



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OMNIBUS SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

## **NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2010**

**RUN 06-2010**

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.

### **• NOV/DEC MEETINGS**

The **November meeting** of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on November 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 member Mike Mullenbach.

The **December meeting** of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on December 3, 2010, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital. The meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

Our program for the evening will be a slide presentation by Ed Montejano.

### **Chicago Transit Authority eyes new system to take fares**

By: Lorene Yue September 28, 2010

(Crain's) — The Chicago Transit Authority is ready to hear from companies that want to supply the agency with a new fare collection system.

The mass transit agency announced Tuesday it issued a request for proposals as it moves ahead on updating the way riders pay to use city buses and trains.

The CTA said it has already heard from 12 interested companies.

The ideal program would remain a touch-and-go system, but would allow riders to pay with smart-chip-embedded credit, debit and prepaid transit cards. The current payment system, which began operating in 1997, requires CTA-issued cards. Cash would remain a payment option in any new system.

"The CTA will be able to update our fare equipment without an upfront capital cost," CTA President Richard Rodriguez said in a statement. "Our riders would have a more convenient, streamlined fare payment and reload option and our farecard partner would be able to expand their presence in the Chicago market by working with other retailers interested in offering promotions to the millions the CTA serves each day."

The CTA would own all the fare equipment and retain authority on setting fares.

The goal of a new fare collection program is to help reduce boarding times, which during rush hours can boost transit times, particularly for buses.

### **Construction Begins for the Yellow Line Oakton Street Station**

Construction began this week on the CTA Yellow Line Oakton Street Station in Downtown Skokie. Construction of the "Kiss 'n Ride" facility is expected to be complete in late fall 2011, and the Chicago Transit Authority estimates some 1,200 boardings will occur at the stop each day.

The station will cost approximately \$20 million to construct, with the Village of Skokie funding \$6 million and an additional \$14 million coming from federal funds. The new station is adjacent to the Illinois Science + Technology Park (IS+TP) in Downtown Skokie. The new station is anticipated to increase the attractiveness of the IS+TP by directly connecting Downtown Skokie and Chicago.

"I am grateful to officials from CTA, the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Skokie's state and federal legislators, Commonwealth Edison, The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Forest City Enterprises and, of course, the Village staff who persevered with this project for many years," said Skokie Mayor George Van Dusen. "Their collective vision, hard work and dedication to this important public transportation initiative will benefit the region for decades to come."



## Metra, Pace: No fare hikes in 2011

**Money intended for projects will be tapped for day-to-day needs**

October 15, 2010

Riders who use Metra and Pace won't see any fare increases next year, but that doesn't mean the transit agencies are in good shape financially.

Metra officials said they need to shift \$60 million earmarked for projects into day-to-day operations and "preventive maintenance," and warned the diversion of capital funds could mean more mechanical problems and slow zones.

The agency unveiled a proposed 2011 budget Friday that reflects declines in ridership and sales tax receipts but rising costs. Metra's operations' spending is estimated at \$634 million in 2011.

Budget-makers are also taking advantage of a \$41 million "credit" from the state, something Metra has never done before.

The step will offset the need for a 10 percent fare hike, Chairwoman Carole Doris said. "We didn't want to raise fares and we will not," she said.

In other business, officials also said they no longer believe it will cost \$80 million to build new retaining walls along the Union Pacific North Line.

The cost of the walls was cited as a reason Metra planned to cut service to a single track during the now-delayed program to rebuild 22 bridges.

The project will resume in spring, but without changes in train schedules.

Pace officials, meanwhile, said they will continue to "pare" inefficient suburban bus routes to save money.

The agency could use up to \$2 million in capital funds to eliminate any operating expense deficit. Pace's 2011 operating budget totals \$183.3 million.

Pace says it will save \$372,000 a year when it trims midday service on four northwest suburban routes starting next month.

The routes connect Golf Mill Shopping Center in Niles, Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge and the Cumberland and Harlem CTA Blue Line stations.

Both Pace and Metra will hold public hearings on their budgets. Information is available at <http://www.pacebus.com> and [metrarail.com](http://metrarail.com).

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## Metra's first female engineer ready to retire

October 15, 2010

**BY SUSAN FRICK CARLMAN, Sun-Times Media**

Vallorie O'Neil wasn't one of those kids who wanted to drive a train when she grew up. When she was small, she wanted to be a lawyer. "Am I off the mark or what?" the pioneering railwoman says with a laugh one morning earlier this week, her last at the controls of a Metra Rock Island line train that runs between Chicago and Joliet.

