

**Rob Ocampo**

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**Subject:** FW: August 30, 2006 Venues Today



# VENUES**today**

The news behind the headlines

Dear April,

**August 30, 2006 VOL. V, Number XXVIII ISSN 1547-4143**

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## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I think there's a misconception that beverage sales are solely driven by customer's desire to satiate thirst...what I increasingly find is that many sales are driven by curiosity. People are more willing to try new things at one of my events, than say, at a grocery store. It's like eating funnel cake once a year at the fair, only this is healthy."  
— *Event Organizer Gary Sandham on the success of concept drinks as concessions.*

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## IN THIS ISSUE...

- Targeted Marketing Pays Off For Hong Kong Convention Centre
  - Texas Town Contracts Private Management For Its Fairgrounds
  - Victoria Gardens Cultural Centers Opening has the Industry's Attention
  - Divas Rock Both Coasts
  - Modern Marquee Serves As Community Message Board
  - Beverages Go Unique to Boost Sales
  - Year-Round Merchandise Op Marketed to Venues
  - Short Takes
  - Help Wanted
- 

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## VENUE NEWS



*The Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre*

**TARGETED MARKETING PAYS OFF FOR HONG KONG CONVENTION CENTRE**

The Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre has achieved its most successful year in its 18-year history, with record results across all of its business units.

Communications Manager Gloria Fong linked the boost in revenue and occupancy to increased participation from Mainland China and a construction boom that has brought 30,000 hotel rooms to the city center.

Fong reported that the fiscal year ending on June 30 brought 1,322 events to the center, bringing in \$105 million in revenue, an 11.7% increase over the previous year. Exhibition revenues were up 12%, bringing in \$53 million, while food and beverage sales brought in \$38 million to the center. Convention revenue climbed 51.2% to \$6.5 million.

Fong said her facility, which is owned by the Hong Kong government and self-operated and managed, has engaged in a selection process to target groups with high potential for revenue — an effort that has boosted the occupancy rate 5% to 58% for the year. The convention center has implemented a sales team to seek out major events with high revenue potential.

Their efforts brought the center the Vinexpo Asia-Pacific, the largest wine expo in Asia. The event had traditionally been held in Japan and China, but Fong said her group was able to recapture the expo after an eight-year lull from hosting the event.

“Our success from that event was our repositioning not as a regional convention center destination, but as a global competitor for business,” she said. “We’ve taken great strides to explain that impact to our clients.”

The Vinexpo Asia-Pacific brought over 6,883 visitors to the convention center for the three-day event, and the uncorking of 60,000 bottles of wine. Fong estimated that 20% of the visitors came from Mainland China. Growing consumer demands from the developing nation are driving trade shows at the center, she said.

“It’s convenient for the exhibitors because of our location, and it’s accessible to Chinese residents. We will remain competitive because of our prime location. We have the reputation, the trade policy and a very stable government. It’s much easier to do business here, then in Shanghai or other parts of the region,” she said.

Fong also pointed to an increasing availability of cheap flights to the island city coupled with an increase in Chinese disposable income. Still, lingering concerns about intellectual property rights issues, especially regarding software and technical design, has caused some major corporations to shy away from the center.

In response, the convention center has hired several intellectual property attorneys to work on site and assist with exhibitors concerns with protecting their proprietary information.

“If there is ever an issue or concern, the attorneys can respond right away,” she said.

The strongest business the center does is consumer trade shows, she said. The convention center just completed a computer show that brought through an estimated 30,000 people. The convention center also held a comic book show that drew in 48,000 visitors and is planning a giant book fair — the biggest of its kind in the region — for 68,000 people.

“Trade shows are a much bigger priority for us because they bring in visitors from

outside of Hong Kong and they spend a lot in the city," she said.

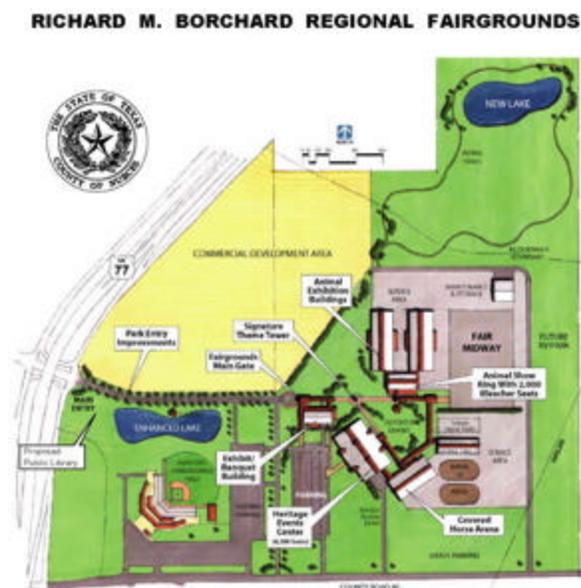
The center also got a big boost on the international stage when it hosted the Sixth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference in December. The long negotiations and bargaining sessions at the expo transformed the convention center into a 24-hour operation with deals going late into the night.

"On the night before closing, the director of food and beverages told me that 360 cups of coffee had been consumed that evening," she said. "It was an interesting situation because we had no real idea when the meetings would close. We had to simply wait in the main hall for the closing ceremony and be ready to go, whenever that was going to be. It was a real challenge, but it improved our visibility on the world stage."

