



Palmetto Progress

Motorcoach Association of South Carolina

P.O. Box 474, Columbia, SC 29202

888.376.1150 FAX 866.376.1156

Spring/Summer 2009

President's Letter

Walter Bryant, Jr.

Bryant Tours, LLC
North Charleston, SC

I hope you took time to celebrate America's Independence Day with family and friends. I took my boat out to enjoy being outside and on the water. After three hours, I had enough of the heat and decided to celebrate in a cooler environment. But, no matter where you were and who you were with, July 4 is a significant day to be celebrated by all Americans. We live in a wonderful country and I think about the sacrifices our forefathers made to give us the freedoms we now enjoy. Our country is a blessed country, even as we are struggling with the current economic stress, I find that there is no where else I would rather live.

The summer months may prove to be trying in our industry. I hear a mixed report from operators. Some say business is not what it could be, but it is OK. Others are struggling to keep their business going. One thing that concerns me is that operators may reduce their rates to keep the coaches on the road, hoping to make the monthly payments and then when the economy bounces back and our customers begin to travel more, what happens to the rate structure then? How do you raise the rate back up after conceding to offer a lower rate?

Sometimes it feels like we, as motorcoach operators, are the target of every tax discussion. Congress now is debating the bill known as the "Cap and Trade" bill. It passed the House and it is now up to the Senate. **Buddy Young**, a member of the MCASC Legislative Committee says, "If we don't want to have to buy carbon offsets to cover our operations, everyone needs to contact their Congressman. Believe it or not, but according to one Congressman, there are a good many Democrats who do not agree with this legislation; however they are getting a lot of pressure from the Democratic Party to support it. We need to convince all of our Senators that this is *Bad Policy* for small business." I encourage you to write and let your Congressmen know that it is important to your business to defeat this bill.

We now live in such a fast-paced world that it is difficult to stay caught up, let alone try to get ahead. The technology available to us is mind-boggling. Are you signed for Facebook? Are you twittering? I don't even know what all of this means, but I probably should find out! My term as president of the Motorcoach Association of South Carolina is drawing to an end. This will be my last message to you as president. I would like to thank each and every member who has supported me and supported the association throughout the past two years. I have learned that we may live in a fast-paced highly technical world, but good ole fashioned one-on-one networking and knowing that you have members who will be there for you when you need them is still the most important thing to me. I appreciate every member who has attended MCASC events over the past two years including two coach rodeo events and annual meetings events. I appreciate every sponsor who made these events possible. I appreciate every board member who served on committees to help MCASC grow in a positive way and attended board meetings faithfully. It takes a great deal of effort on the part of many members and a good staff to keep MCASC thriving, not just surviving. You all have helped that happen during my term and I am grateful.

Now, the Annual Meeting and Market Place is scheduled August 24-27 at the Marriott Gwinnett Place in Duluth, Georgia. If you don't know where that is, it is really Atlanta! I hope you have made plans to attend. **Cricket Elliott-Leeper** and the Gwinnett CVB have gone to extra lengths to give you a great experience. Join us and participate in the events and sessions to provide opportunity for networking, education, and buying and selling in market place. I know times are tough and money is tight. But, now more than ever, we need each other. We need to strengthen the business relationships we have and work hard to create more.

Most of all, I wish you a prosperous summer, safe travels and good health.

Walter Bryant, Jr.

MCASC Annual Meeting

You can request Meeting Registration Material Electronically. Please email angie_g@embarqmail.com.

New Members

ASSOCIATES ATTRACTIONS

TITANIC - WORLD'S LARGEST MUSEUM ATTRACTION

P.O. Box 369
Pigeon Forge, TN 37868
865-257-5183 OR 866-488-2045
Email: mel@titanicsales.com
Web: www.titanicsales.com
Mel House, Sales Manager
Kristy Merritt, VP of Sales & Marketing

HOTELS

COMFORT SUITES - GWINNETT PLACE

3700 Shackleford Road
Duluth, GA 30096
770-942-7080
FAX 770-806-1691
Email: tiffany@sapnahotels.com
Web: www.sapnahotels.com
Tiffany Woods, Director of Sales
Sulton Gillani, General Manager

DAYS INN HILTON HEAD

9 Marina Side Drive
Hilton Head, SC 29928
843-842-4800
FAX 843-842-5388
Email: davisrog1@wynhg.com
Web: www.daysinn.com/hotel/15527
Roger Davis, General Manager
Simon Mikhael, Front Desk Manager

MOUNTAIN VIEW CONDOS AT PIGEON FORGE

124 Plaza Drive
Pigeon Forge, TN 37863
865-868-4601 OR 877-314-6789
FAX 865-868-4800
Email: awilson@mtnviewcondos.com
Web: www.mtnviewcondos.com
Anne Marie Wilson, Director of Sales

RED ROOF INNS

2801 South Kings Highway
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
843-626-4444 OR 800-843-7663
FAX 843-626-0753
Email: i0232@redroof.com
Web: www.redroof.com
David Helman, General Manager

SALES, SERVICE & PRODUCTS

ITRANSIT, INC.