O'Neil, of Steger, was the first woman to work as an engineer for the Burlington Northern line, before there was a Metra rail system, and she was Metra's first female engineer as well.

Almost four decades have passed since she hired on with the railroad and began a career that has seen her wear the hats of conductor, trainer, manager, fireman, hostler (she terms a "glorified parking attendant" for trains) - nearly every position in the rail system. From 1976 to 1985, she was at the controls on trains on the commuter line that runs from Aurora to Chicago's Union Station.

"She's been a go-getter all her life," Metra spokeswoman Meg Reile says. "She took whatever job she got, and went on and made herself eligible for the next."

Each time she changed jobs, O'Neil returned to the bottom rung of the seniority list. So she has worked nearly every holiday since her son, now 42, was a toddler.

She won't miss that when she finishes up her last run today. She also isn't going to mind no longer rising at 3 a.m. - 2 a.m. during the winter - though she expects sleeping in will take some getting used to.

"I think over a period of time, I'll get to where I can sleep till 6," she said, laughing.

## Missing the train

O'Neil mused about the variety of things she does expect to let go of reluctantly as she retires today, one day after her 60th birthday.



"There are a lot of little things to miss," she says early Tuesday morning, commandeering the precisely punctual 416 toward the mist that was giving a low-lying hug to Chicago's iconic skyline.

"The sunrise, the sunset, the snow, the changing colors."

The engineer role tops the list.

"It's not just about running the train; it's about efficiency and being safe," she says, her eyes fixed on the tracks ahead.

"The folks back there are reading, or using the phone, or relaxing, or putting on their makeup, and they expect me to get them to work and home again safely. I'm responsible for them."

Lending balance to the constant state of alert that's become second nature in the 22 years she has been running "the Rock" is a comforting sense of routine that has settled over O'Neil's work day. Pulling into the Mokena station, she glances out the right window.

"I'm going to see if my babies are out here," she says. "They're so cute. They get all excited when they see me. I blow the horn, and I wave to them."

But there's no sign of the bus full of elementary school kids whose driver stops on a side street so her passengers can wave to the lady driving the train.

"Hmm. Somebody must have been late getting on the school bus today," O'Neil says.

### **Railside chat**

More punctual, a few miles farther up the track, is the 90-year-old man who positions himself alongside the track, right next to the spot where O'Neil's cab comes to rest at the Oak Forest stop. He's an old railroad guy, a retired signal maintainer. She opens the window to greet him and accept his well-wishes on her fast-approaching final run.

"I hope I can stay on pension as long as you have," she calls out before reminding him to be careful walking home, and to tell his wife she said hello.

"Can you imagine that? He's been retired 31 years," she says. "Unbelievable."

Seated just outside the cab where O'Neil is perched before the controls, daily passenger Monica Olson, of Tinley Park, notes that the two

railway colleagues engage in the chitchat nearly every day.

"It's so cute," Olson says.

Soon O'Neil's voice comes over the public-address system.

"With bittersweet emotions, I'd like to tell you guys that I'm retiring," she informs her passengers, mentioning her 34 years in engine service. As she finishes her farewell, the car erupts in hoots and applause. The engineer smiles.

### **Blazing a trail**

It wasn't always easy being the first.

O'Neil remembers ugly moments, early in her time on the railways, when she was running freight lines downstate. In some of the smaller towns, she'd sometimes be compelled to eat on the train because the local diner refused to serve black patrons.

Eventually she made it a habit to pack peanut butter sandwiches and apples and bring them along.

And then there was the time a sheriff yelled at her for being in the engine room. He didn't realize she was driving the train.

There were other dark days during the era of separate bathrooms that weren't as nice as those reserved for white people.

O'Neil doesn't carry around a lot of bitterness over those times. She bears in mind that there were plenty of people who went before her, men and women whose own trials made her journey go a little bit more smoothly.

"It is what it is," she says. "It's real world."

### **Laying tracks**

O'Neil has no intention of rusting out in the proverbial rail yard. There will be more time to spend with her four grandkids, all of whom are fast approaching adulthood. She'll take more frequent rides on her beloved horse, Skipper, who is stabled in Crete, not far from her Steger home.

And she'll keep visiting the city often, commuting to her alma mater, Harlan Community Academy, where she'll be a mentor. She plans to focus



especially on young women with a mechanical aptitude.

She knows teens on the South Side live with gang wars and the scourge of drug abuse, just as she did four decades ago. She considers it the least she can do.

"I came up in the roaring '60s, and one of the things I learned was that if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem. You've got to give back," she says. "Just because you're from that environment, you don't have to fall prey to it. You have to step above it."

