



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OMNIBUS SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

MARCH/APRIL 2010

RUN 02-2010

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". At 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.

• MARCH/APRIL MEETINGS

The March meeting of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on March 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 "**Campus Bus Operations**" will be a slide presentation by Jim Beeler of the various campus bus operations around the country along with a couple of other topics.

The April meeting of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on April 2, 2010, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital. The meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

The presentation will be "North Jersey IBOA's," a slide presentation by Fred McGullam.

Mayor Daley, CTA Officials Announce Completion of Security Camera Installation at 24 Green Line Stations

1/23/2010

Initiate Further Expansion of Cameras on System

Mayor Richard M. Daley and Chicago Transit Authority President Richard L. Rodriguez today announced a significant development in the agency's ongoing effort to enhance safety and security on its rail and bus system. With the installation of cameras at 24 Green Line stations, the CTA's rail system now has 1,657 cameras at 73 rail stations.

The CTA has received \$22.6 million in Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funds to enhance its security and surveillance network and is using it to expand camera coverage on its rail system. At least one high definition camera will be installed at every rail station by this summer

and additional cameras will be installed across the rail system beginning with the Brown and Red lines later this year. The Green Line initiative cost approximately \$4 million and the expansion plans are budgeted at \$9 million. The remainder of the funds will be used to further enhance the CTA's security network. All the projects will be paid for by a combination of DHS, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Regional Transportation Authority funds.

CTA also is launching a pilot program to explore the feasibility of retrofitting CTA's current rail cars with cameras. The pilot will help identify costs and the most efficient design and technology upgrades needed in order to operate the cameras. This pilot, funded by \$800,000 in FTA grants, is expected to begin this spring. New rail cars already on order will come equipped with cameras.

"Safety and security is a top priority across the city and CTA has made great progress in upgrading its infrastructure to include the addition of surveillance cameras," said Mayor Daley. "These cameras help police identify and apprehend those who are intent on criminal activity and also can serve as a deterrent."

"We are pleased that the federal government recognizes the importance of having these tools available at transit agencies and provides funds that allow us to install cameras to help further protect the CTA and the City," said CTA President Richard L. Rodriguez. "The cameras across CTA's rail system make real-time video available to CTA's Control Center, the Chicago Police Department and the Office of Emergency Management and Communication. This real-time video allows emergency personnel to assess situations and respond accordingly whether it's a service disruption or a medical or police emergency."

"We're appreciative that the federal government provides the financial resources transit agencies need in order to protect its system and customers," said Chicago Transit Board Chairman Terry Peterson.

Security on CTA buses and trains is provided by the Chicago Police Department Public Transportation Section. Officers from the unit include both uniformed and plainclothes officers who ride the trains and buses and patrol stations. CTA works closely with CPD to identify, apprehend and prosecute individuals who commit crimes on CTA property.

While security cameras are a useful tool, CTA also reminds customers they can assist by reporting any suspicious activity they witness. Reporting instances of crime or suspicious activity across the system helps CTA and CPD determine how best to deploy resources.

CTA calls union proposals too costly

2 sides appear to be drifting further apart in effort to restore service, jobs

By Jon Hilkevitch, TRIBUNE REPORTER

6:49 p.m. CST, February 17, 2010

Cost savings proposed by Chicago Transit Authority labor unions to help reduce a large budget deficit would actually cost the transit agency an additional \$78 million, the CTA board chairman said Wednesday.

The union proposals would cost the CTA more money by bringing back conductors on trains, replacing some CTA managers with union employees and using union labor for some snow-removal work that the CTA now contracts out, board Chairman Terry Peterson said.

The CTA's negative assessment of the union plan to purportedly reduce spending by \$90.6 million was offered at the end of a day marked by dueling news conferences held by the union and by management over how to restore bus and rail service that was cut Feb. 7, along with reversing about 1,100 CTA employee layoffs.

The gulf separating the two sides appears to be widening, and the public-relations tactics are growing increasingly nasty.

Union leaders, accompanied by the Rev. Jesse Jackson, alleged racial discrimination during an event Wednesday morning at the CTA's Red Line terminal at 95th Street along the Dan Ryan Expressway. They said the CTA's service cuts were implemented to produce a harsher impact on poor and minority communities on the South Side, while sparing North Side riders.

CTA officials responded that the service reduction plan was developed in accordance with federal Title VI guidelines, which are anti-discrimination provisions designed to ensure mass-transit routes serving minority communities or the poor are not disproportionately affected by service cuts. The CTA is required to follow those guidelines or risk the loss of federal funding.

Furthermore, most CTA rail lines and bus routes travel through several neighborhoods, the officials said.

The main problem prolonging the stalemate appears to be that CTA officials and the leaders of the

Amalgamated Transit Union still have not met. Wednesday was the 11th day of service cuts affecting 119 of 150 bus routes and seven of eight rail lines.

CTA officials blamed the union leadership, saying its leaders haven't returned phone calls requesting negotiations that would cover possible salary cuts, unpaid furlough days and higher employee costs for health insurance.

