



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OMNIBUS SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

**JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2010**

**RUN 01-2010**

Welcome to another issue of The Green Pennant Special, the official publication of The Omnibus Society of America.

Through this publication we hope to keep our readers informed of events happening in the transit industry in Chicago and other cities in the United States.

Visit the Omnibus Society of America website at "[www.osabus.com](http://www.osabus.com)". At [osabus.com](http://osabus.com) we will be posting upcoming fan trips and meetings information, as well as membership information.

Please visit our site when you have a chance and give us your opinions and comments.

## • FEBRUARY MEETING

The February meeting of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on February 5, 2010, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital, 2751 W. Winona Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. The meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

Our program for the evening will be a slide presentation by William Shapotkin.

## • 2010 membership dues

OSA is now accepting dues for the year 2010. This notice only applies to members that are paying the yearly rate of \$30.00. A membership renewal is enclosed with this copy of Green Pennant.

## South Side train service: Commuters want equal access to Metra's Electric stops and the South Shore Line

**South Shore's trains to Chicago aren't allowed to pick up passengers in the city**

By Richard Wronski Tribune reporter

South Side commuters know from experience that they can board Metra's Electric District trains but not those of the South Shore Line, even though both lines use the same tracks and stop at some of the same stations.

Under a peculiarity of Chicago's mass-transit system, inbound South Shore trains aren't allowed to pick up passengers -- a long-standing policy that recently drew fire from activists who see it as an example of a disparity in public transportation.

Outsiders Organized for Unity and Liberation (SOUL) contends that the South Side has the highest population

density in the city but the longest commute times because it is underserved by mass transit.

One answer, they say, is to get equal access to both Metra Electric and South Shore trains, which would give people more options in getting to jobs and schools.

SOUL backs legislation introduced by state Sen. Kwame Raoul, D-Hyde Park, that would require commuter rail trains to stop and allow passengers to board and exit at all commuter rail stations.

The group believes that the South Shore's policy of not picking up passengers in Chicago on inbound trains is discriminatory.

"SOUL is deeply concerned about the South Shore Line's practice of refusing to pick up passengers on the South Side on westbound (inbound) trains and refusing to drop off passengers on the South Side on eastbound trains," said SOUL's Linda Thisted in a letter to Raoul.

Raoul agrees, saying South Siders often suspect that residents of Indiana and the south suburbs have better access to downtown and its jobs than they do.

"It's got to be frustrating to watch people from another state commute to your downtown area easier than you can, when you are paying taxes in the state," Raoul said.

South Shore and Metra officials insist that isn't the case. The Indiana-based South Shore has operated on the Electric District tracks for decades in an agreement with Metra.

Under its lease, South Shore trains westbound from Gary or Michigan City, Ind., for example, are allowed to drop off passengers at a few Chicago stations. But the line cannot pick up riders at these stations and bring them to Van Buren or Millennium stations, since that would be considered stealing Metra's customers.

"Metra doesn't want the South Shore to pick up what would normally be their fares," said Gerald Hanas, general manager of the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, which operates the South Shore.

Hanas acknowledges that people are often puzzled when told by South Shore conductors that they cannot board, especially now that the South Shore has bi-level cars that look like Metra's.



Metra points out that it has a different fare system than the South Shore, and that if it were to allow South Shore trains to stop at all its stations, it would affect the rest of Metra's schedule, especially its express trains.

The Electric District has about 170 daily trains, more than any other Metra line.

"If (South Shore) trains were to start stopping at all our stations, our trains would start stacking up," Metra spokeswoman Meg Reile said.

Both the South Shore and Metra would agree to discuss the issue of additional service, officials say.

Raoul said that was the point of his legislation, but he acknowledged that the bill, as written, would have slim chance of passage. Its language, he said, would have the unintended consequence of forcing Metra to halt all express trains on every one of its lines.

The bill "requires that commuter rail trains stop and allow passengers to board and exit at all commuter rail stations."

Although his legislation is flawed, Raoul said, it managed to catch the attention of Metra and served to "stimulate the discussion."

"It woke them up," Raoul said. "The question isn't whether these particular trains should be stopping."

"The ultimate question is whether we can get the most efficient access to transportation as supported by taxpayers' dollars."

One solution might come from the Regional Transportation Authority, which recently approved a \$450,000 study to seek ways to improve transportation and access to jobs as well as spur economic activity on the South Side.

The South Lakefront Corridor Transit Study will be conducted by the Chicago Department of Transportation and will recommend one or two projects that could be candidates for federal transportation funding.

SOUL's Thisted said her group welcomes that study.

"That was our big win," she said.

[rwrnski@tribune.com](mailto:rwrnski@tribune.com)

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## **Lawsuit claims racial bias in CTA, Metra funding**

CTA riders have long grumbled about getting a raw deal with high fares and skimpy service, and a federal lawsuit filed Wednesday argues that the complaint is not just

real but fueled by policies that favor white commuters over blacks and Hispanics.

