



Palmetto Progress

Motorcoach Association of South Carolina

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

SUMMER 2011

President's Letter

Bob Garrett

Sunshine Travel & Express Lancaster, SC

Gee, summer is here with a vengeance. High temperatures are setting records in the South. I am hearing that the annual meeting in Savannah August 21-24 is setting records, too! At this writing registration is nearing 250 and that does not count the group leaders who will be included in the market place. As you know, MCASC has not included group leaders in the past. When your board of directors agreed to meet jointly with the Georgia Motorcoach Operators Association, we also agreed that GMOA could include group leaders, which GMOA has done since its first meeting. I understand that there will be a strong group leader market place. I hope that MCASC operators will consider inviting their group leaders or tour planners or charter customers — whatever you prefer to call them. These folks are simply a segment of the industry and they charter our coaches! I caution our associate members attending the annual meeting to be sure to come prepared with appropriate venue rates for operators and group leaders. There is a difference! For more information about pricing, contact Linda at the MCASC office.

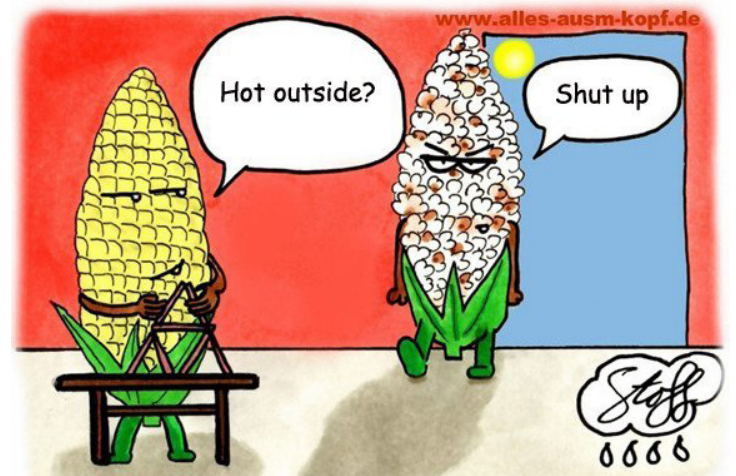
I am excited about the joint meeting because it will be an opportunity for operators who are members of two state associations to network and get to know one another better. I know from experience that folks do business with people they know and trust and I, for one, want to know I have friends in the industry in Georgia if I find myself needing assistance because of a breakdown. They happen even to equipment considered the *latest and greatest*. No operator is immune to an occasional need for assistance. I challenge every MCASC operator member to come to Savannah for the joint annual meeting. The planning committee and our host destination have gone beyond my expectations to provide a meaningful and worthwhile event from beginning to end. Please don't discount the sessions that appear to be targeted to Georgia operators. We can all learn from the topics included in the schedule of events on Sunday and Monday. Expert speakers have been included in the

program. Take advantage of each session to gain knowledge that will help you in your operations. There is so much going on in the industry to the point that I wonder how we can keep up and stay informed. This is one reason it is so important for our operator members to come to Savannah as well as participate in other MCASC and industry events.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have served on the planning committee and those local to the Savannah area who are rolling out the red carpet for members of MCASC and GMOA. Members have truly stepped up to the plate to support this first joint meeting for both of these associations. We anticipated this support because our associate members have been asking for joint meetings to save time and money in an economy that we wish could be better. This is the associations' way of recognizing the budget constraints that many of you are experiencing and responding to your requests. To continue what we think will be the trend in state motorcoach association meetings, the MCASC Board of Directors agreed to meet jointly with the Florida Motorcoach Association in Orlando July 9-12, 2012 and in South Carolina in 2013. I understand that GMOA will also be continuing the joint meetings by meeting with Alabama Motorcoach Association for the next two years. I hope our members see that your requests have not fallen on deaf ears. Now it is up to you to continue the strong support already shown for the 2011 meeting.

Yes, it's summer and it's hot. Stay cool! I look forward to seeing you in Savannah, the coolest place to be August 21-24, perhaps not weather-wise, but certainly otherwise.

Bob Garrett



High temperatures plague the South!

NEW OPERATOR MEMBER

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Laura Fowler Goss, Dir. of Business Dev., x107

Gary Pruss, VP of Operations, x102

Travis Tysall, Office Administrator, x101

Ben Latimer, Director of Sales, x110

Code- BCEGHJ

67 Coaches Operated, 13 Wheelchair

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

ATTRACTION

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276-492-2095

FAX 276-525-1950

Email: marketing@heartwoodvirginia.org

Web: www.heartwoodvirginia.org

Chuck Riedhammer, Marketing Dir.

Mary Lester, Administration Assistant

HOTELS

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Wrightsville Beach, NC 28480

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FAX 910-256-0595

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Web: www.blockade-runner.com

Patricia Lydon, Director of Sales

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Jennifer Brown, SC Account Executive

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Peter J. Chiccarine, General Manager

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Web: www.hiexpresscharleston.com

Cheryl Wooten, Assistant General Manager

Michelle Lewis, Area Director of Sales

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Stone Mountain, GA 30087

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Email: sales@exceptionalhospitality.com

Barbara Mullin, Regional DOSM

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FAX 828-497-7803

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Web: www.microtelinn.com

Elizabeth Mason, General Manager

PARK PLACE HOSPITALITY GROUP

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10231 N Kings Hwy, N Myrtle Beach, SC 29572

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Email: bolson@hiriverview.com

Web: www.marriott.com/myrfn

Brandy Olson, Sales Manager

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19th South 2nd St. Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

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Email: jimmy.cooper@hilton.com

Web: www.hamptoninnandsuitesameliaisland.com

Jimmy Cooper, Director of Sales

HOLIDAY INN CHARLESTON

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843-460-1440 OR 800-766-4451

FAX 843-766-8355

Email: bolson@hiriverview.com

Brandy Olson, Sales Manager

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FAX 843-448-6701

Web: www.vacationmyrtlebeach.com

Marianne Smith, Sales Manager

Email: marianne.smith@vacationmyrtlebeach.com

Connie Ross-Karl, Sales Manager

Email: connie.ross-karl@vacationmyrtlebeach.com

Additional Properties:

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BEACH COVE

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North Charleston, SC 29418

877-583-8490 FAX 843-278-9257

Email: marketing@thecapitalrg.com

Robert Jacks, Director of Marketing

Darryl Berry, CEO

HARD ROCK INTERNATIONAL

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215 Peachtree Street NE, Atlanta, GA 30303

404-688-7625 FAX 404-681-1025

Email: atlanta_sales4@hardrock.com

Web: www.hardrock.com/atlanta

Amanda Roberson, Sales & Mktg. Coord.