Darrell Jefferson, the president of the bus drivers union, Local 241 of the ATU, has not returned any phone calls placed to him by Peterson or CTA President Richard Rodriguez, both said.

Jefferson countered that CTA officials are the ones who haven't answered calls or reached out to hold talks. But Jefferson, who on Saturday during an event at Jackson's Rainbow/PUSH Coalition headquarters called on Peterson and Rodriguez to meet with him Wednesday, did not appear at the union event at 95th Street.

Peterson said he did talk to Robert Kelly, the president of the rail workers union, ATU Local 308, and that Kelly promised to submit more detailed proposals to help cut a \$95.6 million budget deficit this year.

Meanwhile, Peterson said Jackson did agree to meet with him Friday.

jhilkevitch@tribune.com

Copyright © 2010, Chicago Tribune

Trolleys to keep rolling in Schaumburg

Trustees keep service going through September

By Graydon Megan, SPECIAL TO THE TRIBUNE
February 3, 2010

Although Schaumburg trustees are concerned about the cost, they have approved continuing the village's iconic trolley service on a Friday-Saturday-Sunday schedule through September.

"Businesses in Schaumburg have been impacted by the property tax for the first time," Village President Al Larson said in supporting the service, which costs \$344,000 a year. "This is something for the retail and hotel (businesses)."

The trolleys have run in one form or another since beginning as a holiday shopping amenity in late 2000 and have provided nearly 650,000 rides, said the

village's senior transportation planner, Richard Bascomb.

The trolleys run every 20 to 34 minutes, covering a route from the village's Renaissance Schaumburg Hotel and Convention Center on the north to Ikea and through Woodfield Mall to the PACE Northwest Transportation Center and the Streets of Woodfield.

Economic woes have led to reductions in days and frequency of service, with year-around Monday to Thursday service cut last May.

Daily service is still provided from the day after Thanksgiving through New Year's Day, after which trolleys run only Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The Village Board approved continuing the service at a meeting last week.

The trolleys attract tourists — and shoppers — and cut down on congestion and pollution by eliminating some car traffic, village staff members say.

"It's a big number," trustee Marge Connelly said of the cost at a recent committee meeting. But trustee Mark Madej summarized trustee sentiment.

"We depend on sales tax revenue," Madej said. "We could lose some convention business without this, we could lose some retail without this."

Copyright © 2010, Chicago Tribune

Pace Service in McHenry County

Expanded Pace Service in McHenry County Starts February 13, 2010

Partnership leads to new transit options for residents of McHenry County

New Pace dial-a-ride service for the general public serving parts of McHenry County offering new and expanded transit options for residents began February 13.

Everyone (the general public, seniors, and people with disabilities) is eligible to make trips originating within the city boundaries of Crystal Lake, McHenry, and Woodstock as well as to and from these cities and Valley Hi Nursing home or the Fox Lake Metra Station. Seniors and people with disabilities are also eligible for trips originating or ending anywhere in McHenry Township or in Dorr Township outside of Bull Valley.

This is a new, expanded service and does not change existing dial-a-ride services in Crystal Lake, McHenry, Woodstock and McHenry Township.

Registration is required. It is available 6:00am-7:00pm Monday-Friday and 9:00am-5:00pm on Saturdays. Fares are \$3.00 per trip (cash, no discounted fares nor multi-

ride passes) and rides are to be scheduled at least one day in advance.

This service is sponsored by McHenry County through the Transit Grant Program and the Senior Service Grant Fund and offered in partnership with Pace Suburban Bus; the Cities of Crystal Lake, McHenry, and Woodstock; the Townships of Dorr and McHenry; and Pioneer Center for Human Services.

Chicago's Metra may sell naming rights for stations

February 15, 7:12 AM Chicago PR and Advertising Examiner Jeff Louis

As Chicago's budget shortfalls extend to area transportation services, the Chicago Transit Authority has cut services due to the inability to come to some sort of consensus with the CTA workers union. Metra, the rail system that brings travelers to Chicago from the outer suburbs is taking a different approach. Metra is considering offering the naming rights to all of its train stations, routes, and even the bridges trains cross to generate revenue.

Chicago's regional rail line, suffering budget shortfalls similar to the CTA and Pace has felt the recession due to reduced tax revenues resulting from lower sales along with lower ridership due to unemployment. In 2009, Metra trips fell by over 4 million trips, dropping from 86.8 million in 2008 to 82.3 million a year later. The transportation agency is now searching for ways to increase non-fare revenues.

In 2008, a law approved by former Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich allowed seniors to ride for free, increasing the loss from fare revenues.

Metra is considering selling advertising space online, on the outside of train cars, as well as proposing the sale of station and route naming rights. According to Metra, other cities have been successful with similar endeavors although it's not known if revenues would cover the budget shortfall.

Metra officials stated that the sales of station names would be done with a certain amount of sensitivity, noting that both the city and the sponsoring company would share the rights for the station's name.

