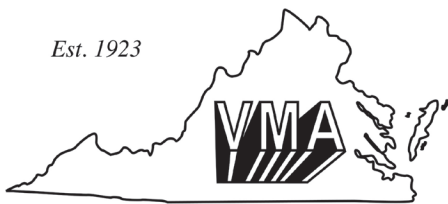


Est. 1923



NEWSLETTER OF THE Virginia Motorcoach Association

106 MAIN STREET BROOKNEAL, VA 24528 434.376.1150 FAX 434.376.1156 FALL/WINTER 2009

In this Issue:

MCI MAKES A HOLIDAY SEASON DONATION TO MOTORCOACH COUNCIL'S "GET MOTORCOACHIFIED" CAMPAIGN

2010 SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL MOTORCOACH OPERATORS MEETING
HILTON ALEXANDRIA MARK CENTER,
ALEXANDRIA, VA
JANUARY 13-15, 2010

INDUSTRY NEWS:
AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION

INDUSTRY NEWS:
UNITED MOTORCOACH ASSOCIATION

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING FORM

VMA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

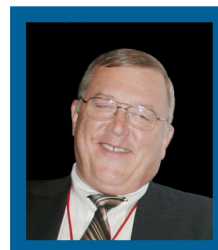
THIS ISSUE SUPPORTED BY:
TOURISM COUNCIL OF FREDERICK COUNTY

VOICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Robbie Quick

Quick-Livick, Inc.

Staunton, VA



It seems like yesterday we were in Lancaster for the annual convention and I was elected President of Virginia Motorcoach Association. It is hard to believe that three months have passed and even harder to believe that 2009 has come to an end and we're about to date everything 2010. I sincerely wish each member a safe, prosperous New Year and good health to enjoy it.

As I said, it seems like yesterday that we were in Lancaster and we're already preparing for the **2010 convention in Charlottesville September 12-15**. As a matter of fact, we're planning several things for the New Year. VMA will hold its first **coach roadeo** in many, many years **March 9** at James River Bus Lines in Richmond. The roadeo will be part of the **annual operators retreat March 7-9** and the program will include excellent educational sessions to update operators on industry issues and hot topics. The planning committee is still considering the program for the operators retreat so you have a window of opportunity to offer suggestions to make the retreat beneficial to you and your business. Please forward your suggestions to the VMA office at info@vamotorcoach.com or call 434-376-1150. I hope you will mark our calendar to participate in these events.

I am excited about the coach roadeo and its success will hinge on participation by the operator members to allow their drivers to compete. The top three drivers will earn a commemorative plaque and a cash prize of \$300, \$200, and \$100 respectively. Please encourage your drivers to participate. There are several other state associations that hold annual coach roadeos and I understand that it is really beneficial to the drivers to realize where they may have weakness and encourages them to become better drivers. It is a fun event for operators and their employees and families who can participate as spectators. We also need judges and scorekeepers. It takes many people to carry out the responsibilities needed for a successful roadeo. I hope I can count on every operator to attend and participate in some way, either by registering drivers for competition or by volunteering to assist as judge or scorekeeper or other responsibility. Watch your mail and email for registration material. Come join me March 7-9 at James

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



VOICE OF THE PRESIDENT CONTINUED FROM COVER

River Bus Lines.

There is another important date. January 13-15 is the date for the Southeastern Regional Motorcoach Operators Meeting in Alexandria. Make plans to attend. This operators' organization has grown over the past eight years to the point that some decisions need to be made for the future of the organization. Be a part of that decision making process. There are some exciting things *in the mill* to create greater utilization of your equipment, not only for hurricane evacuation but also for major special events. *See an additional article about the Southeastern meeting in this newsletter.*

We are a part of an industry that impacts tourism in our state and outside its borders. We are a part of an industry that becomes more challenging each year. We're faced with more and more focus from the federal level. We're faced with challenges financially. We're faced with challenges such as seatbelt regulations. What will be the standard? That is the question. Hopefully, we will find that out in 2010. That one challenge creates other challenges. If these issues are important to you, as they should be, you will want to participate in VMA events where you have opportunity to discuss issues with other members and hear special speakers.

I know that it is tough when I hear of budget cuts at every government level and I know that affects our members. I sincerely appreciate that among your choices, you make the choice to continue your membership in VMA. We need each other more than ever.