IACOFANO GROUP, LLC

626 Coleman Blvd., Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464

843-849-3535 OR 855-485-3663

Email: stacie@iacofanos.com

Web: www.iacofanos.com

Stacie Lynam, Group & Office Manager

Chef John Iacofano, Owner

Additional Listing:

IACOFANO GROUP, LLC

1505 Charleston Highway, #A5

West Columbia, SC 29169

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FAX 918-224-1092

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Web: www.nationalbus.com

Mike Curtis, Commercial Manager

TIB TRANSPORTATION INSURANCE

BROKERS

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818-246-2800 OR 800-248-2877

FAX 818-246-4690

Email: jmcanany@tibinsurance.com

Web: www.tibinsurance.com

Jeff McAnany, Vice President Sales

Greg Black, Account Executive-Southeastern

New Members Continued on Back Cover

MCASC Summer 2011 Newsletter



Member in the Spotlight TITANIC MUSEUM ATTRACTION



In May 1911, the RMS Titanic slid down Slipway No. 3 at the Queen's Yard of Harland & Wolff and settled on the waters of the Victoria Channel in Belfast, Ireland while more than 100,000 people looked on. At the time, she was the largest movable manmade object on the face of the planet. In the coming months, RMS Titanic would complete numerous successful sea trials with Irish workers and crew members on board. To commemorate Titanic's Irish heritage, Titanic Museum Attractions in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. and Branson, Mo. will give away six 11-day trips for two to Belfast.

The 12 winners of the "Back to Titanic 100th Year 'Tour Ireland' Sweepstakes" will cruise to Belfast where they will visit the birthplace of the world's best-known, most luxurious ocean liner. Complete sweepstakes details can be



found at www.TitanicAttraction.com. It has been 99 years since a lookout in the crow's nest shouted, "Iceberg right ahead!" For the twelve months leading up to April 15, 2012, when it will have been a century since the RMS Titanic was lost, Titanic Museum Attractions will pay respect to and honor those

2,208 passengers and crew members with an ongoing series of special events, activities and ceremonies. As the whole world remembers the world's most famous luxury liner, Titanic Museum Attractions will continue to open the door to the past in it's one-of-a-kind way – letting "passengers" experience what it was like to walk the hallways, parlors, cabins and Grand Staircase of the Titanic while surrounded by more than 400 artifacts directly from the ship and its passengers. As visitors touch a real iceberg, walk the Grand Staircase and third class hallways, reach their hands into 28-degree water, and try to stand on the sloping decks, they learn what it was like on the RMS Titanic by experiencing it first-hand. With special Titanic events taking place around the world during 2011 and 2012, Titanic Museum Attractions will be the epicenter of remembrance for RMS Titanic's passengers and crew. And, as the museum has demonstrated since its opening, the experience for guests will leave them amazed. The Titanic Museum Attractions will honor and respect the brave souls of the Titanic with the various events:

The Titanic Museum Attractions in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. and Branson, Mo. opens daily at 9 a.m. Reservations are strongly suggested (many days sell out). Or, passengers may purchase tickets at www.TitanicAttraction.com or by phone at 800-381-7670.

New Prevost H3-41 for Capitol Bus Lines

Reprinted from the National Bus Trader, April 2011 Issue.

Capitol Bus Lines of West Columbia, South Carolina, rang out the year in style, taking possession of a new Prevost H3-41 motorcoach on December 31, 2010. The notion of traveling in style was actually one of the motivations behind the latest addition to its fleet, according to Capitol owner and president Buddy Young.

The family-owned and operated business was founded in 1981 and acquired its first Prevost-used- in the late '80's. "Prevost has been good for us through the years," says Young. "Because we run our buses 12 or 15 years, we look for a stable company that'll be there for us for the duration. Prevost has had the parts and technical support we needed, and the ability to service our fleet too." Located "in the heart of the South," Capitol serves tour and charter customers under the travel names Capitol Tours and Sea Island Stages. Its coaches frequently visit cities like Charleston or Savannah where short, tight turns in narrow, historic streets are par for the course. The 41-foot Prevost H3-41 is ideal under those conditions, Young notes. Passengers have also found its seats comfortable—and they like the fact it is equipped with seatbelts.

In fact, taking the upscale approach has been a Capitol strategy in the recent tough economy. "One way the industry can ensure its survival is by raising our level of service and adding amenities to our fleets," Young says, "so people who still have the means to travel will see motorcoaches as an attractive alternative." Bearing that in mind, Capitol upgraded the interior package on its latest H3-41, knowing that leather seats and other luxury amenities would go over big with discriminating tour and charter passengers. Capitol's drivers are also pleased, Young adds, especially with the new stability system that "helps the bus handle better in the wind than earlier models."

ATTENTION OPERATOR MEMBERS

USDOT's ADA reporting regulations require OTRB companies to submit three types of reports annually by the last Monday of every October. Each annual report covers the time period from October 1 of the prior calendar year through September 30 of the current calendar year.

- A. Annual Summary Report of Individual Accessible/Equivalent Service Requests and Responses/Service Provided
- B. Fixed Route OTRB Company's Annual Lift Use Summary
- C. Annual Report of OTRBs Purchased/Leased and Overall Fleet Data

ADA Compliance Forms are available for download at:
http://www.scmotorcoach.org/ADA_FORMS_2008.pdf

Information about ADA Compliance can be found on the FMCSA website at: www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations/bus/company/ada-guidelines.htm



Linda takes a Mini-Vacation

Members who actually read the association newsletters remember that occasionally I “get away” for a much needed time to relax and visit members (mostly). Recently, I felt the need. Tom and I with our traveling buddies, Bill and Carolyn, set off for Duplin County, Onslow County, and New Hanover County in North Carolina and a side excursion to Myrtle Beach. Being a native of North Carolina, I felt right at home and was not surprised to find that southern hospitality still exists. I’m a Virginian now, but only because of marriage. Tom and I have been married 18 wonderful years, but don’t ask him! He will tell you it has been a long 18 years! Just this morning in Sunday School we were talking briefly about the Mormons and the fact that the men originally were able to have multiple wives. One classmate said, “I can’t imagine why a man would want more than one wife!” Needless to say, that put him in a precarious situation with his lovely wife! But, I’m getting way off the track of the mini-vacation.