House panel approves limits on free rides for seniors

Income test for riders would help boost revenue for transit agencies

By Michelle Manchir, Tribune reporter

February 11, 2010

SPRINGFIELD — Free local bus and train rides would be restricted to low-income senior citizens under a

measure a House panel approved Thursday to help bring in more money for transit agencies reeling from financial woes.

Applying means-testing to the free ride program would generate between \$37 million and \$50 million, said sponsoring Rep. Suzanne Bassi, R-Palatine.

"The bottom line is that there's no free ride if there's no bus," Bassi said.

Under the bill, senior citizens 65 and older would keep riding for free if they qualify for the state's Circuit Breaker program. A one-person household with an income of \$27,610 would be eligible under the guidelines. A two-person household could have a maximum income of \$34,635. The Circuit Breaker program is used to set income guidelines to give seniors property tax relief and aid to buy prescription drugs.

Seniors with higher incomes would ride at half price on the Chicago Transit Authority, Metra and Pace. That's the same discount seniors got before then-Gov. Rod Blagojevich demanded the free ride program in return for signing off on a sales tax increase to bail out the bus and rail agencies two years ago.

Rep. Julie Hamos, who chairs the House Mass Transit Committee, said she does not know if the measure has enough support to pass the full House, but vowed to push for it. Hamos said the measure represents a "fair fare policy."

The proposal is a "well-balanced solution to reform" the free ride program, said Jim Reilly, board chairman of the Regional Transportation Authority, which oversees the transit agencies.

The CTA estimates the free rides will cost the agency more than \$30 million this year in lost revenue. The CTA provided about 73 million free rides last year, the agency said, although the total included seniors, active military personnel, disabled veterans and people covered under the state's Circuit Breaker program. The CTA provided about 22 million total free rides in 2008.

More than 402,000 senior citizens are registered to ride for free, the RTA said. That's up from about 150,000 seniors enrolled before the free-ride program.

Tribune reporter Jon Hilkevitch contributed to this report.

xtxmanchir@tribune.com

Copyright © 2010, Chicago Tribune

RTA: Transit agencies running out of cash

More cuts loom without \$250 million state owes

By Richard Wronski, Tribune reporter

11:57 p.m. CST, February 18, 2010

The Regional Transportation Authority issued a warning Thursday: Unless the state comes up with the cash it owes the transit agencies within a few months, more service cuts like the ones CTA riders are experiencing may be inevitable.

The state's delay in paying \$250 million it owes the transit systems "has reached an alarming point and creates a significant risk for our 2 million daily riders and 15,000 employees," RTA Executive Director Steve Schlickman told Gov. Pat Quinn in a letter.

The RTA has only \$90 million in cash to carry the agencies through the next three months. Without the state money, "disruptions to transit service across the region may be inevitable," Schlickman said.

The letter amplified the warning RTA officials made last month when they complained that the state had fallen far behind in payments to the CTA, Metra and Pace. Along with the RTA, the state has at least \$5 billion worth of unpaid funds to schools, municipalities and other agencies.

The recession has had a dramatic effect on mass-transit revenues, the RTA says. The CTA, in particular, has been forced to lay off employees and cut services.

The delay in state funds forced the RTA to borrow money to pay debt service on outstanding bonds. Schlickman called this "an unsustainable practice under ordinary circumstances."

If the RTA fails to make its debt service payments, the bond trustee will "intercept" funds that would otherwise go to day-to-day operations, officials said.

Meanwhile, Schlickman announced Thursday that he would leave the agency in October after five years as executive director and resume his consulting practice.

Citing the stress of the job, Schlickman, 56, said leaving the RTA was a personal decision reached jointly with his wife. His salary is \$217,910.

Although Schlickman said he is proud of his tenure, he believes Chicago's transit system has yet to achieve

status befitting a world-class city.

"We are accustomed to adequate or less-than-adequate service," Schlickman said. "We have to show the world what we could be."

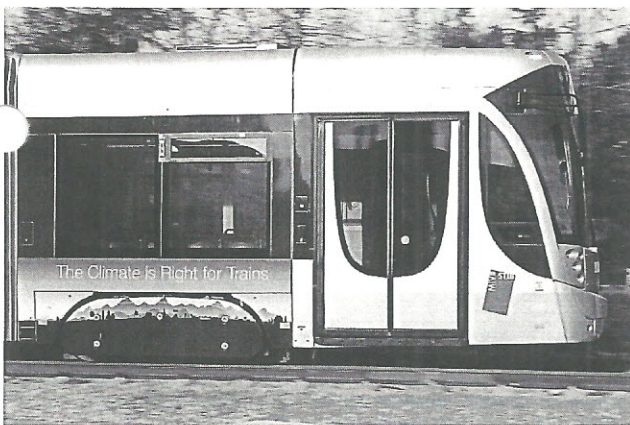
rwrnski@tribune.com

Copyright © 2010, Chicago Tribune

Bombardier launches Olympic Line in Vancouver

On Jan. 28, Raymond Bachant, president Bombardier Transportation North America, and Gregor Robertson, Mayor of the City of Vancouver, co-hosted the grand opening of the Olympic Line at a celebratory event in Vancouver, British Columbia. The two *BOMBARDIER FLEXITY* streetcars, showcased on the Olympic Line, arrived in Vancouver on Dec. 7 following a two-month journey by sea from Brussels, Belgium.

