

## Few Request Airbag On/Off Switches

"Very few car owners are requesting the airbag on/off switches," says Marianne Macina, CPCU, regional manager for Western Insurance Information Service (WIIS). "As of the end of January, only 6,888 authorization filings were made for air bag on-off switches in the U.S."

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the number one reason (4,246) cited for airbag on-off switches was not enough distance from the airbag on the driver side. The second most popular reason (1,563) cited for the switch was positioning of a child on the passenger side. Medical reasons were third with 946 requests.

In Oregon, 113 car owners applied requesting permission for 57 driver side airbag switches, 29 passenger side only and 27 requests for driver and passenger airbag switches. 198 car owners in Washington requested authorization for 100 driver side switches, 62 passenger side only and 36 requests for driver and passenger sides. In Idaho, the numbers are much lower—32 total requests: 17 for the driver side, 4 for the passenger side only, and 11 for both front seat positions.

Macina says these numbers show that car owners recognize the value of airbags. However, she cites a warning from the Insurance Institute For High-

way Safety (IHS): "Airbags aren't alternatives to safety belts. Designed to work with belts, airbags provide additional protection, especially to people's heads and chests, in serious frontal crashes."

"Only if it isn't possible to get at least 10 inches from the steering wheel should you consider an on/off switch," Macina says. "Even if you use a safety belt, sitting this close without an airbag puts your face at risk."

According to Macina, without an airbag, you're still at risk from the steering wheel itself, the dashboard and the windshield. "The better solution may be installing pedal extenders that cost about the same or even a little less than an airbag on/off switch," she says, adding: "This way you have the combined safety benefits of your shoulder and lap belt and an airbag!"

Children are the main concern when considering the airbag on/off switch for the passenger side. "It's safer to put kids in the back," says Macina. The IHS says there's only a rare need to switch off a passenger airbag—for example, when an infant with medical problems requires constant observation and the driver is the only adult in the car.

If you often transport too many kids to put them all in back and worry about keeping the child in front from getting

too close to the passenger airbag, you may wish to consider getting an on/off switch, according to the IHS.

Macina says the insurance industry doesn't want you to discount airbag risks. "Don't discount the benefits of airbags either," she warns. "If you're one of the very few for whom airbags may pose a risk, then an on/off switch may be appropriate. Just remember how few people really need on/off switches and how easily they can be misused."

According to the IHS, if you turn off your airbag, you'd be foregoing important protection in the event of a serious frontal crash. "When you know the facts," says Macina, "it becomes clear that leaving airbags intact is almost always best. From the number of authorization requests, it appears as if car owners across the country agree with this philosophy."

"However, the insurance industry does believe that people who have qualified and received authorization for on/off switches should be able to get them installed." According to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), Air Bag Service in Issaquah, WA, is performing this service for between \$350 and \$450. They can be reached toll-free at 800-2airbag.

## Transportation Projects Awarded to Portland & Gresham

Washington DC—Congressman Earl Blumenauer today announced that 10 major transportation projects for the Portland metropolitan area have been approved by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

"Nearly everyone in the metropolitan area—bike riders, joggers, pedestrians, transit riders, and drivers—will see the benefits of these projects," said Blumenauer.

Under this legislation Oregon will receive \$337.180 million annually, which is a 58.2% increase over the current law.

**South/North Light Rail:** The bill fully authorizes the South/North light rail project which is currently in the preliminary engineering phase.

**Westside Light Rail:** The bill includes the final funds needed to complete the Westside light rail which is due to open in September, 1998.

**South Rivergate Overcrossing:** The bill authorizes \$13 million for a rail/road overcrossing at the entrance of Port of Portland's marine termi-

nal, the region's largest concentration of warehouses and distribution facilities.

**Broadway Bridge Rehabilitation:** The bill authorizes \$10 million to repair and retrofit the Broadway bridge which was built in 1914.

**Lovejoy Ramp Removal:** The bill authorizes \$7.7 million to replace the bridge's out dated access ramp. The removal will enable development of housing in Portland's River District.

**Historic Columbia River Highway:** The bill authorizes \$2 million to continue restoration and preservation of the Historic Columbia River Highway. It includes construction of a pedestrian and bicycle path under I-84 at Tanner Creek, continuing to Moffett Creek. Also included is the restoration of the Tanner Creek and Moffett Creek bridges.

**Naito Parkway Improvements:** The bill includes \$1.5 million for parkway improvements which includes repaving, additional bikeways, new wheelchair ramps, and in the River District, new sidewalks, the

addition of signalized intersections and pedestrian crossing, lights, and street trees.

**Traffic Signal Priority:** The bill provides \$4.5 million to equip 800 buses with devices known as optical emitters. When these buses approach traffic lights, the emitters will send a signal activating the light to turn green. The bill also includes funding to install signal receiving equipment at 100 key intersections.

**Pedestrian to Max Boulevards in Gresham:** The bill allocates \$1.282 million for the design and construction of pedestrian-friendly boulevards on two major arterials, linking with phase one of the pedestrian to Max improvements currently under construction.

**Tri-Met Bus Grants:** This grant for \$3.5 million will be used to purchase additional buses needed when Portland's Westside light rail system opens in September. Tri-Met, the region's transit agency, will be expanding the bus service to provide access to the new line.