Our first stop was lunch and tour at the **Duplin Winery**. Lunch in the bistro was delicious and Eric gave us a very informative tour and wine tasting. Well, the evidence was the fact that I carried out a case of wine and a wine glass souvenir. This is actually the second time I have toured the winery. It is amazing how the winery has grown since my first visit several years ago when NCMA held a coach rodeo at the Duplin Events Center in Kenansville. And, as Eric explained, the winery is in the process of expanding again. There are new wines and the demand continues to grow.

From the winery, we checked in at the Holiday Inn Express in Wallace. This is not your ordinary Holiday Inn Express. Pete

Murphy and Wendell Murphy, legends in Duplin County, are responsible for bringing the hotel to the area as well as the Mad Boar Restaurant located adjacent to the hotel and the exquisite River Landing Development just “up the road.” Later, we would have dinner at the River Landing country club, which was absolutely delicious and quite reasonably priced. Before dinner we had to include a visit to **Cardinal Coach** in Warsaw. **Jim and Odette Harris** treated us to yet another wine tasting of Duplin Winery’s Hatteras Red in their home. Good stuff! Odette showed us her favorite “room,” which to my surprise was outdoors. One naturally enters the back of the house. People do that at my home too. We have a “back front.” But, what greeted us at the Harris home as we stepped out on the front porch was a beautiful lake with a walking trail all the way around it. Odette glowed as she described how she enjoyed



River Landing Country Club

getting up early for a walk around the lake. Jim and Odette joined us for dinner at the River Landing club house.



Mad Boar Restaurant

Early to rise makes one healthy, wealthy, and wise, or so I’ve heard. Healthy, I am. I guess one out of three isn’t bad. You see, I am not an early morning person. I wish I was. Tom is up at the crack of dawn but I don’t become alive until about 7:00 a.m. Here I am getting off track again and telling my secrets no less! We did get up early as **Kristina Ayres** with **Duplin County Tourism** had planned a full day for us. First on the day’s itinerary was a tour of River Landing to find beautiful homes, a lush golf course, a recreational area featuring a facility on the river for group meetings and activities, in addition to the beautiful country club where we dined the previous evening. We toured the Mad Boar to find a beautiful restaurant, bar, and meeting space. Wow! Was I surprised to find such a treasure for group travel and meetings. Yes, this is in Duplin County!

Day two included a tour of the Veterans Museum. **Mr. Randall Albertson** knows this museum and much local history. He was very informative and entertaining as he told of exhibits in the museum. It was quite impressive and is a “must stop” for tour groups. You don’t have to be a veteran to appreciate this museum. Back in the car and off we go to the **Country Squire/Vintage Inn**, restaurant and winery. **Iris Lennon** and her family have created a unique place where one can sleep, eat, and enjoy good wine. Oh, did I mention the gift shop? I sit here, literally, writing this article wearing a lovely necklace I purchased in addition to wine and, yes, a souvenir glass. Iris’ sister, daughter, and son-in-law have created a place that will remind you of an Irish pub. It’s like going back in time. I have a friend who has traveled all over North Carolina and he once told me that if he is in the Kenansville area and it happens to be dinner time, he will go to the Country Squire for the steak. I learned from the son-in-law that the chef takes a great deal of pride in his culinary talent. He said the chef has allowed him to cut a few steaks recently, after some tutelage, of course.



Iris Lennon (right) with her sister, Lillian Carroll.

We enjoyed a wine tasting at Country Squire after lunch and I learned why they named a wine Knicker Dropper. If you want to know the story, you will need to either visit Country Squire or call Iris to find out! From Country Squire Kristina directed us to **Liberty Hall**, where again, we felt like we were going back in time. Liberty Hall, an early 19th century home is very well preserved with eleven fully decorated rooms with period furniture, many pieces from the Kenan family. The grounds include the grand house and several out buildings, an overseer’s cottage, slave quarters,



a carriage house, chicken coop, and smokehouse. After viewing a brief video, we toured the house and grounds with a good background of the family and the restoration of the house. Just across the parking lot to the Liberty Hall visitors center is Cowan Museum, a wonder of antiques and rare and unusual artifacts. I had to drag Tom, Bill, and Carolyn out of the museum. Tom and Bill were amazed at some of the farm implements and household items such as a very early version of the food processor. Carolyn, being a teacher, was intrigued by some of the special school group exhibits such as the alcohol fan and the unique rock collection. It is truly amazing. I don't think I have ever seen as many antiques in one location. Our gracious host, Donna Cowan, could pick up any piece and tell a story about it and show how it worked. One could easily spend most of the day in Cowan Museum.



Liberty Hall

We were all beginning to get hungry again! We left Cowan Museum headed for Mike's Farm in Onslow County with a short stop at the Bulk & More Store. Fresh breads and sweets are the mainstay of the store and I had been told to be sure to get some cinnamon buns! Well, wouldn't you know it; we were there too late for cinnamon buns. In fact, most of the bakery goods were sold. There were shelves and shelves of other items such as stone cut oats, pastas, candies, snacks, and many other homemade items. I bought some trail mix that was delicious. It's a good thing, I think, that the cinnamon buns were all gone! Mike's Farm was all I expected and more. We were amazed at the size of the restaurant and how well it was decorated so that one felt that they were eating at the family table on the farm instead of a huge restaurant. In fact, food is served family style. Ham biscuits are your appetizer while you wait for your food, which is there before you can eat a biscuit. Standard items are green beans, corn, mashed potatoes and gravy, chicken and pork. Theresa's macaroni is her specialty and believe me, it was yummy! This is definitely a great stop for motorcoach groups. But, be sure to call ahead. Mike's Farm is not open every day and when October arrives, it is busy. There are many different events held at the farm in the fall including the Christmas light show. I was told the gift shop was fabulous and I was not disappointed. With a scrumptious meal and a quick tour with a stop in the gift shop, we headed to Wilmington where we would stay two days.