Bombardier Transportation and the City of Vancouver are co-sponsors of the 1.8-kilometre Olympic Line where Bombardier is operating two *BOMBARDIER FLEXITY* streetcars. Free service will be provided 18 hours a day, 7 days a week, between Jan. 21 and March 21.



The vehicles, on loan from the Brussels Transport Company STIB (Société des Transports Intercommunaux de Bruxelles), feature easy access for all passengers, wide doors, large windows, and a beautifully-finished interior, and represent the first 100-percent low-floor street cars in North America. More than 1,500 *FLEXITY* vehicles are in service around the world.

Daimler Buses North America Receives Orders for 92 Orion VII Transit Buses from New York State Agencies

Oriskany, N.Y. (January 15, 2010) – Daimler Buses North America announced today that it has received orders totaling 92 Orion VII transit buses, including five Orion VII diesel-electric hybrid transit buses, from three

transit agencies in New York. Deliveries are set for late summer and fall of 2010.

"These orders are extremely gratifying for Daimler Buses North America as we operate a production facility in Oriskany, New York with over 600 employees," said Patrick Scully, chief commercial officer for Daimler Buses North America. "These orders show the confidence the transit market has in the Orion brand. The Orion VII clean-diesels and hybrids are an excellent fit for these agencies."

Suffolk County Transit placed an order for 81 Orion VII clean-diesel transit buses. The order breaks down to fifteen 40-foot buses, fifty 35-foot buses, and sixteen 30-foot buses. Founded in 1980 as a county run agency, Suffolk County Transit provides service throughout Suffolk County on Long Island. Suffolk County Transit currently operates the Orion V in its existing fleet, but this marks its first order of Orion VII transit buses. Ulster County Area Transit (UCAT) placed an order for three additional

Orion VII 35-foot diesel-electric hybrid buses, bringing its current production order to five buses. UCAT provides services in Ulster County, with limited service to Orange County and connecting service to Dutchess County. The Dutchess County LOOP Bus System has ordered four 40-foot Orion VII clean-diesel transit buses, along with two 40-foot Orion VII diesel-electric hybrid transit buses. LOOP provides a variety of bus services throughout Dutchess County including fixed-route services and demand response services like Dial-A-Ride and Paratransit. LOOP currently has the Orion V operating in its fleet, but this order marks its first Orion VII transit buses.

Daimler Buses to Deliver 460 Coaches to South Africa for the 2010 World Cup

Stuttgart/East London (Dec. 17, 2009) – Daimler Buses will deliver 460 Mercedes-Benz brand coaches to South Africa for the 2010 World Cup. The vehicles were ordered by Autopax Passenger Service Ltd. based in Pretoria, the company is South Africa's largest operator of regular-service long-distance coaches. Delivery of the Mercedes-Benz travel coaches is set to commence in December 2009, with the last of the 460 vehicles to be delivered to the customer in late April 2010. Autopax transports almost four million passengers in South Africa each year. The company is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Public Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA).

"We are delighted that we've landed such an important contract for the World Cup in South Africa," says Hartmut Schick, Head of Daimler Buses. "It shows what a great reputation Mercedes-Benz buses have worldwide and how much confidence our customers have in them. At 460 vehicles, Daimler Buses is delivering by far the largest number of coaches for upcoming top-events in South Africa."

Mercedes-Benz of Brazil will ship the chassis of the 460 type O 500 RSD coaches to Mercedes-Benz South Africa as CKD parts that will be assembled at the Mercedes-Benz plant in East London, South Africa. The coach bodies will be manufactured in Johannesburg, South Africa, by Daimler Buses' close partner Marcopolo. The major order will help to safeguard the future of the production location in South Africa. Daimler Buses has invested around €1 million in the East London plant to increase its bus production capacity. Part of the investment was used to expand the workforce. Daimler Buses has around 50 employees in East London. The 460 Mercedes-Benz coaches will be financed by Daimler Financial Services South Africa.

"With this order we are not only expanding the sales volume of buses in South Africa, but also handling vehicle maintenance," says Holger Suffel, Head of Sales at Daimler Buses. "This underlines our competency as professional service provider."



The Mercedes-Benz O 500 RSD is equipped with a fully electronic management engine with 260 kW output of power. The vehicles will be fitted with a fully automatic transmission with integrated retarder, which has recently been introduced to the product range. The automatic transmission has a number of driving and safety benefits, as it allows the driver to concentrate on stress-free-driving, with the gearbox shifting automatically on demand, and is ideal for inter-city transportation.

Passenger safety and comfort are prime considerations, so both the coaches with seating capacity for 52 and 61 persons are fitted with seat-belts all-round. The coaches are fully equipped with air-conditioning, entertainment equipment including DVD and MP3 player and monitors, and microphone facilities.