O'Neil stepped above it on that day all those years ago when she went to the Loop to see her boyfriend off to Vietnam. She ran into a friend who'd just landed a job at the big white building across the way on Jackson Boulevard, home to the old Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad.

Interested, she cocked an ear toward some of the gossip circulating among those poised to hire on; there was talk of an engineer, and his handsome salary.

"One of the girls said, 'I'm going to have to marry an engineer,'" O'Neil says. "And I looked at her, and I said, 'No, I'm going to BE an engineer.'"

She marched into a supervisor's office and announced her plan.

"He said, 'Vallorie, we don't hire women to be engineers,'" she recalls.

The man then reflected on the policy, talked to some people and found a way to bring O'Neil aboard. Starting as a per diem car clerk, she steadily made her way up through the ranks. She left an especially lasting mark as a trainer to those who came up after her, designing a program for assistant conductors that she launched in 1992.

"She was a lot of fun, trained us all safely," says Tom Olson, road foreman of the engine, formerly one of those under O'Neil's management and now her boss. "She is definitely a bright personality: intelligent, straightforward.

"She'll be missed, that's for sure."

O'Neil has trouble singling out one best day in her long professional life. There have been so many. But a conductor approached her one day not long ago.

"He said, 'Vallorie, you know that everybody that went through your training program is still working today?'" she says. "That made me feel pretty good."

Almost as good as sitting at the helm of the Rock, immersed in the controls, the sounds, the familiar scenes passing by. The engine lets loose a series of blasts, signaling its approach to those up the line.

"Sometimes I blow my horn with a little bit of rhythm to it, a little style to it," she laughs.

"It's the little things."

## **Ex-RTA boss: no expansion funds**

**Schlickman says we must 'stop raising expectations' that new transit lines can be built**

**October 4, 2010**

**BY MARY WISNIEWSKI** Transportation Reporter/[mwisniewski@suntimes.com](mailto:mwisniewski@suntimes.com)

Friday was RTA executive director Stephen Schlickman's last day. The Ride caught up with him before the office cake party, while he was cleaning out his office.

"I'm such a pack rat," Schlickman grumbled. He was going over mounds of paper from his five years in charge of the agency that oversees the CTA, Metra and Pace.

Schlickman will start Nov. 1 as the new director of the Urban Transportation Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago's College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs. The appointment is subject to approval by the university's board of trustees. Schlickman, who has 30 years of transportation experience, has taught at the center for the last 11 years.

On his last day at the RTA, Schlickman had some gloomy thoughts about funding for the region's transit system.

"We've got to stop raising expectations that we're going to be able to expand the system," said Schlickman. He pointed out that the CTA alone needs \$10 billion in capital funding over the next 10 years just to stay in a state of good repair, let alone create something new.

"There's not a feasible financial plan for any of the new start projects proposed by any of the agencies right now," said Schlickman. That includes the



proposed expansion of the Red Line to 130th Street.

"The federal government will not allow them to advance [out of the alternatives analysis phase] unless they put forward a credible financial plan, and they don't have it."

Schlickman noted that even though the state has passed a \$2.7 billion capital plan for public transit, there's no guarantee that the full amount will be funded. He said the RTA continues to be concerned about the CTA repeatedly digging into its capital funding to pay for operating expenses -- the CTA plans to take \$113 million from its capital funding in the 2011 budget.

But asking the state for more operating help "is like asking a poor person to pay another poor person money," Schlickman said.

None of the three transit agencies currently plans to raise fares in 2011. But the CTA might change its mind if it doesn't get a promised \$93 million from the state this year.

Schlickman said the agencies need to look at different alternatives for funding new projects. One example is that the RTA is in talks with the Illinois Tollway to develop a financial approach to building either a rail "Star Line" or Bus Rapid Transit to connect the suburban rail lines.

Schlickman also thinks the gas tax needs to be raised to adequately fund both the nation's highways and mass transit.

## **Next-Generation Fuel Cell-Powered Buses Introduced in Hartford**

SOUTH WINDSOR, Conn., Oct. 15 /PRNewswire/ - Four next-generation fuel cell-powered hybrid-electric transit buses were introduced today in Hartford, joining an earlier generation bus that began service in 2007. The new buses will be operated by Connecticut Transit (CTTransit) and are equipped with UTC Power fuel cell systems. UTC Power is a United Technologies Corp. (NYSE: UTX) company.