We stayed overnight at the Holiday Inn Express, one of the properties managed by Centrex Properties, a new NCMA member. In fact, **Pierrette Cortner**, was voted NCMA's Rookie of the Year at the recent annual meeting in Wilmington. I called **Mikie Wall** with the Wilmington/Cape Fear CVB when I realized I could get away for a few days. Mikie and **Muriel Pearson**, also with the CVB, had arranged such nice tours for the NCMA annual meeting that I decided I wanted to "see what it was all about." I

rarely get to experience the tour options during the annual meeting because of meeting responsibilities. I asked Mikie to arrange a walking tour with **Bob Jenkins**. Bob has gained a credible reputation as a tour guide in Wilmington. Those who attended the first evening event at the Wilmington Convention Center heard just a teaser of Bob's wealth of knowledge of Wilmington's history. But, I'm getting ahead of myself!

We had decided to "take it easy" one day so having some shopping recommendations from Mikie, we had a nice breakfast at the hotel and headed down Market Street and along the river front to see what we could see! Our final shopping stop was the Cotton Exchange, where I found a cone of delicious chocolate ice cream! We headed for Myrtle Beach with a stop at Calabash for some good seafood. I have to say Tom and Bill were fairly patient with our shopping which concluded at Broadway at the Beach before a show at **Calvin Gilmore's The Carolina Opry**. By this time Tom and Bill were more or less sitting on the benches!

When I found that I was able to take the mini-vacation, I called **Theresa Kreig** to see if I could get four tickets to **The Good Vibrations Show**, a 60's, 70's, and 80's variety show featuring music of that time, dancing, and comedy. It is a fast-paced show that definitely keeps you on the edge of your seat. The Carolina Opry began its 26th season in May 2011. It has successfully maintained its place at the top of the polls and remains a standard in entertainment in the South. It is the only show named Most Outstanding Attraction by the Governor of South Carolina, the only show to win the Governor's Cup, and the only show to be voted Best of the Beach year after year. Going to Myrtle Beach? Make this one of your choices for entertainment. Myrtle Beach is home to many theatres and attractions giving motorcoach operators many choices for group tours to Myrtle Beach. Having had a full day of shopping, entertainment, good food, and making many memories, we were "tired to the bone" and headed back to Wilmington and the Holiday Inn Express for a good night's rest.

Now, let's get back to Bob Jenkins. What was to be a 45-minute tour beginning at 9:00 a.m. quickly turned into a 3.5 hours tour and we could have continued that much longer except for the fact I had other stops to make. Bob is a delight! Our tour started with a history lesson of how the Cape Fear River area was settled. I think that was to be about 15 minutes, but it lasted about 1.5 hours. All four of us were amazed (I seem to use that word a lot, but it is so appropriate!) at Bob's knowledge and his talent in telling the story. Of course, his southern charm plays a big role in his success as a tour guide. I just knew he must have been a history teacher; but no, Bob's background is interior design. It was easy to realize that Bob loves the Wilmington area, particularly the historic district, and he hopes that the ambience of the river front is not "tarnished by developers!" The weather was beautiful that morning and people with children were enjoying the river walk, the shops, and the

Continued on Page 6



Mini-Vacation Continued from Page 5

restaurants. If you take a group to Wilmington, ask for Bob Jenkins. If you go with family and friends as I did, ask for a Bob Jenkins' tour!

We left Bob reluctantly and after a quick lunch at Smithfield's Barbecue, we headed for Poplar Grove Plantation. We thoroughly enjoyed our tour of this example of gracious, antebellum homes. The current home was built in 1850 after the original manor house was destroyed by fire. It was renovated and opened to the public in 1980. Visiting Liberty Hall in Kenansville and Poplar Grove Plantation in Wilmington reminded me that I have often said, "I should have been born 150 years earlier." I find a great deal of pleasure in visiting historic homes such as these. I told **Jeanne Walker** at Poplar Grove that I would have been happy in that era but then I think I would not have fared very well during the War of Northern Aggression! Prosperous until the Civil War, Poplar Grove experienced many of the hardships inflicted by Union armies throughout the Confederacy. The Foy family, using the "lowly" peanut as the primary cash crop, restored the post-war economy of the plantation. Poplar Grove is truly a museum of history featuring historic presentations, classes, workshops, exhibits, and special events throughout the year. The grounds showcase several educational exhibits including weaving, spinning, basket making and blacksmithing. We had the opportunity to learn about basket making. We learned about the many and varied kinds of baskets and their purposes. It was very interesting.

Poplar Grove was the last stop of a great four-day mini-vacation. I learned so much and if I were a motorcoach operator I would be so excited about the tour options I discovered. If you need itineraries, just call **Kristina Ayres**, Duplin County Tourism and **Mikie Wall**, Wilmington/Cape Fear CVB for a busy but rewarding tour package. There is a lot to do at a low cost. Someone was recently talking about how tours have decreased and one reason is the senior citizens are reallllly senior citizens now and the "baby boomers" who would take their place don't seem to be interested in structured tours. I am a baby boomer and I love tours. Don't get me wrong, I love my independence, too! My four-day excursion to NC and SC was done, I admit, independently. We had our automobile and the freedom to go at our own pace. We had an itinerary and I managed to see and do everything that Kristina and Mikie suggested and even added my own side trip to Myrtle Beach for shopping and show. The way I see it, somebody has to come up with a "formula" for baby boomers that gives the motorcoach travel experience but yet gives them options to exercise their independent nature. I would have gone on a motorcoach tour to see and do what I saw and did on my mini-vacation but I would have wanted to somehow have options and choices. I don't know the answer; I wish I did. Maybe, you take the

group to the destination by motorcoach and negotiate really good rates for rental cars or motorbikes! Give them the option of a structured tour by motorcoach or hand them the itinerary for an independent tour by car or bike.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to a truly nice get away. I returned home feeling good and ready to tackle the day-to-day responsibilities of motorcoach association management. I treasure the memories I made.

