



AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION

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Did You Know?

Roger Saul of NHTSA is slated to speak to the Bus Industry Safety Council (BISC) meeting July 15 at 2 pm at the NTSB Training Facility in Ashburn, VA. Get more information on the July 14-15 [conference](#) or [download the registration form](#).

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The Most Accurate News Source For The Motorcoach, Tour And Travel Industry

Toronto Creates Motorcoach-Only Parking Spaces Downtown

In a move that could potentially serve as a model for big cities across North America looking for innovative ways to fight congestion, Toronto officials have created 86 free on-street parking spaces located in the heart of the city's downtown tourism region reserved exclusively for motorcoaches.

These reserved spots allow motorcoaches to load and unload passengers throughout the day. Cars and trucks that park illegally within these spaces are subject to ticketing by law enforcement.

Throughout Toronto, bus operators will also find Motorcoach Loading Zones, Pay and Display on-street parking, and private lots that can be utilized by buses. The Motorcoach Loading zones are available 24 hours a day to enable quick pick-ups and drop-offs, while Pay and Display parking allows buses to purchase parking permits from machines along the sidewalk. The private off-street parking lots enable bus operators to make reservations in advance.

"Up until a few years ago, the city had done little in the way of trying to accommodate motorcoaches in the downtown area," Dave Carroll, Director of Safety & Maintenance for the Ontario Motor Coach Association, told the Insider. "In fact, there was an image created of Toronto being a motorcoach *unfriendly* community. Such was Toronto's image that we even heard that drivers for some tour bus companies in the USA felt they drew the short straw if they were dispatched to Toronto, citing the cat and mouse games necessary to avoid getting parking tickets. Obviously, this is an image the city can't afford to have."

The congestion mitigation function motorcoaches provide to urban cores was persuasive in convincing Toronto officials to adopt the unprecedented policy.

"These progressive steps that have eased the pressure for coach companies and their drivers, and help reduce the need to drive around and around wasting fuel and contributing to congestion. These measures have helped to make Toronto a more attractive group tour destination," Carroll added.

"What Toronto has done to recognize the role of motorcoaches in fighting gridlock and removing cars from the roads should serve as a model to big cities across North America," said ABA President & CEO Peter J. Pantuso. Not only can one bus reduce congestion by taking up to 55 single-occupant cars off the road, but it also has the potential to cut CO2 emissions and fuel consumption."

Motorcoach travel is critical to Toronto's economy, as Canada's largest city welcomes an estimated 20,000 group coach tours per year, translating into an annual economic benefit of about \$175 million.



The Insider Q&A: ABA Board Member Charles "Butch" Beckwith, co-owner, Turner Travel, Terre Haute, IN



ABA: What is the history of Turner Travel?

CB: Our company started in 1921. I came on in 1982, we founded our tour department. The first year we did four tours. We've made many changes over time. Now we do air, sea and land travel. We have more boomers traveling with us now. We have grandparents taking grandkids on trips, so we have a cross-section of generations.

ABA: What are your most popular trips?

CB: Some we do every year because of their popularity, such as Hawaii, Alaska and Branson, and others we do include every other year, like Mt. Rushmore. After a while, you get a feel for how your numbers will rotate and how often you can bring a trip back in, so from that we've come up with our catalog.

ABA: How have you handled the rising price of diesel?

CB: We'd raised our rates when insurance and fuel went up, and people complained. But when we explained why they understood. So when fuel went up again, we added a

fuel surcharge instead of raising our rates, and when you tell them that the price includes a fuel surcharge, they understand automatically because they've experienced similar increases in their lives at the gas pump.

ABA: Have you seen a ridership surge because of gas prices?

CB: From people noticing that diesel prices have gone up now that gas prices have gone up so much, they realize we're not the bad guys.

ABA: You're a big proponent of personal customization of the group travel experience. Can you elaborate?

CB: We give people choices. Instead of going to New York and seeing one show, we give them two or three choices. Now they choose two out of three. Now we say, "Here's three shows, which two do you want to see?"

ABA: What other choices do you give?

CB: In Hawaii, our itinerary may say dinner night, and here's meal money, eat where you want. That way they feel empowered by choices.

ABA: For those readers who might not know of your Meatloaf Maxim, please share this time-tested truism of group travel psychology.

CB: I might say we're stopping for lunch for meatloaf, and they say, "Oh, meatloaf." Now I say, we're stopping for lunch and your choices are chicken, fish or meatloaf, and they say, "Oh, meatloaf sounds good!" It's all about giving customers the power of choice, even if they choose what you had originally offered.