At stake is more than \$1 billion in tax dollars split each year among the CTA and the suburban-based commuter railroad and bus lines, Metra and Pace.

Most of the aid goes to the CTA, which serves a far larger share of minority riders than Metra and Pace. But the suit contends that cut is still too low and seeks to remedy things by shifting resources away from the suburban transit agencies. It blames chronic racism for shortchanging the CTA, disproportionately harming black and Hispanic riders.

A controversial contention, to be sure, and one that some experts think is legally shaky. Even so, the lawsuit, filed by public-interest lawyers, serves to highlight long-standing tensions over how to divvy scarce transit resources in an equitable and smart way among agencies that cater to very different customer bases.

The split of sales tax and state subsidies targeted to Chicago-area mass-transit systems over the last 26 years has "grossly and disparately favored white mass-transit riders by over-funding Metra," alleged the proposed class-action lawsuit, filed on behalf of Hispanic and black CTA passengers.

The allegation was swiftly rejected by Metra. Judy Pardonnet, a spokeswoman for the agency, said it "categorically denies any type of racial discrimination" and questions the validity of ridership statistics cited in the lawsuit. "From our preliminary review, there's a lot of information stated in the lawsuit that's not true," Pardonnet said.

CTA officials have lobbied state lawmakers for years to gain a bigger share of the mass-transit funding pot but have never invoked discrimination as an argument. The lawsuit, on the other hand, frames the CTA's chronic funding woes in starkly racial terms while seeking to remedy them by forcing a shift of public resources away from Metra and Pace.

All of this is playing out at a time when the state treasury is mired in a record sea of red ink that has left officials struggling to simply keep funding commitments at existing levels.

Spearheading the suit are lawyers from a civil-rights law clinic at Chicago-Kent College of Law and the Loop firm of Futterman Howard Ashley Watkins & Weltman, which specializes in civil-rights litigation.

Futterman associate Rafael Vargas said the idea for the suit was his and grew out of a thesis he wrote four years ago while a law student at Kent that compared "transit equity" in Chicago to other U.S. cities. Vargas said he did not consult CTA officials about the lawsuit.



Quick to embrace its central thesis was U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., a Chicago Democrat, who said the CTA carries 80 percent of all regional transit riders but Metra gets more capital and operating funding per rider from the state.

"For too long, minority communities have been left out in the cold while services to affluent communities received more than their fair share of new buses, trains and tracks," Jackson said in a statement.

Even if provable, that may not be enough to pass legal muster, said Andrew Koppelman, a constitutional scholar at the Northwestern University Law School. Koppelman said the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that laws that have uneven impacts on blacks and whites are not unconstitutional as long as they don't make clear distinctions on the basis of race.

"Politically, it is quite powerful," Koppelman said of the racism argument laid out in the lawsuit. "But as a legal argument, it's a loser."

At a minimum, the lawsuit may serve to focus fresh attention on the delicate geographic and political balancing act that has tied the financial fortunes of the three transit agencies together for decades under the umbrella of the Regional Transportation Authority.

The RTA, approved in 1974, was initially a tough sell to suburbanites who feared the increased sales taxes they would have to pay would go largely to prop up a financially ailing CTA system that few of them used.

Ironically, some black community leaders also expressed early qualms about the RTA plan because it lacked guarantees of adequate funding for suburban transit projects that would make it easier for minorities to get to jobs outside the city.

The suit attempts to draw a connection between alleged funding inequalities at the transit agencies and the fractious "Council Wars" era in Chicago that began in 1983 with the election of the city's first African-American mayor, Harold Washington.

Racial tensions in the council spilled over to the legislature, which invoked the first in a series of changes in the funding formula for transit that repeatedly shrunk CTA's share, the suit said. Ever since, the suit said, the CTA has been unable to invest in "much-needed" rail service extensions into minority neighborhoods, including extension of the Red Line.

At the same time, the suit said the RTA has not required Metra to build stations in minority neighborhoods. "Instead, Metra's trains whiz past these communities as if they do not exist," the suit said. "They do so for a purely racial reason -- they do not want their white suburban customers to have to mingle with poor minorities."

The RTA declined to comment on the lawsuit.

A quick sampling of CTA riders turned up many who expressed frustration about service and fares but few ready to blame it on racism.

"That would be hard to prove," said Porfirio Castro, 37, of the Logan Square neighborhood. If Metra gets an outsize share of money compared with its ridership it's because it covers a much bigger geographic area, Castro said.

One CTA regular who disagrees with that assessment is Manuel Munguia, one of the named plaintiffs in the lawsuit.

"This is about people's livelihoods," Munguia, a Hispanic resident of the South Chicago neighborhood, said in a statement. "It's really about getting the access we deserve, to education, to good jobs and, ultimately, to opportunity and prosperity. The defendants need to acknowledge that and make this right."

The other plaintiff, Dorothy McGhee, an African-American who lives in Bronzeville, said that reductions in CTA routes in her area "have become commonplace over the years."