Linda Morris

Joint Annual Meeting

Familiarization Tours

Tour I: City Tour



Old Savannah Tours

Climb aboard one of our famous trolleys and enjoy a historical tour of Savannah.

You will be told about General Oglethorpe

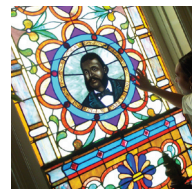
and his plan for laying out the original design of Savannah. You will travel past many of our famous squares and learn about the different districts of our city. Towards the end of the trolley tour, we will stop at one of Savannah's famous homes and step inside and take a look at its many treasures. A hearty lunch in a historic location is included. Space will be limited.



Oglethorpe

Tour II: African American Heritage Tour

Take a trip back in time to learn about the

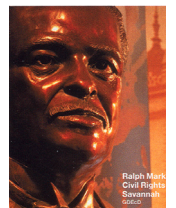


First African Baptist Church

rich African American Heritage of Savannah.

We will load a coach and be accompanied by an expert step-on guide who will educate us on the important role that the

African American community played on the development of this city. We will be going to the Civil Rights Museum and to the First African Baptist Church. A good ole fashioned southern lunch sure to satisfy is included. Space will be limited.



Civil Rights Museum

Tour III: Low Country Tour

Come try out your "sea-legs" on this tour.

We will load the coach and head through Savannah's Low-Country. With our amazing step-on guide we will learn about the importance of this area and the impact it still makes on our region today. We will head out towards Tybee Island where we will then be taking a Dolphin Cruise and hopefully will see some of these amazing creatures up close! A seafood feast will end your time on our coast before we head back to the mainland. Space is limited.



Group Leader Market Place

Operators are encouraged to invite their Group Leaders, also known as charter customers, to participate in this special time when they can meet and visit with associate members. Many trips will be initiated by Group Leaders participating in this opportunity, trips that take the motorcoaches out of the parking lot and out on the highways! That's a good thing for all members! Operators should have received information for Group Leader participation. Please observe the deadlines so appropriate plans can be made for your Group Leaders (Charter Customers).

There are two Market Place sessions for group leaders and associates. Group leaders are seated and associates have a 5-minute visits with each table. Associates are divided so that only half of the registered associates attend either Market Place II or Market Place IV. **Sandy Springs Hospitality and Tourism** is sponsoring 3-ring binders for group leaders.

Meghan Johnson and Visit Savannah partners have created unique familiarization tours for group leaders on Sunday. Group leaders are invited to the Monday Ice Breaker Dinner Event at Mighty Eighth Museum. Accommodations for Monday night have also been arranged by Visit Savannah.

If you are interested in sponsoring an event or providing gifts or prizes for the upcoming Joint Annual Meeting and Market Place please email cindy_p@embarqmail.com to obtain the Sponsorship Form.

All gifts, door prizes, and auction items should be shipped for arrival no earlier than August 19th:
Hold for Linda Morris
c/o GMOA: Aug 21-24
Savannah Marriott Riverfront
100 General McIntosh Boulevard
Savannah, Georgia 31401

Door Prizes and Gifts

Door prizes and gifts for the registration bags or specifically for operators are a good way to "get your name" in front of the operators and others. It is a good way to get special recognition in printed materials for the annual meeting and afterwards. If you enjoy getting gifts in your registration bag, consider giving a gift. It is fun and it is a nice way to say "welcome to the Joint Annual Meeting."

Consider donating a door prize. It's not too late. And, if you enjoy winning a door prize, you might consider donating a prize that can be won by any member. (Note: if you happen to win a door prize that you cannot use, you can always consider privately giving it to an operator member who would likely use it.)

Door prizes are listed in the program. If you donate on-site, recognition will be in the post annual meeting newsletter. The best thing to do is complete the sponsor form and fax it to the GMOA and MCASC office as quickly as possible. The number of door prizes will be divided for drawings for the appropriate number of opportunities.



Airport Information

Savannah/Hilton Head Intl. Airport

Airport Code: SAV

Phone: 912-966-3743 OR 912-964-0514

Website: www.savannahairport.com

Driving directions from Airport to Hotel:

Take Interstate 95 South to Interstate 16 East. Follow Interstate 16 East until it ends and turns into Montgomery Street. Turn right onto Bay Street. The hotel is on the left further down the street.

Airlines: Allegiant Air, American Eagle, Continental, Delta, United Express, US Airways, Vision Airlines

Airport K-Shuttle for Savannah Area:

\$25 one-way

\$39 round-trip per person

Customers **must** make pre-arranged reservations at www.kshuttle.com.

Questions: Warren Hickman, General Manager
877.243.2050

Cell: 912.220.3744

Email: warren@kshuttle.com



Cross Country Tours-Trailways Takes Supplies To Tuscaloosa

Submitted by Elaine Johnson, Cross Country Tours-Trailways in Spartanburg.

On Thursday, April 28th, Elaine Johnson says, “we were waiting for the go ahead for a three-coach move out of Alabama and finally the word came, this move was on go. After the coaches were dispatched it hit us, we are not loaded going down, but loaded on the return. We could have sent relief supplies into Alabama.”

On Friday Cross Country had the same scenario, waiting to move three more coaches into Alabama, empty on the way down and loaded on the way back. The dispatcher called Elaine into her office and said, “Let’s put the word out that we are willing to take supplies into Alabama and especially into the devastated area of the University of Alabama.” One of Cross Country’s drivers has a daughter who survived the tornado and she was calling for Dad pleading for help, not just for herself, but for many other people who needed help. About 4:00 pm Kathy Newman contacted the local news, WSPA News 7 in Spartanburg, and they responded immediately. It was too late for the 6:00 news, but it aired during the 10:00 news on CW40, the 11:00 news on Channel 7, and again Saturday morning on the early news reports. The community was told that Cross Country Trailways would have the coaches at the Westside Wal-Mart and would be receiving water and supplies for the tornado victims of Alabama. Elaine says, “We were all in deep prayer that the word would be heard and that loving hearts would come to Wal-Mart to donate; and as God would have it, our prayers were answered and they were answered in a very mighty way.