The center is currently planning a 215,000 square-foot expansion and the construction of a new exhibit hall, and the Hong Kong government recently undertook an initiative to outfit the center with high-speed wireless connections. — Dave Brooks

*Interviewed for this article: Gloria Fong, (852) 2582 7918.*

### **Schematics for the Richard M. Borchard Regional Fairgrounds, Robstown, Texas**



### **TEXAS TOWN CONTRACTS PRIVATE MANAGEMENT FOR ITS FAIRGROUNDS**

Private management "is becoming typical in the fair industry," observed John Michael, Naismith Engineering, who works for Nueces County as project manager/engineer on the new Richard M. Borchard Regional Fairgrounds, Robstown, Texas, near Corpus Christi. He attended last year's International Association of Fairs & Expositions convention in Las Vegas, along with county officials, and found that to be the case.

Soon thereafter, the county went out to bid for private management of the new \$32 million complex, which is slated to

open in December. The major tenant is the Nueces County Junior Livestock Show, but the plan is to create a new fair for the county as well, Michael said.

Global Spectrum was selected to manage the grounds and Kelvin Moore has been tapped by that firm to be manager.

Tyner Little, executive assistant to the city judge, said the city has a 45-day memorandum of understanding with Global Spectrum to operate, book and provide pre-opening services for the new venue. The hope is to finalize a five-year, fee-plus-incentive deal by the end of September, Little said. The county will pay expenses and split the revenue with Global Spectrum. "We want to do better than we do now. What we have now loses money," Little said.

"Contracts in Texas are very, very complicated. We have strict purchasing laws," Little

added. "We're trying to complete a relationship where they don't have to come back to the county every time they want to do a contract." There is public money in the facility, so the city must be careful how a private entity is paid.

Michael said the county issued Certificates of Obligation to fund the complex. The first phase was to build the 4,500-seat baseball stadium, home to the Coastal Bend Aviators, which opened in 2002.

The \$32 million paid for the land and the fairgrounds complex, which includes a new 48,000 square foot show barn with grandstand seating for 2,000; two animal exhibition barns of 50,000 square feet each, and a 32,000 square foot banquet hall with full kitchen and offices. The next phase is a 62,000 square foot equestrian center with a covered horse arena, grandstand seating for 1,000, concessions, restrooms and a horse barn with 150 stalls. That phase will be complete by next July, Michael said.

Bookings will be predominantly agricultural-oriented, Michael said. All buildings will have concrete floors so they can do boat shows, RV shows, and country peddler shows (arts and crafts), he said. "There might be some small concerts."

Moore said Global Spectrum is projecting 260-270 events the first fiscal year. He is scheduled to arrive at the venue Sept. 5. When contacted, Moore has just visited the Kentucky State Fair, Louisville, to soak up the fair business, something he will be producing.

Global Spectrum moved Moore from the Overland Park (Kan.) Convention Center, but he is a native of South Texas. He agreed that the business at the new fairgrounds would be predominantly agricultural and rodeo. Global Spectrum will also book the baseball stadium during the off-season.

The city isn't interested in cannibalizing the concert business in town, Michael noted. "We just built a new 10,000-seat arena in downtown Corpus [Christi]."

But Nueces County has never had a fairgrounds. "We have a junior livestock show held for two weeks in January every year. We are considered the largest population center in the state of Texas without a county fair." The junior livestock show raises over \$1 million in scholarship monies every year, "but we don't have a fair to go with it. This would ultimately allow us to have a fair, possibly at the same time as the junior livestock show," Michael said.

The new complex replaces a 60-year-old venue, Michael said. The city originally purchased 250 acres for \$500,000, inside the Robstown city limits, for the new county fairgrounds. The site is located at "the intersection of Highway 44 and 77, where Brownsville goes to Houston and Laredo comes to Corpus, which is called the 'Crossroads.'"

The project started with 165 acres, Michael recalled, but "when we hired Bullock Smith & Partners, who is our planner, we decided we needed more land. We were going to set aside some of the front acreage for restaurants and hotels, and other commercial development. The county ended up with over 500 acres, 250 of which are the fairgrounds. They're working on options for the rest."

"One thing you hear from developers and fairgrounds complexes around the country is 'buy as much land as you can afford'," Michael said. "Once you build your facility, everyone will want to buy the land next to it."

The Robstown/Nueces County officials seem to have done their homework. That's why

they opted for private management. "When we went to IAFE in Las Vegas, we found that years ago, in the 40s and 50s, communities built agricultural facilities, big metal barns, relatively inexpensive to build, and they housed an event that happened once a year. When you try to rebuild these facilities in today's dollars, you can't justify spending that kind of capital for a once-a-year event. So everyone is going to these multi-purpose use facilities so you can justify why you are building your community a new 4H or FFA facility. It's used throughout the year.

"Primarily county governments run these facilities and they are not in the entertainment business, so they are beginning to look at private sector management," Michael said. Only Global Spectrum responded to the county's RFP, Michael said.

