

Rob Ocampo

Subject: FW: June 7, 2006 Newsletter



VENUES**today**

"The news behind the headlines"

Dear April,

June 7, 2006 VOL. V, Number XVIII ISSN 1547-4143

Welcome to your **Venues Today** weekly e-newsletter, full of the latest live entertainment industry news. Look for more coverage of the Event & Arena Marketing Conference going on now in Miami in next week's e-newsletter and in our upcoming July issue, which also includes the VT Mid-Year box office reports. For a full calendar listing, to view archives or to subscribe to *Venues Today*, visit our Web site at www.venuestoday.com.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I know for a fact most arenas make money." — *Chris Talley, managing member of the Arkansas Sports & Entertainment Park LLC, on his projections that there is a profit to be made in owning an arena as long as he also owns the sports teams and all revenue goes to the same bottom line.*

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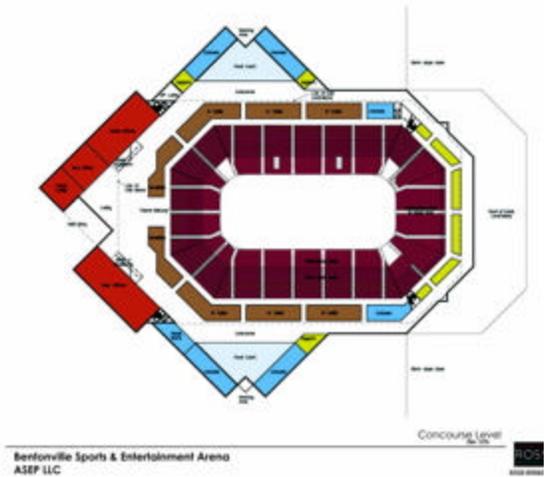
COMING IN JULY! OUR POPULAR MIDYEAR ISSUE!

Our much anticipated **MIDYEAR** issue is back **in July**, with more information than ever on what you want to know: gross revenues, trends, ideas and news throughout the industry. Included in this issue are our popular **MIDYEAR Hot Tickets and Top Stops Charts**. July is also our third INTIX QUARTERLY. Use this edition to promote your venue ranking and to broadcast your message to the industry leaders. **ADVERTISE today.**

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VENUE NEWS



Rendering and schematics for the proposed Bentonville, Ark., arena

PROPOSED ARKANSAS ARENA SEEN AS PROTOTYPE FOR A CHAIN OF VENUES

"I don't make it a habit to spend \$3 million tying up land and getting drawings and schematics for arenas for construction just to have something to do," said Chris Talley, a managing member of the Arkansas Sports & Entertainment Park LLC (ASEP), which has announced plans to build a \$40 million, 9,000-seat arena in Bentonville. The projected opening is fall 2008.

Talley, who is also president of Memphis Pro Soccer, an organization that's building a new American Indoor Soccer League franchise, which will play at Showplace Arena, said he is one of 13 investors who have three more markets picked out for the next three arenas. The key to their formula is owning the sports franchises as well as the arena and combining all revenue streams.

His pro forma, based on 101 events a year at ASEP, calls for operating revenues of \$8.5 million a year and operating expenses, including debt service, of \$5.5 million. He's counting on minor league hockey, NBDL basketball and arena football, probably af2, along with family shows and perhaps five concerts. "I'm personally figuring 92 events," he said. "I expect to run out of the gate with three teams."

Talley plans to roll out league letters confirming their interest in the market over the ensuing weeks as he carries the ball forward to a July meeting of Bentonville's Advertising and Promotion Commission. That board has the power to grant the arena \$8 million in tax monies over 10 years, monies generated from hotel and restaurant taxes. The funding would be based on the arena's ability to generate more such revenues.

He's also soliciting a tourism tax credit from the state. "We're eligible for tax credits in the state of Arkansas equaling 15 percent of our total approved construction costs. That's \$7 million paid out over nine years, so that gives us great cash flow," Talley said.

But it is basically a real estate play. ASEP has secured 40 acres to the north of Bentonville, near the airport, for \$2.1 million, and then added another 50 acres, for 90 acres total at a cost of \$5 million.

The land is located in the center of the Benton County, close to Oklahoma, Missouri and Kansas, he said. "The land was a lot cheaper there than on [Interstate] 540 where we wanted to go. One of our partners had a meeting with a state senator today [June 6] and they're going to call a special session of the legislature in Arkansas and one of the things he will put on the agenda is funding for the roadways in western Benton County for a bypass. We need to get people in and out and you can't dump 4,000 cars on a two-lane road. We've already started our politicking. The money is in place to build the bypass from Springdale to the airport. We just need them to bring it up further north about five miles to connect it to another bypass, which will connect it into Missouri. That will open up all of southwest Missouri and southeast Kansas."

Talley said the arena will be built with or without the bypass. "Our first year we'll have great crowds," he said. "I think we'll have the roads by the third year we're open."

The plan is to develop the real estate around the arena, selling 13 acres to a big box retailer, which Talley did not want to name yet. The project calls for "a movie theater, a hotel, and a couple of casual dining restaurant concepts taking up two front parcels. We have two quick service restaurants also taking out two front parcels. We have a lot of things in place," Talley said. ASEP will own the hotel and will sell off or lease the restaurant and retail sites, he added.