We filled the luggage bays as tight as we could and also had contents in the passenger area. People from Laurens County and Greenville County arrived with supplies and children as young as 4 years old donated nice toys that they had received this past Christmas.

As the coaches moved out of the parking lot, it was a beautiful sight to see and Kathy and I just stood there and hugged and cried knowing that only God could have brought these wonderful people with their cars and trucks loaded with supplies. Many of these people looked as though they needed help themselves, but nonetheless, there was water and other supplies for someone else. We were so excited about this wonderful outpouring of help.

The coaches arrived in Alabama and for a few hours everything was off loaded and distributed for as long as the supplies lasted.

Elaine said, “Not only were our prayers answered, but the prayers of many who were suffering and in desperate need in Tuscaloosa, AL.”

iTransit Moves Service Center and Corporate Offices to new location near attractions and airport to better serve its customers

Press Release submitted by iTransit.



iTransit, Inc. has moved to be more centrally located and accessible for its customers. Now located in South Orlando on West Taft-Vineland Road, iTransit is just minutes from Florida’s Turnpike and the Beachline/528 at Orange Blossom Trail/441.

“Being just 5 miles from SeaWorld and Orlando International Airport and 10 miles from Universal and Disney, we are easily accessible and very convenient for our Orlando based customers and for any motorcoach company bringing coaches to the Orlando area,” said Jack Farrell, Director of Vehicle Services.

Additionally, iTransit has consolidated to allow its sales, service and corporate staff to be at the same location.

iTransit’s pre-owned sales lot covers 1.5 acres with a rotating inventory including a variety of major manufacturers in late year models. The new service center includes space for seven motorcoaches to be serviced under roof for service and repair at the same time.

To mark the grand opening of the new location, iTransit is offering an oil change for \$175, which includes oil, oil filters, fuel filters, chassis lube and comprehensive coach inspection. This special will be offered until September 30, 2011.

For more information about iTransit’s pre-owned sales or service, please call 877.777.6007 or 407.545.2880. Please visit www.i-Transit.com to learn more.

Quarterly Newsletter Advertising Information

Please email angie_g@embarqmail.com to receive an advertising contract. All member ads are welcomed and help offset the cost of publishing this newsletter, a member benefit.



FMCSA Launches New Safety Records Website

Excerpt from The ABA Insider, issue May 16.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has launched a new website that improves free public access to orders and decisions on FMCSA civil penalty and safety rating cases. The web page also provides frequently asked questions intended to help parties understand FMCSA's process for making these legal determinations. Visit this site <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/about/offices/cc/about-cc/about.aspx> to view the webpage

Jack Van Steenburg Named FMCSA's New CSO

Excerpt from The ABA Insider, issue May 16.

On April 28, Jack Van Steenburg was named the new Assistant Administrator and Chief Safety Officer of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA).

Van Steenburg spent the first 25 years of his career with the New York State Police, where he held the ranks of Trooper, Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, Major and Staff Inspector. As the leader of the New York State Police's Traffic Section, he was responsible for all highway safety programs, including commercial vehicle enforcement and the effective execution of these programs by 3,000 field troopers.

Currently, Van Steenburg serves as the Director of Enforcement and Compliance for FMCSA and has been serving in that capacity since May 2008. "On behalf of the American Bus Association and our members I want to congratulate Jack Van Steenburg on his new appointment," said ABA President Peter Pantuso. "Jack is truly passionate about commercial vehicle safety, and he will be a tremendous asset to FMCSA and to the bus industry in his new position. I look forward to working with him in the years to come."

Apply for \$8.8 Million in Wheelchair Lift Grants Now

Reprinted from The ABA Insider, issue July 26.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recently announced the availability of \$8.8 million in Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) wheelchair lift grants as part of its Over-the-Road Bus (OTRB) Accessibility Program. The current grant application deadline is September 12, 2011.

The ADA grant program makes available monies for intercity fixed route operators and other bus operations such as local fixed route, charter, tour, commuter, shuttles, special operations, etc. Bus operators are provided federal grant assistance under this program in order to improve mobility options for persons with disabilities. In past years, more than 90 percent of those operators who have received federal grant funds under the Over-the-Road Bus Accessibility grant program have been ABA members.

ABA has created a special webpage to answer questions and assist operators interested in applying for such grants at www.buses.org/Government-Affairs/Federal-Funding/ADA-Wheelchair-Grants.

For ABA deskside assistance, please contact Brandon

Buchanan via e-mail at bbuchanan@buses.org or call (202) 218-7227 with any questions regarding the ADA grant instructions, the application process, or your project's eligibility. ABA has also partnered with Terrapin Blue to provide ABA members access to new tools to help them put together wheelchair grant application packages and serve as a one-stop shop for each operator's grant application and management needs. Terrapin Blue will offer ABA members an exclusive 15% discount on their nationally recognized grant writing services. Contact Terrapin Blue's Anthony Vaccarello to start the ADA grant application process today. He can be reached at (706) 534-3518 or avaccarello@terrapinblue.com.

Completed applications must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov no later than September 12, 2011. All applications must be submitted online.

FMCSA Administrator Announces National Bus Safety Dialogue at BISC Summer Meeting

Reprinted from The ABA Insider, issue June 27.

Over 100 of the leading bus safety and security experts from across the United States and Canada gathered to hear presentations from top government officials and discuss the latest industry issues at the two-day BISC Summer Meeting held in Dulles, VA. Over the course of the meeting, BISC members listened to presentations from government officials representing the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and other agencies.

Dan Smith, NHTSA's Associate Administrator for Enforcement, was the first presenter to address the group. During his presentation, Associate Administrator Smith updated the group on NHTSA's progress in finalizing several new rulemakings, including rules on safety belts, fire safety standards, rollover structural requirements and bus stability control. FMCSA Administrator Anne Ferro was the next official to present to the group. During her remarks, Administrator Ferro called for a national dialogue on bus safety. To that end, she announced that she is planning a series of listening sessions on bus safety and a national bus safety conference to be held in September. "We had a very productive meeting," said BISC Executive Director Norm Littler. "I want to thank Administrator Ferro, Associate Administrator Smith and the various other government officials who were here for attending the event. Their participation in the BISC will help to get government and the industry on the same page."