200 East Robinson St., Suite 1150
Orlando, FL 32801
407-545-2880
FAX 407-843-4075
Email: mpouncey@i-transit.com
Web: www.i-transit.com
Mike Pouncey, President/CEO
Charlie Rydzewski, General Manager,
Collision & Refurbishment

TOURISM AGENCIES

HOUMA AREA CVB

P.O. Box 2792
Houma, LA 70361
985-868-2732 OR 800-688-2732
FAX 985-868-7170
Email: hal.moser@houmatravel.com
Web: www.houmatravel.com
Hal Moser, Tourism Manager

Changes

OPERATORS

D & J TOUR SERVICE, LLC

3 Coaches Operated

G & B TRANSPORTATION, INC.

George Muhammad, Marketing and
Development

JEAN'S BUS SERVICE

Email wayne@jeansbussvc.com

LANCASTER TRAILWAYS OF THE CAROLINAS, INC.

2321 Airport Road
Lancaster, SC 29720

LANCASTER TRAILWAYS OF THE CAROLINAS, INC.

7259 A Spa Road
North Charleston, SC 29418
Lynn Pritchard, Office Manager

SWEPT AWAY COACH AND TOURS

Richard Ellis, Controller
10 Coaches Operated in Georgia Office
6 Coaches Operated in South Carolina
Office

TOUR OPERATORS

STAMM TRAVEL

Email: stammtravel@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

BATTLESHIP NORTH CAROLINA
CHARLESTON TEA PLANTATION
GHOST TOWN IN THE SKY
GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAIN
RAILROAD
SOUTH CAROLINA AQUARIUM
TANGER OUTLET CENTER

HOTELS

COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT
DOWNTOWN
FAIRFIELD INN – MYRTLE
BEACH NORTH
FOLLY BEACH HOTEL

*(Previously: Charleston on the
Beach – Holiday Inn)*

HOLIDAY INN SELECT
PERIMETER

OCEANA RESORTS

RADISSON HOTEL

CHARLESTON AIRPORT

STAY IN SAVANNAH.COM

*(Previously: North Point Hospitality
Group)*

RESTAURANT

STICKY FINGERS

SALES, SERVICE & PRODUCTS

I.C. BUS, LLC

THEATRE

WOHLFAHRT HAUS DINNER
THEATRE

TOUR RECEPTIVE

SMOKY MOUNTAIN TOUR
CONNECTION

TOURISM AGENCIES

CHATTANOOGA AREA CVB
NC NORTHEAST COMMISSION
SALUDA COUNTY CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

Calendar

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

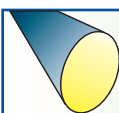
2010 Southeastern Regional
Motorcoach Operators Meeting
January 13 - 15, 2010
National Harbor, MD
(Capital Region)

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

MCASC Annual Coach Roadeo
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



Member in the Spotlight: Gaylord Opryland Hotel



GAYLORD OPRYLAND™

RESORT & CONVENTION CENTER

Nashville

Experience a place where you can have it ALL! Take a walk through 9 acres of lush gardens and cascading waterfalls, shop till you drop, listen to country music's finest at the Opry, let your worries go with first class spa services, play a round of 18, dine on exquisite cuisine, take a ride on our Delta River Flat Boat, and fall into a peaceful night's rest in one of the 2,881 guest rooms.

Gaylord Opryland Hotel in Nashville, TN, is excited to offer special incentives exclusively to Georgia Motorcoach Association Members!

For every group you book that travels by December 31, 2009, you will receive your choice of **one** of the following special incentives:

- **PREMIUM UPGRADES** –all of your guests will be accommodated in Atrium View Rooms overlooking our 9 acres of indoor gardens at Traditional Room Rates (\$65+ value per room/ per night) *based upon availability and not applicable from November 21st – December 12th.*
- **\$20 FOOD CREDIT PER ROOM** – each guest will receive a \$10.00 food credit voucher to be used in any of our food outlets. *Based upon double occupancy.*
- **COMMISSION** – receive 15% commission on new future 2009 bookings AND book a 2010 group at the time of reservation to receive an additional 10% commission. *Commission applies to room rate only and is calculated on actual room revenue (after comps) after departure.*

Offer valid only on groups booked by September 30, 2009, with a signed contract and applicable deposit. Some restrictions may apply.

