



AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION

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### Did You Know?

ABA's new "Operator Trip Planning" tool for members includes information on motorcoach parking areas, drop-off and pick-up points, idling rules and street usage guidelines organized by city and state. CVBs and DMOs are encouraged to send their motorcoach guidelines to [abainfo@buses.org](mailto:abainfo@buses.org) to make the list as comprehensive as possible.

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## Top 100 Event Selection Committee Completes List Of 2009 Winners

CAPE COD, MA—During a lively three-day meeting June 10-12, ABA's 14-member Top 100 Event Selection Committee culled nearly 550 nominees to a final list of the Top 100 Events in North America for 2009, including the top event for both the United States and Canada, as well as additions to the list of Internationally Known Events.

The confidential list of winning events will be announced to all members, the public and the media in early September 2008.

The Top 100 Events in North America, now in its 27th year, is ABA's annual compendium of the best motorcoach and group travel events, festivals and anniversary celebrations. It is used as a key resource for trip planners, tour operators and the public, and helps to drive motorcoach travel and tours to the events selected, as well to attractions, hotels and restaurants in the surrounding regions.

"The Top 100 Event list is based on merit rather than geography," said ABA President & CEO Peter J. Pantuso.

"This time we have a lot more geographic diversity," said Terry Altizer, president of *Terry's Tours*, a tour operator based in Radford, Va., serving his third term on the Selection Committee. "We had top contenders for the No. 1 spot from coast to coast. It was really a bicoastal battle."

Another operator from the Midwest, serving his first time on the committee, found the process challenging, but invigorating at the same time. "It was illuminating to see 14 operators from Delaware to California take more than 500 events and make difficult choices to distill those down to the best 100," said Tim Bannister, president of Banyer Travel LLC in Battle Creek, Mich. "They're all winners, but our job was to choose the Top 100. To have 14 people reach consensus was a formidable challenge, but fun at the same time. I'd love to do it again."

Group-friendly was the predominant theme throughout the three days of spirited discussions. "It was a great experience and we have a good representation of the most motorcoach-friendly events across North America," said Robin Harvey, owner of Second Wind Tours in Myrtle Beach, S.C., a first-timer on the committee. "We are recognizing and accommodating new trends in the travel market, including everything from culinary festivals to music celebrations."

The criteria for selecting events were based on ease of motorcoach access, including parking, drop-off and pick-up of travelers, incentives for drivers and tour guides and other group travel attributes; the ability to package selected events with attractions in the surrounding regions to build itineraries; the prospective broad appeal as well as niche interest in the event; and the potential future benefits to the destination in terms of increasing group travel via motorcoach to the event's market.



Cape Cod's Lighthouse Inn, lodging and meeting host site for the 2009 Top 100 Selection Committee Meeting June 10-12.

(continued on page 2)

“ABA is indebted once again to their annual Top 100 Event Selection Committee volunteers, who took time out of their busy schedules to perform a critical leadership role in helping to plan group travel across North America in the coming year,” Pantuso added.

The meeting was sponsored by the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, Lighthouse Inn, local Chambers representing the distinct towns of Cape Cod, Plymouth & Brockton Street Railway Company, Cape Cod Potato Chips and Cape Cod’s group tour hospitality partners.

“It was refreshing to see what was nominated for 2009, as was the process of finding the unique niche for the next great undiscovered group tour event,” said Michael Embry of FUN ME Events in DeKalb, Ill.

GLAMER (Group Leaders of America) will provide special promotion of the Top 100 Events winners throughout 2009.

More information about previous Top 100 winners and the judging criteria are available [online](#). For photos of the trip taken by Creative Travel Inc.’s Bob Older, a veteran Selection Committee member, visit his Web site and click on [“Cape Cod Photos.”](#)

### FMCSA Warns Drivers Against Use Of Anti-Smoking Medicine

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) recently issued a statement saying that drivers of commercial vehicles, including motorcoaches, should not use the FDA-approved stop-smoking drug Chantix because of its potential side effects.

FMCSA said that drivers who use Chantix should not be medically qualified and approved for driving by medical examiners. Operators should ensure that drivers for their fleets who are medically certified but using Chantix either stop using the drug or stop driving.

### The Insider Q&A: Frank Shoemaker, Coach USA/Lenzner Coach Lines, Pittsburgh; driver, Cancer Awareness Bus, the “Fight Back Express.”