His firm is also building a \$19.3 million agricultural facility which will include an equestrian center in San Patricio County. "We'll start design this fall. It's also Bullock Smith," Michael concluded. — Linda Deckard

Interviewed for this story: John Michael, (361) 814-9900;; Tyner Little, (361) 888-0444; Kelvin Moore, (913) 706-3649



***Kurt Swanson, TMA Inc., and Kevin McArdle, city community services director; the new Victoria Gardens Cultural Center, Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., opening night.***

### **VICTORIA GARDENS CULTURAL CENTER OPENING HAS THE INDUSTRY'S ATTENTION**

RANCHO CUCAMONGA, Calif. — As far as Kevin McArdle knows, the new Victoria Gardens Cultural Center here is the first such venue to combine a theater, library and meeting hall in one integrated environment and then place it as an entertainment destination in a new shopping environment.

McArdle, who is community services director for Rancho Cucamonga, assumes that is true because of the number of phone calls he has received from all over the country, "some developer driven, some artistically driven asking what we think about our position and how it will work. From the shopping center orientation, there's an absolute, definite trend to build these outdoor downtown environments instead of indoor malls.

The goal for the developer is to create a community downtown and cultural facilities are an important part of downtown."

The new cultural center was dedicated Aug. 18, on time and on budget at \$33 million, McArdle said. "We set this date a year ago." The first paid performance will be Sept. 8 with Sheena Easton which is sold out.

The venue includes the 536-seat Lewis Family Playhouse, Celebration Hall which has a banquet capacity of 300, and the Rancho Cucamonga Library, all connected. The tagline is "everything from page to stage."

Asked about the small size of the theater, McArdle called it perfect because "I have five sold out shows. In terms of our mission — theater for young audiences and theater for families — and in our geographic position, it's just the right size to be able to sell out with the right ticket price with the right kind of shows. Anything bigger, I would have been chasing the dollars and would have priced myself out of the market."

The venue is meant to showcase the community. Celebration Hall will host weddings, banquets, books signings and food fairs, along with corporate gatherings.

There is no dedicated paid parking, except valet. Two parking structures on either side of the cultural center park 2,100 cars, but are shared with the other mall tenants.

The operating budget for the three-in-one center is \$5 million, according to Susan Sluka, cultural arts supervisor. She said the theater and Celebration Hall should generate about \$3 million in operating income. The city will subsidize the rest, partially because of the library.

Sponsors have contributed nearly \$5 million for an endowment fund that will help cover operating costs and pay for productions, McArdle said.

The outreach to school groups has been particularly successful. To date, 14 bus trips have been booked, McArdle said on dedication night.

"Theaters struggle for viability," he said. This is a true town center, with 170,000 people living in Rancho Cucamonga. There are 270 Friends of the Playhouse," he added. Friends donate 100 hours to the center, mostly as ushers and ticket takers.

There are some cost efficiencies in having the library with the theater and hall, McArdle pointed out, including energy, custodial and maintenance. The venue has also benefited from the huge exposure to its unique community role, which has resulted in some non-monetary partnerships with hotels, photography studios and printers, he added.

Sluka said that two weeks of opening ceremonies and shakedowns were budgeted at \$60,000, but they probably spent \$80,000 with last minute adds. From 6,000-7,000 attended the open house on Saturday, she said. That included 20-minute performances by the Tweaksters and the Lula Washington Dance Theatre.

The season was announced in April and all five headliners are sold out. Besides Easton, shows include An Evening with Rockapella, Nov. 11; the Manhattan Transfer, Jan. 11, Eddie Carroll as Jack Benny: Laughter in Bloom, Jan. 14; and the Smothers Brothers, June 2.

Easton tickets ranged from \$50-\$40. Patrons were offered Playhouse Packs, a discount of 17% off the general ticket price for buying every show in the season, of which they sold 50. Other discounts included 10% for buying four shows or 15% for buying five or

more, Sluka said.

As of now, they have sold 80-85 percent capacity for the venue's school shows program, she said. The three Main Street Theater shows, including Miss Nelson is Missing, Seussical and Charlotte's Web, have set aside 12 performances each for school groups.

"We worked for two-three years letting educators know this was coming," Sluka said. "We surveyed the teachers to see what they wanted on stage, what books, and invited them to a season announcement, just educators, with over 1,000 attending. We handed out the packets, fed them, and told them how to go about booking, and they started booking immediately." The groups are coming in from a 20-30 mile radius, she said, and the staff is working on packages that keep them in town longer, like talk backs after the show, study programs and lunches. "We hope to extend the experience beyond watching the show and leaving," Sluka said.

Revenue depends on the success of the 27 public performances of these shows, she added. In all, the cultural center is producing or presenting 30 different shows, including their resident community theater's four productions, and 150 performances. "I came five years ago to get our community theater program up and running and that is going well," she said. The program is divided into three series — theater for young audiences, specialty and family (like the Peking Acrobats).

Rentals are just starting to gear up. Rents vary from \$200-\$400 an hour, she said. There are 25 rentals on the books so far for both meetings and performances.

The exclusive caterer is Impressions Gourmet Catering, which also runs the concessions stand.

The fulltime staff totals seven at the theater and seven at the library.

The developer of the mall, Forest City Mall Development, is among sponsors, giving \$100,000 a year for performances. "He considers us an anchor," Sluka said.