For more information contact: Danna Hutton, Leisure Group Sales Manager by phone 615-458-2830 or email dhutton@gaylordhotels.com.

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

Monday, August 24

- 7:30 – 5:30 **Registration**
- 7:00 - **Golfers Leave for Breakfast at Country Inn & Suites at Stone Mountain Park**
- 8:00 – 3:00 **Golf Tournament at Stone Mountain Park Golf Course**
- 10:15 **Board Coaches for Tours**
Tours return to hotel by 3:30 p.m.
- Tour 1: Shopping at Gwinnett Place Mall or Discover Mills**
- Tour 2: History, Culture and Wine--Oh My!**
- Tour 3: In and Around Town**
- 4:00 – 6:00 **Board of Directors Meeting**
- 4:00 – 5:00 **New Member Orientation**
- 7:00 **Board coaches for Welcome Event**
- 7:30 **Welcome Event at the new Gwinnett Braves Stadium**

Tuesday, August 25

- 8:00 – 5:00 **Registration**
- 8:00 – 9:00 **Breakfast**
- 9:15 - 10:30 **Market Place I: Coach Sales**
- 9:15 – 10:30 **Associate Business Session: Election of Associate Director**
- Associate Education Session: Roundtable Discussion & Market Place Preparation**
- 10:45 – 12:15 **Market Place II: Operators and Associates assigned to this session**
- 10:45 – 12:15 **Associates Education Session: Group Tour 101**
- 12:15 **Board Coaches for Lunch**
- 12:30 – 2:15 **Medieval Times Dinner and Tournament**
- 3:00 – 4:30 **Market Place III: Operators and Associates assigned to this session**
- 3:00 – 4:30 **Associates Education Session: Group Tour 101 Repeat**
Presenter: Katie Baasen
- 6:30 **Board coaches for evening event**
- 7:30 – **Icebreaker Event: Under the Sea!**

Wednesday, August 26

- 8:00 – 5:00 **Registration**
- 8:00 – 9:30 **Breakfast**
- 9:45 – 12:00 **Market Place IV: (Operators and all associates)**

- 12:00 – 2:00 **Lunch**
- Business Session: Association Reports and Election Committee Reports**
- Special ADA Presentation: Everything You Should Know About the Treatment of Disabled**
- 2:30 – 4:30 **Session for Operators**
- Panel Discussion: Nuts & Bolts Shop Talk**
- Panel Discussion: Financial Outlook**
- ADA Regulations**
- 2:30 – 4:30 **Seminar Session for Associates**
- Roundtable Discussion: What are you doing to survive the current economic environment?**
- 3:00 – 3:30 **Refreshment Break**
- 6:00 **Reception**
- 7:00 **Awards Dinner**
- Awards Presentation**
- Golf Awards**
- MCASC Awards**
- Board Installation**
- 12:00 **Hospitality will open after dinner event. This will be an event in itself. Great prizes to be awarded!**

Thursday, August 27

- 8:00 – 9:00 **Registration**
- 8:00 – 9:00 **Breakfast and Networking Session**
- 9:15 – 10:15 **Board of Directors Meeting**

**Atlanta Marriott
Gwinnett Place**

The Atlanta Marriott Gwinnett Place is Gwinnett County's premiere full service hotel. Located in Duluth, a vibrant northeastern suburb of Atlanta, our Atlanta-area hotel, situated in the heart of Gwinnett Place and Sugarloaf areas, is surrounded by shopping, dining and major entertainment venues including Discover Mills Outlet Mall, Dave and Busters, and the Gwinnett Arena. Visit and see why we are consistently rated highly in Marriott guest satisfaction, both for individual travel and group events.

Enjoy Atlanta's only JW Steakhouse, a Chicago style eatery for dinner, as well as bountiful buffets for breakfast and lunch in Grapevine. Experience true Georgia hospitality at the Atlanta Marriott Gwinnett Place hotel.



**Visit the Gwinnett CVB
website: www.gcvb.org**

Smoky Mountain Palace's Cirque De Chine

Only a few weeks into the new season and the latest conception of "Cirque de Chine" has the mesmerized audiences proclaiming it as the best production the Smoky Mountain Palace has offered to date. Considering last year's company was the Chinese National Troupe; that is indeed high praise.