Lewis Stages adds a new MCI® J4500, blazes new trails in 2010 with deluxe edition

SCHAUMBURG, IL — January 13, 2010 — Group travel planners will find Lewis Stages' new MCI J4500 coach has the bells and whistles passengers want and the seating capacity sized to fit their trip — whether their groups be small or large. The Salt Lake City, Utah, company's new J4500, with a custom-designed interior, includes a removable mini galley that allows Lewis Stages to change the deluxe 56-passenger coach into a 46-seat coach with galley, making it easy to adapt to smaller groups on longer tours.

Decked out on the outside with a decal saluting U.S. national parks, the coach also features the latest passenger-pleasing amenities including a state-of-the-art Blaupunkt entertainment system with 15-inch video monitors, access to outlets to recharge personal electronics, and individual air-flow controls and reading lights. MCI is showcasing the coach at the ABA Marketplace January 15 through January 19 in National Harbor, Maryland.



Lewis Stages' custom interior was created in close collaboration with MCI and Richard Bizzaro, Chairman and CEO of All Resort Coaches, parent company of Lewis Stages, and his wife, Wendy Gray, an interior designer. "Tour group planners are raising the bar on their equipment requirements to attract a whole new generation," said Bizzaro, whose clients include leading group travel companies. "Our national parks are a popular destination for domestic and international travelers, and they require luxury and environmentally

sound vehicles. We find our J4500 coaches surpass all their requirements, and our expectations. The J4500 seating can be easily reconfigured, and we like to have that flexibility in our fleet. We give our passengers a 'round-going cruise experience,' and that keeps them coming back."

In June, Lewis Stages took delivery of three J4500 coaches equipped with clean-diesel engine technology. All together, the company operates a fleet of nearly 40 tour coaches and 30 transit-style and mini buses. All Resort also operates a fleet of limousines and shuttle buses, including some featuring Hybrid technology.

Lewis Stages provides group tours throughout the American West and hosts many international visitors to the surrounding national parks, offering step-on-guided tours of local and regional attractions. It also offers charter services for conventions and custom events, airport transfers and shuttles. To learn more, visit www.LewisStages.com.

County of Hawaii debuts five MCI® Commuter Coaches, mayor attends dedication

SCHAUMBURG, IL — January 4, 2010 — The County of Hawaii, on the Island of Hawaii, has taken delivery of five 40-foot MCI Commuter Coaches. This is the first time the MCI Commuter Coach, popular with passengers for its comfort and amenities will operate in the state's transit system.



Mass Transit Agency Director Tom Brown said the new commuter coaches are in service on the island's longer routes between Hilo and Kona; and Waikoloa and Ka'u. The new coaches are equipped with wheelchair lifts and feature reclining plush seating for 49 passengers, overhead individual air-flow controls, reading lights, luggage compartments and an audio system. They also include audio and video security surveillance systems and bicycle racks. The County of Hawaii obtained funding for the purchases through federal grants.

Holding to a cultural tradition, the coaches were ceremonially blessed, with Mayor Billy Kenoi in attendance, on December 17. During the ceremony, Brown thanked the mayor and United States Senator Daniel Inouye for their help in acquiring government funds to add the new MCI Commuter Coaches as well as other buses to the transit fleet. The County of Hawaii also has an order for two additional MCI coaches that will be delivered in 2010.

"Our fleet expansion will enable us to reach more riders who want and need public transportation for their jobs, medical appointments and leisure activities," said Brown. "Our riders can expect a more comfortable commute with these new MCI models."

The Hawaii County Mass Transit Agency provides public transportation around the island and offers free passenger service on all scheduled routes. In addition, the agency offers a fee-based Shared Ride Taxi program within the Hilo area.

To learn more, go to www.heleonbus.org.

Dixieland Tours parades six stylish new MCI® J4500 coaches, hits high note in amenities, leather seating, three-point seatbelts

SCHAUMBURG, IL — January 27, 2010 — Dixieland Tours is aiming to amaze its riders. Based in Baton Rouge and serving the greater New Orleans area, Dixieland has taken delivery of six new MCI J4500 coaches that embody blockbuster passenger amenities such as plush leather seating, and the latest in contemporary safety technology, including three-point passenger seatbelts. The MCI J4500 is the best-selling coach in the industry known for its sleek good 'looks, spiral entryway and tiered theater seating. New models come equipped with wide-ride suspension, electronic stability control, tire-pressure monitoring and fire suppression systems and clean-diesel engine technology. Dixieland added appointments including plush blue leather seating by Amaya, Wi-Fi connectivity and power outlets. The new coaches also feature a state-of-art entertainment system by Blaupunkt with flat-screen video monitors, along with Satellite TV and radio.

Dixieland distinguishes these new coaches, jet black with minimal decals, as its limo series. Dixieland plans to phase in its new graphic look in its entire 21-coach MCI fleet over time.

