

Kristin Sarbeck

Subject: FW: March 29, 2006 Newsletter



VENUES**today**

"The news behind the headlines"

Dear Kristin,

March 29, 2006 VOL. V, Number XI ISSN 1547-4143

Welcome to your **Venues Today** weekly e-newsletter, full of the latest live entertainment industry news. 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

"There are not too many building managers that miss IAAM [the International Association of Assembly Managers conference], but we're getting a lot of building managers who think it's not as necessary for box office managers to go to INTIX. As much as they get out of IAAM, box office managers will get out of INTIX." — Karen Sullivan, new INTIX chairwoman

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VENUE NEWS

Rendering of new Washington Nationals stadium (HOK Sport)



PLAN FOR NEW MLB PARK FOR NATIONALS UNVEILED

When long-anticipated plans were unveiled recently for the future home of Major League Baseball's Washington Nationals, District of Columbia residents found out they will get more than just a 41,000-seat ballpark.

"Since this is in the nation's capital, it's going to be more than just a

facility for the D.C. fans. With all our tourism and the out-of-town and foreign guests D.C. gets, the ballpark becomes a kind of multi-national facility that shows off our capital city," said Jim Chibnall, a principal and senior project designer with HOK Sport.

From right field seats, for example, spectators will be able to see the Washington Monument. From most areas of the top decks, spectators will be able to see the Capitol Dome. Other design elements include a main concourse that will offer an almost complete 360-degree open view of the playing field. That means fans standing in line at concession stands can still view the game.

"I think the most important thing a designer has to understand is that we're erecting a building that is all about the District, but also a response to the federal city itself," said Chibnall, who worked closely with the D.C. Sports and Entertainment Commission in the building's design.

"It's a significant development for a number of reasons, not the least of which we have finally once and for all returned the great American pastime to the nation's capital," said Allen Y. Lew, CEO of the D.C. Sports and Entertainment Commission.

The \$611-million plan is the result of input from the Sports Commission as well as architects, business leaders and local residents who reviewed early renditions and made suggestions. The ballpark's design was a joint venture between Devroux & Purnell and HOK Sport. (The D.C.-based Devroux & Purnell is an African-American-owned firm that has been active in the district.) The commission also hired well-known architect James Polshek as a consultant.

The stadium is also being designed for comfort. Fifty-five percent of the patrons who visit the venue can enter the ballpark and access their seats without using vertical circulation such as ramps, stairs, escalators or elevators. It will have 22,000 lower-bowl seats with 12,100 upper seats. It also has 2,500 club seats and 1,111 suite seats.

The suites include 10-24 party suites at a mid-level. "These are a same day purchase, so that you and a group of your closest friends can purchase it for that particular day," Chibnall said.

Premium seating includes the 500-seat Founders Club with an 8,500-square-foot dining area and bar. A second premium area is the 1,300-seat Diamond Club with a 10,000-square-foot bar and dining area.

A restaurant bar in the outfield will take up 10,000 square feet, while concession stands will occupy another 28,000 square feet. A team store will take up 5,000 square feet. Special family features include a 10,000-square-foot children's "training" area and a 2,000-square-foot arcade.

There will be 1,100 total fixtures in the men's and women's restrooms.

Team facilities will include a 19,000-square-foot home clubhouse, two indoor batting tunnels, auxiliary locker rooms and a 12,000-square-foot visitor clubhouse. There will also be 30,000 square feet of administration offices.

Parking and loading docks will have room for 1,225 cars and 30 buses.

Security features were a "very important aspect" in the building's design, Chibnall said. "We hired a consultant team to look not only at how to secure the flow of people coming into the facility, but also secure them once in the facility — looking at opportunities to strengthen the structure, to evade large blasts and that sort of thing," he said.

The facility will have a metal detector similar to the ones found at airports, though

somewhat more sophisticated. "We'll have the first major league baseball facility with a magnetometer," Chibnall said.

The facility is being built by the joint venture design-build team of Clark Construction, Hunt Construction Group and Smoot Construction. The District's Chief Financial Officer plans to meet with Wall Street officials to issue about \$535 million in bonds to finance the project.

Groundbreaking is planned next month with completion set for baseball's opening day in 2008. "We won't deny it's going to be difficult to complete by 2008, but we think it's very doable," Chibnall said.

The 41,000-seat park is expected to spur more development around its location in Southeast Washington along the Anacostia River waterfront, a site bounded by South Capitol Street to the west, N Street to the north, 1st Street to the east and Potomac Avenue to the south. Washington officials have described the stadium as the cornerstone of a new mixed-use waterfront entertainment district expected to rise up on the site.

Vendors have yet to be chosen. Within the next couple of weeks, the site will be turned over to a contractor. "It's been an eminent domain project, but we don't know what's definitely below the ground, though we have an idea from a historical perspective," Chibnall said.