This year's version is an entirely new show performed by an award-winning troupe new to the **Smoky Mountain Palace Theater**. The cast offers the traditional Chinese cultural acrobatics but in a very fast paced, and at times breath taking, manner. **It will be hard to choose a favorite from the 16 different acts you will see, all of which are either National or International Gold Medal winning performances!**

The costumes are absolutely gorgeous; the music selected not only is appropriate for the acts but actually enhances them, and the skill of the acrobats is extraordinary.

There are traditional acts such as the *Chinese Yo-yo*, and these ladies not only show off their skills but their stunning costumes as well. The men *hoop divers* take it to the extreme by diving through hoops that are in motion. A simple schoolyard seesaw, or springboard, is the vehicle that catapults a young lady from the board to the shoulders of another acrobat three people high in the air.

A new act that is rarely performed outside of China is the *Face Off or Mask Changing*. It is a form of Chinese expressionist theater that is documented to be at least 300 years old and is impossible for the audience to explain after seeing it. The face mask on the beautiful young lady changes from one mask to another, without being touched, in the blink of an eye.

There are nearly 1 ½ billion people in China and less than 200 performers have mastered the skill and they are sworn to secrecy about the method behind it. It has to be seen to be believed and then you won't believe what you have seen.



Pictured above are 8 of the 17 drummers performing.

To the absolute joy of everyone who has ever seen them, The *Jiangzhou Drums* all girl ensembles is back after spending last year preparing for, and participating in, the Beijing Summer Olympics. The precision and craftsmanship that these ladies exhibit in their performance have made them a crowd favorite.

After two extremely successful seasons of Chinese acrobats, the third version has been highly anticipated and has proven to be exciting and entertaining beyond expectations. It again reinforces the opinion that the Smoky Mountain Palace's *Cirque de Chine* is the best theatrical production west of New York and east of Las Vegas.

Don't let your groups be left out! It's the Hottest Ticket in Town!

For more information contact: *Monica Jones, CTIS, Director of Sales, Cirque de Chine/ Smoky Mountain Palace Theater 179 Collier Drive, Sevierville, TN 37862 865-429-1601 x146 OR 800-826-2933 FAX 865-868-0027 Monica.Long@SmokyMountainPalace.com*

iTransit Announces Jack Farrell as Director of Vehicle Services



iTransit, Inc. announces the recent appointment of Jack Farrell to Director of Vehicle Services.

Farrell joins iTransit with a full portfolio of experience and expertise in the motorcoach industry, including most recently as the general manager for Setra's Winter Garden, Florida location.

"We are thrilled to have Jack join the iTransit family," said Mike Pouncey, President/CEO for iTransit. "Jack's industry experience will be a tremendous asset as we continue to grow our collision, repair and service business."

As the Director of Vehicle Services, Farrell is responsible for the overall expansion of iTransit's motorcoach collision and repair facility to include complete mechanical services as well as service and support of iTransit's new Brevi Bus, a 25-ft., rear engine, low floor shuttle bus, which will be available in 2010.

In Farrell's 5 ½ years with Setra, he served as a pre-owned coach sales professional, but spent the majority of his time as the general manager for the entire location. Prior to that, Farrell was employed with ABC Bus Companies, as a field service representative and later as a Customer Care Manager.



*Happy
Summer!*

Southeastern Motorcoach Associations form Advisory Committee



The operators attending the Southeastern Regional Motorcoach Operators Meeting in Orlando January 19-21 requested that an advisory committee be created to serve as a liaison between operators and the gulf states emergency management divisions. The Committee is charged with addressing issues of driver treatment, hours of service, staging, and payment.

Under the leadership of Jim Harris, President of North Carolina Motorcoach Association, administrator for the Southeastern Regional Motorcoach Operators Meeting, the committee has been created. Each of the southeastern state motorcoach associations has identified representatives to serve on the committee. See attached list.

The committee met for the first time by conference call on April 27. **Jimmy Kelton** (Kelton Tours, Alabama) was appointed Chairman of the Committee. **Bill Tilton** (Southern Transportation, Alabama) and **Ray Land** (Fabulous Coach, Florida) were appointed vice chairmen. **Warren Newton** and **Morgan Brown** were appointed by the VMA Board of Directors to serve on this Advisory Committee. Committee members identified four areas of concentration and assigned members to sub-committees to formulate a plan to address the individual issues. The four areas are: 1) Driver treatment, 2) Communications, 3) Contract, and 4) Representation. A May 11 follow up conference call is planned and meantime, the sub-committees will meet by conference call. A meeting is scheduled June 8 in Raleigh for the committee to finalize plans to meet with appropriate individuals in each of the gulf states and at the federal level to demonstrate that motorcoach operators should be part of the hurricane (or other emergency) evacuation planning process. In creating the advisory committee, operators hope to show that they can make a positive difference in the process and help to improve conditions, expectations, and communications.

