

Rob Ocampo

Subject: FW: July 26, 2006 Venues Today



VENUES**today**

The news behind the headlines

Dear Rob,

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Welcome to your **Venues Today** weekly e-newsletter, full of the latest live entertainment industry news. For the first time, we're adding a blog to our menu of publications. We will be blogging at the IAAM/NAC convention in San Antonio. 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

"It was very humbling, both a most difficult and most rewarding day, certainly one that I won't easily forget...As much as you truly prepare for your visit, it's hard to be ready for what you encounter there. I think we were all very moved by the experience." —
Pat McCaffrey, ALSD President on the group's Lids for Kids program which provides caps to cancer patients.

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VENUE NEWS



The under-construction Miami Performing Arts Center has been renamed the Carnival Center after the cruiseliner donated \$20 million to the facility

MIAMI PERFORMING ARTS CENTER SELLS NAMING RIGHTS TO CARNIVAL

The Miami Performing Arts Center took a rare step earlier this month during the final construction phase of its \$85 million fundraising campaign. The center sold its naming rights to Carnival Cruise Lines for \$20 million. The new facility will be called the Carnival Center of the Performing Arts.

While it's common for performing arts center to dedicate individual performance halls to

honor philanthropists and companies who have donated during capital construction campaigns, it's rare for a PAC to dedicate its venue name to a private company or endowment.

The Walt Disney Concert Hall in downtown Los Angeles helped paved the way for the practice when it was built in 2003, and a few other performing arts centers have lent their names to major donors, but most elect to keep their title in line with the region or city where they are located.

"For us, it was an opportunity to honor one of our biggest donors during our capital drive," said center publicist Suzette Espinoza. "It was something unique we could offer to Carnival for securing their generous gift to us."

Carnival had previously agreed to give the center \$10 million for the naming rights to the facilities' concert hall, but after further discussions with center officials, Carnival agreed to kick in an additional \$10 million for rights to the entire facility. The move positions Carnival Cruises in the middle of the revitalization of downtown Miami, which is said to be going through a renaissance of sorts, centered on the \$446.3 million facility, \$85 million of which has come from its private capital campaign. The remainder of the financing comes from the County's Convention Development Tax revenues and Miami's redevelopment agency.

What the naming deal means for other performing arts centers remains to be seen, said Jessica Omuro of the Florida Arts Alliance, who added that many centers in the Sunshine State and throughout the country had been keeping their eye on the deal.

"From a fundraising standpoint, selling your naming rights can be an appealing option to raise capital because it requires a commitment that doesn't bring significant costs to the facility," she said. "At the same time, it can cost some centers a little bit of credibility with arts fans, although any educated theatergoer should realize that most all public performance facilities require support from major companies and charities."

But not every performing arts center can simply adopt a name change, Omuro pointed out. "Usually, private donations only represent a portion of a new center's funding. Most of the time, local government agencies kick in a major portion of the financing, and with that usually comes an expectation that the center will take on a regional title."

Carnival's relationship with the facility began back in 1991 when company founder Ted Arison pledged a \$10 million donation to the center. In the past, the company had given to groups like the New World Symphony, the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts and the United Way. Each deal had been inked quietly, Howard Frank, Carnival's Chief Operating Officer said in a press statement. This was the first time Carnival was securing a title sponsorship for a building it was supporting.

The center's main 2,200-seat concert hall will be named after the Knight Foundation, a charity founded by John and James Knight, creators of the Knight-Ridder media company. The Knight Foundation had originally donated \$3 million to the building of the center, and recently threw in another \$7 million to purchase the naming rights for the concert hall.

"We have a long history of supporting the arts and this seemed like a perfect fit for Miami," Knight Foundation spokesperson Larry Meyer said, adding that he expected the new center to include signage promoting the gift of the foundation.

The center's Sanford and Dolores Ziff Ballet Opera House, a 2,400 seat facility, will

keep its name, honoring the South Florida philanthropists who also donated \$10 million to the facility.

The Carnival Center is expected to open by October 2006 and was designed by architects Cesar Pelli of Pelli Clark Pelli architects —Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this story: Jessica Omuro, (407) 872-2382; Suzette Espinosa, (786) 468-2221; Larry Meyer, (305) 908-2610.

NEW ARENA FOR JACKSON, MISS., CLOSER TO REALITY

About to open three arenas in two months, Global Entertainment nevertheless has found time to pursue yet another opportunity, this one in Jackson, Miss. If momentum continues at the current pace, a new arena may open in Jackson by 2008.