The investors are from Southern California, British Columbia (Vancouver), Michigan, and Arkansas, he said. "There are three local partners and myself. The investors see the arena, but really they see the teams. They see a region that in 10 years will have a million people," Talley said. His local partners are Craig Anderson and J.D. Dhawal.

ASEP has brought in Global Spectrum to manage the arena and to help in securing sports franchises, Talley said. Global Spectrum currently has a six-month contract and a first right of refusal to manage the arena, a deal which will be negotiated after financing is completed "sometime in August I think," Talley said.

Rosser International has been brought on board as architect.

Talley said he has never built an arena before. He's a hotel developer. His ultimate goal is to own a National Football League franchise. "Building an arena is no different than anything else. You have to have a competent team surrounding you," Talley said, citing Rosser and Global Spectrum.

"I know for a fact most arenas make money," he declared. If he had to cite a model operation he's studied, it would be Gwinnett Civic Center in Duluth, Ga., which he would love to be able to duplicate, he said.

"The arena market is so wide open," Talley declared of his future plans.

ASEP will see all revenues, "suite sales, sponsorships, parking, naming rights, corporate sales, PSL money, ticket money, radio and TV money. And I only have one staff selling all three [teams]," Talley said.

"In a market like Northwest Arkansas, you have 1,200 people a month moving in from L.A., New York, Dallas, and they are used to this type of entertainment. You have three Fortune 500 companies within 20 miles of each other — J.B. Hunt, Tyson Foods and Wal-Mart. By 2015, they are projecting one million people in Northwest Arkansas. Right now it's 350,000-400,000. Wal-Mart has told all of their vendors if you want to do business with us, you have to be here," Talley said, adding those vendors are setting up regional offices nonstop.

"We also have \$10 million in private cash. When you have a \$40 million project, \$25 million in cash [counting state and city monies], you can walk into any bank in America and get \$15 million. Or we can take cash out of pre-sales. We've gotten five phone calls from people who want to buy skyboxes. They sell for \$30,000-\$70,000. I will sell every one of them," Talley said.

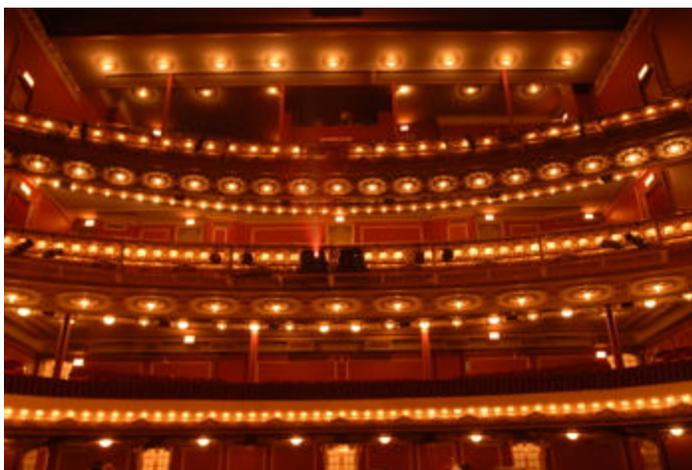
The plan is to have 24 suites, which can be expanded to 40; 8,500 seats for hockey, and 850 club seats. "These are very wealthy people. The people coming down here with these vendors have huge expense accounts for entertainment and no where to spend it. When they first came in, they were buying \$500,000 homes. They figured out they didn't have to spend that much. Now they're buying \$200,000 homes. They all have families and kids. It's a great market. I don't think I've misjudged this market one bit," Talley declared.

On a scale of 1-10, what is the likelihood it will happen? "I'd say 15," he said.

Talley considers his nearest competition is in Tulsa, two hours away. Talk of building a sports arena in Springdale, Ark., 20 miles south, surfaced May 26, Talley said. A group there plans to build a \$50 million Double A ballpark and now say an arena is also in the works. Talley wasn't pleased with that news, which followed on the heels of ASEP going public. He's also heard talk of building a big arena in Springfield, Mo., a 17,000 seater, he said of the marketplace, but he didn't back down one bit on his personal certainty Bentonville will get three teams and an arena.

"I was born in Bentonville in 1971. It's a personal thing. I want to see it through. Short of something terrible happening with the economy, I don't know what would stop us, unless we didn't get tax credits. Then we'd have to walk away and resell the land or downsize the building to 6,000 seats and put the boxes on the same level as the concourse. If they pulled \$15 million away from us, we have to make that up someplace. I don't think it will happen," Talley said. — Linda Deckard
Interviewed for this story: Chris Talley, (901) 604-7250

The restored interior of the new LaSalle Bank Theatre, Chicago (Photo Credit: Cara Garbarino)



CHICAGO'S SHUBERT RESTORED, OPENS AS LASALLE BANK THEATRE

Last month, Chicago's newly restored LaSalle Bank Theatre, formerly The Shubert Theater, celebrated its transformation and 100th anniversary with a week of high-profile events. The Shubert was the city's main venue for a number of Broadway shows, most recently for the pre-Broadway run of "Monty Python's Spamalot."

Housed in the Majestic Building, the theater's \$14 million restoration is part of a \$36 million conversion that will transform its upper stories into a hotel.