"A newer fleet of coaches has its advantages," said Norman Augusta, chairman and CEO of Dixieland Tours. "But we're setting the bar even higher. We have the largest fleet with high-end amenities and three-point seatbelts in the area." Dixieland also trains its drivers in CPR and is equipping its J4500 coaches with Automated Electronic Defibrillators (AERs). "We serve a broad

range of clients and offer many trips for seniors. We're creating a new standard in safety."

An entrepreneur with expertise in the travel industry, Augusta acquired Dixieland and its 12-coach fleet in 1995. He bought the company's first new MCI coach in 1997. "I learned early on that it's better to buy new and maintain new with preventative maintenance practices for reliability on the road."

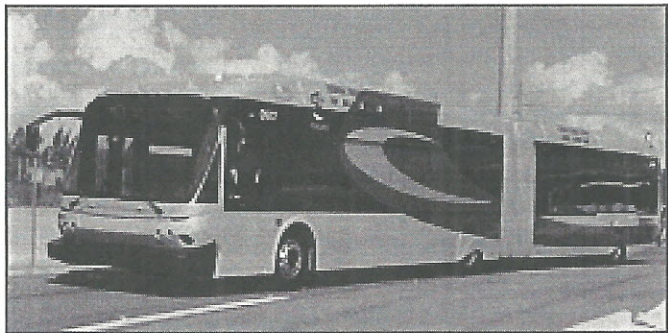
As an owner of other tour-related businesses prior to Hurricane Katrina, Augusta turned his full focus on Dixieland Tours afterwards. "The devastation showed me that there's nothing like hands-on management to be effective," said Augusta, who runs Dixieland with his daughter Lori Augusta-Guyton, general manager. "I'm pleased with the way we've grown and our record for driver retention."

Dixieland offers charters, custom tours, military, school and university trips, team charters, convention shuttles, airport/cruise transfers and transportation for corporate events. It has held contracts with the military since 1998 and on January 8 transported 3,000 troops in one day. The company has an "A" rating with the departments of transportation and defense and is used as a state training facility for the Louisiana State Police DOT.

A new website, www.dixielandtours.com, is due to launch next month.

Launch of the new 95 Express BRT service between Broward County and Miami-Dade County

On January 22, 2010, New Flyer representatives attended the public launch of the new 95 Express BRT service between Broward County and Miami-Dade County in southern Florida. Paul Smith, EVP Sales and Marketing; Wayne Joseph, EVP Operations; Joe Lunny, Regional Sales Manager; Paul Hatton, Senior Customer Programs Manager; and Amy Schreiner, Customer Programs Manager were on hand for the event.



Both Broward County and Miami-Dade County have purchased New Flyer hybrid articulated buses for the new service; these are the first New Flyer hybrids in operation in southern Florida. The project was funded by the Federal Government as well as the State of Florida and municipal funding from Miami and Broward County. Other attendees included Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart; FDOT District Secretary Gus Pego; Miami-Dade Transit Director Harpal Kapoor; and Broward County Transit Director Chris Walton.

New Flyer Announces Fourth Quarter 2009 Orders and Backlog and Recent Award of Contract

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, January 15, 2010

New Flyer Industries Inc. (TSX:NFI.UN) ("New Flyer" or the "Company"), the leading manufacturer of heavy-duty transit buses in Canada and the United States, announced today that the total order activity during the fourth quarter of 2009 totaled 711 buses (753 equivalent production units or "EUs") for a total of \$308 million. This total order activity consisted of new firm and new option orders of 506 buses (531 EUs) and exercised options of 205 buses (222 EUs).

These orders are from both current and new customers and are for a variety of vehicle configurations and propulsion systems, including 35-, 40- and 60-foot buses with clean diesel, diesel-electric hybrid, gasoline-electric hybrid and compressed natural gas ("CNG") propulsion systems. Approximately 20% of the EUs representing these orders (or 141 EUs) are clean-propulsion (i.e., hybrid or natural gas) vehicles.

Some of the larger order activity during the quarter included:

- Connecticut Department of Transportation (CDOT) has awarded New Flyer a contract for 20 firm buses with up to 387 option buses. During the quarter, CDOT exercised 48 of these options. The total order includes diesels and hybrids of various lengths.

- Detroit Department of Transportation has exercised options to purchase 50 40-foot diesel buses
- VIA in San Antonio, TX has exercised options to purchase 27 40-foot diesel-electric buses
- Mississauga Transit of Mississauga, ON has ordered 22 60-foot diesel buses
- Brandon Transit in Brandon MB has ordered 7 35-foot and 4 40-foot diesel buses

New Flyer's order backlog as of December 31, 2009 was 8,990 EUs, up slightly from the 8,949 EUs in the backlog as of October 4, 2009. Clean propulsion vehicles represent approximately 69% of the total backlog. The dollar value of the order backlog as of December 31, 2009 (and as of October 4, 2009 as previously reported) was approximately \$3.9 billion.

Currently, there are approximately 13,200 EUs in New Flyer's new potential order pipeline or bid universe for heavy-duty transit buses, a moderate increase from the approximately 12,300 EUs reported as of October 4, 2009.