Lew said the next big sports announcement in D.C. could be a new 20,000-seat stadium for the city's often-champion soccer team, DC United. "The original plan was to announce the new soccer stadium at the same time as the baseball stadium, but the investor backed out, so we're back to the drawing boards," he said. — David Wilkening *Interviewed for this story: Jim Chibnail (816) 221-1500; Allen Lew (202) 608-1143*

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ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY HIRES GLOBAL SPECTRUM FOR 2008 ARENA

St. Louis University announced that it has selected Philadelphia-based Global Spectrum to manage its new \$80-million, multipurpose, on-campus sports and entertainment facility that is planned for a March 2008 opening. However, the details of the deal have not been hammered out.

Arena Project Manager Jeff Fowler is confident this is the right move. "I've talked to a lot of my counterparts at other universities, and some are further along in the construction process [when they choose a management firm], but some have done like we've done and brought them in very early. What Global Spectrum will tell you is there are some real advantages to bringing them on board at the point we're at now. They can look at what the architects are doing and make sure that works operationally."

Fowler said he's heard the story 10 times now of the arena that didn't bring an operator on board until after the venue was finished and realized they didn't have a door big enough for a circus elephant to walk through. That cost the venue, which is to remain anonymous, \$30,000. "We laugh about these things, but these are things a management company looks at," he said.

The design, by Mackey Mitchell Assoc. and Sink Combs Dethlefs Architects, was downsized in December from a 13,000-seater to a 10,000-seater with more office and practice space. Groundbreaking is planned for September of this year.

The university expects the venue to be not only an attractive element for potential students, but a revenue driver, hosting concerts, trade shows and other new kinds of events, Fowler said. There will be 35-37 men's and women's basketball games each year, and the rest of the calendar is free. "Concerts are going to be more student-focused, but other shows will bring people from all over the state," Fowler said. "Bring in the right events and people will come. Make it an experience and they will come back for another event. Other business for us could bring hundreds of thousands of people to our campus each year that may never have come by."

But they are located in a competitive area, with the 22,000-seat Savvis Center in the city and a smaller Fox Theatre next door. The UMB Bank Pavilion amphitheater in St. Charles is located just across the Missouri River.

"We think our size is really good," Fowler said. "We could do 12,500 for a concert in the round. It's going to put us in between those [other venues]. ...We're also the only college campus."

Global Spectrum will handle booking the venue and pre-opening publicity.

The arena is funded with \$8 million in TIF funding, plus old-fashioned fundraising and bonds to be paid off with building revenue. "We're keeping the venue budget neutral," Fowler said.

The university will work with Global Spectrum over the next 18 months on an RFP for foodservice and other vendors, Fowler said.

The university did have another suitor for the contract, SMG. "We spent a lot of time with both companies, but at the end of the day, the committee felt a higher comfort level with Global Spectrum," Fowler said. — Natasha Emmons
Interviewed for this story: Jeff Fowler (314) 977-2540

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Allan Vella and Karen Sullivan

FACES & PLACES: NEW INTIX CHAIR, FOX GM SHARE THEIR DREAMS

After 18 months as general manager for Ford Park in Beaumont, Texas, for SMG, **Allan**

Vella has announced he will be leaving to start a new job as general manager of **Fox Theatre, Atlanta**, replacing Ed Neiss, who is retiring after 25 years.

Before moving to the Ford Center, Vella managed the Dow Event Center in Saginaw, Mich., for SMG for three years; before that, he spent 13 years with Olympia Entertainment, managing their venues in the Detroit area, which included the historic Fox Theatre in that city.

"Atlanta was kind of a friendly competitor and leader in the industry," Vella said. "And it was a venue we watched closely and always competed to be top grossing venue of our size."

Vella was contacted by headhunter Margaret Genovese about the available general manager position. "I was very excited," he said. "There something exciting about running those historic and beautifully preserved venues. It's a facility with a heart and soul — a living, breathing thing that gives you a real purpose in ensuring its preservation continues."

Programming the venue will be made easier by recent trends, Vella said. "There are so many event opportunities now well-suited to a theater like Fox Theatre in Atlanta. It bodes well for the future of Fox."

This will be Vella's first job with a nonprofit organization. "I think dealing with corporate structures and politicians have prepared me well for reporting to a board," he said.

Neiss plans to stay on board as a consultant for two years, and Vella said he just hopes to emulate his accomplishments with the venue. "They've been so successful, I'm not going in with any major template for change."

Vella will be missed in Beaumont, according to comments in the local newspaper. "It wasn't just me," Vella stressed. "The resources of SMG and the hardworking staff we have here at Ford Park, I think we renewed our energy and enthusiasm. We're really striving to increase our level of service and generate more event excitement and participation by the local market. We've been successful. We've had a number of sellouts and we've pulled in some events that [Beaumont] hasn't seen in a while."

His replacement has not been named. Vella starts his job in Atlanta June 1.

INTIX, the International Ticketing Association, has a new chairwoman. **Karen Sullivan**, vice president of ticketing at the Meadowlands Sports Complex in East Rutherford, N.J., took the reins at the group's annual meeting in Boston and will serve for a year. She has been with the Meadowlands for 29 years.