Rick Kozuback, president of Global Entertainment, said the firm, which manages the Central Hockey League and has five arenas opened or planned housing some of the 18 teams in the league, said his company has been working in Jackson to make an arena happen for five or six years now.

In fact, there was another developer in town who was negotiating to build an arena at the old minor league baseball park, but that deal just died. That developer has moved to Pearl, Miss., now, and Jackson is deep into negotiations with Global Entertainment.

"Right now, we have exchanged a document with the city and anticipate something back from them in a couple weeks or so," Kozuback said. "It's a downtown project being built in conjunction with a convention center project that is happening, approved and city funded." Charlie Johnson, C.H. Johnson Consultants, is consultant on the convention center. The proposed hockey arena is across the road from the convention center.

It is a different project from the other five Global is involved in, Kozuback said. "Primarily this is more of a downtown redevelopment idea. The arena is part of a downtown rebirth." It will probably cost in the range of \$45 million and seat 6,000-7,000, he said, but those details are to be negotiated.

"Our connection with Jackson goes back many, many years," Kozuback said. "We have a team in Bossier-Shreveport [La.] and used to have one in Monroe. They're all on Interstate 20."

"For five or six years we've maintained a relationship in Jackson, until the timing was right. That's how a lot of these projects are. You have to stay with them because you just never know." Changes in leadership, government or motivation can suddenly kick start a project. "It's a process. You have to stick with it," Kozuback said. Five or six years is "a long time, but it helps that we are in that area."

Kozuback has his plate full, so he's counting on Wayne Davis, president of Global Entertainment Marketing Services, as point man in Jackson. Meanwhile, Kozuback is zeroed in on opening new hockey arenas in Rio Rancho, N.M., Oct. 27 (the Santa Ana Star Center); Prescott Valley, Ariz., Nov. 10; and Broomfield, Colo., late October.

Davis said the fact that the "other guy punched out" didn't have a direct impact on Global Entertainment's negotiation with the city. The city has always had a fondness for the idea of a downtown arena, he said.

"Jackson is looking for something like what we normally build, a 5,500-6,000 seat multipurpose arena," Davis said. "We anchor it with hockey. It could be a public-private partnership. It depends on what they come back with." Both Kozuback and Davis thought the next step might be just a month away. "I would think a major step has been taken. We've been back and forth and in and out of there for so long; we finally got something done."

Carl Allen, director of economic development and planning for Jackson, agreed. "We're in the process of building a new convention center. I'm thinking an arena would certainly be a wonderful addition to the downtown business district."

Ground was broken on the \$65 million convention center last month. It's to open in December 2008 and is being financed with a combination of bonds and hotel/restaurant tax increment financing. A TIF based on anticipated revenue and taxes generated would be a possibility for the new arena, as well, Allen said, but that's still to be determined.

Once the city and Global have a memorandum of understanding, the proposal would go before the City Council. Allen agreed that "in 30 days, something will happen."

Jackson has a population of 184,000, with 450,000-500,000 living in the metro area, Allen said. — Linda Deckard

Interviewed for this story: Carl Allen, (601) 672-4697; Rick Kozuback and Wayne Davis, (480) 994-0772

GOOD WORKS



This year's ALSD charity drive Lids for Kids was a huge success. Pictured left is Bill Dorsey, Executive Director of ALSD, from left, Dr. Frank Smith, director of Department of Oncology/Hematology at Children's Hospital, Cincinnati, Ohio; Pat McCaffrey, Senior Director of Ticketing for the Cincinnati Reds and Dene Sheils ALSD Director of Member Services. Pictured right are two lucky recipients of this year's charity drive.

ALSD FINDS SUCCESS IN CHARITY THROUGH LIDS FOR KIDS PROGRAMS

What started as a small charitable drive to get hats on young cancer patients has

morphed into a national campaign for children.

It started simply enough, when Association of Luxury Suite Directors president Pat McCaffrey was meeting with staffers Bill Dorsey, executive director, and Dene Sheils in hopes of coming up with a charity effort for the group's annual June 25–28 conference in Detroit. Usually ALSD did a silent auction to raise money, but this year the association wanted to do something unique.

McCaffrey came up with a simple idea — why not petition the dozens of sports teams within the organization for hats to be given out to cancer patients at Cincinnati's children's hospital? McCaffrey had only been at the helm of ALSD for a year, but he was sure he could secure a couple dozen hats from the Cincinnati Reds, where he worked as director of tickets sales. When the three sat down to come up with a name, McCaffrey suggested the first thing that came to his mind: Lids for Kids.