"We're delighted to have continued opportunities in our home state to demonstrate the benefits of fuel cell buses in real-world service," said UTC Power Vice President and General Manager Joe Triampo. Residents of Greater Hartford will now have more opportunities to catch a ride on a fuel cell bus and experience its benefits."

The new buses, part of the Federal Transit Administration's national Fuel Cell Bus Program, establish Hartford as a leader in adopting fuel cell technology to power transit buses. Only the Greater Oakland/San Francisco, Calif., area will have a larger fuel cell bus fleet in the United States, also equipped with UTC Power fuel cell systems.

The new model 40-foot Van Hool transit buses are lighter than the earlier generation fuel cell bus, which rolled out in 2007 and continues to operate on various routes in Greater Hartford, including the free downtown Star Shuttle route. Advanced lithium-ion battery systems and a more durable fuel cell powerplant are key features of the new buses.

The buses also will be instrumental in capturing real-time information, which will be used in developing more commercially viable fuel cells in the future.

Fuel cell buses run on hydrogen and produce no harmful tailpipe emissions; they emit only water vapor. Their clean operation can have an immediate positive impact on street-level emissions.

According to CTTransit's Assistant General Manager-Maintenance Services, Steve Warren, "The fuel cell bus we've been operating since 2007 has demonstrated that the technology works and its fuel efficiency is about two times better than a standard diesel-powered bus. With the reduced weight of the new model bus, our fuel economy should get even better. And drivers and the riding public tell us they love the quiet, smooth ride and appreciate the environmental benefits."

CTTransit is building a new garage to store up to six fuel cell buses, and the agency also plans to install a hydrogen fueling station on-site. Some of the buses will continue to refuel at a hydrogen station at UTC Power's headquarters in South Windsor, Conn.

"Connecticut is a world leader in the development and implementation of fuel cell technology, and today we begin another exciting chapter in its practical application," said U.S. Rep. John Larson (D-Conn.), who participated in today's event along with Conn. Dept. of Transportation Bureau Chief of Public Transportation James Redeker, Director of Planning and Program Development for the Federal Transit Administration Peter Butler, Conn. Dept. of Transportation Deputy Commissioner Al Martin, and UTC Power Vice President and General Manager Joe Triampo.



UTC Power has provided fuel cell powerplants for fleet transportation since 1998 and its made-in-Connecticut fuel cells have powered buses in the United States, Spain, Italy and Belgium. The company's PureMotion® Model 120 fuel cell system for transit buses represents more than nine years of research and development in partnership with the U.S. Army Tank-Automotive and Armaments Command and the U.S. Department of Transportation through the Northeast Advanced Vehicle Consortium. Based in South Windsor, Conn., UTC Power is the world leader in developing and producing fuel cells that generate power for buildings and for transportation, space and defense applications.

CTTransit is the state-owned bus transit system serving the Greater Hartford, New Haven, Stamford, Waterbury, New Britain, Meriden, Bristol and Wallingford areas. Van Hool of Belgium is one of the world's largest bus and coach manufacturers.

UTC Power is part of United Technologies Corp. (UTC), which provides energy-efficient products and services to the aerospace and building industries. UTC is a founding member of the U.S. Green Building Council and the Pew Center on Global Climate Change and has been named to the Dow Jones Sustainability Index every year since it was launched in 1999. For more information, please visit [www.utcpower.com](http://www.utcpower.com)

## Light-rail trains on a roll in Norfolk test

By Debbie Messina  
The Virginian-Pilot  
© October 7, 2010

### NORFOLK

Esther Pippins stepped off light-rail train No. 406 after a test run Wednesday night with a broad smile and declared it "a smooth ride."

"It's a great running light-rail vehicle," said Pippins, who managed and operated light rail in Los Angeles for 26 years and now heads up training for Hampton Roads Transit.

This week, she and several other light-rail operations managers started testing Norfolk's trains along a 3/4-mile section of track between Brambleton Avenue and Ballentine Boulevard behind Norfolk State University.

For now, the only way to glimpse the trains in motion is from Interstate 264. Next month, testing

will expand, and light-rail vehicles will run at speeds up to 55 mph east to the end of the line at Newtown Road, crossing busy streets and passing through neighborhoods.

"It's definitely going to be an adjustment," said Ben Simms, HRT's director of rail transportation. "We've got to get people used to trains operating in this area."

As the train approached a throng of reporters and cameras during a trial run, the only warning was a low humming sound followed by clanking bells, then a train horn as it got closer.

"These trains are very silent, so it's important to look before you cross the tracks," Simms said.