The second day of the BISC meeting was taken up by subcommittee meetings. BISC is divided into five smaller committees: Vehicle Technical Operations, Human Performance, Security, Environmental, Health and Safety, and Government Activities Review. During each BISC meeting, members are encouraged to participate in the subcommittee that most interests them or best reflects their areas of expertise.

"I would encourage anyone who wants to connect with the best and the brightest in bus safety to join the BISC and attend these meetings," said ABA President and CEO Peter Pantuso. "I think what you'll learn at these meetings will prove invaluable to your operation in the future."



Reminder: Update MCS-150 every 24 months

Excerpt from the Bus and Motorcoach News, issue May 1.

An apparently easily overlooked paperwork requirement for interstate motorcoach operators is that they must update their Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration MCS-150 form every 24 months. Carriers with a USDOT number also must update the Motor Carrier Identification Report if company information changes. Carriers can update the form online by going to: https://li-public.fmcsa.dot.gov/LIVIEW/PKG_REGISTRATION.prc_option. Scroll to "Existing Registration Updates," and select "I need to update my USDOT number registration information or file my biennial update."

Whistle blowing by operators aids safety regulators

Reprinted from the Bus and Motorcoach News, issue May 15.

Candice Tolliver, director of communications states, "All calls are taken seriously and the FMCSA will take the necessary steps to follow up on valid complaints. Reporting violations is easy." Valid complaints can be sent by email anytime from the website, <http://nccdb.fmcsa.dot.gov> or by telephone by calling 888-368-7238 from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (Eastern Time), Monday through Friday.

Telling the coach industry story more effectively

Excerpt from the Bus and Motorcoach News, issue June 15.

Written By Dave Millhouser

Every time the whistle blew, it was terrifying. We were playing soccer at Gallaudet University. As one of the few colleges specializing in educating hearing-impaired students, Gallaudet had the pick of the nation's deaf athletes. They were big, strong, fast and they couldn't hear the whistle. We had been instructed that when the whistle sounded we were to freeze and raise our hands. The problem was that for many of them, recognition that play had stopped came sporadically. There were some terrific collisions. I haven't always been a chubby sissy; back then I was a skinny sissy, and got clobbered a lot. Sometimes I raised my hand when there was no whistle ... just to see what would happen. It's tough to survive in an environment where the competition's comprehension of the rules is different. We often think of our competitors as being other bus operators, Amtrak and the airlines. True enough, but there are a couple of other serious players we have to consider. One, of course, is the car. Americans love their freedom, and driving a car offers control over scheduling, route and who you travel with. Another is cost. Customers look at the price of a charter coach and wince. A ticket on a line carrier can appear expensive. There is also the enduring perception that traveling by bus is *duclassu* (a French word thrown in to impress you).

None of the things listed above is a surprise or new. To compete more effectively, we need to do a better job of telling our story. We have a number of organizations working at it, but two things seem important to say. First, we haven't got the money to do it the way airlines and auto manufacturers do. Nothing wrong with current efforts but we can't afford to mount a large enough campaign to effect major changes. Assess every one of the 30,000 coaches in the U.S. \$100, and you'd have about enough for a single Super Bowl TV ad. Second, if we're going to sell ourselves, we're going to have to do it at the grass roots level. That is, win hearts and minds close to home. We have a lot to sell. Passengers are safer on

the worst bus than in the best car. If Americans knew what it really cost to drive a car, or could divide that charter price by the number of seats, we'd look great. That same math indicates coaches lower consumption of foreign oil, pump less CO2 into the air, and reduce traffic congestion. Heck, you knew that.

One of the first steps might be to make sure everyone involved in your coach company knows the story. Every employee ought to be proud of what they do, and brag on it. Few people can assert they have a "greener" job than someone who works for a motorcoach company. Invite local media to do stories on what is right about buses, let them tell our story. Often they are starved for ideas -- give them one. It seems silly to spend \$500,000 on a coach, and not drop another \$5,000 on graphics to make it a mobile and splashy advertisement for your company and the industry. Your buses are far nicer than the public imagines. Why not take them places, where folks can see them? Travel shows, sales calls to potential customers, county fairs, local parades, fund-raising events, car shows and the like. Manufacturers invest in demonstrator coaches for a reason.

No travel shows in your area? Have an open house and show off your coaches. Trust me, if you feed them, they will come. Track down groups that aren't riding buses and schmooze them. Taverns can sponsor trips to sports events, senior centers might set up day trips to events or attractions. It's an article of faith that the "baby boomers" will eventually ride buses. Not if we don't sell them. This is a huge potential market with money to spend, and they haven't given us much thought.

The traditional model of waiting by the phone (or sitting on your website) isn't enough. Chances are you already have a sales force. Most of your drivers like people, or they'd be driving trucks. Put those skills to work by sending them on sales calls during the off-season. Some may have photographic or public speaking skills, ask them to do presentations at service clubs or schools. Motorcoach drivers have been to fascinating places and met interesting people. Don't waste those stories by only having them repeated at the bus garage. Make arrangements for them to speak to groups. They'll love it and you and the industry will benefit.

Surely you can think of other ways to tell our story (because I KNOW you're smarter than me). National efforts are worthy but the battle will be won locally. You and your employees are the ones who control your fate. If the Gallaudet game taught me anything, it was that standing still was a good way to get run over. Dave Millhouser is a bus industry marketing consultant and freelance writer. Contact him by email at Davemillhouser@gmail.com.

Senator calls for bus operators to display safety rating

Excerpt from the Bus and Motorcoach News, issue July 1.

In many places across the U.S., safety inspectors hand out letter grades to restaurants -- as an indication of their compliance with food safety laws, and require them to post the scores prominently. So, why shouldn't regulators adopt a similar approach for intercity buses? A U.S. senator asked the U.S. Department of Transportation last month.

