.com

Ken Presley
United Motorcoach Association
800-424-8262 FAX 703-838-2950
kpresley@uma.org

Administration Parliamentarian

Linda Morris
106 Main Street, Brookneal, VA 24528
888-376-1150 FAX 866-376-1156
www.scmotorcoach.org
info@scmotorcoach.org

Pinckney Spencer
Atchison Transportation Services
864-595-1234 FAX 864-587-8072
spencer@atchisontransport.com