New Flyer's current backlog consists of the following mix of products:

	Firm EUs	Options EUs	Total EUs
40 foot and under buses	1,444	3,468	4,912
60 foot buses	638	3,440	4,078
Total	2,082	6,908	8,990

Options included in the backlog expire, if not exercised, as follows:

Expiry year	Option EUs
2010	851
2011	930
2012	1,607
2013	2,755
2014	765
Total Options	6,908

No options expired in the fourth quarter of 2009.

Subsequent to the year-end order activity, New Flyer has been awarded a bus procurement contract by a U.S. customer for up to 500 buses of varying lengths and propulsion systems; representing a minimum value of approximately \$173 million should all buses be purchased. The contract documentation is currently being finalized and the customer has not yet issued any purchase orders under this award. The ability to purchase buses under this procurement are assignable to other transit systems. The 2009 year-end backlog numbers (both EUs and dollar value) do not include this award.

NOTE: All dollar amounts are stated in US currency based on an exchange rate of US \$1.00 = Cdn \$1.05 to calculate the value of the Canadian contracts in this release.

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

Saint-Eustache, Quebec, January 14, 2010 – 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, NY 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.

Electric bus plant could create 2,600 jobs

GREENVILLE, S.C. -- Electric bus maker Proterra Inc. could create as many as 2,600 jobs in Greenville over the next seven years -- double the 1,300 it has promised state officials -- if overseas business materializes as expected, the company's chief executive officer said, the Post and Courier reports.

And that doesn't include thousands of other jobs that Chief Executive Officer Jeff Granato expects will be generated in South Carolina by companies supplying parts for the plant Proterra formally announced last Thursday

The company, which currently employs about 40 in Golden, Colo., said it would begin operating the \$30 million, 250,000-square-foot plant at Clemson University's International Center for Automotive Research early next year.

About 1,200 of the promised 1,300 jobs would be production positions paying an average of \$15 an hour, Granato said.

Dale Hill, Proterra's founder and chairman, said the company's vehicle systems are modules that can be incorporated into various kinds of vehicles -- trucks and delivery vans, as well as buses -- that might be made by Proterra or other companies.

"Our game plan is to have a whole family of vehicles over the next five or six years using our technology, and I can't even begin to tell you where that's going to go," Hill said.

Hill said it doesn't make sense for Proterra to make a truck, "but on a delivery van, if we can design something that is unique, then we'll do that."

Now the company plans to make its all-electric, battery-powered transit bus at the Greenville plant, as well as energy storage systems, drive systems, control systems and charging stations.

Proterra also plans a research office at ICAR, but its headquarters and some of its research will remain in Colorado, Granato said.

Gov. Mark Sanford and other dignitaries were at ICAR for the official announcement, while U.S. Sens. Lindsey Graham and Jim DeMint and U.S. Rep. Bob Inglis joined through prerecorded video messages.

Greenville Mayor Knox White said from the podium that Greenville has always re-invented itself.

"And that is what Proterra and this day are all about -- reinvention," White said.

Also present were Clemson President Jim Barker, Greenville County Council Chairman Butch Kirven and former governor and U.S. Education Secretary Richard Riley of Greenville.

Granato said Proterra's promise of 1,300 jobs over seven years is based solely on projections for its U.S. business, which so far consists of orders for about 30 of its transit buses.

The company also is negotiating deals to sell its vehicle systems in China, India and Chile, and the overseas business could lead to a doubling of the announced employment in Greenville, he said.

"We have a significantly greater optimistic forecast internally that we believe will be achievable," Granato said.

He said Proterra is scheduled to close in March on \$30 million in financing from a Chinese investment company. He declined to name the company but said it plans to buy systems Proterra will make in Greenville and

incorporate them into electric vehicles to be assembled and sold in China.

Proterra said it would begin manufacturing at an undetermined temporary location in Greenville while the plant at ICAR is under construction and expects to hire about 50 people this year.

"We're going to need to begin hiring people sometime in May, at the very latest June time frame, to accomplish those transitional objectives," Granato said. He said people interested in the jobs may e-mail inquiries to greenville@proterra.com.

Granato said Proterra has committed to spend \$68 million on South Carolina facilities over seven years and has room to double the size of its ICAR plant to 500,000 square feet.

The Commerce Department said it provided an incentives package to Proterra that includes \$3 million for plant infrastructure and site preparation.

Christian Przirembel, Clemson's vice president for research and economic development, said the announcement was "absolute confirmation of what the (ICAR) campus was intended to be." Przirembel was instrumental in developing the research park along Interstate 85 over the past decade.

Inglis predicted that Proterra's presence would drive more energy-related jobs to the Upstate, and that suppliers and other manufacturers have already begun to investigate the area and can be expected to come.

"As Proterra becomes successful, we can expect a job-generating effect like BMW has spurred," Inglis said.

Bill Mahoney, chief executive officer of the South Carolina Research Authority, said he expects Proterra's arrival to make South Carolina more attractive to seven smaller technology companies he is helping to recruit.