The train movements will be restricted to the area behind NSU for about a month. In a couple weeks, HRT's first class for light-rail operators will begin. For now, the testing occurs only at night, between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., because contractors need access to the track during the day to finish their work on the electrical system in the daylight.

"We're pretty much logging hours, back and forth, getting familiar with the vehicles," Simms said.

Next, the manufacturer of the vehicles, Siemens Transportation Systems Inc., will conduct its assessment of how well elements of the vehicles perform before releasing them to HRT for a 1,000 mile burn-in period.

HRT purchased the nine cars, and spare parts, for \$36 million. They were delivered late last year and sat idle because of cost overruns and delays while the track was constructed. Siemens' testing of the vehicles' brakes, lights, motors and other systems is expected to wrap up by the end of the year.

Once that's complete and the track west of NSU is electrified, the trains will start testing in the downtown area after the first of the year.

Meanwhile, downtowners will get a sneak preview of light rail next week when a vehicle is towed from NSU to the west end of the line in what's known as a clearance check. The exercise ensures that there's ample space for the trains to pass without striking something such as a pole or sign.

Some of the tests that began this week were to start in August, but HRT did not have some of its work completed and Siemens was not prepared, HRT spokesman Tom Holden said.



That delay, however, will not affect light rail's start-up in May.

"We're going to be ready," Simms said.

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## **2011 completion date for two TRAX lines announced**

Published: Friday, Oct. 1, 2010 12:21 a.m. MDT

By Steve Fidel, Deseret News

**SOUTH SALT LAKE** — The Utah Transit Authority announced on Thursday that the West Valley and Mid-Jordan TRAX lines are scheduled to be operational on Aug. 7, 2011.

The news came as UTA marked the halfway point in light- and heavy-rail expansion, which will add 70 miles of rail to the existing 64-mile rail network. The \$2.5 billion FrontLines 2015 program will include four TRAX lines and a 45-mile commuter-rail extension.

"We're going to open them both up at the same time," UTA General Manager Mike Allegra said of the two west-side TRAX expansion lines. "We're going to kick off a very state-of-the-art public involvement process to engage the entire west-side community to restructure the routes of the entire west side."

The rest of the expansion will include a TRAX line to the Salt Lake International Airport and Draper extension on the southern end of the main north-south TRAX line, and a 44-mile extension of the FrontRunner line to Provo.

"There isn't any other transit authority in the United States that is doing something this size and is on schedule and under budget like we are here in Utah," said Greg Hughes, UTA board chairman and state legislator.

"We have created more than 2,700 direct jobs and 2,600 indirect jobs — more than 5,000 jobs to help out in our tough economic times," Hughes said of the construction project. "If our economy cooperates and revenues arrive, we could be as much as two years ahead of schedule" when the project is complete.

UTA expects the current daily ridership, of 50,000, to double by the time the expansion is complete.

Thursday's announcement was made in a new \$51 million maintenance facility at 2264 S. 900 West in South Salt Lake that used to be an expansive ZCMI warehouse. The facility is uniquely equipped to maintain new light-rail cars that will have their mechanical systems overhead, allowing the passenger area to be positioned closer to the ground. Mechanics will use a series of overhead catwalks to access rail cars' mechanical systems.

Converting an existing building "saved taxpayers half of what a maintenance facility like this would cost," Allegra said.

The maintenance facility will employ about 200 people and can store and maintain as many as 100 light-rail cars.

If the weather and economy cooperate, the UTA says the Draper and Airport lines could be open by 2013, and the FrontRunner expansion the year after that.

## **Union Depot will get a major face-lift**

The Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority Board signed off on a \$149 million construction package to turn the historic building into a transportation hub.

By CHRIS HAVENS, Star Tribune

Last update: September 22, 2010

The historic Union Depot in St. Paul is on the road to restoration.

The Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority on Tuesday approved a \$149 million construction contract for the renovation and transformation of the building into a transportation hub. The vote was 6 to 1, with Commissioner Janice Rettman dissenting.

Preparation work will start soon and major construction will get underway in January. Completion is expected in late 2012.

Mortenson Construction, the project's lead contractor, was awarded a \$5.5 million contract for design in January. Tuesday's action means Mortenson guarantees the project will be completed at or under the \$148.7 million budget.

The entire project, including building acquisition and construction, will cost about \$243 million. So far, \$139 million has been found from a mix of sources. County officials are seeking federal



grants, state money and other funds to pay for the remaining \$104 million.

Rail Authority Board Chairman Jim McDonough said he's confident the project will get some federal grant money, although it's highly competitive. He also noted that if the grants don't come through, the Rail Authority will be able to pay for the project without having to raise the levy.