**ABA: What do you hope to accomplish by driving the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network Fight Back Express Bus for six months, driving to all 48 contiguous states?**

**FS:** The six-month tour, which started in Cleveland May 4th, is aimed at raising awareness of cancer during an election year. We want to get candidates, as well as Congress and the public, to focus on cancer. And we want to get insurance companies to cover cancer testing and people to take preventative measures.

**ABA: What has it been like driving the Fight Back Express?**

**FS:** Auto drivers on the road slow down to see what the bus is all about. It is exciting to watch the emotions people have when writing a message on the bus, whether words of encouragement or reflections on how cancer has affected their lives. Whenever we make a stop, there are activities to educate everyone on how the government plays a part in defeating cancer.

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**ABA: How did Coach USA/Lenzer become involved and what compelled you to take on this opportunity?**

**FS:** Coach USA/Lenzer became involved during the celebration on the Hill honoring cancer survivors. I did this because I lost my father to colon cancer. After I heard about the movement, I saw a chance to make a difference. I had lived a life affected by cancer, and I wanted to do something so others don't have to. I actually started driving at 18, and my father also was a driver, which means I have been riding the bus since I was three.



Ex-Sen. Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD) signs the MCI "Fight Back Express" during its D.C. stop June 5th.

**ABA: Where has the bus been, and where is it going?**

**FS:** Over the past month, we have traveled to Ohio, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and D.C. We are at the Williard in D.C. because there is a convention headed by the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease, but we will also stop at George Washington University, Howard University and the Nationals baseball game. After today [June 5th], we will move forward in order to cover 48 states before the November 4th election. You can see all of our stops by visiting our [Web site](#).

**ABA: Who rides with you on the bus?**

**FS:** Staff members from the American Cancer Society and the Cancer Action Network ride along with us. Whenever

we reach a new state, there is a regional representative who travels with me.

**ABA: Could you talk a bit about the motorcoach you have been driving?**

**FS:** I am driving a MCI J4500 motorcoach which has a ZF transmission. I have noticed that the ZF transmission has made a difference with improved fuel economy. I also see more power when driving through hills.

**ABA: What opportunities do you see with running this campaign on a bus as compared to another mode of transportation?**

**FS:** With the bus we are able to get into all communities, from the little towns to the big cities. You can't do that with any other mode of transportation. It also makes for a great rolling billboard. In fact, we often call it a "Rolling Petition."

### Peter Pan Marks 75th Anniversary

Peter C. Picknelly started [Peter Pan Bus Lines Inc.](#) in 1933, carrying seven passengers from Springfield, Mass., to Northampton. Back in the 1930s, a lot of people couldn't afford their own cars. But today, people are again choosing the bus over cars—even when they own one or two autos.

In 2008, with commuters and travelers facing the challenges of \$4 a gallon gas, parking fees, highway tolls and the chronic congestion of driving in and around big cities in the Northeast Corridor, the bus is becoming a more and more attractive alternative to the automobile. "Our job is what it always has been, to take people out of their personal automobile," said Picknelly's grandson, Peter A. Picknelly, who heads the company, now in its third generation of family leadership. "Our competition is the personal automobile, then the plane and then the train."

Today, Peter Pan is a company of 1,100 employees with a fleet of 300 buses.

"The product has changed," Picknelly said. "Buses aren't like they used to be."

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## ABAInsider

### House Approves \$14.9 Billion For Amtrak Reauthorization

On June 11th, the House approved a \$14.9 billion Amtrak reauthorization measure with enough votes to override a veto promised by President Bush. On a 311-104 vote, House members adopted the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act, which authorizes \$4.2 billion for capital grants and \$3 billion for operational grants over the bill's five-year life.

The White House cited the bill's high price tag and lack of reforms, but the measure safely exceeded the 290 House votes required to override a veto. The bill breezed through committee markups and gained bipartisan support thanks to a provision allowing private companies to bid on the creation of high-speed rail corridors. That language brought almost half of House Republicans to support the bill despite its increase in funding.

The House had not taken up an Amtrak measure since its authorization expired in 2002. The bill also authorizes a total of \$1.7 billion to pay off past Amtrak debts incurred during recent years.

### Splish Splash Bus Bath Cleans Coaches For Charity

Nearly two dozen volunteers grabbed hoses, sponges and squeegees to help raise money for the Ontario Motor Coach Association Foundation and other charities during the "Splish Splash Bus Bath" held June 11 at Cape Cod's Simon Mall.