"It's still fun. I like the variety. I'm fortunate I work in two buildings, Giants Stadium and Continental Arena, with two football teams, soccer, NBA, NHL, Seton Hall college sports, in addition to concerts, Sesame Street, etc.," Sullivan said. "You don't get bored."

Sullivan said her INTIX focus is on education. "We're trying to increase educational outreach partly through providing more one-day programs for regionals [groups] and partly through the INTIX Intensive prior to the annual conference," she said.

The Intensive, which this year featured expert negotiator Peter Baron Stark heading up a leadership seminar, sold out. But the Intensive is limited in capacity to 75-100 students. Sullivan hopes to expand the program, even including a Box Office 101-type of class for newbies in the field. Financial and accounting topics are other requests, and

personal growth. "How can you work in a box office and maintain a personal life?"

As far as the biggest challenges facing box office managers, Sullivan said it is rising customer expectations. "I've been on the phone all day with thousands of people trying to get NCAA tickets, asking where are my seats going to be?" she said. "It's more and more difficult to make [people happy]. There are still only so many good seats in the house."

There's an old saying that only 5 percent of customers are troublesome, but that they take up most of the box office staff's time. "I think that percentage is going up," Sullivan said. "It is more and more expensive to go, and when you spend more money, you expect a better experience. Some people might think \$200 for a concert ticket is expensive, but then there's someone with a \$350 seat. ...Spending that kind of money, people are expecting to have a great experience."

Packaging is a trend that is satisfying some patrons, Sullivan said. The venues have offered parking with tickets for the past year-and-a-half. "Every time we have that out there, it sells out. We do it through Ticketmaster."

Another goal of Sullivan's for her time as chairwoman is to increase the profile of INTIX with building general managers. "There are not too many building managers that miss IAAM [the International Association of Assembly Managers conference], but we're getting a lot of building managers who think it's not as necessary for box office managers to go to INTIX. As much as they get out of IAAM, box office managers will get out of INTIX," she said. "It really is an educational conference. You just come out with so much." — Natasha Emmons

Interviewed for this story: Allan Vella, (409) 951-5401; Karen Sullivan, (201) 460-4325

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BOOKINGS



HOT tickets

L.A. COLISEUM BREAKS \$3 MIL ON HISPANIC SHOW

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 March 7, 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:* \$3,165,150; *Event:* RBD; *Venue:* **Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum**; *Attendance:* 63,007; *Ticket Range:* \$100-\$50; *Promoter:* Roptus; *Dates:* March 18; *No. of Shows:* 1

2) *Gross Sales:* \$1,526,903; *Event:* Billy Joel; *Venue:* **Verizon Center, Washington, D.C.**; *Attendance:* 17,818; *Ticket Range:* \$89.50-\$49.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* March 16; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$1,517,763; *Event:* Wisin Y Yandel; *Venue:* **Coliseo De Puerto Rico, San Juan**; *Attendance:* 25,947; *Ticket Range:* \$125-\$30; *Promoter:* Carlos Diaz Flores, Inc.; *Dates:* March 17-18; *No. of Shows:* 2

4) *Gross Sales:* \$1,010,742; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Rupp Arena, Lexington, Ky.**; *Attendance:* 17,035; *Ticket Range:* \$64-\$54; *Promoter:* AEG Live, The Messina Group; *Dates:* March 25; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$846,224; *Event:* Juan Gabriel; *Venue:* **American Airlines Arena, Miami**; *Attendance:* 11,089; *Ticket Range:* \$122-\$50; *Promoter:* CMN; *Dates:* March 11; *No. of Shows:* 1

10,001 - 15,000 Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$1,925,700; *Event:* Rahman vs. Toney; *Venue:* **Atlantic City (N.J.) Boardwalk Hall**; *Attendance:* 8,340; *Ticket Range:* \$500-\$50; *Promoter:* Caesars Entertainment, Top Rank; *Dates:* March 18; *No. of Shows:* 1

2) *Gross Sales:* \$1,169,939; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Ervin J. Nutter Center, Dayton, Ohio**; *Attendance:* 20,635; *Ticket Range:* \$64.50-\$54.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Mischell Productions, The Messina Group; *Dates:* March 23-24; *No. of Shows:* 2

3) *Gross Sales:* \$437,087; *Event:* Queen; *Venue:* **The Arena at Gwinnett Center, Duluth, Ga.**; *Attendance:* 5,909; *Ticket Range:* \$123-\$33; *Promoter:* House of Blues

Concerts, Jack Utsick NE Presents; *Dates:* March 7; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$415,224; *Event:* Nickelback; *Venue:* **The Arena at Gwinnett Center, Duluth, Ga.**; *Attendance:* 10,949; *Ticket Range:* \$39.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Concerts West, Fastlane Concerts, The Messina Group; *Dates:* March 17; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$329,672; *Event:* Nickelback; *Venue:* **Roberts Stadium, Evansville, Ind.**; *Attendance:* 8,563; *Ticket Range:* \$42.50-\$39.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Concerts West, Fastlane Concerts, The Messina Group; *Dates:* March 19; *No. of Shows:* 1