#### Historic character honored

The block-long building faces 4th Street and sits between Wacouta and Sibley Streets in Lowertown. It was built between 1918 and 1923 on the site of an earlier train station that burned in 1915. It was put on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

It has been about 40 years since the depot was a functional transportation center, and Ramsey County officials have made its renovation a priority over the years.

Many of the design ideas call for cleaning and bringing back the historic structure.

Work will be done in coordination with the building of the Central Corridor light-rail line, which will end at the depot, and the new Lafayette Bridge. Other rail and bus service, cars and bikes will link to it the depot. Amtrak and Greyhound have expressed interest in moving to the facility.

Project planners told commissioners Tuesday that there will be road closures and other obstructions during portions of construction. Christos, the restaurant inside the depot, will likely be closed for four months next year.

"We're ready to put shovels in the ground," McDonough said.

Chris Havens • 612-673-4148

## Canadian Navy Takes Delivery of Three Setra TopClass S 417 Motorcoaches for Recruiting Efforts

**Greensboro, NC (May 13, 2010) –**

Daimler Buses North America delivered three Setra TopClass S 417 motorcoaches to representatives of the Canadian Navy at the National Defense Headquarters in Ottawa. The three Naval Display Buses will be used as mobile recruiting coaches, and have been designed to support the Navy's recruiting efforts.

"The Setra TopClass S 417 coaches serve as an excellent rolling billboard and help us present the Navy in an extremely professional manner," said Navy Lt. Chuck Dufton. "Potential applicants enter the Naval Display Buses at the rear of the coach and are greeted with state-of-the-art computer kiosks to provide information about the employment opportunities the Navy has to offer. Naval personnel and Canadian Forces recruiters are onboard to meet with potential applicants and answer their individual questions. Once finished, the individual then exits through the front of the coach."



These Setra TopClass S 417 coaches are a custom order for the Navy. The coaches are wrapped with vivid graphics depicting warships and various sailors at work and are equipped with state-of-the-art kiosks and computer systems to provide information to the Canadian public and employment opportunities to potential sailors.

"We are very proud to continue our relationship with the Canadian Department of National Defense," said Tom Cheek, vice president of sales for Daimler Buses North America. "These three Setra S 417 coaches are part of a standing offer and showcase a very unique coach for the Canadian Navy's recruitment efforts."

The coaches will travel around the Ontario, Quebec, and Prairie regions of Canada looking to attract and recruit sailors for the Navy.

In 2007, Daimler Buses received an order for 30 Setra S 417 motorcoaches from the Canadian Department of National Defense. The offer was awarded following Daimler Buses' successful completion of a qualification and standing offer



award process. The coaches are being used to transport troops within Canada.

## **Daimler Buses North America Delivers 25 Orion VII CNG Transit Buses to California Transit Agencies.**

**Oriskany, N.Y. (June 17, 2010)** – Daimler Buses North America announced today the delivery of 25 Orion VII Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) transit buses to four transit agencies in California. The deliveries have been made to Sonoma County Transit (10), Visalia Transit (7), Union City Transit (6), and the City of Turlock (2).

"Orion was one of the early pioneers in CNG-fueled transit buses in the early 1990s with our deliveries to Sacramento Regional Transit," said Patrick Scully, chief commercial officer for Daimler Buses North America. "The early success has allowed us to optimize our product for not only customers across the country, but also for these California properties."

The Orion VII CNG buses are a low-floor design that optimizes safety and comfort, while also providing efficiency. The frame is specially designed with a true heavy-duty construction, designed specifically for the extra weight of the CNG fuel tanks. These models also share the same modern, European design as the traditional diesel model.

"We look forward to the successful introduction of these new buses in these California cities and to doing our part to reduce emissions and providing reliable service to customers in Sonoma, Visalia, Union City, and Turlock," added Scully.

## **GHL Worldwide Chauffeured Transportation joins the MCI family with the purchase of a fully outfitted J4500 coach**

**SCHAUMBURG, IL — October 4, 2010 —** Houston-based GHL, a family owned chauffeured transportation company that started with a single used limousine back in the early 1990s, recently purchased its first MCI® J4500 model to serve its expanding corporate convention and event business.

