



**AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION**

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### Did You Know That...

Motorcoaches provide 184 passenger miles per gallon (MPG), more than any other transportation sector?

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

## ABA-Led Coalition Files Lawsuit To Strike Unconstitutional D.C. Permit Fees

The American Bus Association has formed a coalition to defend Washington tourist services and visitors against a D.C. government measure that would hurt tens of thousands of potential visitors to the nation's capital.

The coalition filed a lawsuit in D.C. Superior Court July 27 to stop the city from collecting \$50 trip "permit fees" every six days from each motorcoach entering the city. For each "trip permit" fee (commonly known as a tax) operators must surrender \$50 per coach for each six-day period, or up to \$2,200 per year for each bus.

The costs to obtain the permits may be another \$25-50 if operators are forced to hire someone to stand in line for hours to secure the permit. And because the permit has to be bus-specific, the logistics of scheduling charters months in advance can be daunting.

The lawsuit claims that the fees violate D.C. law and the Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution, and seeks a declaratory order, a permanent injunction against collection of the fees, and refunds of any fees that are collected.

The coalition joining the legal action includes the National Tour Association and United Motorcoach Association.

The 2006 Motorcoach Impact Study, commissioned by the ABA Foundation, documents that "a single tour bus on a two-night tour injects as much as \$16,000 into a local economy." That confirms the conclusions of a 2002 George Washington University

study, also underwritten by ABA.

D.C. restaurants, hotels, vendors and other retail businesses all collect sales taxes on such revenues on behalf of the nation's capital. So the tourism tax on bus operators could result in less visitor-generated local spending, meaning a decline in tax revenues overall. D.C.'s traffic congestion could also worsen as a result of this measure. With every full motorcoach taking up to 55 cars off the road, motorcoaches help fight gridlock.

"The same mom-and-pop operators who transport veterans and students visiting the capital to learn how democracy works now have a new fee to pay for the privilege," said ABA President & CEO Peter J. Pantuso.





Motorcoaches are part of the congestion mitigation solution in New York and other big cities.

### New York City Commission To Study Congestion Pricing Scheme

New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's proposed \$8 congestion pricing fee plan is now going to be studied by a commission.

New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer (D) signed a compromise bill July 26 to establish a 17-member Traffic Congestion Mitigation Commission charged with examining the issue and making recommendations by the end of January.

The enacting legislation (A09362) also stipulates that the U.S Department of Transportation, New York City or a combination of both must allocate \$250 million to implement a congestion mitigation

plan by Oct. 1. Assuming the funding clause is met by DOT and the Commission creates an implementation plan by Jan. 1, 2008, three legislative bodies (New York City Council, New York State Assembly, and the New York State Senate) have approval authority in the form of authorizing legislation.

The U.S. DOT will have to decide whether by enacting a study commission New York City qualifies for a grant under the Urban Partnership program. DOT has already rejected similar proposals from Los Angeles and other major cities because the required authorizing legislation did not exist and a study protocol on congestion mitigation does not qualify under this program as a plan to reduce

### CANADIAN CURRENTS

#### Ontario Gets Provincial On Registration Rules

Many U.S. carriers were caught off guard when Ontario law enforcement officers started demanding proof of Commercial Vehicle Operator Registration (CVOR) during roadside inspections 18 months ago.

It seemed unfair to issue tickets for a law no one knew they were violating (until the RCMP pulled them over), so the Ontario government has agreed to stop charging U.S.-based (and plated) passenger carriers buses for a short interim.

Registration is free, and it will save drivers a lot of unnecessary roadside hassle. Registration application forms are available at: <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/trucks/guideline/appendixm.htm> For more information on CVOR, contact: Client Services Unit (416) 246-7166 Ext. 6302

#### ABC Companies Expanding North Of The Border

ABC Companies is looking to expand north of the border. The biggest importer of Van Hool motorcoaches has named ABC's John McFarlane its first Canadian account executive. He recently completed a business deal with Traxx Coach Lines of Medicine Hat in Alberta, Canada by selling 10 new Van Hool C2045's, one of the company's most popular Van Hool models.