5,001-10,000 Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$505,409; *Event:* Celtic Woman; *Venue:* **Radio City Music Hall, New York**; *Attendance:* 9,959; *Ticket Range:* \$65-\$35; *Promoter:* Radio City Entertainment; *Dates:* March 17-18; *No. of Shows:* 2

2) *Gross Sales:* \$362,018; *Event:* Nickelback; *Venue:* **Von Braun Center, Huntsville, Ala.**; *Attendance:* 9,546; *Ticket Range:* \$39.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Concerts West, Fastlane Concerts, The Messina Group; *Dates:* March 18; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$218,040; *Event:* KORN; *Venue:* **Magness Arena, Denver**; *Attendance:* 5,870; *Ticket Range:* \$39.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* March 8; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$189,424; *Event:* Third Day; *Venue:* **Gibson Amphitheatre at Universal CityWalk, Universal City, Calif.**; *Attendance:* 4,705; *Ticket Range:* \$40.50-\$35; *Promoter:* House of Blues Concerts; *Dates:* March 18; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$170,745; *Event:* David Gray; *Venue:* **Gibson Amphitheatre at Universal CityWalk, Universal City, Calif.**; *Attendance:* 3,616; *Ticket Range:* \$55-\$29.50; *Promoter:* House of Blues Concerts; *Dates:* March 21; *No. of Shows:* 1

5,000 or Fewer Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$677,535; *Event:* R. Kelly; *Venue:* **Fox Theatre, Atlanta**; *Attendance:* 9,090 *Ticket Range:* \$80-\$55; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* March 20-21 *No. of Shows:* 2

2) *Gross Sales:* \$677,215; *Event:* Ben Harper; *Venue:* **Florida Theatre, Jacksonville**; *Attendance:* 1,858; *Ticket Range:* \$39; *Promoter:* Fantasma, In-House; *Dates:* March 9; *No. of Shows:* 1

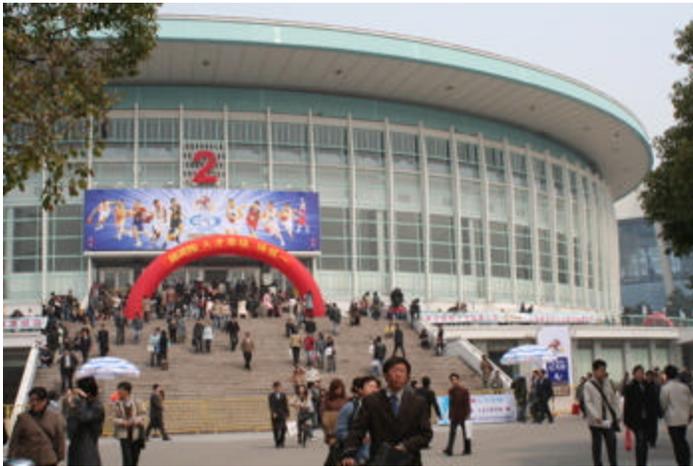
3) *Gross Sales:* \$338,552; *Event:* Dame Edna; *Venue:* **Ruth Eckerd Hall, Clearwater, Fla.**; *Attendance:* 5,868; *Ticket Range:* \$67-\$37; *Promoter:* In-house; *Dates:* March 8-12; *No. of Shows:* 7

4) *Gross Sales:* \$300,366; *Event:* Jerry Seinfeld; *Venue:* **Warner Theatre, Erie, Pa.**; *Attendance:* 4,115; *Ticket Range:* \$78-\$48; *Promoter:* JS Touring; *Dates:* March 16; *No. of Shows:* 2

5) *Gross Sales:* \$285,881; *Event:* Van Morrison; *Venue:* **The Opera House, Boston**; *Attendance:* 2,640; *Ticket Range:* \$150-\$68.50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* March 8; *No. of Shows:* 1

Compiled by Kristin Sarbeck, HotTickets@venuestoday.com

Shanghai Grand Stage on Caoxi Bei Lu



ROLLING STONES TO PLAY SHANGHAI NEXT MONTH

Aging rockers the Rolling Stones will finally come to China as part of their "A Bigger Bang" tour, which started in August 2005. Originally, the band was due to play dates in 2003, but the shows were cancelled due to the SARS (Sudden Acute Respiratory Syndrome) scare.

According to Jonathan Krane, the president of Emma Entertainment,

the promoters of the April 8 concert in Shanghai, "They have wanted to perform in China for many years. This will be their first-ever performance. Many artists want to perform in China. They are intrigued, and China represents the largest emerging market in the world."

Emma Entertainment is one of China's leading promoters. They have offices based in Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong and New York. At present, they are promoting a variety of events in China, including the Volvo Golf Open and some more events featuring local talent such as Kun Opera. Previously, they have been the promoters for such large events as the Formula1 Grand Prix.