"Despite paying my fair share, I have to leave my home hours in advance to reach my children's schools, my job or other activities," she said in a statement. "Even then, there is no guarantee that I will arrive at my destination on time. My older children are forced to ride overcrowded buses to get back and forth to school."

Tribune reporters Jon Hilkevitch and Angie Leventis Lourgos contributed to this report.

--Bob Secter and Richard Wronski

## **PACE BOARD FINALIZES COST REDUCTION PLAN**

December 9, 2009 6:00:00 PM  
Media Release Office: (847) 228-4295  
Contact: Patrick Wilmot (847) 228-4295

Numerous routes saved from proposed elimination through restructuring, use of capital funding

Facing a projected \$6.5 million budget shortfall for 2010, the Pace Board of Directors approved a balanced budget in November without specifically outlining how the shortfall would be resolved. The Board directed staff to continue discussions with stakeholders and to review alternatives to service reductions that would have affected 51 bus routes in the Pace service area. A new plan, approved by the Board at their December meeting, preserves service on 27 of the 51 routes, and relying on restructuring of routes to improve productivity and an infusion of capital funding to cover operating costs.



"While we weren't able to save all of the routes proposed for elimination, we feel confident that every effort was made to preserve everything that we could, and further mitigate the impacts for as many riders as possible," said Pace Chairman of the Board Richard Kwasneski. Of the 24 routes that remain slated for elimination, nine are losing only Saturday and/or Sunday service and their weekday service will be unaffected. The 24 affected by elimination were selected because they have low ridership, particularly relative to the cost of operation. All eliminations and reductions are to be effective February 7, 2010.

In addition to the \$1.5 million of service eliminations/reductions, Pace will be redirecting \$2.3 million of capital funding to cover the cost of operation of the 27 routes preserved from the original list of eliminations and reductions. Finally, Pace has outlined \$2.7 million of non-service related cost reductions that are unchanged from the proposed budget. These include five unpaid furlough days for all nonunion employees, increased nonunion employee healthcare contributions, and reductions to the budgets for marketing, fuel, and certain types of insurance.

"The impacts of the current economic crisis are the direct cause of the service reductions that remain," said Kwasneski. "If the economy hadn't collapsed, we would be expanding service right now instead of going through reductions and eliminations. Sales tax receipts are \$23 million below what was projected at the beginning of 2008 when new transit funding was approved by the General Assembly."

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#### Pace Suburban Bus

#### 2010 Route Reduction/Elimination Plan

Implementation Date: February 7, 2010

Routes eliminated - 15

451 Southeast Homewood

452 Northeast Homewood

460 Hazel Crest

535 Fox Valley Shuttle

637 Wood Dale – Rosemont CTA

643/645 NW Elmhurst – Elmhurst Industrial

654 South Glen Ellyn

657 Bloomingdale/Glendale Heights

690 Arlington Heights Road

750 Country Club Hills

753 Matteson

767 Congress/Douglas – Prairie Stone

781 North Naperville Office Complex

1012 Evergreen Park – Prairie Stone

Weekend service eliminated - 9

209 Busse Highway (Sunday ONLY – Saturday service remains)

234 Wheeling – Des Plaines (Saturday)

304 Cicero – LaGrange (Saturday and Sunday)

320 Madison Street (Saturday)

422 Linden CTA – Glenview – Northbrook Court (Saturday)

423 Linden CTA – The Glen – Harlem CTA (Saturday)

528 Aurora Trans. Ctr. – Rush Copley Medical (Saturday)

715 Central DuPage (Saturday)

747 DuPage Connection (Saturday)

Service reduced - 9

210 Lincoln Avenue

326 West Irving Park

362 Park Forest

685 Naperville – West Wind Estates

696 Woodfield – Arlington Heights – Randhurst

699 Palatine – Woodfield – Elk Grove

747 DuPage Connection

821 Woodridge – Belmont

822 Woodridge – Lisle

Service remains unchanged (service day proposed to be affected, where applicable) - 18

208 Golf Road (Sunday)

223 Elk Grove – Rosemont CTA (Sunday)

302 Ogden/Stanley (Saturday)

315 Austin/Ridgeland (Saturday)

348 138th St. Riverdale Corridor (Saturday)

366 Park Forest – Chicago Heights (Sunday)

367 University Park (Saturday)  
 529 Randall Road – 5th Street (Saturday)  
 16 The Chancellory Connection  
 626 Skokie Valley Limited  
 661 Southwest Westmont  
 668 Burr Ridge – Hinsdale  
 669 Western Springs – Indian Head Park  
 676 Naperville – Cress Creek  
 687 Naperville – Farmstead  
 689 Naperville – Hobson Village  
 711 Wheaton – Addison  
 757 Northwest Connection

## Harold Geissenheimer passes

Harold Geissenheimer passed away in his sleep at 0545 Thursday, January 7, 2010 at the Gino Merli Veterans Home in Scranton, Pa.