"At this point I'm entirely satisfied with everything from the design to the operation. Our strategic plan and our mission are on the exact right track," McArdle said. "Our city council said this is as important as a park or a police car or a fire truck to offer to our community." — Linda Deckard

*Interviewed for this story: Kevin McArdle, (909) 477-2760, ext. 2101; Susan Sluka, (909) 477-2775, ext. 3733*

## NEW VT WEBSITE COMING IN SEPTEMBER!



Stay tuned in September to see our new, improved website! It will sport an updated look and will be more user friendly. There will also be new exciting features available to users. The help wanted ads that appear in the weekly e-newsletter will also be posted on the new site for anybody to view, you'll be able to submit your box office scores online, and for the first time,

the monthly Hot Tickets and Top Stops charts will be available for download to subscribers of *Venues Today*

Keep checking back!

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## BOOKINGS



### HOTtickets

#### DIVAS ROCK BOTH COASTS

**HOT TICKETS** is a weekly summary of the top acts and ticket sales as reported to *Venues Today* e-newsletter. Following are the top 20 concerts and events, the top 5 in each seating capacity category, which took place since Aug. 8, 2006. To submit reports, e-mail [HotTickets@venuestoday.com](mailto:HotTickets@venuestoday.com) or fax to (714) 378-0040.

The **Hot Tickets** this week as reported to *Venues Today*:

#### 15,001 or More Seats

- 1) *Gross Sales:* \$3,408,357; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Ford Field, Detroit**; *Attendance:* 44,836; *Ticket Range:* \$81-\$65.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, DLI Entertainment, The Messina Group; *Dates:* Aug. 26; *No. of Shows:* 1
- 2) *Gross Sales:* \$1,300,140; *Event:* Mariah Carey; *Venue:* **Madison Square Garden Arena, New York**; *Attendance:* 13,930; *Ticket Range:* \$150-\$19; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 23; *No. of Shows:* 1
- 3) *Gross Sales:* \$1,293,454; *Event:* Tim McGraw and Faith Hill; *Venue:* **Arco Arena, Sacramento, Calif.**; *Attendance:* 15,516; *Ticket Range:* \$86.75-\$65; *Promoter:* Live Nation, In-house; *Dates:* Aug. 12; *No. of Shows:* 1
- 4) *Gross Sales:* \$1,205,163; *Event:* Mariah Carey; *Venue:* **Air Canada Centre, Toronto, Ontario**; *Attendance:* 14,550; *Ticket Range:* \$109.50-\$18; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 13; *No. of Shows:* 1
- 5) *Gross Sales:* \$1,114,515; *Event:* Shakira; *Venue:* **Verizon Center, Washington**; *Attendance:* 13,897; *Ticket Range:* \$98-\$19.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 29; *No. of Shows:* 1

#### 10,001 - 15,000 Seats

- 1) *Gross Sales:* \$1,366,244; *Event:* Dixie Chicks; *Venue:* **MTS Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba**; *Attendance:* 20,835; *Ticket Range:* \$77.20-\$59.14; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Concerts West; *Dates:* Aug. 19-20; *No. of Shows:* 2
- 2) *Gross Sales:* \$888,875; *Event:* Steely Dan; *Venue:* **Nikon at Jones Beach Theater, Wantagh, N.Y.**; *Attendance:* 13,416; *Ticket Range:* \$95-\$35; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 17; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$860,378; *Event:* Shakira; *Venue:* **ipayOne Center at the Sports Arena, San Diego**; *Attendance:* 11,940; *Ticket Range:* \$88-\$19.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 16; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$849,880; *Event:* Shakira; *Venue:* **U.S. Airways Center, Phoenix**; *Attendance:* 14,007; *Ticket Range:* \$75-\$19.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation, In-house; *Dates:* Aug. 11; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$776,457; *Event:* Ringling Bros. And Barnum & Bailey Circus; *Venue:* **ipayOne Center at the Sports Arena, San Diego**; *Attendance:* 46,191; *Ticket Range:* \$81.50-\$13; *Promoter:* Feld Entertainment; *Dates:* Aug. 9-13; *No. of Shows:* 9

### **5,001-10,000 Seats**

1) *Gross Sales:* \$735,625; *Event:* Def Leppard; *Venue:* **Red Rocks Amphitheatre, Denver**; *Attendance:* 9,518; *Ticket Range:* \$85-\$59.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation, Kroenke Sports Enterprises; *Dates:* Aug. 15; *No. of Shows:* 1

2) *Gross Sales:* \$316,770; *Event:* Warped Tour; *Venue:* **Tower City Center, Cleveland**; *Attendance:* 10,714; *Ticket Range:* \$35-\$20.24; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 11; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$295,603; *Event:* Melissa Etheridge; *Venue:* **Chastain Park Amphitheatre, Atlanta**; *Attendance:* 3,802; *Ticket Range:* \$103-\$38.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 15; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$227,995; *Event:* Nickelback; *Venue:* **Kay Yeager Coliseum, Wichita Falls, Texas**; *Attendance:* 5,149; *Ticket Range:* \$47.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Concerts West, The Messina Group, Fastlane Concerts; *Dates:* Aug. 24; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$214,760; *Event:* 311; *Venue:* **Charter One Pavilion, Chicago**; *Attendance:* 6,623; *Ticket Range:* \$35; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 11; *No. of Shows:* 1

### **5,000 or Fewer Seats**

1) *Gross Sales:* \$261,054; *Event:* Melissa Etheridge; *Venue:* **Mizner Park Amphitheater, Boca Raton, Fla.**; *Attendance:* 3,068; *Ticket Range:* \$103-\$58; *Promoter:* Fantasma; *Dates:* Aug. 19; *No. of Shows:* 1