ABA: How about some of your other popular excursions?

CB: We do a lot of day trips. We go to Chicago. You can sign up for the Chicago auto show or International Motorcycle Show or Macy's On State Street for a behind-the-scenes tour of their famous chocolate tour, or the

ABAInsider

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American Girl Place. So the family can go to Chicago for the day, and the dad and son can go to see the auto show, and the girls can go to Macy's. But you have to work it out with destinations and attractions that understand group tours. We've found a way to take group motorcoach travel and make it customizable within that dynamic.

ABA: What is your secret to minimizing stops along the Interstate?

CB: We try to figure our trips so we can do rest stops on the Interstates where they have them set up for large numbers of people. But we always ask the group, "Do you want to stop to stretch your legs?" Again, it gives them the power of choice. We try to work it out in advance with the timing of our tours to attractions, so we plan to do them anyway. But the traveler is empowered.

ABA: How do you know where to go for motorcoach-friendly stops?

CB: Truck stops don't mind you stopping, because they have good restroom sizes and there's the possibility passengers will grab a soft drink. With a group student tour to DC, that works for meals, and at the same time it's good for us because we can change our drivers out to comply with hours of service rules, or to refuel.

ABA: Any final words on how you reach that next busload of travelers to book them for Turner Travel?

CB: Our unwritten slogan is, "You can tell us where to go. The only thing we ask is that you go with us."

Check Your 2009 MCM Proofs

All members are reminded to make sure they approve the proof of their 2009 Motorcoach Marketer listing(s). Proofs were sent via e-mail, fax and regular mail to the primary contact for each company. Questions? abamotorcoachmarketer@buses.org.

ABA Board Members Slated To Be Green Transportation Panelists



Jim Jalbert



Woody Blunt

ABA Board Members Jim Jalbert, president of C&J in Portsmouth, N.H., and Harry W. Blunt, Jr., president of Concord Coach Lines in Concord, N.H., are slated to be panelists on a State Public Transportation Partnerships Conference scheduled to take place Aug. 7, 2008, in Providence, R.I., from 10:45 a.m. to 12 p.m.

The panel, titled "Going Green: States Leading the Way in Intercity Passenger Rail & Intercity Bus Service," will look at the role of public-private partnerships, such as motorcoach commuting park & rides, as part of the transportation solution.

The program description reads: "With high gas prices, focus on climate change, and growing congestion on the highways and at the airports, intercity passenger rail and intercity bus service are fast becoming viable transportation options. States all across the U.S. are investing in passenger rail to improve on-time performance, add frequency of service, and provide mobility options. These corridors are seeing significant increases in ridership."

The moderator is Barbara Donovan, manager of Transportation Programs, Maine Department of Transportation, and the presenters include Jalbert and Blunt, as well as Toby Fauver, deputy secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation; and Gene Skorpowski, general manager, Capitol Corridor, Calif.

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MARKETPLACE PACE

Charlotte 2009 Registration Opens Monday, July 14



Marketplace registration and housing materials will be mailed to all active ABA members on July 11, 2008. On-line registration will begin on July 14, 2008. Housing will be open to all delegates on July 14 at 12 pm EST.

To better serve members, ABA will be staggering registration dates for Marketplace 2009. This will help to shorten the time online required to submit one's registration and help prevent server overload experienced in the past. The staggered registration dates will not adversely affect seller appointment-takers because all appointment-takers within a specific appointment session will have the same registration start date/time.

Fairness will be maintained because the appointments are scheduled by session, not all together (i.e. DMO appointments, Lodging appointments, Attractions/LRO/Other appointments are scheduled separately). The same holds true for housing reservations. Housing will be open to all delegate categories on July 14 at Noon ET. Delegates do not need to be registered to make housing reservations. For information on registration by delegate segment, go to the Marketplace 2009 [Registration Page](#).

Product Pavilion Registration Now Underway



ABA's newly enhanced Product Pavilion, the one-day, one-stop exhibit show slated for Jan. 11, 2009 in Charlotte, NC, in conjunction with Marketplace, is now accepting reservations for exhibit booth space—with a special discount for early bird registration.

"The [Product Pavilion](#) offers everything under one roof," said ABA President & CEO Peter J. Pantuso.

"The Product Pavilion provides a great opportunity for manufacturers, suppliers and distributors to connect face-to-face with more than 600 bus operators," said Brenda Borwege, Vice President of Marketing for ABC Companies, the exclusive U.S. distributor of Van Hool motorcoaches.