## 1998 Volunteer Centers' 6th Annual Human Race Accepting Registrations

The Volunteer Centers' are once again gearing up for their annual Human Race. The Volunteer Center in Portland and The Volunteer Center in Vancouver will again join forces to create a great walk and fun run in beautiful Vancouver. The event has been scheduled for Saturday, July 25.

In its short five year life, the Human Race has raised over \$500,000 in contributions for participating non-profit organizations. The event is designed to help any non-profit agency or organization raise much needed funds.

The event works as a pledge drive for 5K walk and run from Waterworks Park throughout fort Vancouver Historic site and Officer's row. By bringing hundreds of community service groups together, each to raise their own funds, the Human Race creates a collaborative event showcasing the services available in our community and non-profits to raise funds for their organizations. We coordinate all details of the event, provide materials and guide people through the process, all they have to do is to tap into their support network," said Sheridan Thompson,

Human Race Event Coordinator. Many groups and individuals that have participated in the past have already signed on for this year.

There will be several informational meetings scheduled in the near future for interested non-profits and other organizations to attend.

For more information and registration details contact one of the following volunteer centers:  
**In Vancouver:** The Volunteer Center at 360-694-6577  
**In Portland:** The Human Services Council at 503-222-1355

## Tri-Met Proposes Smaller Lift Pass Increase

Tri-Met is reducing a proposed fare increase for the Lift in response to customer comments.

Tri-Met monthly pass is now proposed to increase \$10, effective Sept. 1, 1998. The new pass would cost \$30. Earlier proposals suggested eliminating the monthly pass or raising the fee to \$44. The Lift provides door-to-door rides for seniors and people with disabilities.

Other elements of the earlier proposals remain intact:

- Monthly passes would allow unlimited rides and would be non-transferable
- A 20-ride punch card for \$23 would be established, providing a 10 cent

discount per ride. Each of the 20 rides could be used at any time and shared with others.

• Lift cash and ticket prices would increase 25 cents -- the new cash and ticket price would be \$1.25.

Lift fares currently cover less than 5% of the cost to provide each ride, which is \$15. Discounts currently offered through monthly and annual passes have resulted in frequent Lift passengers paying as little as 35 to 40 cents per ride.

The citizens Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT) will review the revised proposal in a public hearing on April 15. The meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. with public

comment at 10:20 a.m. The meeting is scheduled in the Portland Building, 1120 SW Fifth Ave., Second floor, Room "C." Comments are also invited by writing to: Tri-Met Board of Directors, 4012 SE 17th Ave., Portland, OR 97202; or by calling 238-RIDE (7433), TTY 238-5811, or by e-mailing to comments@tri-met.org

The Tri-Met Board of Directors will formally hear the proposal, along with other proposed general fare increases at its April 22 meeting. The Board meeting begins at 3:30 p.m. in Gresham City Hall, 1333 NW Eastman Parkway. The public is invited.

# Business

# and INDUSTRY

## Two New Vice Presidents Join American Minorities Media

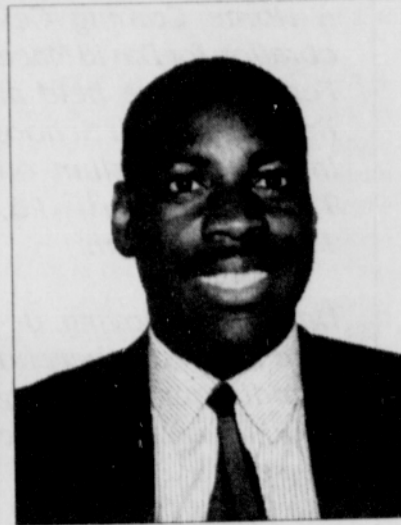
American Minorities Media is pleased to announce that Mr. Kent Carthan and Mr. Tony Jones have joined our company as Vice Presidents of National Sales. Every African-American publication will benefit from their proven success in bringing business to this marketplace.

Mr. Carthan and Mr. Jones join a seasoned team of minority professionals at American Minorities Media already providing unsurpassed account management, media placement services, and cutting-edge technical innovation to advertisers, agencies, and publishers.

As proud sponsor of the National Newspaper Publishers Association and West Coast Black Publishers Association, and as the leading official representative of the National Association of Hispanic Publications, we are in the best possible position to cross-sell advertising into the African-Ameri-



**Kent Carthan, Vice President American Minorities Media**



**Tony Jones, Vice President American Minorities Media**

can print marketplace.

As always, Luisa Donis, AMM Market Director, will continue to handle all publication information and media recommendations to our national sales staff. She may be

reached at 805-968-8007 Ext. 114.

Please join us in welcoming Mr. Tony Jones and Mr. Kent Carthan to American Minorities Media effective April 6.

## Youth Jam '98

Annual City Wide Youth Enrichment Program

"Releasing Our Faith In '98"

April 24, 25 & 26, 1998

Friday: April 24th @ 7pm

Worship Service at Community A.M.E. Zion Church  
3605 E. 13th St. Vancouver, WA.

Saturday: April 25th @ 9am-3pm

Mentor & Fellowship Day at Bagley Community Center  
4100 Plomondon Vancouver, WA.

Sunday: April 26th @ 11am

Worship Experience at Community A.M.E. Zion Church  
3605 E. 13th St. Vancouver, WA.

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