2) *Gross Sales:* \$208,125; *Event:* Tom Waits; *Venue:* **Detroit Opera House**; *Attendance:* 2,672; *Ticket Range:* \$75; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 11; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$184,824; *Event:* Melissa Etheridge; *Venue:* **Bob Carr Performing Arts Center, Orlando, Fla.**; *Attendance:* 2,266; *Ticket Range:* \$101-\$46; *Promoter:* Fantasma; *Dates:* Aug. 20; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$175,000; *Event:* Gnarl Barkley; *Venue:* **Central Park SummerStage, New York**; *Attendance:* 5,500; *Ticket Range:* \$35; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* Aug. 17; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$172,676; *Event:* Melissa Etheridge; *Venue:* **Ruth Eckerd Hall, Clearwater, Fla.**; *Attendance:* 2,125; *Ticket Range:* \$102-\$37; *Promoter:* Fantasma; *Dates:* Aug. 18; *No. of Shows:* 1

## MARKETING



***The new vaudeville marquee at the Morris Performing Arts Center, South Bend, Ind., left; The new marquee at the Arrowhead Pond of Anaheim (Calif.).***  
**MODERN MARQUEE SERVES AS COMMUNITY MESSAGE BOARD**

The recent unveiling of a new vaudeville-era marquee atop the Morris Performing Arts Center in South Bend, Ind., is an example of what's possible with marquee marketing. Within six months of the marquee's completion, ticket sales escalated a staggering 60%, generating \$144,600 more in profits, according to Executive Director Dennis Andres.

"We were expecting maybe about a 20% increase," Andres said. "I think that has been a verbal kind of statement within the industry, that a marquee can generate up to 20% of your audience. So we were surprised to see [a 60%] increase."

While certainly above the norm, Andres ascribed the success to the marquee's visibility. "We have over a quarter-million vehicles, five days a week, pass by the face of the building, so it is very important that there was some kind of movable sign that would attract your attention to the building."

A shift, which is beginning to take place and will surely continue to affect the industry, is the introduction of HD (High Definition) television to video boards on marquees. The wider screen creates a wide, rectangular shape, which gives more room for moving images on one side of the screen coupled with technical information on the other side, said Nevada Colwell, multimedia manager at the Thomas and Mack Center at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, a design and manufacturing center for marquees and video boards. Colwell said of the new technology "you have the ability to put more content on the video boards themselves. It looks a lot cleaner, you're not trying to cram a lot of stuff into a square, you have more of a rectangle."

The one drawback to this new technology, as with any innovations, is a hefty price tag as HD works solely in digital, widescreen formats, meaning other equipment needs to

be changed to fit the HD technology, he added. The benefits are helpful, though, as everything transmitted through HD can be saved to a server, eliminating the need for tapes, DVDs, and other weighty forms of storage. "It'll save more money when it comes to how you store your content and actually the distribution of content as well. "

Creating a marquee for a venue is specific to the location and needs of the client; no two signs are alike, noted Katie Conroy, sales manager at White Way Sign and Maintenance Company, Chicago. She described the different types of marquees according to function, from attraction boards, static signs used for performing arts theaters where the message need not be changed over the course of a few weeks, to message centers where advertisements are shown electronically and can be changed by the venue whenever it is necessary.

"It all depends on what type of venue it is, and from that point start discussing, 'Well, how many lines of text are you going to want to show at one time on the marquee?... What type of building is this going on to, will it project out or flat against the wall? Are you going to want it to be more contemporary or are you going to want to have the flashing, scintillating bulbs going around?' It's how they show the message that's going to increase their sales," Conroy said.

The planning process behind the creation of a marquee emphasizes a meeting of these needs and seeks the best way to get these messages to the consumer. "We take a look at the building to make sure that it'll work with that, you don't want a real contemporary building with a real old-fashioned marquee, it doesn't work," she continued.

From there, the art department looks at photographs of the building and tries to keep their designs consistent with any type face on the building or used by the venue in playbills and advertisements.

Placement of the sign itself is very important, the marquee at the Arrowhead Pond of Anaheim (Calif.), soon to be renamed the Honda Center, had to be placed in such a way that it would not distract drivers on the adjacent 57 freeway but still get the messages across to people passing by.

Marquees are usually built in sections and transported to the site on trucks or trailers. Prices can range from more austere signs giving simple messages at \$45,000 to larger, more complex boards that can cost \$750,000.

"You're getting their eyes and ears at that time," said Colwell on the attention an effective marquee will bring. "It's that extra mile that I think helps out for corporate partners and sponsorship and how ever they're trying to get their fans or their customers."

The marquee at the Morris Center was paid for solely by the center's non-profit wing, which raised over \$750,000 to get the sign up. Andres said he tried to solicit government funds, but was unsuccessful. "This is a fully paid project by the citizens of the community," he said. "It is kind of neat when you think about it."

The Arrowhead Pond marquee was paid for using a combination of funds from the city government, and anticipated advertising revenues from four of the signs permanent sponsors, which all have year round displays on the marquee.

The city funding came following an agreement to also use the sign to publicize events. Bob Wagner, senior vice president and marketing officer for the Anaheim Pond and the Anaheim Ducks, described the cooperation and mutual benefits of working closely with

the city of Anaheim. "It gives us opportunities to publicize public events for the city of Anaheim and charities, community involvement, as well as some of our sponsored messages. It became very apparent from the very beginning on our side that we wanted to utilize it not only as just a marquee or a billboard but actually as a landmark in the center for Orange County. It really put a stake in the ground literally for us to use it as a community service marquee as well as an advertising opportunity.