The concert will take place at the Shanghai Grand Stage on Caoxi Bei Lu, which is located in the west of Shanghai. It is well connected by subway with its own station on the Metro Line 1 and also served by many bus lines. Limited parking is available at the site. The stadium has a capacity of 8,500 seats, all of which will be used for the show.

The sponsor is Deutsche Bank.

According to staff at the venue's development office, the show is controlled and organized entirely by the promoter and their only role is the rental of space. Acts often bring their own staff and road crew, but this show will employ both local and overseas labour. Although some acts choose to import their own equipment, as noted by Krane, "China has a good and updated equipment supply."

For the cancelled tour, which was promoted by Ten Events-Asia, the media and advertising budget was \$250,000 (U.S.), which included TV spots, radio, print media and a giant 260-foot-long, 20-foot-wide street banner. The promoters also organized "Rolling Stones" nights at popular bars such as Ark in Shanghai's Xintiandi bar and restaurant complex. The cancelled dates were March 28-29 at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre and April 1 and 4 in Shanghai and Beijing respectively.

Advertising for the "Bigger Bang" tour has so far appeared in English language magazines such as *That's Shanghai*, which are available at popular bars and restaurants around the city. The print ad has been placed inside the front cover of that magazine. Also, a huge multi-story wraparound billboard has appeared in a prominent position on the elevated highway towards the Bund (a Shanghai landmark building).

Ticket prices range from approximately \$35 to \$230, in a city where the average income for the local population is less than \$200 a month. Emma is also using its Web

site to auction the four best seats in the house, with part of the proceeds to go to the Special Olympics. The bidding ends April 5 and must be paid in cash at either Emma's Beijing or Shanghai office.

Tickets are available through Emma Entertainment's bilingual Web site, www.emma.cn, as well as on their ticket hotline, which has Chinese and English language operators. Other sites for ticket sales include the Chinese language sites www.eaticket.com and www.eticketfast.com. The manager at East Asia ticket, Mr. Fan, declined to comment on the exact demographic of ticket sales, but did say that the tickets were already sold out.

As the promoter of the failed Forty Licks tour, Michael Luevano said, "One of the major issues that faced the 2003 show [aside from SARS] was a lack of knowledge from the local Chinese, [as to] who the Rolling Stones actually were." The main focus for advertising was high-end and white-collar Chinese. It was taken as given that the expatriates would buy tickets.

Bringing acts to China may pose some difficulties. The Chinese government has a strong hold over censorship and watches over many areas of communication, including music. Entertainment and media industries are controlled by the Chinese government, and artists are required to submit their material before coming to the country on tour. Once song lyrics are reviewed by the Ministry of Culture and approved, the artists are given permission to perform in China.

Another issue that affects the artist is that of piracy. The violation of Intellectual Property Rights is a huge problem in China, and many artists are reluctant to include China on their tours as they are unable to sell records when they tour live. Although the government has regular public crackdowns on pirated goods, which include staged scenes for the news media of police steamrolling illegal copies, they have failed to stamp out this problem. — Elyse Singleton

Interviewed for this story: Michael Luevano, +86-21-6386-0864; Jonathan Krane, +86-10-6505-6456; Mr. Fan, +86-21-6426-5678

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Tom Roberts and animals, Zippos Circus



U.K. CONSIDERS STRICT CIRCUS ANIMAL CONTROLS

A complete ban on wild animals in travelling circuses could soon become reality in the United Kingdom, following an announcement by Animal Welfare Minister Ben Bradshaw earlier this month.

"I intend to use a regulation under clause 10 of the Animal Welfare Bill to ban the use in travelling circuses of certain non-domesticated species whose welfare needs cannot be satisfactorily met in that

environment," Bradshaw said in a statement to the House of Commons.

"In drawing up proposals for secondary legislation, we intend to ensure a clear read across between zoo licensing standards and those standards that we will require from permanent circus premises. Individuals or organisations who train performing animals will be subject to inspection. This will be in addition to existing proposals that we introduce a Code of Practice for circuses and performing animals to deal with other issues such as training activities, trainer competencies and accommodation needs for animals when travelling."

The move was welcomed by animal charities and animal rights campaigners, such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) and the Born Free Foundation.

"It remains to be seen which species of animals will fall into the ban, and the Society continues to urge that all wild animals be spared the indignity and inadequate welfare facilities associated with performing and travelling with a circus," Rob Atkinson, the RSPCA's head of wildlife, said in a statement. "However, this news, and the accompanying announcement that the winter quarters in which circus animals are kept will be subject to licensing and inspection, is a positive step forward — and one that the RSPCA welcomes."

Circus proprietors and representatives from the circus industry, however, were surprised and angered by the announcement. Chris Barltrop, Equity's circus councillor, said that the sector has been in discussion with government representatives for the past 10 years about the welfare of animals, and the plan had been to introduce some form of regulation for travelling circuses.

He is very concerned about the government's sudden U-turn on the issue, and put it down to the powers of the animal rights lobby. "Over the past 10 years the animal rights movement has donated \$4.37 million (U.S.) to the Labour Party — so one suspects that this is policy for money," he said.