"Now that ABA is enhancing the whole image of the Product Pavilion, it will help it expand and grow," said Pat Ziska, Vice President of Marketing and Chief Commercial Officer of Motor Coach Industries. "You always have a trend."

Launched at Marketplace 2008 in Virginia Beach as The MARKET, the Product Pavilion has been renamed and enhanced to show its added value as the most efficient business-building opportunity for motorcoach product & service providers. "Registration for the Product Pavilion ensures you're part of the first and largest motorcoach transportation show in North America," Pantuso added. Registration includes admission to all Saturday and Sunday Marketplace events.

The Product Pavilion has been scheduled at a peak floor-traffic period during Marketplace and relocated in a more centralized location on the show floor. Exhibitors who invest early in booth space can take advantage of special savings incentives. Those who reserve their exhibit space before September 15th will receive \$100 off of their investment. Visit the Product Pavilion section online to [register today](#) or call 800-283-2877.

Motorcoaches are expected to be exempt from Canada's new law requiring speed-limiting devices on commercial trucks.

Did You Know?

ABA's government affairs department has more than half a century of combined experience in the motorcoach industry and in federal transportation service. Call 800-283-2877 to put ABA's expertise to work for you with desk-side assistance on issues ranging from regulatory compliance to free service of process, all of which are included as part of ABA's comprehensive member benefits package

FMCSA OKs Employer Disclosure Of Drug & Alcohol Violations

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration June 13 published in the Federal Register an emergency interim final rule authorizing employers and third-party administrators to disclose employee drug or alcohol violations to state CDL licensing authorities where state law requires it. Currently the new rule will only apply to seven states that mandate reporting: Arizona, California, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas and Washington.

Critics of the rules complain that FMCSA did not go far enough. They claim that this leaves 43 states open for violators to continue to "job hop" with reduced chances of losing their CDL. The bus industry has long been an advocate of enhanced drug and alcohol violation reporting and the need for a central data base that is accessible to employers.

ABA Holding Event For Rep. John Olver (D-MA)

ABA will be holding a fundraiser for Rep. John Olver (D-MA) 5-6:30 p.m. EST July 14 at Erickson & Company, 38 Ivy Street SE, Washington, DC. Olver is Chair of the Transportation & HUD Appropriations subcommittee; a

member of the Interior & Environment Appropriations subcommittee; and a member of the Energy & Water Development Appropriations subcommittee. To RSVP, please call ABA Legislative Assistant Bethany Field at 202-218-7224 or e-mail bfield@buses.org.

CANADIAN CURRENTS

Ontario Adopts Speed Limiters for Trucks

Thanks to the hard work of the Ontario Motor Coach Association (OMCA) and ABA partner Motor Coach Canada (MCC), coach operators will not fall under a new speed limiter mandate that the Ontario government signed into law on June 18, 2008. Initially the measure targeted all commercial vehicles, including commercial coaches, operating in Ontario, including vehicles entering from the US. All commercial vehicles would have to have had a speed limiting device installed and set to no more than 65 miles per hour (105 kilometers per hour). Recognizing the havoc this law would cause to cross-border coach operations, the OMCA/MCC initiated meetings with key legislators and policy officials to make certain coach operations were exempted. The good news for coach operators is that they were successful. Coaches are exempt from the new law's grasp. While the law does not expressly provide the exemption, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation has promised that implementation regulations will provide the coach exemption.

MEMBER SERVICES

Take Advantage Of Introductory Rates To Join ABA Now

If you aren't an ABA member yet, now's the time to join and take

A speed-limit sign on a main highway in Ontario instructs drivers not to exceed 110 kilometers per hour (68.2 MPH).



Member Services

Continued

The ABA Foundation has released a new study looking at marketing motorcoach travel to baby boomers.

Did You Know?

ABA has published a guest blog on <http://www.ruralvotes.com> discussing the importance of bus transportation for rural Americans. Read it [here](#).

advantage of promotional incentives to save on your investment in the premiere motorcoach, tour and travel association in North America.

Bus & tour operators can join now for the remainder of calendar year 2008 at the inviting rate of only \$195, while travel industry and associate members can join for only \$350 for the rest of 2008. For a comprehensive list of ABA member benefits by category, visit [ABA's Member Benefits](#) page. E-mail Roderick Lewis at rlewis@buses.org or call 800-283-2877.