I wish you a prosperous New Year. I wish you safe travels.

Robbie

NEW MEMBERS OPERATORS

BLUE RIDGE TOURS

1850 Meadow vista lane
McGaheysville, VA 22840
540-289-9559

FAX 540-289-4064

Email: talexander@blueridgetours.com

Web: www.blueridgetours.com

Todd Alexander, General Manager
1 Coach
Code- BG

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Web: www.hamricks.com

Brandy Hartman, Special Events
Coordinator

Hayden Trnavsky, Assistant Director
of Advertising

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800-334-6912

FAX 717-337-3344

Email: [manager@](mailto:manager@gettysburgcomfortsuites.com)

gettysburgcomfortsuites.com

Web: www.gettysburgcomfortsuites.com

Matthew Turley, Operations Manager
Joy Patel, Owner



CHANGES ASSOCIATES

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

ATTRACTIONS

Dolly Parton's Dixie Stampede
Dinner & Show
Tyson's Corner Center

HOTELS

Holiday Inn Atlanta Northeast
Orlando Fun Spots Hotels

THEATRES

Sight & Sound Theatre

TOURISM AGENCIES

Brunswick & The Golden Isles CVB
Hershey Harrisburg Regional
Visitors Bureau
PA Dutch CVB

**IN MEMORY OF
ARNOLD LEE
"BROWNIE" BROWN**
HE WAS 66 YRS. OLD,
OF OCEAN VIEW, DEL.
DIED DECEMBER 11
SURROUNDED BY FAMILY
AND FRIENDS AT BEEBE
HOSPITAL IN LEWES.
BROWN WAS THE
STEPFATHER OF NEW
WORLD TOURS PRESIDENT
DAVE BOLEN, AND RAN
THE BRISTOW, VA.-BASED
COMPANY'S OPERATIONS
OUT OF BETHANY BEACH,
DELAWARE.

MEMBERS TAKE NOTE:

VMA Scholarship information is available at
www.vamotorcoach.com/vascholarship.htm



**ATTENTION
OPERATORS
MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!!**

**VMA OPERATORS RETREAT
AND COACH ROADEO**

**JAMES RIVER BUS LINES
RICHMOND, VA**

MARCH 7-9, 2010

**REGISTRATION MATERIALS
WILL BE PUBLISHED SOON!**

**MCI MAKES A HOLIDAY
SEASON DONATION TO
MOTORCOACH COUNCIL'S
"GET MOTORCOACHIFIED"
CAMPAIGN**

To demonstrate its gratitude to customers and help boost consumer perception of motor coach travel, MCI is making an end-of-the-year donation of \$5,000 to the Motorcoach Council. "MCI decided to make this financial contribution at the holiday season to say 'thank you' to the efforts of the Motorcoach Council and all its members and to help jumpstart the 'Get Motorcoachified' campaign in the new year." said Patricia Ziska, MCI vice president and chief customer officer. "We're hopeful this gesture will encourage operators' full participation in this promising marketing campaign." MCI, a founding member of the council, has established a voluntary, opt-in program for customers to contribute 1/2 of one percent of their MCI Service Parts purchases. MCI has pledged to match the first \$50,000 in customer contributions made through this program. Operators can access the MCI Service Parts program at www.MCIcoach.com by clicking the "Get Motorcoachified" banner or by speaking to an MCI service parts representative.

To learn more about the Motorcoachified campaign, go to www.motorcoachcouncil.org.


DESTINATION
Frederick COUNTY

- National Shrine of Elizabeth Ann Seton
- Monocacy National Battlefield
- 50 block historic district
- Year-round festivals and events
- Unique shopping and dining
- Great location for hub and spoke tours to surrounding destinations (Baltimore, DC, Gettysburg)
- National Museum of Civil War Medicine
- Frederick County Wine Trail


**Oh say...
you can see!**



For sample itineraries, and info on group lodging and dining, or to request a visitor guide contact Tiffany Wilms, Tour & Marketing Coordinator at 800-999-3613 or www.fredericktourism.org.