Barltrop warned that if a ban comes into force some circuses could be forced to close down and the animals would also face an uncertain future. "One consideration is not just the business and having to change your whole business concept — it's the consideration of the animals themselves. If you separate them from the home — the people and other animals they know — they'll pine and they'll die sooner or later."

"The newspapers, the media and the government are all falling into a situation that the judgement is pre-determined and whatever view we put forward is discounted.

"Circus people are in the main without formal qualifications, but have a life-long experience of working with animals, sometimes through several generations of the same family. We're being told that we don't know what we're doing and that circuses are always cruel to animals, all the clichés are coming out, when in fact circus people are largely very good with animals."

Barltrop is on a working party panel that is advising the government about possible codes of conduct, certificate of training and transport of animals for circuses. But although the industry is being consulted, he is not sure whether their views will actually be taken into account when the Animal Welfare Bill comes into force in October this year. It is also not clear when the possible ban would be introduced — most likely circuses would be given a certain time to prepare for the new laws.

A ban on wild animals in circuses has already been introduced in Austria, and some other European countries already have legislation in place banning circuses from including certain types of animals.

The potential ban in the United Kingdom would apply to travelling circuses only — performances in zoos, in film, television and in static circuses would be exempt. — Eva Johansson

Interviewed for this story: Chris Barltrop, +44 207 379 6000

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MARKETING



John Killian, Abe Pollin and Tony Lewis; changing signs at night

MCI CENTER BECOMES VERIZON CENTER ALMOST OVERNIGHT

The 20,000-seat MCI Center in Washington, D.C., has been renamed the Verizon Center, with the name transition taking place two weeks ahead of schedule. This is the first name change the center has had in its nine-year history.

“It actually has been a much smoother process than anyone anticipated,” said Rick Moreland, senior vice president of corporate marketing and executive seatings for Washington Sports & Entertainment, which owns the center. “We started the process about five weeks before the actual opening date of the Verizon Center; for things to go as smoothly as they did was quite remarkable for us.”

The target date for the transition to take place was the third week in March. On March 5, the National Basketball Association (NBA) Washington Wizards played the Sacramento Kings, the first event to take place under the Verizon name.

The change in name came about as part of the merger between Verizon Communications and MCI. “It was a very aggressive timeline that we put together to take advantage of the national spotlight for the NCAA’s the third weekend in March,”

said Guillermo Lopez, manager of Verizon Business in Ashburn, Va.

"We were fortunate that Verizon had a signage-design team that had worked with a number of their other properties and office buildings, and they had confidence in this group to be able to commit to the project, access the inventory and determine what signage was needed for different places," Moreland said. "They had done rebranding around the country before, but not to this scale."

Moreland estimates that between 700 and 1,000 signs had to be replaced. "Everything from the signage in front of the building to garage signs, the plaques on every one of our 114 suites, major entrance signs...they all had to be replaced."

"In our naming rights [deal] with MCI they were responsible for any changes and costs involved if something like this ever occurred," explained Moreland, who said he does not know a figure on the cost involved. "With the arena itself, Washington Sports & Entertainment had no costs whatsoever to make the switch. Everything from shirts to stationery to business cards, forms, sales material; anything that had a logo on it, Verizon was responsible for paying for."

Lopez also declined to give figures for the cost of the switchover from MCI to Verizon, saying that they were still making changes and the final figure had not been calculated. "The exterior signage is temporary; the permanent sign, which will be backlit, will be up by midyear," Lopez said. He added that the sign on the north wall of the Verizon Center was in Chinese, in keeping with the neighborhood of Chinatown that is adjacent to the arena.

"The steering committee wanted to keep true to the neighborhood, to be respectful to the neighborhood," Lopez continued. "Almost all the commercial properties in that area have their name in Chinese and English."

Moreland went on to say that they had to contact their media partners so the graphics could be changed, and all radio spots had to be changed to reflect the Verizon Center name. Spots for local restaurants that mentioned they were close to the Verizon Center had to be notified. Signs outside of the arena, such as street signage directing people to the arena, also had to be changed.

Verizon brings a good deal to the table with what the company offers: wireless Internet conductivity, telecommunications, the Yellow Book, and other elements, which might add to the enjoyment of Verizon Center patrons. "Right now we don't have any plans with them," Moreland said. "They came in quickly, they changed the building out. Now we are having discussions with them to see what enhancements could be made with them and their products. I think they will look at this as a place to showcase their products and will see branding opportunities for Verizon, which will really enhance what we are doing here at the Verizon Center."

Other buildings with communications sponsors, such as Nokia, have incorporated elements of that industry into the signage. On the front of the Nokia Theatre in Times Square in New York City, for instance, that sign is capable of displaying both live and digital video. It has the capability of displaying text messages from fans who are attending a show at the theatre. Fans can also charge their Nokia phones, see new product offerings from the company, and download content to their phones.