The Southeastern Regional Motorcoach Operators have met for the past eight years rotating the meetings among the southeastern states. The Southeastern was organized

on the belief that operators benefit by meeting together to discuss common industry issues and concerns, and attempt to address them collectively. Overwhelmingly, at each of the past eight meetings, those attending have voted to continue another year. Both **American Bus Association** and the **United Motorcoach Association** have supported this meeting since its inception in 2002. Leaders in the industry are invited to speak and various educational sessions are presented on topics of interest or have impact on motorcoach business.

For more information contact Linda Morris at 434-376-1150 or Jimmy Kelton, Kelton Tours, Gadsden, AL at 256-546-2162.

DHS Preparedness Grants Awarded

William A. Arrington, General Manager of the Highway and Motor Carrier Division (HMC) of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) today applauded the successful award of nearly \$14 million in Homeland Security grant funds to members of the American commercial truck and bus industries.

"It gives me great pleasure to transmit Secretary (Janet) Napolitano's announcement today that five trucking firms and 71 intercity motorcoach operators will be granted funds to enhance their security preparedness," Arrington said. "In the truck security grant program, \$2.2 million will be awarded to allow these conscientious applicants the opportunity to install or augment tracking capabilities to carry the nation's most hazardous, security-sensitive, materials. In the intercity bus community, 71 separate companies will be awarded \$11.7 million to bolster passenger, driver and facilities security.

"I congratulate each successful applicant and I personally extend TSA's thanks for their commitment to transportation security," he said. "The grants process is detail-oriented and at times tedious work. The fact that this year more operators stepped forward to conquer those barriers in the name of better roadside security stands as testament to the their dedication. They deserve the respect and regard of all traveling Americans," Arrington concluded.

Congratulations to the following MCASC members who received grant: Cross Country Trailways and Lancaster Trailways of the Carolinas.

Each day you get better or worse;
the choice is yours!

-James K. Jefferson, Jr.-

U.S. DOT Orders Full Review of Motorcoach Safety

Press release from U.S. DOT, Thursday, April 30, 2009

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today ordered a full departmental review of motorcoach safety. A Departmental Motorcoach Safety Action Plan will be created from the review's findings. The plan will outline the additional steps needed to improve motorcoach safety for the millions of Americans who rely on these vehicles for safe transportation.

"Motorcoaches have been a safe form of transportation in the United States for many years, but even a single crash or accident is unacceptable" said Secretary LaHood. "We will continue our efforts to make them as safe as possible. As Secretary of Transportation, safety is my top priority."

U.S. DOT agencies participating in the creation of the Action Plan include the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, the Federal Highway Administration and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. The review will also consider outstanding recommendations to U.S. DOT from the National Transportation Safety Board.

The full departmental review follows a recent NTSB hearing concerning the motorcoach crash in Utah in January 2008 that resulted in nine fatalities. The report is expected to be completed and released by August 2009.

Members

To encourage use of the MCASC web site www.scmotorcoach.org, please place a link to the MCASC web site on your web site and the MCASC logo to proudly show your status as a current member.

For the MCASC logo call Angie at 888-376-1150 or email your request to angie_g@embarqmail.com.

What is Your Communication IQ?

From the book, "*Get Along with Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere ...8 Keys to Creating Enduring Connections with Customers, Co-Workers - even kids*" by Arnold Sanow and Sandra Strauss

Take the following test, then ask two people you know to rate you on the same statements. Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 on the statements below:

- 1 - Never
- 2- Almost never
- 3- Sometimes
- 4- Almost always
- 5 -Always

Do you ...

- Give people your full attention when they speak?
- Project genuine interest in conversations?
- Maintain a good balance between speaking and listening?
- Avoid giving advice before you're asked?
- Wait until someone finishes talking before speaking?
- Maintain good eye and face contact?
- Ask open-ended questions to encourage others to talk?
- Respond to others by communicating in a positive way?
- Ask about the meaning of any unfamiliar words, phrases, or jargon?
- Restate instructions or expectations to be sure you understand them correctly?
- Withhold all opinions about what's being said until you have all the information?
- Note the speaker's expressions, gestures, and tone for the intended meaning?
- Make mental notes to help you remember the main points?
- Try to see the situation from the speaker's perspective when you disagree?
- Focus on listening even when you disagree?
- Allow people to vent their feelings and concerns?
- Provide supportive and constructive feedback when others speak?
- Seek to negotiate mutually satisfying solutions when disputes arise?