ABC is an active member of Motorcoach Canada and the Ontario Motorcoach Association. The company plans to offer a comprehensive line of new and used equipment to Canadian operators including the full Van Hool equipment class.



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congestion. But federal support for Mayor Bloomberg's plan has not wavered, and DOT may look for other ways to authorize the money based on the passage of authorizing legislation by the New York State Legislature.

The latest Quinnipiac poll shows NYC respondents oppose congestion pricing by a margin of 52% to 41% (Manhattan voters support it 59% to 37%).

More than 1,000 motorcoaches provide commuter service to the city every day, transporting workers from suburbs within the state, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania to jobs in the city. ABA maintains that motorcoaches should be exempt from the fee because they are critical components of mitigating congestion. Each full motorcoach removes as many as 55 single-occupancy cars from the road.

To learn more about the New York commission, click on <http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?bn=A9362>

### **ABA Joins With Leavitt Group To Offer New Insurance Service**

ABA has formed a strategic partnership with the Leavitt Group to offer a new member benefit: ABA Insurance Service, an exclusive "one stop insurance shop" for ABA members that will encompass all lines of insurance and assist members with their insurance needs. ABA has teamed up with Leavitt, a top 20 national insurance broker, to provide superior products that will be marketed at optimal prices.

As Leavitt builds the infrastructure of the ABA Insurance Service, a representative from this service will contact you requesting insurance data. Providing such information will allow the ABA Insurance Service to craft tailor-made insurance programs for all ABA members. ABA believes this service will add considerable value to your membership.

### **Did You Know That...**

In the 2004 U.S. economy, motorcoach traveler and tourist demand generated total sales of more than \$44 billion, which generated employment for 758,000 people throughout the United States?

## **LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY ROUNDUP**

### **FMCSA Requires That Fires Be Logged As "Accidents"**

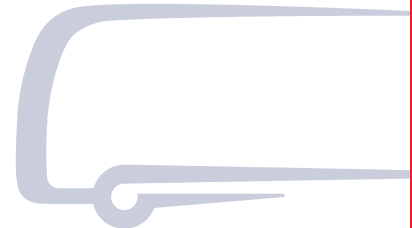
Any time there is a motorcoach-related fire where a person gets hurt or killed, or the vehicle has to be towed, carriers must log the fire as an "accident," the FMCSA ordered, effective July 24.

The new regulation is the product of a National Transportation Safety Board recommendation that the FMCSA establish guidelines for collecting and analyzing data on fires.

Recording a fire as an accident could skew carrier accident data in SafeStat — and ultimately could affect the carrier's safety rating. But the FMCSA says the worst possible effect would be that the carrier would have a compliance review — which would determine whether the fire was preventable or not.

Both the ABA and the Bus Industry Safety Council have stated their opposition to the FMCSA's approach to this issue, contending this will do nothing to help determine causes of bus fires. What it does do is place the blame for a fire solely on the motorcoach carrier. ABA and BISC will continue to follow up on this matter with both the FMCSA and the NTSB.

The regulatory guidance may be downloaded at the following link: <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/242/01jan20071800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2007/pdf/E7-14092.pdf>



THE  
LEAVITT  
GROUP

ABA forms  
strategic  
partnership with  
The Leavitt Group  
to offer ABA  
Insurance Service.

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## MARKETPLACE PACE

### Marketplace's Virginia Beach Registration Opens To Tidal Wave Of Interest

Marketplace registration opened on July 16 with a tidal wave of registrations with six months still to go. On the first week of Marketplace 2008 ABA registered more than 1,500 delegates, setting the pace for more delegates than ever taking advantage of Our New Wave of Business! Week One Stats:

- 1,189 Companies Registered
- More than 340 Operators (217 appointment-taking operators)
- More than 1,200 Travel Industry/Associates

All delegates have been sent an e-mail and fax of their confirmation including the link to access housing reservations. If you have not received your confirmation, please contact us at 800-283-2877 or [mkplonline@buses.org](mailto:mkplonline@buses.org).