"As we grow our relationship with the building we will consider other things that Verizon can bring to the table and see what works with the Center," said Lopez. "We will certainly be looking for more ways to grow together in the future."

Sheila Francis, director, Event and Venue Public Relations, said they handed out 10,000 rally towels to the first people who came through the door for the basketball game on March 5, and did the same for the Washington Capitals hockey game. Each commemorative towel had the date and new logo on it.

"We also did a presentation during the Wizards game with some of the representatives from Verizon," Francis said. "John Killian, president of Verizon Business, introduced the Wizards, and Tony Lewis, president of Verizon in Washington, D.C., introduced the opponents. Then we did an honorary jump ball with Mr. Killian and Abe Pollin, chairman and owner of Verizon Center and Washington Sports and Entertainment."

Francis said they also did media drops with the Wizards' mascot to local radio and TV, delivering desk clocks and portfolios with the new Verizon center logo. "We are doing ads in some of the trade publications, letting the news about our new name be known," she added.

"Being a sports and entertainment facility, every time we toss a ball or drop a puck, there is another acknowledgement that the building has changed its name," said Moreland. "When CBS telecasts the regional championships from here it will be the top-rated programming for the week, so we have built-in PR available to us."

The venue has already has several concerts and family shows under the new name, including Queen with Paul Rodgers on March 9, Billy Joel on March 16 and the Harlem Globetrotters March 18. The building has 200 events a year, including Wizards basketball, National Hockey League's Capitals, and Georgetown Hoyas Basketball.

Upcoming events include Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus, March 29-April 2; Billy Joel's second concert, April 14; Champions on Ice, April 15; Luciano Pavarotti, June 25; Tim McGraw and Faith Hill, June 30. — Vernell Hackett

Interviewed for this story: Guillermo Lopez, (703) 723-6498; Rick Moreland, (202) 628-3200; Sheila Francis, (202) 628-3200

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CONCESSIONS

Rendering of the Broomfield (Colo.) Event Center

BCG SIGNS NEW ARENA,

EXPANSION

Boston Culinary Group has signed a five-year deal to provide food and beverage to the \$40 million Broomfield (Colo.) Event Center (BEC), which opens in November. The venue will be home to the Rocky Mountain Rage of the Central Hockey League (CHL) and the Colorado 14ers (for the 52 mountains in the region rising 14,000 feet or better) of the Continental Basketball Association. Broomfield is located 20 miles north of Denver.

Joe Armstrong III, business development manager for BCG, said Greg Fender, regional vice president, is relocating from the firm's Tampa office to open an office in Denver. He will oversee anticipated expansion for BCG in the region. Existing accounts there, besides Broomfield, include Bramlage Coliseum, Manhattan, Kan.; the Sioux City (Iowa) Convention Center, Pasadena (Calif.) Civic Center; the Tulsa Convention Center and the Chevrolet Center, Youngstown, Ohio, most of which have joined the fold in the last two years. And that grouping is likely to grow quickly.

Trey Medlock, executive vice president and general manager of the new venue for Wiens Frew Management Group LLC, said it is his understanding BCG will also provide food and drink services for two other new CHL venues opening this fall — Rio Rancho, N.M., and Prescott, Ariz. However, each deal is negotiated separately, he said.

Medlock came on board in Broomfield six weeks ago. He had been part of the ownership group of the CHL Rio Rancho Valley Killer Beez in South Texas. He sold his shares and moved to Colorado to oversee another startup, taking on responsibility for the team as well as the arena.

Most of the deal with BCG was done before Medlock arrived, but he could confirm the length of the contract and the fact one goal is to theme the restaurants and concessions stands to the Denver area, avoiding a generic look. Most of the CHL arenas are built on the same footprint, with local variations, originally conceived by International Coliseum Corp., which owns the league. Rio Grande Valley was the first of the series, followed by the Budweiser Events Center in Loveland, Colo., Youngstown which opened last year, and soon by three more in 2006. "The model ICC has has been found to be successful," Medlock noted.

Among the features that will set Broomfield apart is 500 seats on one end that can be retracted to accommodate an end-stage for concerts, upping the potential capacity to 7,881, Medlock said. He's just getting the promoter package out there, but he's excited about the extra capacity built into this design. They are negotiating with Irwin Seating to provide the seats.

Other aspects of the arena not necessarily usual to a minor league arena are a 360 degree LED fascia board from Daktronics, and an eight-sided centerhung scoreboard with 94-96 feet of LED. And this arena will have a basketball practice facility, a weight room and an exercise room. "There are NBA (National Basketball Association) arenas that don't have a practice facility," Tedlock said.

Choice Ticketing out of Boulder has been selected to do the ticketing. The venue will have 6,000 fixed seats, 26 luxury suites and 900 club seats. Food and drink outlets will include two club lounges, a restaurant and five concessions stands.

BEC is expected to host 130 events the first year, of which 32 are hockey games. BCG is working with the venue staff to design menus and fine tune the design. Tedlock said BCG allows BEC a lot of flexibility. "It's a working relationship. In a lot of markets, the

facility hires a company and they come in and say 'this is the way we've done it.' BCG wants to work with us."