## Valparaiso's bus to Chicago to stop at Toll Road

December 24, 2009  
 BY JAMES D. WOLF JR., POST-TRIBUNE  
 CORRESPONDENT

VALPARAISO -- More changes are coming for the city's bus line into Chicago.

The most significant is the addition of a stop north of the city, near the intersection of Indiana 49 and the Indiana Toll Road.

The city hopes to start a 90-day trial on Jan. 25, having the 7:15 a.m. bus make a five-minute pickup stop at the Toll Road's carpool lot.

"I've had many requests from folks from Valparaiso who live on the north side of town, as well as folks from Chesterton," Assistant City Planner and ChicaGo Dash manager Tyler Kent said at Wednesday's Board of Works and Safety meeting.

Kent is still talking to Toll Road officials, who are concerned about lot overcrowding, Kent said.

Redevelopment Commission Director Stu Summers said the city is hoping for a 20 percent increase in ridership.

Valparaiso also is talking with Hobart about a possible stop there.

Monthly pass riders also will be eligible for reimbursement when they have to leave the city early, Tyler said.

The monthly pass users would get up to 12 vouchers a year, similar to the Illinois PACE plan.

The goal is to make public transportation attractive and customers have expressed appreciation on the flexibility of times and stops, Kent said.

Mayor Jon Costas said, "we've got to keep working it."

Although the job market is slow even in the city, Costas foresees more of a need for the bus service in the next two or three years.

Other changes include:

- \* The earliest return bus leaving the city later, at 4:10 p.m. rather than 3:40 p.m. This will also be instituted as a 90-day trial.
- \* The last Saturday bus trip to Chicago will be Saturday, just after Christmas. The city will consider resuming the service in spring.
- \* The Chicago stop at Financial and Van Buren will be moved during construction to Van Buren and Congress.

Kent also unveiled two possible design plans for the new Dash buses, although Board of Works members wanted changes that would make the name Valparaiso more prominent on either design.

Board member Chuck Williams said, "That's what you're marketing, that you can go from Valparaiso to Chicago."

**01-06-10 Regional Bus Authority**



## Seeks Public Input On Service Needs

Tuesday, January 5, 2010 3:10 PM CST

The public is invited to share their needs and opinions regarding bus service in and around the City of Hammond during a series of public input sessions. The Regional Bus Authority (RBA) assumes responsibility for bus service in Hammond on January 1, and a new service contract is required by July 1st 2010. These first three input sessions will help determine the scope of the new services to be provided for the second half of 2010.

Three sessions have been scheduled and more are being finalized. Scheduled sessions are:

- Jan. 14 from 10 am until 12 pm at the Hammond Public Library Community Room, 564 State St.
- Jan. 21 from 10 am until 12 pm at Purdue University Calumet, Calumet Conference Center, 2300- 173rd St
- Jan. 28 from 2 until 4 pm at Calumet College of St. Joseph, Room 200, 2400 New York Ave., Whiting

Persons who plan to attend and need special accommodations are asked to call 219-762-4767 at least 48 hours before the meeting. Individuals with hearing or communication impairments may call the Indiana Relay 711 system for assistance.

## Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority Purchases New NABI Buses

**Anniston, AL** (November 24, 2009) – Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA) is taking progressive steps toward improved public transportation in Birmingham. The agency recently purchased new compressed natural gas (CNG) powered buses from North American Bus Industries. The purchase of the buses was made possible by a grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The new BJCTA fleet of North American Bus Industries LFW model buses will be equipped with smooth and dependable wheelchair ramps, security cameras, audible annunciation systems, and bicycle racks.

The new buses not only look and perform better and more efficiently, but will be used to reveal the exciting new image of BJCTA. The buses have a dramatic new paint design and will be equipped with the newest technologies for location, announcements, and maintenance. According to William Copling, Interim Executive Director at BJCTA, "The buses help to replace an aging fleet and will be equipped with state of the art automatic systems to assist passengers and the authority with data collection. The acquisition of these new heavy duty buses is part of our commitment to provide the citizens of the Birmingham area with

improved transit service and to continued development of a system that better meets the needs of our passengers."

Birmingham's new buses are also equipped with CNG power plants. "These new CNG buses demonstrate Birmingham's continued dedication to the environment while at the same time allowing them to operate with a lower cost domestically produced fuel," according to Chris Dabbs, NABI's Regional Sales Manager. "The BJCTA staff took a very methodical approach to this procurement and the passengers in Birmingham will realize a long term benefit as a result of this professional and detailed process," added Dabbs.

Birmingham has a history of transit dating back over 100 years and Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority currently now operates a fleet of over 120 fixed route and paratransit vehicles, covering a service area of more than 200 square miles.

## Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus Purchases 11 Articulated Buses for Rapid Blue Lines

- Alternative fueled CNG buses to be purchased from North American Bus Industries, with an option to buy 10 additional buses in the future.
- Transit agency plans to use longer, higher capacity buses on popular Rapid 7 and Rapid 3 bus rapid transit (BRT) lines.