Scores:

90-100: You've got an excellent communication IQ!

80-89: You're using some excellent communication skills. You're tuning in to the main ideas, but you may be missing important messages and distracted at times

70-79: Listening is music to other peoples' ears! Explore more ways to connect to the interests of others.

69 and under: Tune in and listen up! You're likely to be frustrated by a disproportionate share of miscommunications. Recognize that listening is a skill and concentrate on developing it daily.

ABA Sends Letters To Governors Citing Role Of Buses In State Tourism

ABA President & CEO Peter Pantuso, CTIS, sent a letter to all 50 state governors promoting bus tourism as a way to help bring in visitors 55 at a time to see each state's historical sites, scenic wonders, monuments, hotels, restaurants and other attractions. The letter, designed to raise ABA visibility and offer bus & group tour information to help drive tourism dollars back into their state economies, has already generated responses from Maine, Massachusetts, Tennessee, West Virginia and Wyoming.

GroupConnect Powers Up

GroupConnect has named veteran travel industry business leader Jennifer Lynne Powers as Vice President of Sales & Marketing for the new joint American Bus Association-Ontario Motor Coach Association online portal, designed to be a one-stop shop for group travel needs. This is a new position.

Powers most recently served as Director of Leisure Sales & Service for Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center in Nashville. Prior to that post, she held key positions in the travel industry, including District Sales Manager for Collette Vacations, Travel Industry Sales Manager for Opryland Hotel, Director of Sales & Marketing for Destinations of New York State, and Corporate Sales Manager for the Radisson Hotel & Quality Inn in Buffalo, New York. GroupConnect is being developed specifically for the motorcoach, tour and travel industry as a way for members to network.

EPA To Issue 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.

Michigan Issuing Enhanced Driver's Licenses

The DHS U.S. Customs and Border Protection office announced last month that Michigan has begun issuing its Enhanced Driver's Licenses (EDL).

In a letter from the agency to ABA, the agency wrote that "bus lines could see travelers with the Michigan EDL" shortly after the issuance of the documents. Michigan state officials "worked very closely with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to develop a secure, highly tamper-resistant EDL that includes vicinity radio frequency identification (RFID) capability, a machine-readable zone/optical character

read (MRZ-OCR) and contains multiple layers of overt, covert and forensic security features," the agency wrote. The Michigan EDL is "an acceptable stand-alone" WHTI-compliant document for U.S. entry at all land and sea ports of entry, and is available to U.S. citizens only. When the EDL is presented by a traveler, "no other documentation is required for purposes of proving identity and citizenship."

Three visual cues on the Michigan EDL indicate it is an enhanced document: the word "Enhanced" in the title, the U.S. flag at the lower center left of the card, and the MRZ-OCR zone on the back of the card. Questions? Call Colleen Manaher at WHTI (202-344-3003) or Bryan Kegley at WHTI (202-344-2525). The ruling goes into effect June 1.

Smithsonian Parking Now History

A traffic pattern change resulting from construction has led to the temporary lack of motorcoach parking on Madison Drive between the National Mall and the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington, DC.

A temporary bus zone has been established for motorcoach drop-off and pick-ups on the Constitution Avenue side of the museum between 14th and 12th streets.

Bus Security Funds Imperiled By Obama Budget Proposal

Proposed as part of its 2010 budget the elimination of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Intercity Bus Security Grant Program (IBSGP), claiming "the awards are not based on risk assessment, and the homeland security investments in intercity bus security should be evaluated in the context of the risks faced and relative benefits to be gained."

"ABA is disappointed with the proposal to cut critical, cost-effective bus security," said ABA President & CEO Peter J. Pantuso. "Since 2002, the bus security program has been administered through a careful and competitive grant process." Federal subsidies between 1996 and 2005 show passenger trips on buses were subsidized at six cents each, commercial airlines at \$4.32 each, and Amtrak at \$46.06 each.

All operators are encouraged to write Congress. ABA's customizable letter can be found at www.buses.org.

"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.

Transportation Subcommittee OKs 2009 Highway Bill; Funding Still An Issue

The U.S. House Transportation & Infrastructure's Highways & Transit Subcommittee approved a six-year, \$450 billion surface transportation authorization bill June 24, but how to fund it and how to distribute those funds between highways and transit remain looming obstacles to eventual passage.