Nearly 20 motorcoaches, at peak times waiting three-in-line, stopped by the mall for a wash. More than \$500 of the proceeds were donated to this year's charity—the OMCA Foundation. Monies raised in years past have been donated to the ABA Foundation and other worthy causes. One New Jersey-based operator was so interested in the Foundation's [programs and research reports](#) he requested much of it be sent to him to share with his company.

"This event is not only a fundraiser, but it's also a fundraiser," said Cyndi Williams, Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce (CCCC) Group Sales Chair and Director of Sales, Lighthouse Inn.

The bus wash included volunteer washers from the CCCC Group Tour Committee and its group hospitality members.

"Now that each motorcoach we washed can see clearly, we hope they will see more of everything Cape Cod and its hospitality partners have to offer," said Patti Lloyd, vice president of sales for the CCCC.

### Private Buses Replace Transit At John Deere Golf Tournament

The Federal Transit Administration ruling upholding a 20-year old law prohibiting publicly subsidized transit systems from offering charter service—when private buses are ready to provide the same service—is reverberating nationwide.

The John Deere Classic golf tournament, held in July in the Quad Cities region on the border between

**Did You Know?**

ABA's new [Operator Tip Sheet](#) suggests how to make high gas prices work in your favor.

Volunteers wash a coach during the Splish Splash Bus Bath on Cape Cod.



The Hard Rock Park features classic rock-themed thrill rides.

Iowa and Illinois, won't be using the MetroLink transit system, but will rely on private bus service instead.

*The Quad Cities Times* reported, "A Federal Transportation Administration ruling that prohibits publicly subsidized transit systems from offering charter services has forced the MetroLink board to opt out of the contracted shuttle service to and from the TPC Deere Run. ... The FTA provided a waiver for MetroLink to provide the free shuttle service to and from five Q-C parking lots last year, but a recent opinion provided to the board said the company would risk its federal funding by accepting payment from the tournament for bus service this year."

A spokesperson for the tournament said the organizers of the event are "ready to contract services from local private charter companies." The goal "will be to provide the same level of efficiency," and may require as many as 60 buses.

By contracting with a private charter service, the tournament can return to the use of shuttle lots in Iowa this year. Last year's FTA waiver for MetroLink prevented the service from being provided outside of Illinois.

## TRAVEL TRACKS

### Hard Rock Park Hits Myrtle Beach

Hard Rock Park this month opened the front gates to the world's first rock 'n' roll theme park, a 55-acre destination boasting more than 50 attractions for rockers of all ages, including roller coasters, live shows and entertainment, children's play areas, restaurants and retail stores. British rock band The Moody Blues commemorated the official opening of the Park's psychedelic, Moody Blues-inspired dark ride, "Nights in White Satin: The Trip."

A live performance from The Moody Blues, accompanied by Myrtle Beach's Long Bay Symphony orchestra, followed at Hard Rock Park's Live amphitheater. Guests can also enjoy the Park's rock-themed thrill rides, including "Led Zeppelin—The Ride" and "Eagles: Life In The Fast Lane" as well as live shows.

For more information, visit [www.hardrockpark.com](http://www.hardrockpark.com).

## EXECUTIVE EXCURSIONS

### Trop Deals Pat Hand

The Tropicana Casino and Resort in Atlantic City has named Patty Laveglia its new National Sales Manger for the destination resort. In this role, Laveglia will have direct responsibility for building and managing association, union and government sales for the Tropicana.

To contact Laveglia, call (609) 340-4186 or e-mail [plavegli@tropicana.net](mailto:plavegli@tropicana.net). For more information, visit [www.tropicana.net](http://www.tropicana.net).