The companies, which make advanced materials and battery and fuel cell technologies, are potential Proterra suppliers and together would employ about 100 people, Mahoney said.

Proterra also considered sites in Ohio and Indiana for the plant.

Granato said the company picked Greenville in part because of the city's "livability" and support from Graham, DeMint and Inglis. The politicians helped Proterra establish contacts at the U.S. departments of transportation and energy and the Federal Transit Administration, he said.

But the prospect of collaborating with researchers at ICAR was the biggest reason Proterra chose Greenville, Granato said.

Clemson gave Proterra a seat on the ICAR board, which

means the company will have influence on the research agenda at the graduate school of automotive engineering there.

As a technology company, Proterra must focus on advancing its technology and believes "ICAR will actually give us that edge to remain in front and continue to innovate," Granato said.

He said Ohio had offered Proterra the services of the Center for Automotive Research at Ohio State University and the company "had difficulty walking away from that."

"We're still very interested in finding out how there might be collaboration opportunities (at Ohio State), but our initial commitment is to ICAR and making sure we have everything exhausted here before looking for outside support."

Rail project in final stages, officials say

Commuter line is on schedule to begin in March after tests.

By Ben Wear

AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

Published: 11:15 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2010

The long and winding road that has been Capital Metro's commuter rail project is in its final stages, agency officials said Tuesday, including work to complete late-the-game changes in the line's signal and communication systems.

The 32-mile line from Leander to downtown Austin should be "operational" by late February, interim CEO Doug Allen said, allowing federal railroad regulators to perform final checks. Assuming the line passes those tests, agency rail contractor Herzog Transit Services will conduct about two weeks of on-schedule testing of trains, and public service on the line would open before April. That would meet the first-quarter 2010 target for the opening that Capital Metro set last fall. The line was initially scheduled to open two years ago.

"I don't lose any sleep over this," said Elaine Timbes, Capital Metro's executive vice president. "I'm just excited to be a part of it. I've been here 24 years. To be part of launching rail for this community, it's an opportunity of a lifetime for me."

Allen and Timbes stopped just short of guaranteeing a March opening, given that installation of new software in the line's signal system is ongoing and will have to be tested. The agency decided last fall to reprogram the system of red, yellow and green lights that will tell train engineers when they can go and when they must stop, going from a system that had different signal modes for passenger trains and for freight trains to a single mode. Cost: \$530,000.

The agency is also installing a radio-wave communication system along the line, including relay equipment on poles. Capital Metro had initially planned to use a cellular system to transmit data from the track signal installations to the central control system in North Austin but decided last fall to instead use radio frequencies as a primary system, with the cellular system as a backup. The cost of the added equipment and installation will be at least \$207,000, Capital Metro said.

The agency and Herzog are also engaged in an intersection-by-intersection final inspection and repair of the crossing arm equipment that had performed erratically throughout last year during train testing. Capital Metro also is "de-stressing" some track sections that because of installation problems had developed subtle waves that could cause discomfort to passengers.

Capital Metro, which had initially said construction and startup of the rail line would cost \$90 million, amended the price tag to about \$105 million early last year. But that does not include a variety of expenditures directly related to the rail line, including a \$7.4 million park-and-ride lot at the Leander station. Nor does it include any of the \$35 million or so that will have been paid by the time the line opens to Veolia Transportation, the agency's former passenger and freight rail operator fired in December, and to Herzog as they helped the agency get the line ready for service.

bwear@statesman.com; 445-3698

Wisconsin Coach service to Midway Airport Discontinued

February 21, 2010, was the last day of operation for Wisconsin Coach service between Milwaukee and Midway Airport



New HRT leader makes rounds

by Patrick Terpstra, 13News
Posted on February 9, 2010 at 12:24 PM
Updated Tuesday, Feb 9 at 5:49 PM

NORFOLK -- Light rail trains will be running in the spring or summer of 2011, HRT's new CEO and president Phil Shucet told Norfolk City Council members Tuesday.

It's the first estimate from HRT for completion of The Tide since a series of cost overruns and construction delays were revealed in December.

The project is 61 percent complete with major construction expected to be "substantially complete" in July.

Shucet said it's still too soon to estimate how much it will cost to complete the project.

Shucet, on the job for a week, said that number will be ready next week and made public at the HRT commission meeting on Feb. 18.

"It will be a number everyone at HRT will own," Shucet told council members.

Shucet then met with Virginia Beach City Council members to ask for \$244,800 in city funds to match a federal grant offer.

The money would go toward a \$6.63 study underway examining the feasibility of extending The Tide from Newtown Road in Norfolk to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront.

City Council members cringed at the request.

"We just don't have the money," Councilman Bob Dyer said.

But Virginia Beach may have no choice but to pay for the federal match for to finish the study.

A draft is scheduled to be complete in summer 2011.

"What happens if we don't pay?" Councilwoman Rosemary Wilson asked.

"I honestly don't know," Shucet said.

Contingency funds would cover the funding request, City Manager James Spore said.

The council is expected to vote on the request in the "next few weeks," said Mayor Will Sessoms.