The festivities included a grand marquee lighting with a video display of Broadway shows and upcoming events, and an inaugural performance by Phantom of the Opera

actor Michael Crawford that was preceded by a theater dedication featuring Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, Alderman Burton F. Natarus and Jimmy Nederlander, Sr. of the Nederlander Organization, which owns the building in partnership with Live Nation (formerly Clear Channel Entertainment).

According to Eileen LaCario, vice president of Broadway in Chicago, the partnership between the Nederlander Organization and Live Nation, more than 3,000 people attended the weekend-long open house on May 26 and 27. "The public was able to go up on stage. Free photos were taken, which could be downloaded and printed off the Internet. We also conducted a free hourly raffle for prizes like theater tickets and signed show posters," she said. Costs for this event, which was sponsored by Broadway in Chicago and LaSalle Bank, were not disclosed.

A press opening for the theater's inaugural Broadway show, *Golda's Balcony*, starring actress Valerie Harper, was held on May 31.

Construction began in May of last year. The Nederlander Organization, which has owned the Majestic Building at 22 West Monroe Street since 1991, is renovating it in partnership with the Northern Realty Group, a Chicago-based real estate services firm that both develops and manages properties. Nederlander will retain ownership of the theater in conjunction with Live Nation and will be part owner of the hotel, along with Northern and its hotel partner, First Hospitality Group of Rosemont, Ill.

According to a recent *New York Times* article, the financial side of the project was complex and involved a \$5.5 million tax increment financing grant from the city, the sale of a facade easement donation and various tax credits.

The theater occupies floors one through five, while the hotel, which is scheduled for completion in October of this year, will be on floors four through 21.

George Halik of Booth Hansen, principal architect on this project, said one of his biggest challenges was incorporating new mechanical systems, like an elevator, into the tight existing spaces. "We did incredible things to make everything fit," he said.

The restoration highlighted the theater's decorative features and uncovered a number of surprises. "We expanded the lobby area into what was formerly a retail space and discovered a vaulted decorative plaster ceiling and historical wood paneling," Halik said. The project also revealed a cast brass railing that was painted over during the war. Formerly a one-story space, the lobby was expanded both vertically and horizontally to two stories.

The theater now has 1,992 seats, 20 fewer than before, because seats were made wider and row to row dimension is deeper. "The rows also have been reconfigured so they are more direct to the exits, and the sloping was redesigned, providing better views of the stage," Halik said.

Along with new concession areas, office and storage space was added on the theater's second floor. A group room on the third floor includes a bar, concessions area, restrooms and a coat check section. Halik said this area will be used during intermission by showgoers for an additional fee. "The theater can also rent this room for groups of up to 150 who want to use it independently of theater performances or in conjunction with shows," he said.

The Shubert was originally known as the Majestic Theater when it opened as a vaudeville house on New Year's Day in 1906. It was then closed for 13 years during the Depression before being acquired by New York's Shubert Organization and reopened in

1945 as a legitimate theater.

In the early 1990's, the city developed a plan for a live-theater district on and near Randolph Street in the Loop that included renovating four historic theaters, including the Chicago, the Oriental (now the Ford Center for the Performing Arts/Oriental Theater), the Palace (now the Cadillac Palace) and the Shubert, as well as constructing a new home for the Goodman Theater, the city's oldest and largest nonprofit theater. Along the way, the city awarded tax increment financing grants worth about \$55 million to developers to get the projects started. All but the Shubert have now been completed.

According to the League of Chicago Theaters, a trade association, downtown Chicago currently has more than 22,000 live theater seats, up from 14,000 before the theater district's creation. Broadway in Chicago, which owns or controls four of the leading downtown houses for live theater, was founded five years ago to handle the booking and management. Live Nation owns the Ford Center for the Performing Arts/Oriental Theater and co-owns the Cadillac Palace with Nederlander.

Although LaCario would not reveal the LaSalle Bank Theatre's marketing budget, she anticipates it will be in the six figures for most shows. "We will do a variety of things to promote the venue to New York Broadway producers, because we will be focusing on Broadway and pre-Broadway shows. We also hope to hold meetings and conferences in the theater, as well," she said. Marketing plans will incorporate television, radio, print, Internet and billboard advertising.

Golda's Balcony runs through June 11. Martin Short is scheduled to appear at the theater in his pre-Broadway show July 5-16. — Lisa White

Interviewed for this story: George Halik, (312) 869-5000; Eileen LaCario, (312) 977-1700



Michael Taormina; Matt Hollander

FACES AND PLACES: COHL, MORAN, ERNST, HOLLANDER AND TAORMINA IN THE NEWS

Michael Cohl is about to embark on Act III of his storied life as one of the world's premier promoters. **Live Nation** recently acquired a controlling interest in the touring division of Cohl's **Concert Productions International (CPI)** in addition to a 50 percent interest in the Grand Entertainment division of CPI, known for its promotion of Rolling Stones tours.

As part of the deal, Cohl, the man been behind megatours like Pink Floyd and U2, will join Live Nation's Board of Directors, which will now expand to 10 company directors,

according to a press release from LN spokesperson John Vlautin; neither Cohl nor an LN spokesperson were available for comment.

Cohl's resume as a major tour producer is impressive, but he's also known for blazing trails by adding on such extras as VIP ticketing, fan clubs, merchandising and DVD's to those outings, which fits in with some new LN initiatives.