"At first we said "Why don't we give hats to kids," and then we said "Why don't we just call it Lids for Kids. The whole thing took about ten seconds," Dorsey said.

McCaffrey and other ALSD staffers sent out a few email blasts to attendees of this year's conference, urging them to bring signed and unsigned caps to the conference.

"I was expecting people to bring us hats, but I never expected to get over 500 hats," Dorsey said. The caps came from everywhere. The Cincinnati Reds donated 24 signed hats, including a few lids from the sometimes elusive Ken Griffey Jr. The group received hats from Churchill Downs, the Baltimore Raven's cheerleading squad and the Green Bay Packers. Detroit Red Wings Star Steve Yzerman donated a hat, as did the National Basketball Association, which handed over several caps from its All-Star Game in Denver. Most of the hats usually retail for \$20 to \$30, Dorsey said.

"Everyone in the association stepped up and reached out for a good cause. We had most of the teams participate," McCaffrey said.

Hospital staff told him the hats were one of the biggest contributions of its kind to the hospital, McCaffrey added. ALSD staff stacked the hats in a pyramid at the hospital for presentation. News of the hat program was first picked up local sports columnist Paul Daugherty of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, and later the *Associated Press*, local television and *Sports Illustrated* magazine.

But beyond the positive press, McCaffrey said the most rewarding aspect of the Lids for Kids program was seeing the faces of the children when they were given the prized caps.

"It was very humbling, both a most difficult and most rewarding day, certainly one that I won't easily forget," McCaffrey said. "As much as you truly prepare for your visit, it's hard to be ready for what you encounter there. I think we were all very moved by the experience."

The day also had a huge impact on the kids ALSD was serving, many of whom were sports fans. McCaffrey said the Reds and Bengals hats were the hottest moving items of the day.

"They all had big smiles on their faces. It really brightened their day and made everything worthwhile," he said, later adding, "Unfortunately some of the nature of what we encountered was very difficult, but they all brightened up and were very talkative and smiling when we came around. It was a small thing, but we all made a difference."

Dorsey said ALSD planned to continue the practice next year and expand to other children's hospitals throughout the country.

"Nearly every major metropolitan city has a children's hospital and we think this is a good way to spread our presence nationwide," he said. "Next year, we'll probably distribute to Phoenix."

That's the likely location of next year's ALSD conference, although the plans have not been finalized. Dorsey said his group even has plans to trademark the phrase "Lids for Kids" and create new outlets to collect the hats. He hopes to get more members involved over the next few years.

"It's been a great program and the hospital really loved us," he said. "We want to make that part of the conference each year, and in each city where it is hosted, we will give to a new area location." — Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this article: Pat McCaffrey, (513) 765-7050; Bill Dorsey, (513) 674-0555

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be celebrating **four wonderful years** of covering the industry. Come by for **CUPCAKES** and to participate in our **first trade show blog!**

BOOKINGS



HOT tickets

MADONNA HITS THE JACKPOT IN PHILLY

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 July 4, 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:* \$4,716,475; *Event:* Madonna; *Venue:* **Wachovia Complex, Philadelphia**; *Attendance:* 28,970; *Ticket Range:* \$350-\$45; *Promoter:* TNA; *Dates:* July 12-13; *No. of Shows:* 2
- 2) *Gross Sales:* \$1,732,399; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Pizza Hut Park, Frisco, Texas**; *Attendance:* 27,347; *Ticket Range:* \$69.50-\$49.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, The Messina Group; *Dates:* July 22; *No. of Shows:* 1
- 3) *Gross Sales:* \$1,036,378; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Madison Square Garden Arena, New York**; *Attendance:* 14,811; *Ticket Range:* \$84.50-\$44.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, The Messina Group; *Dates:* July 14; *No. of Shows:* 1
- 4) *Gross Sales:* \$917,044; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Marcus Amphitheater, Milwaukee**; *Attendance:* 22,141; *Ticket Range:* \$64.75-\$24.75; *Promoter:* AEG Live, Summerfest, The Messina Group; *Dates:* July 4; *No. of Shows:* 1
- 5) *Gross Sales:* \$861,935; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **New Orleans Arena**; *Attendance:* 14,546; *Ticket Range:* \$63.50-\$53.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live, The Messina Group; *Dates:* July 20; *No. of Shows:* 1