Do you know others in the group travel industry who should be at Marketplace? What vendors do you use to help with your business? Let us know so we can make certain they are a part of Marketplace as a Buyer, Seller or exhibitor at the MARKET. Send us a referral at [meetingsdept@buses.org](mailto:meetingsdept@buses.org). This will help us make certain we have the right people at the right show that are right for growing your business.

### Insider Q&A – Virginia Beach Has Plenty Of Attractions Within Reach

*February may not be ideal sunbathing weather — but Virginia Beach has plenty to offer Marketplace attendees, from whale-watching and kayaking trips to spa visits and shopping.*

*ABA took a few minutes to speak to the Virginia Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau about the city's attributes.*

**ABA:** Is hosting Marketplace at Virginia Beach like having the Super Bowl?

**VA BEACH CVB:** Yes. It really is. We're thrilled. We just opened our new convention center in January of this year. This will be the first event using every inch of our building — all our ballroom space, all our exhibit space and all our meeting space at the same time.

We've had the building maxed out in certain areas, but never all at the same time. We're very excited. Plus, our director wanted one of our first big conventions to be a tourism-related convention.

**ABA:** Why?

**VA BEACH CVB:** We've always been a leisure market. This particular event brings us the big convention — but it also brings an increase in group tour business for years to come.

**ABA:** What would you recommend people do while they're in Virginia Beach?

Have your message read by the right people.

Reach out to the motorcoach, tour and travel industry audience in the ABA Insider.

Contact Brian Parker for information on sponsorship opportunities, (215) 321-9662 x41, [bparker@buses.org](mailto:bparker@buses.org).

**VA BEACH CVB:** We have a lot of events planned. We're going to have shopping tours in Virginia Beach both at the mall and at Hilltop, which has more small shops and cafes. And a trip to Edgar Casey Association of Research and Enlightenment — they have one of the best spa experiences too. We're also going to a new spa, called Flowering Almond Spa.

**ABA:** What sort of sights would you suggest? There's the Chrysler Museum of Art and Mount Trashmore (the former garbage dump covered in grass).

**VA BEACH CVB:** You can go on whale-watching tours featuring humpback whales. We had sightings in most of the ships last year. It's a fun, two-hour whale-watching boat trip. The views are nice. We're also going to have a fishing trip. And a kayaking experience.

**ABA:** What if they fall in the water? Won't it be cold?

**VA BEACH CVB:** You'd be amazed at how outdoorsy this place is. We are a temperate climate. It will probably be in the 50s when they're here. For the most part, people go kayaking, walking and biking in the winter.

**ABA:** What's the best part of having Marketplace in Virginia Beach?

**VA BEACH CVB:** We get a chance to showcase our city in the off-season. People are excited about coming. We have a lot of new hotels, new restaurants, new shops — and the new performing arts center will be open when they come. It's an exciting time to come to the city. Plus, this group is a lot of fun to host. They like to get out and experience your destination. I went with them in Grapevine. They want to get out — they don't just sit in their hotel rooms.

## Heavy High Vehicle Tax Return Can Be Filed Electronically

IRS officials have adopted a new policy allowing the Form 2290 (the Heavy High Vehicle Tax Return) to be the first excise return to be e-filed. Of course, paper forms are still permitted, including those reporting 25 or more vehicles.

### IN THE STATES

## The Peters Principle To Aid Rebuilding Of Storm-Ravaged Roads

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita literally ripped up roads in parts of Louisiana and east Texas.

Now roads that were damaged during natural disasters will be fixed. Transportation Secretary Mary E. Peters

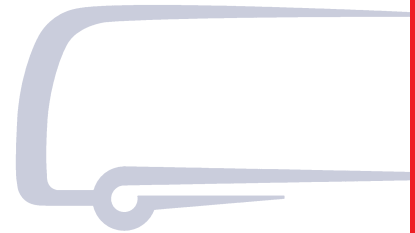
announced July 23 that \$871 million in emergency relief funds are now available to repair roads damaged by natural disasters.