Terms of the deal were not announced. CPI will still operate as a separate unit and will work alongside the existing global LN touring division led by Arthur Fogel, leading the way in LN's initiatives to securing rights to recordings, films and DVDs.

LN recently announced a plan to finish wiring 120 of its venues with digital live studios capable of recording and transmitting live concerts for TV, cell phones and radio by the end of this summer (VT e-newsletter, May 24, 2006). The huge project rolled out at 36 venues in the U.S. last year and is in the process of being carried out at 84 more in the U.S., Canada and Europe this year, fitting each venue with next-generation studios that can capture and repurpose live concerts for use in a variety of media, including terrestrial and satellite radio, 3G delivery for cellphones, high definition TV, video on demand, podcasts and other means of digital distribution.

"Under Michael Cohl's leadership, CPI has established an impressive track record of expanding the relationship between artists and fans beyond the live event," said LN CEO Michael Rapino in a statement. "CPI has consistently been a leader in creating new revenue streams centered around the live show."

The acquisition is also something of a family reunion for Cohl, who will be re-teamed with Fogel, with whom he helped build TNA into one of the world's most successful worldwide touring operations.

In addition to promoting concerts for more than 35 years, Cohl created and produced the World Professional Skating Championships for ABC, produced on and off-Broadway shows and dabbled in film projects, including the top-selling music DVD of all time, the Rolling Stones' "Four Flicks." Cohl is also credited with developing the concept of global touring, working with artists to strategize and route tours, as well as boosting such aftermarket revenue streams as books, TV shows, videos and merchandise.

Live Nation also announced this week that veteran promoter **Bruce Moran** has been named president of Live Nation New York and his longtime friend and capo **Phil Ernst** has been named senior vice president. Moran's new gig will have him overseeing the company's regional concert booking, marketing and promotion, as well as supervising and guiding the New York staff.

"It's actually a tiny bit better than that," said Moran, who officially starts his new job on June 19, but admitted to being a bit worn out from going out to cover a recent pair of Pearl Jam shows. "My production manager **Phil Guiliano** is coming along, too. Phil [Ernst] and I have a wonderful comfort level. Both of us started out as agents at ICM in 1985 and we worked together from '85 until 1990 and then when I opened up this office in 1994, I started courting him. It took a few years to get him over here, but I finally landed him in 1999."

Moran was previously the CEO of OCESA Presents/CIE USA Entertainment, where he managed the company's international booking and talent buying operations and ran its U.S.-based businesses. During his 12-year tenure, he established Mexico as the hottest concert market in Latin America by booking and producing shows for everyone from U2 to The Rolling Stones, Paul McCartney, Metallica and Madonna. And in addition to being excited about his new sandbox, life-long New Yorker Moran said he's equally psyched

about the shorter commute.

“One immediate difference that comes to mind is that I’ll be able to cover a show without flying 4,500 miles round trip,” he joked. “All kidding aside, it’s a wonderful opportunity to keep up the grand tradition begun in that office by Ron Delsener. It will be an honor to carry it forward. I’ll continue to buy topnotch national and international talent, but candidly, the stage is bigger.”

Ernst, who began working with Moran at OCESA Presents/CIE in 2000, will help oversee LN’s booking in the New York region. While at OCESA Presents/CIE, Ernst worked with artists such as Eric Clapton and Pearl Jam and was the associate producer of the Tony Award-nominated Musical “Tango Argentino.”

In the performing arts world, **Michael Taormina** starts his new job as managing director of the **Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre** in Atlanta June 19. He replaces Wendy Riggs.

This will be the third performing arts center Taormina has opened. The others include the Benedum Center for the Performing Arts in Pittsburgh and the Hobby Center in Houston. “I didn’t open New Orleans (Cultural Center and New Orleans Theatre of the Performing Arts), but I remodeled it,” he added. Taormina has worked in the performing arts business for 30 years.

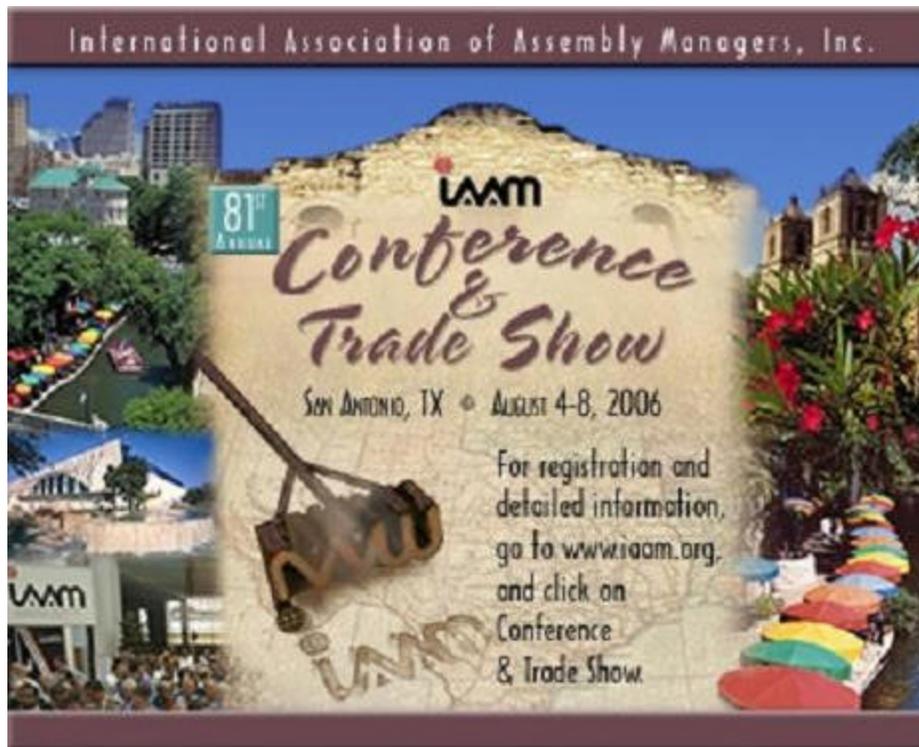
Having been in Houston for five years, he’s looking forward to “four seasons again,” and, of course, to debuting the 2,750-seat, \$145 million PAC, which opens in September 2007.