Francis Scott Key



2010 SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL MOTORCOACH OPERATORS MEETING HILTON ALEXANDRIA MARK CENTER, ALEXANDRIA, VA JANUARY 13-15, 2010

All VMA operator members and coach members should have received the registration material for the Southeastern Regional Motorcoach Operators Meeting in January. The work of the Southeastern Regional Motorcoach Emergency Evacuation Advisory Committee over the past seven months has been very productive. This is just one example of the benefits of the southeastern operators' organization. It is not an official association, but it has been an operators' organization for the past eight years.

The meeting began on the premise that operators need to meet to discuss common issues, and try to resolve those issues through resources available. Sometimes resolve has been accomplished and sometimes it hasn't. Because some things, we have concluded will not be resolved. But, the success of the Advisory Committee has been energizing those serving on that committee for the past seven months. All most weekly conference calls have kept the committee on target. What has been rather significant is the fact that while the committee has worked diligently to accomplish the four tasks assigned regarding emergency evacuation, the committee members have come to realize that not only are there opportunities for equipment utilization when there are hurricanes, but the horizon has broadened to explore other opportunities for operators to participate in major special events requiring multi-company involvement. The Southeastern Operators together have a much stronger voice in determining fair pay, fair treatment, process involvement and improved communications between the operator and the client, whether it is an emergency management agency or a special events transportation provider.

It is an exciting thought that southeastern operators collectively could enhance the business possibilities for all. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend the January 13-15 meeting in Alexandria. Decisions will be made for the future of the Southeastern Meeting. Should it be a legal organization? If so, there are other decisions such as a dues

structure. Should the state associations support it or the operators or a combination? Should a committee be formed to explore alliances with event transportation providers? Should the Emergency Evacuation Committee continue as a liaison with the state emergency management agencies? Your opinion is welcomed as these and other decisions and discussion topics are explored. In addition, the schedule of events includes several excellent education sessions featuring FMSCA update on CSA 2010, public-private partnerships/active tourism-changing tour demographics, how to manage your record on the FMCSA web site, web sites to enhance your operations, plus the always popular nuts and bolts panel discussion with coach sales and technical staff.



Times are tough right now. The old adage is "when times get tough, the tough get going." Now is the time for you to really get going. The investment you put into attending this meeting will bring benefit to you and your business.

Also, ABA has issued an invitation to all operators attending the Southeastern meeting to participate free of charge in the operator education sessions and the equipment pavilion on January 15-16. Take advantage of the convenience of attending these opportunities. You have the option of hotel accommodations at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center or just ten miles away across the Potomac River is the Gaylord National Resort, headquarters hotel for ABA's Marketplace.

I hope to see good representation from each of the southeastern and south central states at the Southeastern Regional Motorcoach Operators Meeting in January! If you need registration material, please call or email.

Safe travels!

Linda Morris,
Executive Director
VMA



Drivers' appearance: Important to your and their future

Written By Dave Millhouser. Reprinted from *Bus and Motorcoach News*, a publication of United Motorcoach Association, November 1, 2009.

Our boss was at his wit's end. He'd accumulated a fine group of drivers for the summer season but we just didn't LOOK the part. No amount of driving skill could overcome the perception created by ratty blue jeans and T-shirts. So, Joe mandated we all wear blue shirts, clip-on ties and name tags. Folks, this was the 1970s and blind obedience was not in the cards.

One rascal discovered you could get a discount on name tags -- if they were all the same. The next time we were together, we sported ties clipped to our back pockets and all of us wore name tags emblazoned "ETHEL."

Times have changed but one thing has remained constant: Drivers are the face of your company. Their appearance and demeanor may be the only thing your customers remember about a trip.

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade. Hard times have ended the driver shortage and created an opportunity to mold your folks into a team positioned to take advantage of fading competition, and the good times that will eventually return. For the first time in a while, it's possible to unload the weak links (and put the mediocre ones on notice). Not a bad idea, but there's also a ton that can be done on the more positive side.

Driving a motorcoach IS a responsible job, and doing it well should be a source of pride. Good drivers should look the part (for bad drivers, see paragraph seven). What they wear doesn't have to be expensive or fancy, but it ought to be consistent and convey the fact they are professionals.

Would you be happy flying in a 747 whose pilot was wearing cutoffs and flip flops? We're not THAT different, lives and sophisticated equipment are at stake.

Part of the deal is personal grooming. Haircuts, bathing, shaving, jewelry and the like all have to be within boundaries that have been set -- and understood.