Tedlock imagines the hockey fan in Colorado will be similar to the hockey fan in South Texas. They drink a lot of beer. But beyond that, there is a local flavor to enhance the experience. "Microbreweries are a big part of life here. That will be what fans want," he said.

The building will open with two concerts, to be booked, and two hockey games, he said.

Eventually, the arena will benefit from other development on the site, which occupies 215 acres known as Arista. The BEC is the major anchor. The two teams are co-owned by John Frew and Tim Wiens. The city and county of Broomfield own the arena, which is managed by Weins Frew Management Group. Architect for the arena is Sink Combs Dethlefs Architecture. — Linda Deckard

Interviewed for this story: Joe Armstrong III, (617)499.2700 ext. 153; Trey Medlock, (303) 991-5975

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SHORT TAKES

L.A. COLISEUM SETS HISPANIC CONCERT RECORD

Concert promoter Roptus announced that a March 18 Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum concert by RBD made history by generating the highest paid attendance and gross revenue from a Latin music concert ever to take place in the United States. Just over 63,000 RBD fans (63,007) generated \$3,165,150 in ticket sales. The attendance total eclipses the previous Coliseum record of 42,751 set in 1997 for the KLAX Cinco de Mayo Festival. Comprised of six members, three male and three female, RBD has experienced skyrocketing popularity, due mainly to their soap-opera or "novella," which airs each weekday afternoon on the nation's top Spanish-language TV network. The show at the Coliseum was presented by El Mexicano brand food products, KMEX Channel 34, Superestrella FM Radio and *La Opinion* newspaper. Tickets were priced \$50 (general admission), and \$75 and \$100 (reserved floor seating).

Contact: Jon Lee, (213) 765-6357

ARVADA CENTER EXPANSION UNDERWAY

Groundbreaking ceremonies took place March 20 for the \$6.4 million Arvada (Colo.) Center expansion. This phase of construction is expected to take less than six months, with opening festivities set for the Center's 30th anniversary, Nov. 5, 2006. Fentress Bradburn Architects developed the building expansion program. Phase I will include 20,000 square feet of newly constructed space and 18,500 square feet of interior renovations and improvements, as well as parking, site improvements and public art.

Contact: Jessica del Pilar, (303) 282-6192

CAMPO'S DELI JOINS WACHOVIA CENTER FOOD LINEUP

Philadelphia-based Campo's Deli is now the "Official Hoagie" for the Wachovia Complex, Philadelphia. Campo's is the newest element of local concessions in the Wachovia Complex, joining Chickie's and Pete's, Mexican Post, Polish Water Ice, and J & J Snack Foods (provider of the pretzels) — all based in the Greater Philadelphia Region. Campo's hoagies and hot sandwiches will be served in three locations within the

Wachovia Center and one location in the Wachovia Spectrum.

Contact: *Eric Nemeth, (215) 389-9553*

MUSIC RISING CHARITY AUCTIONS SET

More than 60 musical artists scheduled to perform in concert this summer are joining forces with Ticketmaster and four of the nation's largest concert promoters, Live Nation, House of Blues, AEG Live, and Nederlander Concerts, along with Gibson Guitar, for online ticket auctions to raise funds in support of Music Rising, the campaign to replace instruments and equipment lost by Gulf Coast musicians in Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Beginning April 1, online auctions are scheduled to launch on www.ticketmaster.com where fans can bid for tickets to more than 80 summer concert events nationwide.

Contact: *Bonnie Poindexter, (310) 360-2321*

BOBCATS PROMOTE TAPSCOTT AND SMUL

Ed Tapscott has been named president and CEO of Bobcats Sports & Entertainment, Charlotte, N.C., and Peter Smul has been elevated to the role of Chief Operating Officer. Tapscott has led the Bobcats organization since the NBA granted Charlotte an expansion franchise in December 2002. He had previously served as president and chief operating officer, where he managed the organization's day-to-day operations. In his new role, Tapscott will retain the president's title while working closely with the organization's ownership group in directing the strategic on-court and off-court development of the Bobcats, Sting and Charlotte Bobcats Arena. Smul will oversee all sales, service, administrative, finance, legal and marketing functions for the two franchises.

Contact: *Scott Leightman, (704) 688-8866*

KULAS PROMOTED TO VEE VP OF BOOKING

Kevin Kulas has been promoted to vice president of Booking at VEE Corporation, taking over the leadership reins for the booking and routing of VEE's national and international live touring family shows. Kulas joined VEE Corporation in November 2005 as director of Booking and was promoted to executive director of Booking in early February. Kulas joined VEE Corporation from the Minneapolis offices of Clear Channel Entertainment where, as market manager, he oversaw concert bookings throughout the upper Midwest. Kulas also served as Clear Channel's Minneapolis director of Finance and Operations and, prior to that, director of Event Analysis for Target Center.

Contact: *Jane O'Hara, (612) 852-2394*

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