For motorcoach operators, the bill includes key provisions that would step-up law enforcement against outlaw operators through stiffer action by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), a move that the industry applauded.

"ABA is gratified to see that Chairman Oberstar's proposed legislation ratchets up enforcement provisions against rogue operators, as well as increases the ability of FMCSA to more fully scrutinize chameleon carriers who endanger public safety by seeking re-entry into the over-the-road-bus business by changing their names in an attempt to hide from their non-compliant safety records," said ABA President & CEO Peter J. Pantuso.

All Motorcoach Passengers & Drivers Need Passports For Canada, Mexico

As of June 1, 2009, the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) requires all motorcoach passengers and drivers who are U.S. citizens returning from travel to Canada, Mexico, Bermuda or the Caribbean to present a valid U.S. Passport or other authorized form of identification for admittance.

The requirement stems from the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA), and it affects both land and sea travel.

"The goal of WHTI is to facilitate entry for U.S. citizens and legitimate foreign visitors, while strengthening U.S. border security," according to the U.S. Customs & Border Protection website. "Standard documents will enable the Department of Homeland Security to quickly and reliably identify a traveler."

WHTI went into effect for air travelers on January 23, 2007. More information is available online at http://www.getyouhome.gov/html/lang_eng/index.html

To succeed in life you need three things: a wishbone, a backbone and a funny bone!

Grumbling, Groaning and Fault Finding Destroys Relationships and Happiness

People don't like Grumblied because hearing constant complaining gets on their nerves. They don't need any more problems to pile on top of their already overtaxed stress levels. Plus, they often stop listening and tune you out, even when you have valid complaints.

Whining doesn't serve your best interests. If you want to improve your chances of getting more of what you want, get all of those awful thoughts out of your system. Gather up your "Ain't it awful!" attitude - all the reasons why life's unfair, how mistreated you feel, how others get all the lucky breaks and how hopeless it all seems. Then, throw yourself a short-lived pity party, inviting all your negative thoughts to it. Wallow in them for a while, but when you've purged them quit complaining! Don't allow chronic negativity to sap any more of your energy, or contaminate anyone else with it. Incessant fault-finding may also be a symptom associated with chronic depression, in which case therapeutic assistance is advised.

Invite thoughts of gratitude and appreciation as an antidote to all the awful, no-good, dirty, rotten ones. Think about some ways you're willing to improve your situation, and act on them. Focus on solutions, not sorrow; cultivate good connections, not toxic ones. Misery loves company, but who really loves to keep company with those who focus on finding fault?

Based on the book, "*Get Along with Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere ... 8 keys to creating enduring connections with customers, co-workers ... even kids*" by Arnold Sanow, Sandra Strauss - www.getalongwithanyone.com here are 10 good reasons to stop groaning and grumbling:

1. Makes people want to avoid you
2. Destroys respect people have for you otherwise
3. Pollutes the atmosphere
4. Creates negative programming
5. Attracts negative people (misery loves company)
6. Makes you feel worse and brings others down around you
7. Increases your stress level
8. Reinforces negative energy
9. Gives power to problems rather than solutions.
10. Drains you of productive energy

Web offers one-stop bus shopping

The intercity bus industry now has its own version of Expedia and Orbitz - sort of.

BusJunction.com is a web-based bus ticket search engine created by people who say they were "frustrated by the arduous process of finding the right ticket" on regular-route carriers operating in the East, Northeast and Midwest.

The website is like Expedia or Orbitz in the way it helps travelers sort through a crowded field, but unlike those two popular airfare websites, BusJunction doesn't sell tickets.

Instead, it steers users to the online ticketing on the bus lines' home pages. It's an aggregator of data, like Kayak.com, not a booking site.

It's a critical difference. BusJunction stays independent from the bus lines, and doesn't favor any company at the expense of customer choice.

"They simply perform a journalistic function; they simply tell you what's available," said one travel expert. "I find it reassuring they have no axe to grind, they get no money out of the sale of their ticket."

BusJunction searches 12 bus lines, including megabus.com, Boltbus, Vamoose, DC2NY, Fung Wah, Peter Pan, Lakefront, Trailways and Greyhound.

According to founder Matthew Keller, the Washington-based company serves 31 cities and will find users an average ticket price of \$25. The most popular destinations are Washington, Philadelphia, New York City and Boston.

Before buying tickets, users can see which routes have amenities like onboard Wi-Fi and power outlets.