By the way, that roaring in your ears isn't tinnitus, that's the laughter of people who know me. What the last few paragraphs prove is that, in real life, I'm still able to serve as a bad example.

It's important that professional appearance be an accurate reflection of behavior. The trigger for this column was a Washington Post article about a Washington, D.C.-to-New York City bus trip. It was a horror story involving, but not limited to, a driver engaged in cell phone chatter, car nudging, tailgating, obscene gestures, littering and driving under the influence of a hamburger in his lap.

In my misspent youth I did many of those things, but not all at once, and NOT at the wheel of a loaded coach.

The Post article named the operator, and heads have rolled, but real damage was done to both the bus company and our industry.

Airlines correctly make the distinction between skills and demeanor. When pilots have accumulated enough seniority to become captain, they're sent to the airline version of "finishing school," where they learn how to look and act the role of Airline Captain.

Good coach drivers take pride in their driving, navigational and mechanical skills. The best know how to convey that pride to their passengers.

When you plan drivers' meetings, consider having a component similar to the "Captains School" where you set guidelines, and discuss the appearance, behavior and demeanor that will best serve your company and customers. Role playing can be useful (and fun). Drivers will enjoy telling war stories, and learn from each other.

Read, then post, comments from customers. Tips (in the form of crisp greenbacks) are a powerful incentive for charter drivers to get this aspect right. Good line drivers take justifiable pride in their work, for the ones who don't, refer back to paragraph seven.

Stress how important appearances are to your business, and their future. For a motorcoach driver, people skills are nearly as important to driving well.

In ye olden days we had a driver we called the Granola Kid. At mealtime he'd drop his passengers off at the restaurant entrance. Once they were inside, he set up his little Bunsen Burner and pot in the parking lot, then cooked some concoction of nuts and twigs. He wasn't so much a vegetarian as a nut case.

Before we got to point out to him that his behavior made his passengers squirrely (pun intended), he parked his bus near a forest, and disappeared. Hope he's not working for you.

Dave Millhouser is a bus industry marketing consultant and freelance writer. Contact him at: dave_millhouser@hotmail.com.

Homeland Security extends states' REAL ID deadline

Reprinted from *Bus and Motorcoach News*, a publication of United Motorcoach Association, November 1, 2009.

The Department of Homeland Security has given states an additional six weeks to request an extension to implement toughened drivers' licenses and identification card security standards mandated by the REAL ID Act of 2005. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano extended the deadline to give Congress time to consider alternative legislation, known as PASS ID, that would be less costly, burdensome and controversial to implement.

"REAL ID has put DHS, the states and the traveling public on a collision course, and Congress must act fast to fix it," said DHS spokesman Matthew Chandler.

While Chandler acknowledged that Napolitano opposes implementation of REAL ID, and is working to support the "Providing for Additional Security in States' Identification Act of 2009," or PASS ID, she is at the same time bound to enforce the existing REAL ID law.



NTSB Calls for Law Enforcement Crackdown on Rogue Operators

Reprinted from ABA Insider, Issue Number 62, December 21, 2009.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) this month recommended that government agencies identify rogue operators failing to comply with regulatory requirements, put their buses out of service and force those companies to cease operations. The proposals stem from the NTSB's investigation of a January 2008 rogue operator motorcoach crash in Texas that killed one person. Investigators say the driver, who had only 3.5 months of experience behind the bus wheel, fell asleep about eight hours into a 10-hour trip from Monterrey, Mexico to Houston. The driver initially told authorities he fell asleep and later denied it. NTSB staff ruled out the bus itself and weather as factors, but they found fault with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) for failing to do a compliance review of the some bus operators.

Other NTSB recommendations included creating databases to help state law enforcement identify out-of-compliance buses and take them off the roads; requiring carriers to certify when they apply for perating authority, and once a year thereafter that all owned or leased buses comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; and using the Web for distribution of safety compliance materials.

"The NTSB's findings underscore the need for more rigorous enforcement at all levels of government to get the rogue and reincarnated operators off the roads," said ABA President & CEO Peter Pantuso.