Member-Get-A-Member Program Offers Cash Incentives

ABA's "Member-Get-A-Member" program continues to offer \$25 gift cards to current members who connect with others in the motorcoach, tour and travel industry and successfully invite them to join the ABA community. Every member who gets a member is entered into a cash drawing at Marketplace for \$1,000. Rich Gilbert of Maryland won the prize at Marketplace this year in Virginia Beach.

FOUNDATION FOCUS

MCI Slated To Again Sponsor "Going For The Green"

[Motor Coach Industries](#) is graciously sponsoring the ABA Foundation "Going For The Green" putting challenge fundraiser on the Marketplace floor again for the 2009 show in Charlotte Jan. 7-12.

"Going for the Green" is a custom-made 40-foot-long putting challenge. Testing your skill on the course and your knowledge of our green industry for only \$5 a putt will net a cash prize for one lucky winner. Learn more about MCI's green technologies while helping to raise money for industry research, scholarships and internship programs.

Study Looks At Getting Baby Boomers On Motorcoaches

The Foundation has released a study on marketing motorcoach travel and tourism to baby boomers. The [study](#), titled "Baby boomers and future seniors: How to get them on motorcoaches?" was co-authored by James F. Petrick, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University; and Kam Hung, Ph.D. Student, Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University, who received an ABA Foundation grant to help underwrite the study.

"The baby boomers are highly educated, analytical on information received from mass media, more used to using credit cards to make purchases, and have high interest in spending on products and services that enhance their enjoyment of life," the study reports. "Research also indicates that mature markets respond to marketing efforts more effectively when these efforts reflect their personal values including autonomy, connectedness, altruism, personal growth, and revitalization."

"Baby boomers will be retiring in large numbers soon, and their expected use of their discretionary income for leisure travel is an opportunity for the motorcoach, tour and travel industry," said Foundation Director Daniel Hoff. "This study provides critical information that will help the industry better understand the travel experience expectations of baby boomers, and ultimately help them market to this consumer segment better."



MCI's Pat Ziska putts on the company's "Going For The Green" course at Marketplace 2008.

New York City Harvest's goal is to rescue 20 million pounds of excess food for the needy.

Did You Know?

San Diego is now the second largest city in California, having surpassed the population of San Francisco. But the Bay Area (SF-Oakland-San Jose) still ranks as the Golden State's second-largest metro area, following the Los Angeles-Orange County region.

TRAVEL TRACKS

Wyndham To Acquire Microtel, Hawthorn Suites

Wyndham Worldwide Corporation is planning to acquire Microtel Inns & Suites and Hawthorn Suites hotel brands, together totaling more than 29,000 rooms. Microtel Inns & Suites, a chain of 292 newly-constructed economy hotels, with 38 more underway, has been ranked No. 1 in guest satisfaction in its segment by J.D. Power and Associates for the last six years. Wyndham Worldwide will enter the all-suites, extended-stay market with the addition of the 91-hotel Hawthorn Suites chain. For more information, [click here](#).

NYC & Company Dishes Dining Deal Delicacies

NYC & Company has announced the schedule for the Big Apple's summer 2008 Restaurant Week, which is two weeks of dining delights for tourists. From July 21-25 and July 28-Aug. 1, more than 230 restaurants will offer three-course prix-fixe lunches for \$24.07 and three-course prix-fixe dinners \$35 (excluding beverage, tax

and gratuity). Restaurant Week has teamed up with American Express to support NYC & Company's support of City Harvest, which delivers excess food to the needy. American Express will donate \$0.50 per transaction when diners pay with any American Express Card at participating restaurants during NYC Restaurant Week 2008, up to \$25,000. City Harvest's goal is to save 20 million pounds of excess food from the food industry—including restaurants, manufacturers, wholesalers, green-markets, hotels, corporate cafeterias, grocery stores and farms—and deliver to more than 600 community food programs throughout the five boroughs using a fleet of 16 trucks and volunteers on foot. For more information, [click here](#).