The company is steering clear of lesser-known mom-and-pop operations that might not offer reliable service, said Keller. Still, the companies it does track offer upwards of 30,000 travel possibilities.

"We wanted to get the bus lines that offer the most amenities, so that's the ones we're focusing on," said Keller. "There are a handful of (lines) that offer no amenities. There are certain bus lines that have questionable reputations. We're trying to steer our passengers away from those lines just to serve them better."

Given the economy, BusJunction has come along at an appropriate time. A search of weekday fares on BusJunction yields a price of \$15 for a one-way, four-hour trip between New York's Penn Station and Boston's South Station.

Through Orbitz, round-trip flights between those two cities on the same day cost between \$199 and \$1,134.

"Especially on the East Coast and in the Midwest, where companies like megabus are flourishing under the banner of low-cost travel, BusJunction will become an indispensable tool for comparing the fares," said Cynthia Drescher, an assistant editor at the travel website Jaunted.com.

Three Keys Seen To Reducing Bus Fires

Driver training, preventive maintenance and high-tech equipment are the best bets for the motorcoach industry to take on one of its major menaces -- bus fires.

That's the shared opinion of more than 150 industry representatives who gathered here last month for a special Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance summit on bus safety.

Although their basic ideas were not necessarily new, they did emphasize that it will take a combination of all three measures to be most successful in preventing fires and minimizing damages when they occur.

To help get the job done, they also suggested the industry needs to develop a method of tracking bus fires so detailed and accurate information on their numbers, causes and damages can be maintained. Efforts to gather such information have been made in the past by safety consultants, trade groups and others, but no one has ever been sure of the accuracy of the data.

Operators Jump On Board Miles For Babies Program

Motorcoach operators and the motorcoach industry will be front and center for a major national fund-raising effort in September on behalf of the March of Dimes' healthy babies program.

Coach operators are being urged by the United Motorcoach Association to sign up for the Miles for Babies program on Sept. 24. Many already have.

Operators participating in the program are committing to donate 10 cents a mile for each mile driven on that day and during the March of Dimes fall special events season.

To sign up for the Miles for Babies program, go to www.milesforbabies.org.

FMCSA Adopts 'Two-strikes' Policy For Unsafe Companies

Now, the FMCSA has thrown out its three-strikes policy for assessing maximum fines for motor carriers found to have committed a pattern of violations of "critical or acute" safety rules and gone to a two-strikes-and-you-get-a-big-fine policy.

The change went into effect April 1. The Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act of 1999, which created the FMCSA, mandated the agency assess maximum civil penalties on anyone who committed a "pattern of violations" of important safety regulations, or to have "previously committed the same or a related violation" of critical regulations.

Fuel efficiency rules for buses?

Last month, when the Obama administration announced tougher requirements for automobile fuel efficiency, and a first-ever national greenhouse gas reduction standard for cars and light trucks, there was speculation similar rules could be proposed for over-the-road buses and trucks within the foreseeable future.

The Obama plan for cars and pickup trucks sold in the U.S. calls for a 30 percent reduction in carbon dioxide and other emissions and an overall auto fuel-efficiency standard equal to an estimated 35.5-miles-per-gallon rating by 2016. One trucking industry environmental affairs specialist said the proposed auto rules may signal a tougher overall environmental policy by the Obama administration that could include heavy truck and bus standards as early as 2016. However, before that policy could take effect, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 requires that a heavy vehicle fuel efficiency study be completed by March 2010, and a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration fuel efficiency report be completed by fall

2010. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration could then begin a rulemaking process for fuel efficiency in heavy commercial vehicles.

However, there is a nascent move afoot to remove fuel efficiency standard setting from the NHTSA and park it in the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection where pollution standards are set. Such a move could accelerate the process and make it tougher on the commercial vehicle industry. The new mileage and emissions regulations for cars and light trucks would be a joint, or so-called harmonized, effort of EPA and NHTSA, a departure from past practice.

Meanwhile, the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009, marked up by a House committee last month, calls for EPA to begin a greenhouse gas reduction rulemaking for new heavy vehicles by the end of 2010. That bill, as currently configured, does not call for a joint rulemaking or harmonized approach to the differing tracks EPA and NHTSA have taken.

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

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



P.O. Box 474
 Columbia, SC 29202
 888.376.1150
 FAX 866.376.1156

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@capitol-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

JoLynn Lott

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

Willie Robertson

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

Charles Coleman

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

Baldwin "Nick" Nicholson

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

John Thomas

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

Bennie Elliott

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

Ada Perry

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

Parliamentarian

Pinckney Spencer

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

Administration

Linda Morris

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