**SANTA MONICA, Calif.** – October 20, 2009 –

The Big Blue Bus has announced that 11 new flexible 60-foot articulated buses will be joining its fleet starting in 2011, allowing the transit agency to add a new level of expanded service to the public.

A provision in the contract allows for the option to purchase an additional 10 buses as funding becomes available in the future. Three of the new buses are being purchased with funds from the federal government's economic stimulus package.

The articulated buses will first be introduced on the popular Rapid 7 bus rapid transit (BRT) line, which is one of the agency's busiest routes. The Rapid 3 line will also receive new buses after the initial deployment on Rapid 7 is complete. The new cleaner burning compressed natural gas buses will replace some of the older diesel buses in the fleet, in keeping with the city's commitment to sustainability.

The new NABI articulated models include interior features for maximum comfort and convenience for all passengers, including seniors and those with disabilities. Each bus has 53 seats instead of the usual 40, and runs on clean compressed natural gas, which is 77 percent cleaner burning than diesel fuel.

"These new NABI articulated Rapid Blue buses will not only be quick, beautiful and comfortable, but they're



fueled by natural gas, which will reduce our carbon footprint and help keep the air cleaner," said Stephanie Negriff, director of transit services for the Big Blue Bus.

"We're excited to add these to our busy Rapid lines because they have the latest features people want, and they'll make riding more comfortable and less crowded, which will hopefully inspire people to take public transit more often," she said.

According to NABI Senior Vice President Joe Gibson, BRT vehicles offer cities a less complicated and more affordable way to implement an efficient, more environmentally friendly transit system in their communities than other solutions.

"NABI's 60-foot BRT vehicle is a rubber-tire solution to light rail," said Gibson. "It offers many of the same amenities and features of rail, but with the flexibility afforded to bus route deployment," he said.

"It also uses the latest in transit-signal technology, so it helps passengers get to their destinations quicker, oftentimes much faster than driving a car along the same stretch of road," he said.

Negriff noted that using the new CNG powered buses will allow the Big Blue Bus to eliminate tons of emissions from entering the atmosphere throughout the operating life of the buses, while also lowering the transit agency's operating costs.

The Big Blue Bus currently operates a fleet of over 200 alternative fueled vehicles, carrying over 20 million passengers a year around a 52-square mile service area of Los Angeles County. The agency, nationally known for its commitment to sustainable transit equipment and technologies, recently opened a new \$60 million eco-maintenance facility that includes three dedicated bays to service the new articulated models.

The Big Blue Bus contract with NABI contains provisions enabling the transit agency to purchase additional 60-foot BRT's in subsequent years, in keeping with anticipated expansion of the transit agency's Rapid Blue service.

## **SamTrans rolls out new buses with sleeker look, more features**

By Mike Rosenberg

San Mateo County Times

Posted: 12/28/2009 06:16:20 PM PST

Updated: 12/28/2009 07:51:26 PM PST

There is a strikingly new, modern look to buses in San Mateo County.

SamTrans has begun rolling out 135 new buses that feature a sleeker design, automatic rear doors and cleaner engines. The first ones hit the road two weeks ago.

The \$61.6 million project the agency launched nearly three years ago will result in the replacement of one-third of the SamTrans fleet. The 137 old vehicles that will be retired from service first rolled onto the streets in 1993.

The agency used \$9.7 million from its half-cent sales tax and \$1.5 million from local bridge toll revenues and received \$50.2 million in federal grants for the buses. SamTrans has faced budget problems that have led to higher fares and fewer routes, but spokeswoman Christine Dunn said the money used was earmarked for capital improvements and could not be used to stave off operational cuts.

It will be hard for motorists and pedestrians to miss the new buses. The signature red, white and blue color scheme remains, but the new vehicles are more colorful than the old, mostly white buses, and the colors swirl in a thick, curving motion, instead in straight, skinny lines. Also, the front of the new buses is curved instead of having a boxlike design.

And interior looks and feels different. The stanchions are yellow, the seats are upholstered with cloth, digital video recorders are installed for safety purposes and the lights are LED. There also are overhead sensors that automatically open the rear door at stops, and the wheelchair ramp incline is less steep.

The new buses also meet 2009 California Air Resources Board standards. They use ultralow sulfur diesel fuel, emitting less nitrogen oxide and particulate matter. Dunn said the vehicles should save the agency money on operating costs, but it is not known by how much.

Most of the buses will be either 40 or 35 feet long, but four 29-foot buses will be used along Route 17. The shorter buses will allow drivers to navigate more easily on narrow coastal roads, Dunn said.

Dunn said each bus was custom-made by Hayward-based manufacturer Gillig. Public transit buses typically are replaced every 12 years, although the agency made some improvements to the old fleet to extend buses' lives a few years. She said the fleet's other buses do not need replacing.

Mike Rosenberg covers San Mateo, Burlingame, Belmont and transportation. Reach him at 650-348-4324.