- Meanwhile, **Matt Hollander** has been promoted to general manager of the newly renovated \$71 million **MassMutual Center**, Springfield, for **Global Spectrum**. He had been assistant general manager and has now taken Pat Montgomery’s place as Montgomery moved on to Citizen’s Bank Ballpark in Philadelphia.

Hollander has been in the business for 15 years, but did take a two-year sabbatical to be an entrepreneur, opening a commercial refrigeration business with a partner. It did not weather 9/11, he said, so he returned to his true love, venue management, joining Global Spectrum in 2003 as director of operations at the Palm Beach County Convention Center in West Palm Beach, Fla.

His first priority in Springfield is increasing awareness of the convention center operations while continuing in Montgomery’s wake in aggressively pursuing concerts and events. The building’s value to the community is not just direct dollars, but in generating business in the entire market, he said. Several northeastern civic centers, once prime concert venues, are adding meeting space to broaden their appeal, he noted. — Gil Kaufman and Linda Deckard

Interviewed for this story: Michael Taormina, (713) 807-0551; Matt Hollander, (413) 271-3259; Bruce Moran and Phil Ernst, (212) 586-0222



BOOKINGS



HOTtickets

STAPLES CENTER "FIGHTS" FOR THE TOP SPOT

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 May 9, 2006. To submit reports, e-mail 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:* \$2,900,090; *Event:* Ultimate Fighting Championships; *Venue:* **Staples Center, Los Angeles**; *Attendance:* 7,830; *Ticket Range:* \$1,000-\$40; *Promoter:* Zuffa; *Dates:* May 27; *No. of Shows:* 1
- 2) *Gross Sales:* \$1,818,590; *Event:* Pearl Jam; *Venue:* **Air Canada Centre, Toronto**; *Attendance:* 33,728; *Ticket Range:* \$84-\$54; *Promoter:* PMC Entertainment; *Dates:* May 9-10; *No. of Shows:* 2
- 3) *Gross Sales:* \$1,780,531; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Wachovia Complex, Philadelphia**; *Attendance:* 29,013; *Ticket Range:* \$64.50-\$54.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, The Messina Group, Varnell Enterprises; *Dates:* March 25-26; *No. of Shows:* 2

4) *Gross Sales:* \$1,729,022; *Event:* Ricardo Arjona; *Venue:* **Coliseo de Puerto Rico, San Juan**; *Attendance:* 21,437; *Ticket Range:* \$125-\$45; *Promoter:* Dueno Promotions, Casiano Group; *Dates:* June 2-4; *No. of Shows:* 3

5) *Gross Sales:* \$1,688,307; *Event:* Cirque du Soleil Delirium; *Venue:* **Savvis Center, St. Louis**; *Attendance:* 18,176; *Ticket Range:* \$110-\$69.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* May 12-13; *No. of Shows:* 3

10,001 - 15,000 Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$1,985,533; *Event:* Faith Hill, Tim McGraw; *Venue:* **Jacksonville (Fla.) Veterans Memorial Arena**; *Attendance:* 25,215; *Ticket Range:* \$85-\$45; *Promoter:* Fantasma; *Dates:* May 28-29; *No. of Shows:* 2

2) *Gross Sales:* \$1,480,985; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Van Andel Arena, Grand Rapids, Mich.**; *Attendance:* 23,969; *Ticket Range:* \$64.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Mischell Productions, The Messina Group; *Dates:* June 2-3; *No. of Shows:* 2

3) *Gross Sales:* \$798,990; *Event:* Depeche Mode; *Venue:* **Nikon at Jones Beach Theater, Wantagh, N.Y.**; *Attendance:* 11,460; *Ticket Range:* \$85-\$35; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* May 13; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$752,620; *Event:* Riverdance; *Venue:* **John Labatt Centre, London, Ontario**; *Attendance:* 9,352; *Ticket Range:* \$97.74-\$70.20; *Promoter:* The Theatre Council; *Dates:* May 23-27; *No. of Shows:* 6

5) *Gross Sales:* \$564,504; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, Fort Wayne, Ind.**; *Attendance:* 9,209; *Ticket Range:* \$64.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Mischell Productions, The Messina Group; *Dates:* June 4; *No. of Shows:* 1