Two-thirds of the money was released to 23 states to repair damage caused by hurricanes, flooding, earthquakes and winter storms.

There are 33 different types of disasters that qualify for funding. The package was signed into law by President Bush, and supplements the \$2.5 billion for Gulf Coast recovery efforts allocated in the 2006 Defense Appropriations Act.

More info about the emergency funds is available at:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/pressroom/fhwa0710.htm>.



Virginia Beach has plenty to offer Marketplace attendees.



Transportation Secretary  
Mary E. Peters

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**In the States**

*Continued*

Motor Coach Industries helps mark the Udall Foundation's 10th anniversary.

**Do you have experience in the motorcoach or minibus industry?**

Carey International Inc. has exciting management opportunity for individual with strong motorcoach background. Resp. include planning, coordination & maintenance of nationwide Service Provider Network to support company's industry-leading Events Div. Mgmt. exp., contracting & negotiation skills reqrd. Procurement background helpful. Knowledge of motorcoach industry essential.

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EOE. Visit us at [www.carey.com](http://www.carey.com)

**MCI Udall Legacy Tour Wraps Up Cross-Country Green Awareness Mission**

The Udall Legacy Tour completed its two-month, 26-city green motorcoach trip on August 4 in Tucson.

The Udall Foundation is a government agency dedicated to educating people about environmental policy. The MCI-built motorcoach featured on the tour can operate on up to 20 percent biodiesel and includes real-time particulate-matter emission monitors to ensure clean-air operations at all times. It is the first-ever green-certified motorcoach.

Udall's 8,606-mile journey began in Washington D.C., and 13 scholars have crossed the country helping replant trees in New Orleans, exploring six national parks, and helping EarthCorps remove invasive ivy from Seattle's Me-Kwa-Mooks Park.

The landmark motorcoach journey ended at the Morris K. Udall Foundation in Tucson August 4, with local dignitaries attending to hear the activists share stories of their experiences.

Motor Coach Industries worked with Lamoille Valley Transportation, a Morrisville-VT charter company, to make the eco-friendly coach.

The bus will next be used for an EPA energy efficiency tour.

For more information, go to [www.udall.gov](http://www.udall.gov).

**Wyoming Looks At Gas Tax Hike For Road Repair**

Worried about Wyoming's crumbling roads and highways, an interim state legislative committee recommended raising the gas tax 10 cents per gallon.

Right now, the tax is 14 cents/gallon. Eventually it would be 24 cents/gallon.

The plan is to gradually raise the tax over three years: In January 2009, it would be 17 cents; in January 2010, 20 cents; and in January 2011, 24 cents.

Gov. Dave Freudenthal has not stated a position on the legislation. But two years ago, when a state panel voted for a five-cent gas tax hike, Freudenthal opposed the measure.

**Evergreen State Accepts Miles Accrued Out-Of-State For Overtime Rate**

The Washington State Supreme Court refused to reconsider an overtime ruling that interstate truck and bus drivers are eligible for overtime based on weekly hours worked both in-state and out-of-state. The original ruling overturned 20 years of administrative precedent that limited overtime pay to drivers who worked more than 40 hours only within Washington. Drivers with significant contact within the state may also be eligible. Trips that offer per-mile pay should be calculated on a blended per-mile rate that includes anticipated overtime pay. For more information, review the Washington Administrative Code, Section 296-128-0 12. Go to <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac>.



## TRAVEL TRACKS

### Lake Tahoe Hopes For Elvis-Inspired Comeback

"The King" will be featured in Lake Tahoe's new national ad campaign about enjoying outdoor fun at Lake Tahoe. The goal of the effort is to bring tourism back to the scenic area recently devastated by wildfires.

The ad campaign will start this month and run through the fall on the Travel Channel, Discovery Channel, Discovery Science and Fox News. Other print and television ads will feature the Blue Man Group.