10,001 - 15,000 Seats

- 1) *Gross Sales:* \$2,096,550; *Event:* WBC Boxing-Carlos Baldomir vs. Arturo Gatti; *Venue:* **Atlantic City (N.J.) Boardwalk Hall**; *Attendance:* 12,277; *Ticket Range:* \$400-\$50; *Promoter:* Caesars Atlantic City & Main Events, Sycuan Ringside Promotions; *Dates:* July 22; *No. of Shows:* 1
- 2) *Gross Sales:* \$674,716; *Event:* Ozzfest; *Venue:* **Journal Pavilion, Albuquerque, N.M.**; *Attendance:* 13,628; *Ticket Range:* \$78.50-\$25; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* July 4; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$141,880; *Event:* Tom Jones; *Venue:* **John Labatt Centre, London, Ontario**; *Attendance:* 1,872; *Ticket Range:* \$109.48-\$43.36; *Promoter:* Crowne Concerts; *Dates:* July 15; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$133,371; *Event:* Rock Eisteddfod Heats; *Venue:* **Brisbane (Australia) Entertainment Centre**; *Attendance:* 6,269; *Ticket Range:* \$21.28; *Promoter:* Rock Challenge Pty. Ltd.; *Dates:* July 13-18; *No. of Shows:* 4

5) *Gross Sales:* \$69,797; *Event:* Slayer; *Venue:* **Spokane (Wash.) Arena**; *Attendance:* 1,767; *Ticket Range:* \$39.50; *Promoter:* Bravo Entertainment; *Dates:* July 16; *No. of Shows:* 1

5,001-10,000 Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$1,093,301; *Event:* Disney On Ice; *Venue:* **Newcastle (Australia) Entertainment Centre**; *Attendance:* 35,711; *Ticket Range:* \$41.81-\$19.70; *Promoter:* Feld Entertainment; *Dates:* July 19-23; *No. of Shows:* 10

2) *Gross Sales:* \$545,610; *Event:* Steely Dan; *Venue:* **Aladdin Theatre, Las Vegas**; *Attendance:* 6,292; *Ticket Range:* \$125-\$50; *Promoter:* Live Nation; *Dates:* July 22; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$352,980; *Event:* Ringo Starr and his All Starr Band; *Venue:* **Radio City Music Hall, New York**; *Attendance:* 5,920; *Ticket Range:* \$75-\$35; *Promoter:* Live Nation, MSG Entertainment; *Dates:* July 20; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$161,515; *Event:* Dashboard Confessional; *Venue:* **Gibson Amphitheatre at Universal CityWalk, Universal City, Calif.**; *Attendance:* 5,724; *Ticket Range:* \$33-\$29.50; *Promoter:* House of Blues Concerts; *Dates:* July 13; *No. of Shows:* 1

5) *Gross Sales:* \$151,904; *Event:* Angels & Airways, Taking Back Sunday; *Venue:* **Nokia at Grand Prairie (Texas)**; *Attendance:* 6,464; *Ticket Range:* \$23.50; *Promoter:* AEG Live; *Dates:* July 16; *No. of Shows:* 1

5,000 or Fewer Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$149,288; *Event:* Intocable; *Venue:* **Dodge Theatre, Phoenix**; *Attendance:* 2,607; *Ticket Range:* \$72-\$42; *Promoter:* Elias Entertainment; *Dates:* July 8; *No. of Shows:* 1

2) *Gross Sales:* \$119,045; *Event:* An Evening with Bill Maher; *Venue:* **Sacramento (Calif.) Community Theatre**; *Attendance:* 2,380; *Ticket Range:* \$55-\$45; *Promoter:* Another Planet Entertainment; *Dates:* July 23; *No. of Shows:* 1

3) *Gross Sales:* \$114,407; *Event:* Heart; *Venue:* **Morris Performing Arts Center, South Bend, Ind.**; *Attendance:* 2,002; *Ticket Range:* \$68.50-\$38.50; *Promoter:* Pacific Coast Concerts; *Dates:* July 18; *No. of Shows:* 1

4) *Gross Sales:* \$105,121; *Event:* Cats; *Venue:* **Morris Performing Arts Center, South Bend, Ind.**; *Attendance:* 2,952; *Ticket Range:* \$47.50-\$22; *Promoter:* Broadway Theatre League of South Bend, Inc.; *Dates:* July 19; *No. of Shows:* 2

5) *Gross Sales:* \$79,985; *Event:* Kenny Loggins; *Venue:* **The Mountain Winery, Saratoga, Calif.**; *Attendance:* 1,452; *Ticket Range:* \$65-\$45; *Promoter:* Live Nation;

Dates: July 6; No. of Shows: 1

Compiled by Rob Ocampo, HotTickets@venuestoday.com

MARKETING



Photo credit: Courtesy of VMDO Architects

Left, Liz Flynn and Jesse Lynn; right, the bowl at John Paul Jones Arena, Charlottesville, Va.