"We've been going to bus shows for years and we zeroed in on MCI because aerodynamically there's no coach that's quite like it and it's really pleasing to the eye, and it's an extraordinarily well-built coach," said Kimberly McLea, president of GHL Worldwide Chauffeured Transportation, created from the 2001 merger of Greater Houston Limousine and the McLea family's original company, Royal Coach Limousines. The company's 45 car, limousine and van fleet did include one previous coach, a competitor's model that's being retired



As America's best-selling coach, GHL's new MCI J4500 is a fully appointed demo that includes a top-of-the-line interior with wireless and Blaupunkt video and stereo system. It also features a Detroit Diesel Series 60 engine and an Allison B500 6-speed automatic transmission with prognostics capability.

Kimberly and her husband Brett come from a family of entrepreneurs, though Brett was in sales for a flooring company and Kimberly was at home raising their four children when Brett decided to start driving a limousine part-time to bring in more income. "Our first limo was an older model — we were happy with the extra income and we'd use it for weekend airport transport and weddings. But right around 1990, Brett realized that he really liked driving and we started talking about doing it full-time." Royal Coach Limousines was formed.

Kimberly ran the office while Brett drove and expanded vehicle operations. After their decision to buy GHL — "we did it because we needed to get bigger," Kimberly explained — the new combined company faced an immediate chill in 2001 after the September 11 attacks. "We're at our best when times are tough, aren't we? It forced us to be better thinkers."



Today, the children are joining the business. Daughter Ashley, 25, is now handling customer service for all the company's operations. "She's exceptional. She has a business degree and we're hoping to groom her to keep this company going another generation." To learn more visit [www.ghlimo.com](http://www.ghlimo.com).

## **Swarthout adds luxury touches to new MCI® D4505**

**SCHAUMBURG, IL — August 6, 2010** — Through carefully chosen options and additions, Swarthout Coaches, Inc., Ithaca, New York, is proving that a coach lauded for its value also can be applauded for its luxury. Swarthout's new MCI D4505, delivered in June, offers premium seating with 110-volt outlets at every other seat, a DVD entertainment system, Wi-Fi and other upper-end finishing touches.



"I was looking for a good, solid, dependable coach. We chose the D4505 because it fit our budget and anticipated lower operating costs, which mirrors people's spending habits right now," said Robert Swarthout, president and owner of the 60-year-old company. "We opted for a good looking interior, new exterior graphics and aluminum wheels. Also, we put Wi-Fi on all of our coaches."

Swarthout, which runs a fleet of 12 coaches, half of them MCI D models, does a lot of its business with area colleges, including Cornell. "The Wi-Fi goes over really well with the college kids, and we expect the electrical outlets to be popular as well," said Swarthout, who says the company's latest D4505 is the first new MCI it has purchased since 1998. Swarthout also does group-charter work and offers trips to New York-area attractions, casinos and entertainment venues.

The new D4505 is powered by a Detroit Diesel engine and Allison transmission. The D4505 is part of the best-selling model family in motor-coach history.

Swarthout, which has been serving the New York area since 1950 under Swarthout family leadership, started with a single school bus. The company, which employs 27 staff, prides itself on its safety procedures. To learn more visit, [www.goswarthout.com](http://www.goswarthout.com).

## **Motor Coach Industries goes to Washington, participates in APTA "Telling Our Story" initiative to Congress, touts job creation in clean-energy economy**

**SCHAUMBURG, IL — September 27, 2010** — It's no fairytale. Increased federal investment in public transportation leads to job creation, a healthier economy and better connected communities. So said transit workers, riders and equipment manufacturers who told their stories at a rally on Capitol Hill September 22, urging Congress to increase funding for public transportation by passing a multi-year surface transportation authorization bill.



In support of the "Telling Our Story" initiative created by the American Public Transit Association, Motor Coach Industries put its MCI Commuter Coach, with APTA's signature campaign graphics, front and center in the caravan that converged on Capitol Hill.

"You couldn't miss the message on our 45-foot coach, but more importantly the rally provided an opportunity to be heard by key representatives," said Michael Melaniphy, MCI vice president of public sector, who spoke at the rally.



Melaniphy's message was about job creation. "MCI is an example of a company that is creating skilled, green jobs by building clean-diesel, diesel-electric hybrid and CNG models used by transit agencies across the country on commuter routes. In many cases, private operators are also beneficiaries of funding, with opportunities to provide service on rural routes."

MCI has been a fixture in the transit market for 40 years. More than 4,000 MCI coaches currently serve commuter transit. Major customers include New Jersey Transit and Metropolitan Transit Authority of New York as well as transit systems in Houston, Salt Lake City and Atlanta, among others.

With a final assembly plant in the U.S., MCI can supply D-Series coaches that are compliant with the Federal Buy America requirements. In addition, MCI's D-series coaches have met the Federal Transit Administration's Altoona accelerated life cycle testing requirements.