"It was important for us and it was important for the city of Anaheim to have something that had some city pride to it." The project itself took 14 years to complete, a labor that was not without personal involvement and attachment.

"You look at it as," Wagner said, " 'Well it's a marquee, what's a marquee? There 's a million marquees.' Well for us it has a little bit of a story behind it of how proud we are of it and how much it means to us because it took so long. There 's a lot of sweat equity and this one has a little bit more of a special place in our hearts I guess. It was all done for the right reasons and now it's something we're very proud of." — Greg Lehman

*Interviewed for this story: Katie Conroy, (312) 642-6580; Nevada Colwell, (702) 895-4293; Bob Wagner, (714) 704-2983; Dennis Andres, (574) 235-5603*

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## CONCESSIONS

***Event organizer Gary Sandham found success with Pomegranate juice.***



### BEVERAGES GO UNIQUE TO BOOST SALES

LOS ANGELES — To Gary Sandham, people don't necessarily buy drinks because they're thirsty.

"I think there's a misconception that beverage sales are solely driven by customer's desire to satiate thirst," he said. "What I increasingly find is that many sales are driven by curiosity. People are more willing to try new things at one of my events, than say, at a grocery store. It's like eating funnel cake once a year at the fair, only this is healthy."

For Sandham, that curiosity was born out of Pomegranates. Well, pomegranate juice to be exact. Noticing the popularity of the drink with his girlfriend and her health-crazy friends, Sandham began looking into selling the drink for his company

EventMinded, which organizes and manages a number of street fairs and food and wine festivals throughout Northern California.

"I first tested the drink at the Walnut Festival (Walnut Creek, Calif.)," he told attendees during a beverage panel at the Western Food and Hospitality Show in Los Angeles Aug. 26-28. "We just included it as one more option in our beverage booth. We did zero marketing and only bought 400 units from the distributor."

Sandham said the drinks sold out on the first day of the five-day festival and regulars immediately begin asking what happened to the drink. He said he later talked with the supermarket across the street from the fair and one of the store managers said sales of the POM drink were up from the previous week.

The success of the product made Sandham wonder if other new beverage products

could drive concession sales at his events.

“There was just this fascination with the drinks that was bringing people to the beverage area. We had done zero marketing or promotion and we sold out of the units on the first day. I figured if I invested a little creativity and marketing into new drinks, I would really have something.”

Sandham began researching beverages and found several new drinks he thought might do well at mid-sized events. Besides the POM drink, which purports to be loaded with age-fighting antioxidants, Sandham also discovered there was a lot of buzz surrounding the Sambazon acai energy-drink. The drink has a smoothie-like consistency and comes from the Brazilian acai berry. It tastes similar to a blueberry smoothie, but has a unique flavor and is said to provide a cleaner energy source than caffeine.

“Everyone is buzzing about this drink, and all I’m thinking to myself is ‘Do I have to bring blenders to my booth to make this thing?’” Sandham said.

After contacting the company, Sandham discovered the drink came prepackaged in 16-ounce plastic bottles, similar to other smoothie drinks. Sandham made a large order and arranged to get some promotional materials from Sambazon to advertise his new offering.

He blanketed his next event, another art show in Capitola, Calif., with large fliers for the drink, and created a display for both POM and Sambazon at his beverage booth. He didn’t release any numbers on how well the drinks did during the two-day exhibition only saying they sold “quite well.”

More importantly, Sandham said, he also noticed another trend. Across the board, drink sales at the show were up 13%. Part of that increase, he believed, was the heatwave that hit the state and other parts of the country, but a large component to the success was people’s curiosity about the new drinks.

Fellow panelist Adolf Dulan agreed. Dulan sits on the board of the California Restaurant Association and manages several burger chains in the Los Angeles area. Dulan said he caters several festivals and fairs each year and typically offers drink items that he doesn’t sell inside his restaurant.

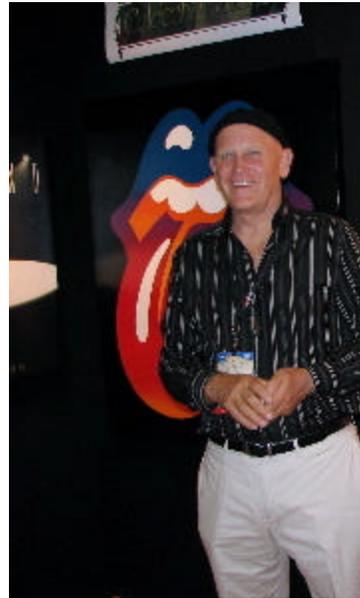
“It really does two things,” he said. “First, it creates multiple destination points for your concessions. Now not only do you sell the primary item, you also offer a secondary fringe element that will drive people to the booth. Secondly, it provides you the opportunity to collect all sorts of promotional material that isn’t available to other vendors. Fliers advertising organic tea are really going to stand out from a bunch of ads for soft drinks and beer.”

Sandham added that many new drink companies are willing to provide promotional staff support and even free products for certain events.