5,001 - 10,000 Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$356,775; *Event:* A-Mei Chang; *Venue:* **Aladdin Theatre, Las Vegas**; *Attendance:* 3,701; *Ticket Range:* \$168-\$50; *Promoter:* Jade Entertainment; *Dates:* May 27; *No. of Shows:* 1

2) *Gross Sales:* \$349,449; *Event:* David Copperfield; *Venue:* **Dodge Arena, Hidalgo, Texas**; *Attendance:* 7,157; *Ticket Range:* \$65-\$35; *Promoter:* Theater Council; *Dates:* May 19; *No. of Shows:* 2

3) *Gross Sales:* \$283,290; *Event:* Black Eyed Peas; *Venue:* **Everett (Wash.) Events Center**; *Attendance:* 8,094; *Ticket Range:* \$35; *Promoter:* House of Blues; *Dates:* May 15; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$226,615; *Event:* WWE; *Venue:* **Dodge Arena, Hidalgo, Texas**; *Attendance:* 7,104; *Ticket Range:* \$60-\$20; *Promoter:* WWE; *Dates:* May 12; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$153,852; *Event:* Rush Limbaugh; *Venue:* **Nokia at Grand Prairie (Texas)**; *Attendance:* 1,881; *Ticket Range:* \$100-\$45; *Promoter:* AEG Live; *Dates:* May 11; *No. of Shows:* 1

5,000 or Fewer Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$3,635,158; *Event:* Wicked; *Venue:* **Fox Theatre, Atlanta**;

Attendance: 70,623 Ticket Range: \$66-\$27; Promoter: Broadway in Atlanta; Dates: May 17-28 No. of Shows: 16

2) Gross Sales: \$1,311,328; Event: Bombay Dreams; Venue: **Sacramento (Calif.) Community Theatre**; Attendance: 27,499; Ticket Range: \$65-\$15; Promoter: California Musical Theatre; Dates: May 10-21; No. of Shows: 16

3) Gross Sales: \$856,610; Event: Jerry Seinfeld; Venue: **The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas**; Attendance: 8,130; Ticket Range: \$150-\$75; Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West, In-house; Dates: May 12-13; No. of Shows: 2

4) Gross Sales: \$712,621; Event: Rent; Venue: **Fox Theatre, Atlanta**; Attendance: 14,709; Ticket Range: \$54.50-\$34.50; Promoter: In-house; Dates: June 2-4; No. of Shows: 5

5) Gross Sales: \$649,380; Event: Confessions; Venue: **Warner Theatre, Washington, D.C.**; Attendance: 15,713; Ticket Range: \$49.50-\$33.50; Promoter: Marvelous Entertainment; Dates: May 14-21; No. of Shows: 10

Compiled by April Stroud, HotTickets@venuestoday.com

MARKETING



PAETEC Park, Rochester, N.Y.

TWO SOCCER STADIUMS KICK OFF THIS MONTH

A new soccer stadium opened earlier this month in Rochester, N.Y., and another venue will open June 24 in suburban Chicago that will be only the fourth major soccer-specific stadium in the United States.

"One of the things unique about it is that it has a \$2 million natural grass system that is state-of-the-art," said Art Cooper, vice president, Midwest, for AEG, which will operate the new Bridgeview, Ill., facility.

Another unusual aspect of the stadium is its built-in stage roof. "Acts can set up without

having to build scaffolding. It's probably the second of its kind in the U.S.," Cooper said.

The team plays its first game June 11 with a controlled crowd; the official opening is set for June 24, when there will also be the annual "Summerbash," put on by local radio station B96, which is a Top Forty station.

"Both events are sold out," Cooper said. There will be various promotional events all summer, including an all-star game by the UK-based Chelsea soccer team, one of the best in the world. Also planned is a Kenny Chesney concert in September.

One promotional event before the stadium's completion was a "2006 Waiting List" program, where for a \$50 seat deposit, fans were placed on a waiting list after current season ticket holders. Both full and partial ticket plans were offered. The promotion included discounted merchandise and invitations to special events prior to the opening. "We have no hard numbers, but season ticket sales so far are way ahead of last year," Cooper said.

The \$70 million, 20,000-seat stadium is part of a plan to revive an area of Bridgeview, which is a suburb only 15 minutes from Chicago near Midway Airport.

"This is the first step in a redevelopment of the entire village where the stadium will serve as an anchor to a whole retail-office area," Cooper said.

The new stadium is at 71st and Harlem, a major Bridgeview artery, on a 100-acre tract. Its 20,000 seats can be expanded to 30,000 during a later phase. Concert seating capacity is 28,000. The complex includes 48 luxury suites, a soccer pub, food courts, retail displays, a press room, training rooms, four locker rooms and meeting rooms.

Major League Soccer's Chicago Fire will be the stadium's primary tenant. The venue houses the team's offices and official training center. As a multi-purpose facility, the stadium will also be used for major concerts and other special events. "We'll have graduations, some automotive events, some public events like festivals and fairs. You name it," Cooper said.

The United Soccer League's Rochester (N.Y.) Rhinos opened its soccer-specific stadium June 3.

"The Rhinos' new stadium is a far cry from the transformed ballpark where they used to play," said HOK Sport project manager John Fickel of the new venue called PAETEC Park.