Sen. Charles Schumer, a Democrat from New York, wrote a letter to U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Administrator Anne Ferro asking them to implement a system of letter grades for discount tour bus companies so consumers will be able to easily determine operator safety records. Schumer's proposal was prompted by the string of deadly bus crashes that began in March, including one that left 15 dead in the New York City borough of Bronx. Since then, New York has inspected hundreds of buses and drivers in a stepped-up program to stop buses for safety evaluations.



But Schumer said a simple letter grade is needed to clarify the record, and he said it must be posted so customers can see it before they buy tickets because many bus riders either don't have access to the internet or have no idea where to find the scores on the net or how to interpret them.

UMA questions need for EOBR rule

Reprinted from the Bus and Motorcoach News, issue June 15.

The United Motorcoach Association has urged the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to walk before it runs when it comes to adopting a mandate requiring all over-the-road bus and truck operators have electronic onboard recorders. In comments filed with the FMCSA last month, UMA said the agency needs to prove that electronic onboard recorders reduce commercial vehicle crashes before requiring all commercial vehicle operators to install the expensive pieces of equipment. Currently, says UMA, there is inadequate evidence that indicates use of recorders actually results in fewer crashes.

UMA said the agency has a perfect opportunity to substantiate the case for electronic onboard recorders through a rule that goes into effect June 1, 2012. That rule says carriers that violate hours-of-service rules 10 percent of the time, based on a single compliance review, must use electronic onboard recorders to track driver hours. UMA urged the FMCSA to defer any consideration of an EOBR mandate for all commercial carriers "until such time as FMCSA can substantiate a credible and significant reduction in crashes and a further reduction in supporting documents that justifies such a substantial financial investment by motor carriers."

The comments submitted by UMA apply to an FMCSA proposal issued in January that would expand the 2012 rule to cover all of the approximately 500,000 truckers and bus operators now required to maintain driver logs. UMA also contends that passenger carrier operations are enough different from those of trucking that actual violations of hours-of-service maximums are not a major issue, and motorcoach drivers generally don't have an opportunity to violate hours-of-service rules like truck drivers.

"Generally, motor carriers of passengers operate under two scenarios: 1) scheduled service, or 2) charter services," said UMA. "Under both scenarios, substantial documentation exists to substantiate the intended hours a driver is to drive and be off-duty.

"Scheduled-service operators generally have published schedules and passenger expectations. Charter operators generally dispatch drivers under charter orders that meet the demands of groups. Motor carriers of passengers' drivers are generally supervised through a myriad of formal and informal means.

"Actual violations through (hours-of-service) maximums are very low. Non-compliance of recordkeeping is generally low and usually a result of carelessness rather than willful acts.

"As a general rule, motor carriers of passengers' drivers are not free to act as 'free agents' as they are controlled by a predetermined schedule or a detailed charter order," UMA asserted.

Beyond the operational differences between bus companies and truckers, UMA said the FMCSA needs to be mindful of the financial impact of an EOBR mandate. With 96 percent of all motorcoach operators considered small businesses, a one-size-fits-all commercial vehicle mandate "hardly acknowledges the financial inequities." UMA also said it remained "concerned" there is a considerable lack of standardization of electronic onboard recorders for widespread use by drivers and enforcement agencies. "We heard testimony at the recently held National Transportation Safety Board Truck and Bus Safety Summit

that at least some enforcement agencies may not yet be capable of evaluating existing EOBRs for compliance, either due to a lack of proper technology, education or perhaps both. "This summit also produced comments that suggested, at the very least, anecdotal evidence that some (commercial vehicle) drivers with EOBRs have already found ways to manipulate the technology in a manner to 'cheat.'" UMA said.

Finally, UMA noted that while EOBRs may accurately record the time a commercial vehicle is in operation, EOBRs are incapable of recording the purpose of commercial vehicle use and accounting for the time drivers are not driving. "EOBRs cannot compel a driver to rest, nor can they account for the quality of rest," the association said. "Considerable evidence exists that point to these factors as risk adverse, as opposed to driving time. These reasons alone suggest that EOBRs would not be any more effective than paper logs in reducing fatigue or associated crashes."

Bill proposes incentives for new safety technology

Reprinted from the Bus and Motorcoach News, issue June 1.

A bill has been introduced in the U.S. House that would provide a tax credit to commercial vehicle owners, including motorcoach and school bus operators, to purchase and install specific advanced safety technology, including vehicle stability systems, lane departure warning systems and collision warning or mitigation systems. The bill was introduced last month by Reps. Geoff Davis, R-Ky., and Mike Thompson, D-Calif. H.R. 1706, the Commercial Vehicle Safety Act of 2011, would: Provide a tax credit equal to 50 percent of the cost of a qualified system, up to \$1,500. Allow a total credit of up to \$3,500 per vehicle. Limit the qualifying taxpayer to a maximum credit of \$350,000 per taxable year.

Vehicles weighing more than 26,000 pounds would be eligible for the credits. As would be expected, the Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association and its affiliate, the Heavy Duty Manufacturers Association, announced strong support for the measure. "Increasing the deployment of the technologies in this bill will help reduce accidents and fatalities on our nation's highways and improve commercial vehicle safety," said Bob McKenna, MEMA president and CEO.

In a study last year, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety assessed a number of the technologies included in the bill and found they have "the potential to prevent or mitigate more than one of every four large truck crashes, one of every three injury crashes, and about one of five fatal crashes." The list of eligible technologies was developed with the assistance of the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance, and targets the cause of approximately 60 percent of commercial motor vehicle accidents identified in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Large Truck Crash Causation Study.

Tighter enforcement isn't going to solve safety issues

*Excerpt from the Bus and Motorcoach News, issue July 1.
Written By Dave Millhouser*

We're the ones with the most at risk, and we're the only ones who can really do it. Bear in mind, the same governments that do regulation built the U.S. Postal Service and run Motor Vehicle Registries. They'll be just as successful at legislating safety. It's up to us to make the industry safe. Management needs to be clear that safety trumps all, and that you are paying attention. When we do that the regulators become a useful tool, not a menace. Pogo got it right: "We have met the enemy and he is us."



New Members Continued from Page 2

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HENDERSON CHARTERS, INC.

Susan Griffin, Office & Charter Manager

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

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