Elvis died on August 16, 1977, at his home in Memphis. Fans will be marking the 30th anniversary of his passing all month.

### Huddled Masses Yearning To Be Free... From Old Ferry?

The National Park Service is switching to a new ferry operator for the Statue of Liberty and the Ellis Island Immigration Museum in October. As a result, Circle Line-Statue of Liberty Ferry Inc. cannot sell any tickets after September 30.

If you buy any tickets between now and then, be sure to use them, because they won't be valid after the end of September. They aren't refundable or exchangeable. Questions? Call the National Park Service at (212) 363-3206.

## MEMBER SERVICES SHORTS

### ABA To Bring Operators Together To Share Ideas For Business Growth

ABA operators are invited to gather for this year's Peer-to-Peer Exchange Groups (aka "20 Groups" or "Performance Groups") held September 26 -27 at the Tyson's Corner Marriott just outside Washington, D.C.

This is a chance for you to network with non-competing operators, compare lessons learned with top-performing operators, and improve

your bottom line. We'll make sure to pair you in groups with people who are not your direct competitors — and everything you say will be completely confidential.

Best of all, the event is free.

### Motorcoach Marketer Gets Update For 2008

Thank you to all of the companies who updated their membership profile for the 2008 Motorcoach Marketer. Though the information has been pulled for this year's membership directory, keep your profile updated. These updates will be a part of the online research database, member lists, and other marketing tools. Each member company will receive a copy by the end of the year.

## EDUCATION

### Certified Travel Industry Specialist Ideal Source For Business Writing Course

Enroll in the CTIS Program and register for the Business Grammar and Writing course. Learn practical tips and techniques for successful business writing. This course provides basic understanding of grammatical relationships rather than mere memorization of rules. Acquire skills to better target your audience and establish positive communications with your clients. Enhance your writing skills through exercises and letters that are persuasive, controversial or just routine correspondence styles. Upon completion, you will have a portfolio of assignments for reference to gain greater confidence and proficiency in both your business and personal correspondence. The Business Grammar and Writing course begins September 1 and ends October 30, 2007. For CTIS Program information: [http://www.buses.org/meetings\\_events\\_and\\_education/Education/Certified\\_Travel\\_Industry\\_Specialist/](http://www.buses.org/meetings_events_and_education/Education/Certified_Travel_Industry_Specialist/)



Lake Tahoe is using Elvis to bring tourists back to enjoy its scenic splendor.

ABA operators are invited to network for business growth on September 26-27 at the Tyson's Corner Marriott.

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## CHARTER NOTICES

- **Monongalia County Urban Mass Transit Authority (MCUMTA)**, Morgantown, WV. Submissions due by August 12.
- **Housatonic Area Regional Transit District (HART)**, Danbury, CT. Submissions due August 16.
- **Roscommon County Transportation Authority**, Prudenville, MI. Submissions due by August 20.
- **River Valley Transit**, Williamsport, PA. Submissions due by August 31.
- **Laredo Transit Management (El Metro)**, Laredo, TX. Submissions due by September 4.
- **Monroe County Public Transportation (MCPT)**, Woodsfield, OH. Submissions due by September 21.

# ABAInsider

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## PENDING OPERATOR MEMBERS

**Elite Limousines Of Atlanta LLC**  
 Atlanta, GA  
 Mike Kersten, General Partner

**Karst Stage**  
 Bozeman, MT  
 Dan Martin, General Manager

**Recreation Adventure Tours**  
 Oklahoma City, OK  
 Keith Butler, Owner/President

## NEW MEMBERS

**US Air Ambulance**  
 Clifton Carothers, C.E.O.  
 5919 Approach Road  
 Sarasota, FL 34238  
 PH 800-633-5384, FAX 888-633-5384

**Butler County Tourism & Convention Bureau**  
 Jack Cohen, Executive Director  
 310 E. Grandview Ave.  
 Zelenople, PA 16063  
 PH 724-234-4619, FAX 724-234-4643