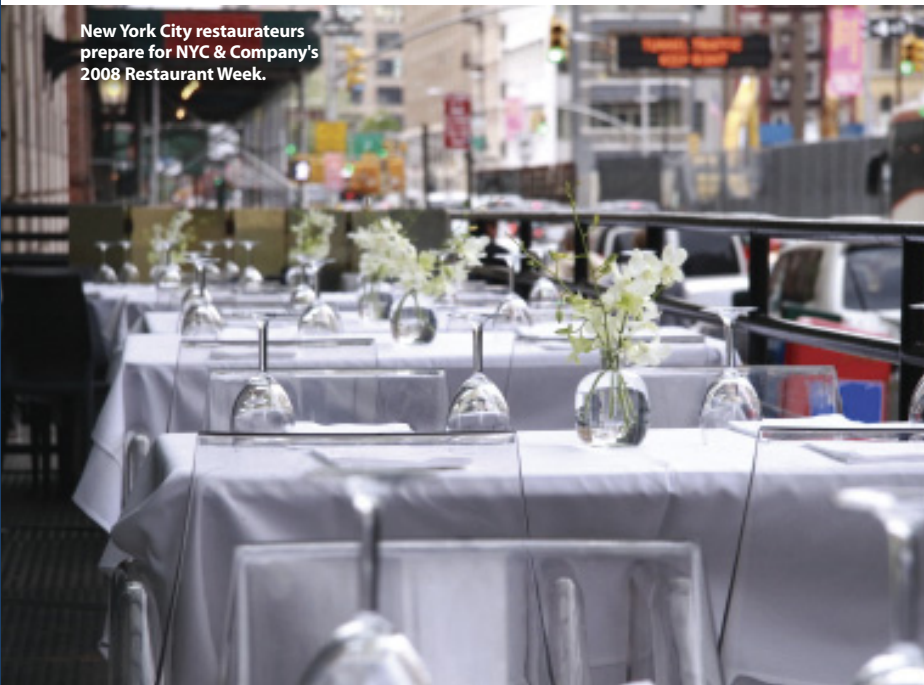
Chicago's Navy Pier Offering 20 Percent Summer Savings

Chicago's Navy Pier, Illinois' top tourist attraction, is offering special 20 percent off package incentives this summer on trips combining the high-flying acrobatics of "Cirque Shanghai: Gold" with options to view the Windy City skyline via boat or Ferris wheel.

With a nod to the summer Olympics, "Cirque Shanghai: Gold" features performers whose troupe has been honored with gold awards in international circus and acrobatic competitions. Their signature style combines Chinese acrobatic wonder with fast-paced production elements, contemporary visuals, inventive choreography, stunning costumes and thrilling music. The result is a display of agility, strength and balance seen nowhere else in the world this summer but at Chicago's Navy Pier.

Special package deals start at \$35.75, representing more than a 20 percent savings, including a 20 percent off dining voucher for Riva Restaurant. Special package deals can be purchased at Navy Pier. Call (312) 902-1500 or [click here](#).

New York City restaurateurs prepare for NYC & Company's 2008 Restaurant Week.



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

Did You Know?

ABA completed shooting footage July 2 for its new motorcoach safety video, designed to help operators comply with FMCSA requirements for pre-trip passenger safety messages. The video is now in post-production, and should be available later this summer, along with laminated safety cards. ABA thanks Prevost, ABC Companies, Motor Coach Industries and Setra for their help in providing coaches and background material for this important project.

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PENDING BUS/ MOTORCOACH OPERATORS

The following Pending Bus/Motorcoach Operator companies have submitted applications for membership between June 14 – June 30, 2008:

City Tours (US DOT 895045 MC 389228)

Ruth Wynn
Allentown, Pa.

Fidelity Tours

Jay Bomze
Massillon, Ohio
www.fidelity-tours.com

Southeastern Motor Coach Inc. (619920 MC 296463)

Randy Williams
Birmingham, Ala.
www.southeasternmotorcoach.com

Should members have comments regarding these applications, please contact abamembership@buses.org.

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PBA Elects New Board Members

The Pennsylvania Bus Association elected new Administrative Board Members to two-year terms at PBA's General Membership Meeting June 19 in Atlantic City.

New Bus Operator Board Members include David Myers, Myers Coach Lines, Export, Pa.; Amy Brooks, Susquehanna Transit Co., Avis, Pa.; and John Bailey, Bailey Leasing, York, Pa. Fritz Smith of the Philadelphia CVB (host city for Marketplace 2011) was elected new Supplier Board Member.

PBA also re-elected to its Administrative Board Steven Haddad, Bieber Tourways; James A. JeBran (Chairman), Trans-Bridge Lines, Inc.; Nelson Floyd (Vice Chairman), Perkiomen Tours; Scott Henry, Martz Trailways; Wayne Klein (Secretary), Klein Transportation; Aerial Fullington Weisman (Treasurer), Fullington Trailways; and Brad Wolf, Wolf Bus Lines, Inc.