He said the stadium has a European feel in an intimate setting.

The exposed steel structure features a four-pole European lighting system and a special, pre-engineered seating system. The horseshoe-shaped seating bowl seats 13,500 (which can be expanded to 20,000) and provides an open north end designed for large group gatherings. There are 20 suites and 1,500 club seats.

The west side upper deck provides dramatic views of downtown Rochester, and the first row of seats in the four corners is just 15 feet from the action on the field.

A new brand of FieldTurf was used to accommodate a variety of events. "The field turf used has a unique FIFA 2-star rating; nowhere else in the U.S. does this quality of turf exist," said Fickel, whose reference to the FIFA was the governing board of the soccer league.

The turf not only allows for the best soccer playing field possible, but also allows the venue to hold various other events.

In addition to the Rhinos, PAETEC Park will host Major League Lacrosse's Rochester Rattlers; women's professional soccer, lacrosse and football championships; and various community events.

Located in a once-blighted area, the \$40 million stadium will "revitalize Rochester and provide increased revenues for one of the most successful teams in the USL," according to Fickel.

A somewhat unusual construction challenge was that the site had contaminated soil, which required a clean up and close coordination with the EPA. "The blighted areas surrounding the neighborhood currently are being redeveloped into retail/restaurant and entertainment environments," Fickel said.

PAETEC Park represents HOK Sport's first soccer-only stadium to open in the U.S. It's the fourth largest USL stadium to be opened in the U.S., according to Fickel. HOK also has a Colorado Rapids stadium now under construction. — David Wilkening
Interviewed for this story: Jay Cooper, (708) 496-6705; John Fickel, (816) 329-4409



EVENT & ARENA MARKETING CONFERENCE, MIAMI, June 7-10

Seen in Miami, left to right, are Liz Presler, Greensboro (N.C.) Coliseum; Tia Harris, Crown Center, Fayetteville, N.C.; Erin Hackett, Nationwide Arena, Columbus, Ohio; and Angie Kinsella, Assembly Hall at the University of Illinois, Champaign. At right, from left, are Lisa Zinser and Elizabeth Bass, Lakeland (Fla.) Civic Center; Ronnie Chase, Greensboro Coliseum, and Alissa Sneiderman, BankAtlantic Center, Sunrise, Fla. (VT Photos)

LP Field, Nashville, Tenn.



CHARITY A BIG PART OF TITANS SPONSORSHIP FOR LOUISIANA-PACIFIC CORP.

Nashville-based Louisiana-Pacific Corp. has bought an expensive bag of tools with a \$30 million, 10-year agreement inked yesterday for naming rights at the National Football League (NFL) Tennessee Titans football field.

Yet, John Neilson, vice president of marketing for LP, said the company, a manufacturer of building products, feels this sponsorship will bring their marketing opportunities to another level.

"This deal was very attractive to us," Neilson said. "It was attractive to us because of the broad visibility and the tools it gives us to build our marketing. Whether it's tickets to a game for potential clients, personal appearances or signed items, it makes our marketing more effective than anything else we could do."

Temporary signs on the Titans stadium with the new name, LP Field, went up yesterday. Permanent signs should be in place in about one month, according to Don MacLachlan, Titans administration and facilities vice president. MacLachlan said they are also gearing up with LP Field logo merchandise for the coming season.

All specifics of the agreement were not readily available at the announcement, but Neilson said the \$30 million LP is paying for the naming rights comes out to be about \$3 million a year. The company, which moved its headquarters to Nashville two years ago, will have an option to extend the agreement another 10 years.

Negotiations began last fall.

"The Titans organization was great to work with," Neilson said. "We just really clicked." MacLachlan said the Titans are thrilled to have LP as a partner.

"Their corporate headquarter is located right across the river from the field," he said. For the duration of the agreement, LP and the Titans will work together on several philanthropic initiatives to benefit Nashville and surrounding communities. Specifically, for the 2006 season, LP and the Titans will jointly provide financial and volunteer support to build a home for the Nashville Area Habitat for Humanity.

LP will donate building products to Habitat for Humanity to support construction of at least one home in every city in which the Titans play an away game in the 2006 season. It will donate a kit of LP materials that provide the structure and siding of homes.

In addition, LP will continue to support The PENCIL Foundation, a Nashville business-school partnership program and its LP PENCIL Box free school supplies store. LP will now have opportunities to incorporate the Titans into these and other efforts.

LP has also launched a Web site, www.LPfield.com. The site features games, attractions, links to ticket sales and a sweepstakes for tickets to the Titans opening home game.

The stadium has been known as simply The Coliseum since the Titans ended their relationship with Adelphia Business Solutions in 2002. That company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy that year. — Pam Sherborne

Interviewed for this story: John Neilson, (615) 986-5886, Don MacLachlan, (615) 565-4018

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SHORT TAKES

TAMPA BAY PAC ENDS LIVE NATION CONTRACT

The Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center and Live Nation have agreed to part ways after a joint contract to present touring Broadway shows at the venue expires on June 1, 2007. Live Nation and TBPAC collaborated on Broadway programming and marketing decisions on touring productions. According to TBPAC President Judith Lisi, "The change is purely a business decision. As we looked at the business model, we wanted to try and keep more Broadway revenues here to support the rest of our programs, including our educational outreach and much of our mission-based fine arts programming, which always need support from more commercial bookings." The Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center presents Broadway in the 2,600-seat Carol Morsani Hall. The Center has more than 10,000 Broadway season ticket holders.