**Colony IV by the Sea Motel**  
 Joe Cowling, General Manager  
 405 S. Virginia Dare Trail / P.O. Box 287  
 Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948  
 PH 252-441-5581, FAX 252-441-1602

**Comfort Inn North Oceanfront**  
 Jackie Szymanski, General Manager  
 P.O. Box 3427/401 N. Virginia Dare Trail  
 Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948  
 PH 252-480-2600, FAX 252-480-2873

**Cumbres Toltec Scenic Railroad**  
 Gayle Martinez, Marketing Director  
 P.O. Box 1057  
 Chama, NM 87520  
 PH 505-209-0218, FAX 505-756-2694

**Eagan Convention & Visitors Bureau**  
 Denise Olsen, Tourism Sales Director  
 1501 Central Parkway  
 Eagan, MN 55121  
 PH 651-675-5546, FAX 651-675-5545

**Fontana Village Resort**  
 Toni Crisp, Director of Sales  
 P.O. Box 68 / Highway 28 N.  
 Fontana Dam, NC 28733  
 PH 828-498-2211, FAX 828-498-2209

**Grove City Area Visitors & Convention Bureau**  
 James Hale, Executive Director  
 4052 Broadway  
 Grove City, OH 43123  
 PH 614-539-8747, FAX 614-539-8762

**Hotel Grand Pacific**  
 Jaime Reilly, Sales Manager  
 463 Belleville St.  
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**Hyatt Hotels & Resorts, Hyatt Place, Hyatt Summerfield Suites**  
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 9805 Q St.  
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**Island Resort & Casino**  
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**J.M. Hospitality Inc.**  
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 8330 Woodbine Ave.  
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 Markham, ON L3R 2N8 Canada  
 PH 905-477-6077, FAX 905-477-9664

**Johnston County Visitors Bureau**  
 Angie Abrams, Sales Manager  
 1535-A Booker Dairy Road  
 Smithfield, NC 27577  
 PH 919-989-8687, FAX 919-989-6295

**Lexington & the Rockbridge Area Tourism Development**  
 Jean Clark, Director  
 106 E. Washington St.  
 Lexington, VA 24450  
 PH 540-463-3777, FAX 540-463-1105

**The Lighthouse Inn**  
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 One Lighthouse Road  
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**Lodging Unlimited Inc.**  
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 Millersville, MD 21108  
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**Mount Airy Casino Resort**  
 Pat Stinson, Sales Manager  
 44 Woodland Road  
 Mount Pocono, PA 18344  
 PH 570-243-4809, FAX 570-243-4899

**O. Winston Link Museum**  
 Mary Clemons, Marketing Manager  
 101 Shenandoah Ave., N.E.  
 Roanoke, VA 24016  
 PH 540-982-5465, FAX 540-982-5683

**Palace Hotel**  
 Khozem Kharawalla, Director of Sales & Marketing  
 3600 Tonnelle Ave.  
 North Bergen, NJ 07047  
 PH 201-866-0400, FAX 201-866-6007

**Pechanga Resort & Casino**  
 Patty Donovan, Leisure Sales  
 45000 Pechanga Parkway  
 Temecula, CA 92592  
 PH 951-770-8604, FAX 951-770-2419

**Ponca City Tourism**  
 Mary Beth Moore, Tourism Coordinator  
 420 E. Grand Ave.  
 Ponca City, OK 74602  
 PH 580-765-4400, FAX 580-765-2798

**Quebec City International Festival of Military Bands**  
 Marie-Eve Jacob, Marketing Coordinator  
 51, rue des Jardins, bureau 300  
 Quebec City, QC G1R 4L6 Canada  
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**The Randy Parton Theatre**  
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 500 Carolina Crossroads Pkwy.  
 Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870  
 PH 252-536-5700, FAX 252-536-5719

**The Wilder Hotel Group of MD, NJ, & PA**  
 Vicki Blatt, Corporate Director of Sales & Marketing  
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 Paramus, NJ 07652  
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**Virginia Civil War Trails**  
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