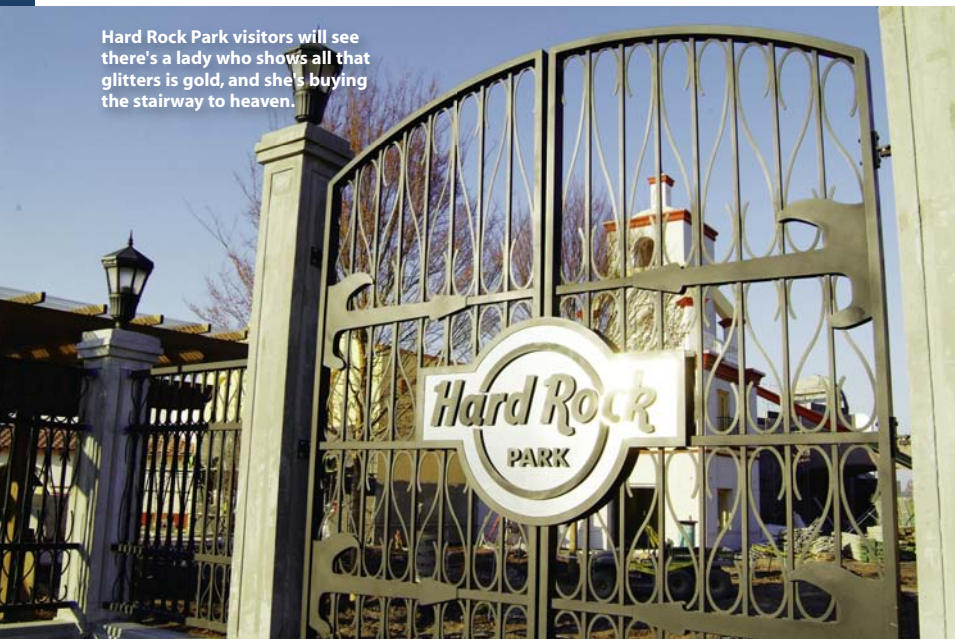
## Clarification

The June 9 story announcing Stephen Ekstrom as the new Director of Sales for Ripley's Believe It Or Not! in New York City should have linked to [www.ripleysnewyork.com](http://www.ripleysnewyork.com).

### Did You Know?

There is now at least one winery in all 50 states, with South Dakota being the last state to open one in March 2007. —Courtesy Michael Embry, FUN ME Events, DeKalb, Illinois.

Hard Rock Park visitors will see there's a lady who shows all that glitters is gold, and she's buying the stairway to heaven.





## INTRODUCTION

The ABA Foundation mission is to answer the call to support the industry with research and scholarships that benefit the ABA, policy-makers and the public. As part of its efforts to meet the lofty expectations set by its visionary Board of Governors, the ABA Foundation awards 18 scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students each year, hosting interns and conducting research studies on the industry and its positive impact on the country at a variety of levels.

## LEGACY PATRONS



## PLATINUM DONORS



## Bridgestone/Firestone ABA Foundation Golf Tournament Set

Members are invited to participate in the Bridgestone/Firestone ABA Foundation fall golf tournament the afternoon of Sept. 24. The event, scheduled to take place at the pastoral Tantallon Country Club in Fort Washington, Md., will help raise funds for scholarships and research.

This will be a great opportunity for all ABA members to mingle with industry colleagues to talk about business in a relaxed, picturesque setting that should provide a fun challenge for both the novice as well as the advanced player. The Foundation is excited to have the support of five industry sponsors (Bridgestone/Firestone, Setra, ABC Companies, Motor Coach Industries and Prevost.) Registration forms can be downloaded [here](#).

## 2008-2009 Scholarship Winners Announced

The following 18 students are the winners of 2008-2009 academic year scholarships from the Foundation, each of which is valued at \$2,500. Over the past decade, the Foundation has awarded more than \$300,000 worth of scholarships to students pursuing coursework in the motorcoach, tour and travel industries.

### The winners are:

- **David Barrows**  
[Anderson Tour & Travel](#)  
St Vincent College
- **Melissa Dolly**  
[Starr Tours](#)  
The College of New Jersey
- **Alanna Pollock**  
[Westworld Tours](#)  
University of Regina
- **Boris Sotnikov**  
[Rockland Coaches, Coach USA](#)  
Rutgers, The State College of New Jersey

- **Briana Walsh**  
[Greyhound Lines Inc.](#)  
Drury College
- **Allison Wishon**  
[James River Bus Lines](#)  
George Mason University
- **Courtney Kavanagh**  
[Rustad Bus Service](#)  
South Dakota State University
- **Isabelle Morin**  
[Prevost](#)  
College of Francois-Xavier-Garneau
- **Amanda Alt**  
[Lodestar Bus Lines](#)  
Columbia College
- **Holly Zeszutko**  
[ABC Companies](#)  
University of Central Florida
- **Maria Benner**  
[Alaska Travel Industry Association](#)  
Alaska Pacific University
- **Michael Pixley**  
[Tecumseh Trolley](#)  
Kettering University
- **Matthew Wywial**  
[Coach Canada](#)  
University of Toronto
- **Allison Muise**  
Endicott College
- **Kyle Maurer**  
Johnson and Wales University
- **Aiyi Liang**  
Saddleback College
- **Robert Hawk**  
Johnson and Wales University
- **Zachary Hamilton**  
Arizona State University

## Marketplace Auctions Already Attracting Donations

The ABA Foundation Auctions at Marketplace, both of which take place on the show floor, and which include a LIVE Auction from 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Jan. 11, as well as a Silent Auction scheduled Jan. 8-11, are already attracting donors to the worthy cause.