APTA's Online Wall features video testimonials of riders and community leaders speaking to the benefits of public transportation during the rally at [www.apta.com](http://www.apta.com). All content on the wall was submitted by APTA members, and APTA plans for the wall to become the collective voice of Americans expressing the importance of Public Transportation.

## **Motor Coach Industries to showcase Greyhound's new model at BusCon**

### **Greyhound goes for extra legroom, plush seating, Wifi, power outlets, three-point seatbelts in 70 new MCI® D4505 coaches**

**SCHAUMBURG, IL — September 24, 2010 —** Built by Schaumburg-based Motor Coach Industries, the MCI D4505 model is already a best-seller. Greyhound Lines has the model taking its turn as a trend-setter. As part of Greyhound's initiative to modernize its fleet, the company is taking delivery of 70 new MCI D4505 coaches, all offering an unprecedented level of passenger comfort and techno-friendly amenities.

MCI is showcasing Greyhound's new model to industry peers at BusCon, an equipment show attended by tour and charter operators, public transit and related ground transportation operators,

at Navy Pier, Chicago, September 29 and September 30.

Inside the coaches, Greyhound has added plush leather seats for 50, rather than the conventional 55, to give passengers extra legroom. Wireless Internet access and electrical outlets at every seat allow passengers the convenience of using and powering their digital devices. Additionally, each coach is wheelchair accessible, and comes equipped with clean-diesel engine technology consisting of a Detroit Diesel Series 60 engine paired with an Allison B500 transmission.

"Greyhound's upgrades demonstrate the versatility that the MCI D4505 offers operators and the company's commitment to give passengers a new level of comfort with conveniences that no other mode of transportation offers," said Tom Sorrells, MCI president and CEO. "Historically, Greyhound has led the industry in model trends. This is again the case with their latest MCI model additions."

MCI models have powered Greyhound's fleet for decades, dating back to Greyhound's purchase of the MC-5 model for its western routes. Starting in the 1960s, MCI and Greyhound worked together on the design of the MC-Series; models MC-6 through MC-9. The rest of the industry embraced the MC-Series as well, launching MCI's reputation for reliability and one of the most successful eras in coach history. Greyhound continued relying on the MC-Series, eventually making the MC-12 an important part of its fleet before buying its first 45-foot 102DL3 in the 1990s. The D-Series has gone on to become the best-selling model in motor coach history.

Greyhound continues to be an influential force on MCI product design, and the company is known for requesting specifications that eventually set the standard within the coach industry. Today, nearly 90 percent of the vehicles in Greyhound's fleet are MCI coaches.

"It's an exciting time for us travel, and Greyhound is again leading the way," said Sorrells. "MCI is pleased to be part of their future."

## **Two new Volvo 9700s join Minnesota Coaches fleet**

**Sainte-Claire, QC, August 4, 2010 —**Family-owned Minnesota Coaches, a leading school bus and motorcoach operator in the North Star State, welcomed its first Volvo 9700 in June, with a



second one scheduled for delivery soon. The new additions to the company's fleet of 13 Prevost H Series XL2 and X3-45 coaches mark its first foray into Volvo ownership, and results to date are highly promising.



Affordability and fuel efficiency were key factors in Minnesota Coaches' purchase decision. The 9700's D13 engine and I-Shift transmission are among the most fuel-efficient powertrains on the market today. That translates into significant savings over the service life of the vehicle, says Joe Krois, head of motor coach operations for the company.

"The 9700 is rated at 8 mpg. Over 750,000 miles at current fuel prices, that works out to around \$100,000 less in fuel cost. Even with variations due to real-life driving conditions, that's a pretty convincing argument!"

Other features also attracted company attention, notes Mr. Krois, including extensive on-board amenities, excellent passenger visibility, and full three-point seat belts—a plus for the school and college market given growing safety concerns among school boards and lawmakers. Generous access to demo coaches from Prevost also helped tip the balance.

Joe Krois is already impressed by the 9700's comfort and is eager to crank up the radiant floor heating system during Minnesota's legendary winter cold, especially after the 9700 demonstrated outstanding air conditioning performance during its maiden voyage. "My driver was crossing the Mojave Desert with a Polish boys choir en route from L.A. to New York City. He called to tell me it was 103 degrees outside and 68 degrees in the bus. He said life was good." No doubt choir members were singing the coach's praises too!

With its contemporary lines and masterful custom paint job by Mark Polzin of Budget Truck and Auto, the Volvo 9700 makes a proud addition to the Minnesota Coaches fleet.

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