## **Peter Pan Bus Lines updates look, takes first 10 of 30 new MCI coaches Ultramodern amenities lure new generation of riders**

**SCHAUMBURG, IL — December 15, 2009** — Staying true to the character that inspired its name, Peter Pan Bus Lines refuses to age. The company is rebranding its image, staying current with new equipment and more ways for passengers to stay connected. The new image



debuts with the delivery of the first 10 of 30 MCI coaches. The coaches, a mix of MCI® J4500 and MCI® D4505 models, showcase Peter Pan's new exterior graphic and new signature interior featuring customized fabric on seats with three-point seat belts, power outlets, Wi-Fi connectivity and wide flat-screen video monitors. The coaches feature clean-diesel engine technology for lower emissions as mandated by the EPA along with MCI's safety and performance package of Electronic Stability Control, SmartWave® tire pressure monitoring and Amerex fire suppression system, standard on new MCI models.



MCI, which has been serving Peter Pan since 1974 and delivered its very first J4500 to the company in 2001, will complete delivery of all 30 coaches by May. Peter Pan, which operates a fleet of 250 coaches with an average age of six and half years, plans to update its fleet with the new graphics and interior updates over the few next years.

"This is a huge departure for us," said Bruce Westcott, vice president of business development for Peter Pan Enterprises. "Peter Pan understands that it needs to be flexible and change with the times. We're listening to our customers. They want comfort and amenities, and we want an identity and a message that reflects all of the virtues of motor coach travel."

The company reviewed 15 versions of the coach graphics, narrowing them down to three that were then tested with key customers. "Their response to our new look was overwhelmingly favorable," said Westcott. Customer input also determined interior changes. Peter Pan selected a sculpted seat and an earthy-colored custom woven fabric (made exclusively for Peter Pan) that gives the interior cabin a more modern flair.

Change in ridership demographics is also driving Peter Pan's rebranding. Over Thanksgiving weekend, Peter Pan ridership reached 140,000 passengers, mostly students and professionals. "Our rebranding is about communicating that motor coach travel is green and a much nicer experience than what might be expected," said Westcott. "The new buses will be going on a road show to colleges and corporate customers and we will

be using a multimedia approach to publicize the new look, amenities and safety features."

"MCI always comes through for us," said Peter A. Picknelly, president. "They have the flexibility, responsiveness and resources to create a coach for us the way we want it, and with quality that we expect to stand the test of time."

"We appreciate our longstanding relationship with Peter Pan, and the way they count on MCI models for looks, amenities and dependability," said Tom Sorrells, MCI president and CEO. "We're very gratified to have once again worked so closely with their key staff to fulfill the requirements of their trend-setting initiatives."

MCI plans to showcase Peter Pan's new J4500 at the ABA Marketplace, January 15 through January 19, at Gaylord National Harbor, Maryland. The MCI J4500 is ranked as the most popular coach on the road in the U.S. and Canada for the past six years. The ABA event serves to link buyers and sellers of travel and is billed as the premier business event for the group-travel industry.

## MTC Limousine's three new MCI® D4505 coaches help to curb carbon footprints

**SCHAUMBURG, IL — December 9, 2009** — Expanding their commitment to provide their clients with the most sustainable, fuel efficient "green" fleet possible, MTC Limousine & Corporate Coach, Inc., headquartered in Bedford Hills, New York, has upgraded its corporate motor coach fleet with new MCI D4505 coaches powered by clean-diesel engine technology.



"MCI delivers an exceptional product, and we are resolute in our decision to support our clients' sustainability initiatives," said Joe Brunetto, MTC Vice President of fleet and technology. "Today, the majority of our corporate clients have environmental policies in place, and as their ground transportation supplier, it's important for us to offer vehicles that provide them the opportunity to reduce the emissions their programs and travel are creating."



The new MCI D4505s feature the engine technology currently mandated by the EPA and replace MTC Limousine's older MCI models. As a partner in the EPA Climate Leader program, MTC Limousine has committed to reduce emissions by 40 percent by 2016. "This new equipment is an exceptionally good fit — combining a lower footprint with the amenities our customers have come to expect — we don't believe that efficiency and comfort should be mutually exclusive," said Brunetto.

Passenger amenities on MTC Limousine's new coaches include plush seats with overhead reading lights, individual airflow controls, aircraft quality enclosed overhead storage for luggage, and a state-of-the-art entertainment system with six flat-screen monitors. New exterior graphics designed by MTC promotes the company's environmental focus.

These new MCI vehicles are part of the increasingly efficient MTC Limousine fleet. As the first ground transportation company to join the Climate Leaders, an industry-government partnership that works with companies to develop comprehensive climate change strategies, and as a founding member of the Limousine Environmental Action Partnership (LEAP), MTC Limousine fully supports new vehicle technology development to make a real difference in fuel costs, emissions, and service. MTC Limousine's fleet now includes a variety of hybrid, biofuel, compressed natural gas and other alternatively fueled vehicles. "We are looking to have the majority of our fleet converted to more efficient vehicles with lower emissions in 2010," said Brunetto.