ABA members in the Plymouth, Mass. area have already donated a \$15,000 group tour package that includes 50 Boston Red Sox tickets, 50 tickets to

## 2008 BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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Captain John's Boats, 50 tickets to the Plimoth Plantation, 50 tickets to the Jenney Grist Mill, 50 tickets to the New Bedford Whaling Museum and 25 hotel rooms at the Pilgrim Sands.

Tier I donors (items/services valued at \$3,000 or more) receive elevated visibility for their contributions, including the choice of participating in either the Live Auction or Silent Auction, up to a 300-word description with company logo and picture in the Foundation Auction Catalogue, internet visibility with description, logo and company link posted within 48 hours of pledge and completion of documents.

Within two weeks of making their donations and having them posted on the Web, donors will receive an exclusive article in the Foundation Focus, including descriptions of the donations and company/destination link right from this section.

Tier II donations (\$1,000-\$3,000) and Tier III donations (up to \$1,000) also receive visibility and listings. For a complete description of benefits by Tier level, [click here](#).

### Auction Advertising Options Are Cost-Effective Way To Reach Delegates

The [advertising options](#) for the auctions are a cost-effective way to reach all Marketplace delegates while supporting the Foundation's good works for the industry, featuring full and half-page color ads. This is a great low-cost, high-visibility way to reach the entire Marketplace audience.

### Hard Rock International To Sponsor Afterglow At Whisky River Charlotte

The Foundation expresses its appreciation once again for the gracious hospitality of [Hard Rock International](#) for hosting the annual ABA Foundation Afterglow at Marketplace, scheduled for Sunday,

Jan. 11, 2009, from 9:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m. at the [Whisky River in Charlotte](#).

The Whisky River, owned by NASCAR icon Dale Earnhardt Jr., offers a unique blend of rock and country music, VIP tables and mechanical bull riding, live music and electrifying DJs, with breathtaking views of Uptown Charlotte and Bobcats Arena.

Tickets are \$35, and go to the Foundation's scholarships and research programs. Register [here](#).

### Hoff Named Foundation Director

ABA has promoted Daniel Hoff to serve as Director of the ABA Foundation. Hoff had been serving as acting director since 2007, handling daily operations including supervision of the scholarship program, research grants, and fundraising activities, as well as overseeing the creation and dissemination of industry research.

He also serves as Policy Manager for ABA. Before joining ABA in 2006, he worked as Legislative Director in the Maryland House of Delegates, and in the Baltimore Mayor and City Council President's offices. He has a B.S. in Information Technology and a B.A. in Political Science from Syracuse University.

"Daniel's leadership of the Foundation over the past year has been critical in helping to create opportunities for enhanced scholarship and research programming that enables us to reach out and support the next generation of industry leaders," said ABA President and CEO Peter J. Pantuso. "As the Foundation Director, Daniel will help to elevate the role the Foundation plays across the entire motorcoach, travel, and tour industry."

### Interested in supporting the industry's future leaders through the [ABA Foundation](#)?

Our form makes it easy to [give online](#).

## New Members—Print and Add to Your 2008 ABA Motorcoach Marketer

Have a news tip for the *Insider*?

Please e-mail it to **Eron Shosteck**.

### Did You Know?

Guest blogger **Don Meador** offers his insights on how hoteliers can attract vacation travelers during challenging economic times: take the bus!

## ABAInsider

**Eron Shosteck**, Editor In Chief

**Kate Martin**, Associate Editor

**Brian Parker**, Advertising Director



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Food Service

#### Delaware Art Museum

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Museum

#### Durham Convention & Visitors Bureau

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Lodging

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Lodging, Attraction - Other

### PENDING BUS/MOTORCOACH OPERATORS

The following Pending Bus/Motorcoach Operator companies have submitted applications for membership between May 30 - June 13, 2008:

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(DOT 384599 MC 126986)  
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[www.dufourtours.com](http://www.dufourtours.com)

Should members have comments regarding these applications, please contact [abamembership@buses.org](mailto:abamembership@buses.org).

**A bus-friendly sign at one of C&J's Park and Ride facilities in New Hampshire.**