NEW JOHN PAUL JONES ARENA FETES THE PRESS, OPENS AUGUST 1

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — To showcase the new John Paul Jones Arena just completed at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, SMG and university officials hosted a media preview tour/luncheon on July 21 followed by an Open House July 22. Larry Wilson, SMG general manager of the facility, welcomed close to 300 invited members of the press, along with local government officials and other dignitaries to media day. A reported 13,000 visited the following day.

Built to house the university's basketball teams, the 16,000-seat arena is readying for its Aug. 1 opening date when Cirque du Soleil's "Delirium" arrives in town.

"Our goal is to have as many groups as possible and as diverse a lineup as possible," Wilson said in his opening remarks on media day. Calling the new arena, "the finest facility on the East Coast, if not in the country," Wilson went on to say it would host everything from WWE Monday Night Raw (at which he promised Hulk Hogan would be making an appearance) Aug. 14; to family entertainment like The Wiggles, Aug. 24; and Disney on Ice, Oct. 18-22; to nationally known entertainers James Taylor, Aug. 17; Eric Clapton, Oct. 12 ("I get the most questions asked about him."); Kenny Chesney, Aug. 30; and the Dave Matthews Band, Sept. 22-23.

Dave Matthews is sold out, Wilson said. Clapton goes on sale Aug. 26, and Charlottesville is the smallest market on his tour announced so far, he added.

Confirmed bookings to date also include: Larry the Cable Guy, Nov. 16; Lipizzaner Stallions, Nov. 24; and Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, Dec. 6-9.

Leonard W. Sandridge Jr, executive vice president and Chief Operating Officer for the University of Virginia, told the Media Day audience, "Our 20-year business plan to make this project work is on track." Sandridge noted that John Paul Jones Arena "is the only

arena on the East Coast to have been built entirely with private and self-generated funds." He said they expect to host a half million to 600,000 people in the first year of operation and that arena management hopes to host 125 events a year within three years.

Those in attendance were separated into specific media groups and given tours of the facility, the largest indoor arena in Virginia. Leading the print media were Liz Flynn, director of Marketing, and Jesse Lynn, event services director. Asked what she felt was unique to the building, Flynn pointed out the 26 "Jeffersonian" columns on the outside, reminiscent of other campus buildings originally designed by Thomas Jefferson.

Flynn said another unique feature is an etched sign above the student seating section proclaiming, "I have not yet begun to fight," in tribute to the Revolutionary War hero who bears the same name as the man for whom the arena is named. John Paul Jones is a 1948 graduate of the university and a huge basketball fan. His son, Paul Tudor Jones II, a 1976 graduate, made a \$35 million commitment to the building of the arena and was granted his request to name the building after his father. The total cost of the project, designed by Charlottesville-based VMDO Architects and Ellerbe Becket of Kansas City, was \$129.8 million.

As they led a tour of the building Flynn and Lynn pointed out numerous features designed to make the arena capable of hosting everything from a full-house event to a smaller, more intimate concert. These include a variety of stages and floors, curtains to partition off sections and change the atmosphere inside, and special panels in the ceiling to provide acoustic superiority. A \$7.5 million Mitsubishi Diamond Vision audio-visual system, equal to that used in premier venues around the world, includes a center-hung scoreboard with four 9-foot tall/16-foot wide LED high definition screens and two more same-sized screens that hang in the entrance lobby.

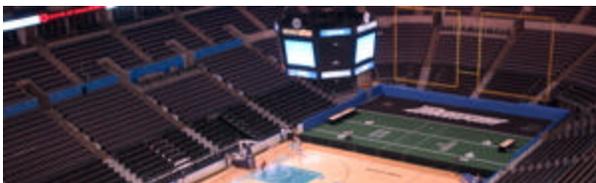
Flynn noted the arena has "25 full time employees and 100 others that are here every day, including university media and video services. We are feeding 450 student athletes every day; I guess that's what makes us different from other arenas."