“You have to really match products up with the right people. You’re not going to do well with an alcoholic drink at a 5K event or health expo, just as you’re not going to sell an energy drink at a cocktail party,” he said. — Dave Brooks

*Interviewed for this article: Gary Sandham, (510) 672-6781; Adolf Dulan (323) 654-8300.*

**Dave Furano of Celebrity Gallerie**



## YEAR-ROUND MERCHANDISE OP MARKETED TO VENUES

### YEAR-ROUND MERCHANDISE OP MARKETED TO VENUES

SAN ANTONIO — Dave Furano, Celebrity Gallerie, Manhattan Beach, Calif., has crossed the line as a manager in his years. Along with his brother Del at Winterland and Signatures Network, he is selling souvenirs for everyone from the Grateful Dead to Barbra Streisand. This month, he is here during the International Association of Assembly Managers (IAAM) convention with

Saying he has inked no arena deals but is in discussion with several heavy hitters, Furano has a long end line of limited edition merchandise that can be displayed year-round as wall art in arenas. Furano said the Celebrity Gallerie or Wall of Fame Gallerie will incorporate 100 pieces of art for that venue and provided through his firm that are not only great visuals but that are for giclees and high end reproductions of images usually seen on concert T-shirts or in historical sale, on the spot or on the Internet.

Celebrity Gallerie products range from \$70 T-shirts to \$1,000 giclees — Furano said. (By features archival ink applied using state-of-the-art printers. The original painting is captured by depositing millions of small droplets of ink onto watercolor paper. The result is a museum quality nearly continuous in tone.) Furano is marketing giclees for \$300, \$500, \$700 and \$1,000 retail. "We sold eight [giclees] at a Michael Buble show at the Santa Barbara Bowl, and we sold four at a Mariah Carrey show at American Airlines Arena, Miami," he said.

The merchandise has also been tested at Z Gallerie stores, where Celebrity Gallerie has a collection of Madonna merchandise since November 2005, Furano said. The art is also marketed at Z Gallerie featuring Madonna and soon to include the Rolling Stones and Kiss. The Madonna collection is a limited edition series just for Z Galleries, he said. It's on sale at 76 outlets.

In the venue field, Furano has high expectations. "For a baseball stadium, with a great collection of franchises, we want to do the baseball collection," he said. "It's about the buildings and stadiums that have been used by the greats."

Celebrity Galleries would secure the copyright and create and manufacture the merchandise, and then license the revenues to the appropriate licensees. The venue would provide the real estate and would set the retail price of the item, Furano said. He envisions Celebrity Galleries and Celebrity Wall of Fame with 200 images, ranging in size from 8.5 X 11 inches to 36 X 36 inches.

"This is the soul of the building, integrated into the building as their wall of fame," Furano said. "This goes back to the greats that have been in their gene pool." He is not aware of any building today that has photos for sale in its hall of fame. But if they already have halls of fame, all the better. "We would clear the images for reproduction and sale. The idea is to sell limited edition prints from the gallery."

This is what Daren Libonati, Thomas & Mack Center, Las Vegas, calls a non-traditional revenue source, "something we all need more of." Libonati talked to Furano in San Antonio and is not yet a client, but he would be.

"I loved it," Libonati said. "We all have great photos of great events that have played in our venues. If the artist continues to have the opportunity to make money long after he's gone, that's a good thing. If I have a photo or credential I have captured from a unique or special event, I believe if there's life in it, let's all share in that life."

In fact, Libonati saw applications for new arenas, not just those with a history. The most prominent roadblock to this idea is real estate. Most arenas have limited wall and hall space. "If I had a new arena, I would create themed areas and use artwork like this. So many people love the history of tours. If all of a sudden you've given a person who walks through your venue a chance to buy something they love, a poster they love, that's great," Libonati said.

Furano calls the idea "the obvious" at the same time he admits it's complicated. It's not replacing anything, he notes. It is new revenue for all parties, the artist or team, the venue, the merchandiser. The offer would be exclusive to the venue and would not go on tour with the band. Going forward, once Celebrity Gallerie is established in venues, he foresees preplanning licensing deals, getting approvals when the artist is in the building. For the historical merchandise, it's more complicated.

"Signatures Network and myself have been in this business [merchandising] for 30 years; we understand multiple copyright owners. It's a challenge. I can't just make wall art without getting a license to do it. We search for the copyright holders and offer a license agreement, then they get a percentage of sales. We pay favored nation royalty rates to copyright owners," Furano said.

His hope with venues is to introduce the Wall of Fame Gallerie with an annual event at the venue, a wine, food and art festival. "Everyone I'm talking to initially has to be a building that has the capability and environment to host an art, wine and food exhibition, something built around a big weekend at the facility," he said.

"We're moving merchandise and the experience of the event up the food chain so it has its own event," Furano said. He glommed onto the idea while attending wine and food festivals in California that are highly successful and high end. He said Celebrity Galleries would co-produce the venue show and he's considering calling the events "The Best Festival," for the best the community has to offer.