### Calculating carbon savings

As a supplemental service, MTC provides customers with detailed emissions tracking information that is audited and verified for accuracy and reliability. "We're not just talking about 'sustainability', we are delivering better, lower emission options today and are hard at work testing new technologies as they come into the marketplace. The reality is that carbon reporting and Cap & Trade is going to force everyone to change how we do things," said Brunetto. "Our customers don't have to worry about accounting for the indirect emissions they generate from ground transportation, because we've got them covered."

MTC Limousine launched in 1986 as a provider of transportation for executive travel and has grown into an international provider of executive sedan, limousine and motor coach transportation. To learn more, visit [www.mtclimo.com](http://www.mtclimo.com).

## Anchor Trailways adds more MCI® D4505 coaches to fleet with federal funds Expands bus service to reach more riders

**SCHAUMBURG, IL — November 13, 2009** — Providing transportation to underserved communities is proving successful for Nashville's Anchor Trailways. The operator, which has garnered significant capital-assistance from 5311(f) funding, has taken delivery of three MCI D4505s that went into service in July and has ordered another two for spring delivery. The new coaches are in addition to the two D4505 coaches Anchor Trailways acquired at the beginning of the year.

The three D4505s serve Anchor's new A.T. Runner service between Florence, Alabama, and Nashville, making 12 scheduled stops in all. Beyond offering much-needed transportation and intermodal connections, the coaches are equipped with satellite television, 110-volt outlets and wireless Internet. "Passengers traveling from Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, to the Nashville Airport can work on their laptops," says Jared Stancil, vice president and nephew to the company's founder. Stancil says the high-tech ride is also popular with students from universities and colleges along the route, who want to travel to Nashville or to nearby airports.



Anchor's next A.T. Runner route will link Memphis and Nashville via Paris and Union City, both smaller towns in Tennessee. "We joke that you'll be able to take the bus to Paris," quips Mark Szyperski, Scheduled Route Manager, who says the company appreciates 5311(f) funding for the opportunities it provides to increase the availability of transportation in rural areas.

Anchor Trailways has been growing rapidly outside of the federal-funding gains. Started 20 years ago by Dr. John Stancil with a single coach, Anchor now has a fleet of 65 coaches, exclusively an MCI fleet. It added 30 coaches in the last year alone, bought to serve a contract with the Fort Campbell military installation. The company is also expecting two new D4505s marked for charter service later this year.

A Trailways member since 2000, Anchor takes advantage of the benefits, tapping into GPS provisions and other value services offered by the organization. The company is an active member of the United Motorcoach Association, Alabama Motorcoach Association and the Tennessee Motor Coach



Association. To learn more visit,  
[www.anchorrailways.com](http://www.anchorrailways.com).

## MCI delivers 26 Commuter Coaches to Metropolitan Council of Minnesota

**SCHAUMBURG, IL — November 5, 2009** — Aiming to grow transit ridership, ease congestion and improve mobility, Metropolitan Council, which manages transit services in the Minneapolis and St. Paul area, is giving its residents touring-class comfort on long-distance commutes. The Council has taken delivery of 26 MCI Commuter Coaches. The Commuter Coach, based on the popular MCI® D-Series, offers riders plush seating with head rests, individual reading lights, personal air-flow controls, and overhead storage.



Metro Transit, a service of Metropolitan Council, is operating 19 of the new coaches on express routes that cover longer distances. Metro Transit launched its newest express-route to downtown Minneapolis September 28 as it unveiled a new Lakeville park-and-ride ramp adjacent to the freeway. State and federal government officials attended, including Minnesota's governor and the mayors of Minneapolis and several surrounding towns.

The new buses, park-and-ride facilities and transit services are funded through the Urban Partnership Agreement (UPA), a federal-state project aimed at reducing traffic congestion, as well as by a grant from the Counties Transit Improvement Board.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb said, "We not only want to offer our riders a comfortable ride, we want to give customers a consistent schedule. By riding with us, commuters can get to the city from Lakeville in 30 minutes thanks to the use of MnPASS toll lanes and bus-only shoulder lanes." The highway system that surrounds Minneapolis has bus-only shoulder lanes spanning 275 miles, the longest in the nation. "When traffic is moving less than 35 miles per hour, our new coaches are using the bus-only lanes. While other commuters are sitting one by one all alone their cars, our

riders are in coaches, moving right along at up to 35 miles an hour, non-stop."

Metro Transit advertised the new service through a direct mail campaign. "We're very pleased by our ridership averages at our new Lakeville park-and-ride," added Lamb, whose agency provides nearly 90 percent of the bus and light rail service in the Minneapolis/St. Paul region. All together Metro Transit operates more than 900 transit buses. These are the first MCI Commuter Coaches for the agency that operated two leased MCI models several years ago. In 2008, customers boarded Metro buses and trains nearly 82 million times, the highest annual ridership in 27 years.