Contact: Paul Bilyeu, (813) 222-1050

CSC AND APEX PROVIDE EVENT STAFFING AT HIFI BUYS AMPHITHEATRE

When HiFi Buys Amphitheatre, Atlanta, opened its 2006 concert season, it marked the first year that Contemporary Services Corporation (CSC) provided its services for the House of Blues Concerts (HOB). Overseeing the preparations for the 2006 concert season is CSC Atlanta Regional Manager Jay Purves. The APEX Group, CSC's sister company which provides executive security management services, will provide all off-duty law enforcement officers.

Contact: Jeanette Johnson, (818) 335-1904

BIG 12 CONFERENCE AWARDS FUTURE CHAMPIONSHIP SITES

The Big 12 Conference announced that its 2007 football championship game will be held in at the 65,000-seat Alamadome in San Antonio, Texas, and the '08 men's and

women's basketball championships will take place in Kansas City, Mo. This marks the third time San Antonio will play host to the Dr Pepper Big 12 Football Championship game. The Phillips 66 Big 12 Basketball Championships returns to Kansas City for the eighth time in 2008. It will be the first time the men will play at the under-construction Sprint Center there. The women will again be headquartered at Municipal Auditorium.
Contact: Bob Burda, (214) 753-0107

FIRST IAAM SAN DIEGO CHAPTER MEETING SET

Several speakers have been scheduled for the first International Association of Assembly Managers (IAAM) chapter meeting in San Deigo, set for June 20, 4-7 p.m. at the House of Blues on Fifth Avenue. Michael Enoch, general manager, Coors Amphitheatre, HOB Concerts, is the host. The keynote will be delivered by Dolf Berle, COO, HOB Entertainment. Don Telford, president and COO, San Diego Theatres, will moderate a session on local issues; Richard Anderson, CFE, executive vice president and managing director, San Diego Padres Petco Park, will give an IAAM update; and Joe Psuik, CFE, senior vice president, CEO, San Diego Convention Center, will address IAAM's Venue Safety and Security initiative.

Contact: Michael Enoch, (619) 671-3506

SINGAPORE PICKS SANDS CORP. TO BUILD ITS FIRST CASINO

The Las Vegas Sands Corp. has been chosen to build and run Singapore's first casino, a project that will cost more than \$3.2 billion. A panel of government ministers chose the group from four consortia, which included top casino firms Harrah's Entertainment Inc. (and director James Cameron and AEG Live) and MGM Mirage (and Cirque du Soleil) and their local partners. Las Vegas Sands representatives have said that its \$3.6 billion plan for the Singapore casino resort would make it the costliest in the world. The casino will be built on a 50.9-acre waterfront site and will include conference halls and performance venues. The Sands has a 30-year lease. Moshe Safdie is the architect and is said to have a design inspired by a decks of cards leaning against each other. Proposals for a second casino, slated for the resort island of Sentosa, must be submitted by October.

Contact: Ron Reese, (702) 414-3607

MABLE IS THE WINNER IN RBBB ELEPHANT NAMING CONTEST

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, *Weekly Reader* and *>Teen Kids News* sponsored a name the elephant contest for the 20th Asian elephant born at Feld Entertainment's RBBB Center for Elephant Conservation in Florida. More than 3,600 votes were cast. Mable, after the wife of John Ringling, one of the original Ringling Brothers, was selected from a choice of five names.

Contact: Amy McWethy, (703) 448-4179

CORRECTIONS

VEE Corporation's newest family show, *My Little Pony Live*, kicks off this fall (VT, May 26 e-newsletter). Boston Culinary Group's web site address is www.bostonculinarygroup.com and the firm was founded in 1961 (*Venues Today*, June 2006). We apologize to VEE and BCG for printing erroneous information.

HELP WANTED

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Newseum - Business Manager, D.C.

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Universoul Circus - General Manager – Show Tour

An ent. co. that produces the famous Universoul Circus is seeking a General Manager. Position tours the circus to 30 + cities across the U.S. 10 months of the year. Has overall responsibility for all aspects of the tour incl: 75 plus performers, operations, maintenance, safety, production, box office, merchandise, food & beverage. College degree and 5-7 yrs exp. as GM or in a related capacity. Strong leadership and mgt skills req.

[Click here for more information](#)

Universoul Circus - Drivers

Entertainment Co. that produces the world famous Universoul Circus is looking for drivers to start immediately! CDL Class A & Class B drivers will be hired. Drivers will tour with the show 10 months per year. Lodging is provided. CDL drivers - major responsibilities are to move the show equip. from city to city. Minimum 2 yrs. exp. req. Class B Drivers – drive circus vans transporting performers from hotel to circus lot several times a day. Also drive vans & truck to cities as circus moves. Apply to: bwalker@universoulcircus.com

Universoul Circus - Public Relations and Media Specialist

Universoul circus has a position opening for an aggressive public relations and media person with 3-5 years solid exp. in communicating and marketing for entertainment or related fields. Send resume to bwalker@universoulcircus.com for more information.

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