"Hundreds of thousands of people attend these things in California. We're bringing that event along with the Wall of Fame Gallerie to buildings and amphitheaters," Furano said. It's also a way to market 30 years of "the greatest rock and roll art that's ever been put on T-shirts" that is in the Signatures Network/Winterland copyrighted archives. — Linda Deckard

*Interviewed for this story: Dave Furano, (310) 546-9008; Daren Libonati, (702) 895-3727*

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### SHORT TAKES

#### **BOSTON GETS GREENLIGHT ON CONSUMER SHOWS**

The Boston Convention & Exhibition Center (BCEC) can have consumer shows now that the Massachusetts legislature has reversed a decade-old ban. The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority has issued a Request for Information to the consumer show industry looking for shows beginning in 2007. The ban was originally in place to lessen street traffic and parking woes in local neighborhoods and protect two private convention facilities in the area. Consumer shows at the BCEC must be larger than 250,000 square feet. The BCEC offers 516,000 square feet of exhibit space.

*Contact: Joann Washington, (617) 954-2411*

#### **STUBHUB LANDS SEVEN MORE COLLEGES**

StubHub has inked multi-year sponsorship deals with seven college athletic programs. StubHub now has agreements with 14 colleges and 26 sports teams overall. The new schools are Texas A&M, Kansas State, Mississippi State, Southern Mississippi, San Jose State, Rutgers and Georgetown. CEO Colin Evans said the new deals expands the geographic reach of the web site service into smaller markets.

Contact: Jeff Fluhr, (414) 222-8400

### **TICKETMASTER CREATES NEW GROUPS FOR SPECIALIZED SERVICES**

Ticketmaster has announced the formation of two new business units to provide specialized client services. The first is Ticketmaster Venue Relations, dedicated to facilitating ticketing programs and services for the company's domestic and international venue clients. The other unit is Cottonblend, the company's new in-house media design studio. Ticketmaster Venue Relations will be headed by David Goldberg and Mick McGee, along with newly appointed Sr. Vice President Neal Gunn.

Contact: Bonnie Poindexter: (310) 360-2321

### **SEAHAWKS AND PATRIOTS PLAN GAME IN CHINA**

The Seahawks and the Patriots will play the first NFL preseason game in China next summer. NFL officials have discussed a plan for the Patriots to spend a week in Seattle, possibly playing an exhibition game. The teams would then travel to China for several days of practices and public appearances, followed by another game. There is no news yet on where the two teams will play once in China

Contact: Jeff Cortis (508) 543-8200

### **AEG TO MANAGE CASINO ENTERTAINMENT**

Boyd Gaming Corporation has entered into an agreement with AEG Live for the company to produce and present shows in the two major entertainment venues at Echelon Place, a new Las Vegas resort set to replace the Stardust. According to the agreement, AEG Live will operate the 4,000-seat production theatre and 1,500-seat performance venue at Echelon. Neither facility has been named.

Contact Robert Stilwell, (702) 792-7353

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## **HELP WANTED**

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### **Everett (Wash.) Events Center - Operations and Changeover Supervisor**

Coordinate and direct set ups, changeovers and operations tasks in the main arena, ice rink and conference center. 3 years exp in sports/entertainment facility preferred.

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### **Global Spectrum/Nueces Cty Regional Fairgrounds - Director of Sales and Marketing**

Global Spectrum seeks an experienced Director of Sales and Marketing for the Nueces County Regional Fairgrounds, Robstown, Texas. To learn more/apply, please visit [www.global-spectrum.com](http://www.global-spectrum.com), click on "Careers," the direct link, and "Sales and Marketing." EOE, DFWP

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#### **Orleans Arena, Las Vegas - Conversion Coordinator/Ice Technician**

Schedule and supervise conversion crew for all event changeovers. This position will also be responsible for installing dasher board, glass, ice, and all other related aspects of ice maintenance. Must be able to operate all equipment related to making and maintaining ice including Jet Ice system, Zamboni, and ice edger. To apply e-mail resume and cover letter to Damian Costa-Event Producer, [dcosta@coastcasinos.net](mailto:dcosta@coastcasinos.net)

#### **Orleans Arena, Las Vegas - Part-Time Zamboni Driver**

Must be able to operate all equipment related to making and maintaining ice including Jet Ice system, Zamboni, and ice edger. To apply e-mail resume and cover letter to Damian Costa-Event Producer, [dcosta@coastcasinos.net](mailto:dcosta@coastcasinos.net)

#### **Orleans Arena, Las Vegas - Assistant Box Office Supervisor**

Assist Box Office Manager with the daily operations of the Arena Box Office in an efficient and productive manner. Full time, hourly position with varying hours. To apply e-mail resume and cover letter to Sue Schwartz-Box Office Manager, [sschwartz@coastcasinos.net](mailto:sschwartz@coastcasinos.net).

### **Orleans Arena, Las Vegas - Marketing Coordinator**

Full time, salaried position with varying hours. Supports the promotional, publicity, marketing, research, tracking & reporting efforts regarding all aspects of the Arena and its events. Duties also include tracking of competition within the local and surrounding market, and creating, implementation, and follow-up of all promotional activities. To apply e-mail resume and cover letter to Tayra Lagomarsino-Director of Marketing and Ticketing, [tlagomarsino@coastcasinos.net](mailto:tlagomarsino@coastcasinos.net).

### **Orleans Arena, Las Vegas - Technical Coordinator**

To work in sound and lighting areas and be head electrician for events. Responsible for installing and operating sound and lighting equipment. Install and monitor power for events. To apply e-mail resume and cover letter to Damian Costa-Event Producer, [dcosta@coastcasinos.net](mailto:dcosta@coastcasinos.net).

### **South Coast Repertory, Costa Mesa, Calif. - Group Sales Manager**

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