## Cross Country Trailways, of Spartanburg SC, recently added a new Van Hool C2045E to their fleet, which now totals 19 motorcoaches

Founded by Robert and Elaine Johnson in 1994, with a single used coach, Cross Country has grown steadily, becoming one of South Carolina's top charter and tour operators.



The 2010 C2045E has a Cummins engine coupled to an Allison transmission, matching the rest of Cross Country's all Van Hool fleet. The new coach also features Van Hool's exclusive contoured parcel racks with 6 large screen 22" video monitors, panoramic rear window, WiFi service, wireless PA microphone, Dura Bright aluminum wheels and a custom graphics design. The passenger seats have leather inserts and 3 point seat belts, among the first in South Carolina.

Robert Johnson was an executive with 24 years in the computer information management field, when the Choir Director of his church offered the opportunity to invest in a startup bus line. When things didn't develop quite as planned, the Johnsons ended up owning and managing the company.

Robert continued his computer career, while working at the bus line without a salary. Four years later Cross Country Trailways had grown to the point where he



could leave computers, and join Elaine full time, devoting all his energies to building the company.

"Joining the prestigious family of Trailways operators in 2005," Johnson says, "provided us with a chance to learn from some of the most elite motorcoach operators. Membership in Trailways gave us a real boost of pride and offered such opportunities as featuring one of our coaches in a Hollywood feature film, and a bus's appearance in a TV series already released this year."

They now provide charters to 49 states and Canada, as well as offering their own packaged tours. A substantial part of their charter work comes from competing tour brokers, and they work hard at maintaining a cordial, ethical, relationship. Cross Country's steady growth seems to indicate that it's working.

"We strive for customer satisfaction... and go as far as we have to go to keep passengers happy," Johnson said. "We're into safety and that starts with the best possible drivers. We match them to the particular client. We try to have the cleanest coaches on the road and repair dings right away. We'll charter a replacement, rather than have our customers ride a dented coach. ABC excels at getting us any parts we need... quickly."

Like all Trailways carriers, Cross Country is Department of Defense safety certified. "We take particular pride in serving the military, feeling that carrying our soldiers is more of a privilege than just providing transportation," Johnson pointed out.

"We've bought 28 coaches in 15 years," he said. "Every single one of them has been from ABC. The Van Hool's have done a great job for us, and for 15 years ABC has treated us really well when there was a problem. ABC's Account Executive Steve Olesen did a great job in helping us buy the right coach to serve our customers, and he's great about staying in touch." Olesen said, "Cross Country has been a loyal customer. Robert runs a terrific operation and is fun to serve. We love it when he visits ABC's Winter Garden facility. He treats us like we're part of his family."

## **Connecticut Transit to add 35 Nova LFS Artic buses to its fleet**

Nova Bus is pleased to announce that Connecticut Transit (CT Transit) has selected Nova Bus to provide 35 LFS Artic buses, with options on an additional 35 articulated vehicles over a four-year period. CT Transit, whose divisions serve 7 metropolitan areas throughout the state of Connecticut, including Hartford, New Haven and Stamford, selected a mix of clean-diesel and hybrid drives for its articulated vehicles, with deliveries starting in late 2010.

Valued at approximately \$60 million, the order will be assembled at Nova Bus' Plattsburgh, N.Y., plant. The company was selected particularly for its product design and performance, price and delivery schedule.

In 2009, MTA New York City Transit purchased 90 Nova LFS articulated vehicles which are assembled at the Plattsburgh facility. The delivery process for this order is currently under way.

## **Charm City Circulator – Baltimore**



Things to know about your new ride, the "EcoSaver IV"

### **Smooth...**

The EcoSaver IV utilizes highly efficient electric motors to smoothly propel it. The jerking and growling of a large transmission is completely absent in the EcoSaver IV, because there is no transmission. The EcoSaver IV utilizes highly efficient electric motors that smoothly propel it throughout its complete range of acceleration and deceleration without a shift or sound.

### **Quiet...**

The quiet ride of the EcoSaver IV electric bus has been repeatedly described as "like being inside of a library." Even with the Auxiliary Power Unit (APU) running, there is almost no discernible engine noise inside the cabin.

### **Green...**

The DesignLine system utilizes a "clean burning" turbine, or the smallest combustion engine on the market. The body design reduces vehicle weight by up to 3 tons over other systems, resulting in approximately 2.25 tons less greenhouse gases a year.

### **What is it and how does it work?**

The EcoSaver IV greatly reduces a fleet's greenhouse gas emissions. The fleet's emissions are cut in half, by burning only half its fuel when the bus is operating. The EcoSaver IV also emits far less emissions than a conventional bus by spending a significant portion of the operating day in "zero" emission mode, running on pure battery power. Electricity is provided by an on-board Auxiliary Power Unit (APU). The APU is not a drive motor, but an electrical generator, providing up to 30 kW of electrical energy to the batteries. A second source of the electricity is the bus's regenerative braking system, which taps the energy generated by coasting and braking. Coupling the lower fuel and lower maintenance cost has proven the technology to be a sustainable energy efficient form of transportation.