\$11.5 Million in 2010 Bus Security Grants Available

Reprinted from ABA Insider, Issue Number 62, December 21, 2009.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) December 8 began accepting applications for the FY 2010 Intercity Bus Security Grant Program. Important information interested operators should know includes: Applications must be submitted online through www.grants.gov; the CFDA # is 97.057; applications may be submitted until 11:59 p.m. EST on Friday, Feb. 12, 2010; \$11.52 million has been made available for FY 2010; and there is a cost-sharing/in-kind match requirement of at least 25 percent for submitted projects. A recent (defined as within the past three years) security plan and a vulnerability assessment must be completed and certified to DHS in order to apply for FY 2010 grant

funding for other projects. A free sample template can be downloaded at http://www.tsa.gov/assets/doc/ibsgp_sepp_020408.doc. For FY 2010, the \$11.5 million in IBSGP funding has been split along two tiers, and will be awarded through a competitive grants selection process within each tier.

To qualify as a Tier I carrier, for which \$6.3 million is available, applicants must have in-service fleets of more than 250 over-the-road-buses, as well as provide fixed route service to at least one FY 2010 UASI jurisdiction or provide at least 50 charter trips annually to a designated FY 2010 UASI jurisdiction. To qualify as a Tier II carrier, for which \$5.2 million is available, applicants must provide fixed route service to at least one FY 2010 UASI jurisdiction; or provide a minimum of 50 trips annually to a designated FY 2010 UASI jurisdiction. The funding can be used for training and exercises (hiring security consultants for training programs, tabletop exercises, drills); facility security enhancements (lights, fences, ID badges, CCTV); vehicle security (GPS, kill switch technology, streaming video, panic buttons, driver shields); passenger screening (wanding devices, detection technology, canine patrols); and security planning (development of security plans, vulnerability assessments). Operators may request funding for as many as three projects. In addition to providing grant guidance and application instructions, DHS will also be holding weekly teleconferences every Tuesday regarding the grant application process from Dec. 8, 2009-Feb. 9, 2010 from 1-2 p.m. ET. The call-in number is (877) 988-9660; the passcode is 6827433.

Other questions should go to DHS at askcsid@dhs.gov or (800) 368-6498, as well as ASK-GMD@dhs.gov and (866) 927-5646. Operators must obtain a DUNS number and to register with both www.grants.gov and the Central Contract Registry (CCR) to create an account in order to complete and submit your application online. The registration process can take up to three weeks for first time registrants. All applications must be submitted online. For more information, go to ABA's grants page.

Small Business 401K Retirement Plan Now Offered as New ABA Benefit

Reprinted from ABA Insider, Issue Number 60, November 23, 2009.

Small bus & tour operators, travel partners and any other ABA member who thought offering a 401(k) benefit plan was too costly can now take advantage of a new ABA Premium Partnership with Transamerica Financial Services Inc. offering just that. To learn more about this benefit, call Craig S. Johnson at (877) MEP-401k (637-4015), email him at craigjohnson@mep401k.org, or visit www.mep401k.org.

VMA NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING FORM

Putting your advertisement in the VMA Newsletter gets you right in touch with motorcoach companies in Virginia. We invite you to use this form to contract for your ad space.

The costs are as follows:

One Issue:

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

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

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

Ads should be received as a .JPEG or .TIFF file with a resolution of 300 or higher, or a PDF file with embedded font files and Macintosh compatible. No spot colors, only CMYK process. 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 VMA office. If there is a question about format please contact Angie at the VMA office at 434-376-1150 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 Virginia Motorcoach Association and mail with hard copy to:

Angie Reynolds Glass, VMA Office, 106 Main Street, Brookneal, VA 24528

Questions: 434.376.1150 or FAX: 434.376.1156 or Email: angie_g@embarqmail.com



CALENDAR

2010 SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL MOTORCOACH OPERATORS MEETING
JANUARY 13 - 15, 2010
HILTON ALEXANDRIA MARK CENTER, ALEXANDRIA, VA

**AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION
MARKETPLACE**
JANUARY 15 - 19, 2010
NATIONAL HARBOR, MARYLAND

UNITED MOTORCOACH ASSOCIATION MOTORCOACH EXPO
FEBRUARY 23 - 27, 2010
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

VMA OPERATORS MEETING / COACH ROADEO
MARCH 7-9, 2010
JAMES RIVER BUS LINES, RICHMOND, VA

2010 VMA CONVENTION
SEPTEMBER 12-15, 2010
DOUBLETREE, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA

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