John Paul Jones Arena offers 56 concession stands, 16 permanent. Branded concepts include AFC Sushi, Wild Wing Café, Dominic's of New York, Boardwalk Fries, Greenberry's, Ben & Jerry's, Dippin' Dots and Pepsi. Aramark is the concessionaire. Eddie Whedbee, director of operations, UVA Dining, is in charge of concessions and catering.

Wilson said, "I have been doing a lot of calling, but the facility will sell itself." Wilson said he has been working with all the big promoters, including Live Nation, DC Concerts, AEG, and Nashville's Outback, as well as Charlottesville's own Starr Hill Presents. – Donna Schwoebel

Interviewed for this story: Larry Wilson, (434) 243-4958; Liz Flynn, (434) 243-4957; Jesse Lynn, (434) 243-2078.

The Ford Center in Oklahoma City came up with a unique configuration for a recent open house.



FORD CENTER USES UNIQUE SETUP TO SHOWCASE THREE TEAMS

Gary Desjardins had a unique challenge on July 8 while trying to participate in the

Oklahoma City Salute, a month-long festival showcasing the city.

How could the Ford Center General Manager for SMG showcase the three sports the Oklahoma City arena hosts — ice hockey, basketball and arena football — in a four-hour event and allow fans to experience each team first hand?

His answer: split the arena floor in three, with one section made into an ice hockey rink, the middle area a hardwood basketball floor and the final section an Astroturf arena-football end-zone with goal posts. Conceptualized by the building's Director of Operations Terry Faulkinberry, the plan would essentially put the center's three teams — The Oklahoma City Blazers of the Central Hockey League; the Oklahoma City Yard Dawgs of arenafootball2; and the New Orleans Hornets of the National Basketball Association — on the floor at the same time.

Splitting the floor into three would require some difficult logistical planning. The biggest challenge would be maintaining the ice on just one third of the court without damaging the basketball hardwood or the Astroturf.

"Basically, we put the ice cover over only two-thirds of the floor and erected the basketball courts and turfs on top of those areas," he said. "Then we built an ice-dam along the perimeter of the wood and used a moisture-control vapor barrier made out of plastic to prevent anything from spilling onto the hardwood."

Once the barriers were in place, the Ford Center crew painted the ice and watered down the one-third of the arena floor saved for hockey. Desjardins said his crew didn't want to run the underground cooling surface at a low crank in fear it could damage the ice cover, so they had to add less water to the hockey area and create a smaller slate of rink ice.

"We usually go for an inch -and-a-quarter thickness, but this time we dropped it to about three-quarters of an inch," he said.

As for constructing the basketball court in the center of the floor facing the opposite way it normally faces, Desjardins said his team simply measured out how much space it would need to drop the wood-planks and then fit the flooring together like a puzzle.

"We went dasherboard to dasherboard so we could fit it into the floor," he said.

For the football arena, his staff dropped the last few yards of the field and the endzone on the far end of the stadium floor.

"For us, it was a way to showcase the capabilities of the Ford Center and the places some fans hadn't had the opportunity to go," he said. "We wanted to create a space where they could skate on the ice, shoot baskets, kick field goals and tackle dummies on the Astroturf. We also gave tours of the player's areas, locker rooms and the suites. A lot of people had never been to the suites before, so it was an opportunity for them to do that."

The center's concessionaire and facility restaurants gave out free samples of their food and guests entered to win party suites for upcoming games. Players from each of the teams attended the events, along with cheerleaders and the three team's general managers. In the arena's concourse, a couple dozen private vendors and building partners set up stands and handed out promotional supplies to fans.

"The best thing was that everyone got to take something home with them," he said.

Desjardins estimated about 2,400 fans attended the event, and the Ford Center's box office sold tickets to a number of sporting events, although Desjardins didn't have any specific figures on sales. He said the event was relatively inexpensive to run because most of the staffing and resources were done in-house — he estimated the Ford Center spent about \$10,000 on guest-relations staff and food and beverage for the window.

"Overall I would say it was a very successful event," he said. Desjardins said he plans to hold the open house again. — Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this story: Gary Desjardins, (405) 602-8700.

News-Journal Center, Daytona Beach, Fla.



LIFE GOES ON FOR THE NEWS-JOURNAL CENTER

The \$23 million building in Daytona Beach, Fla. opened last January and business has been "awesome," according to Julie Rand, executive director. She spoke about the two major tenants of the building and the variety of other events, especially community events, the building has hosted.

But, what she wouldn't speak about is the continuous feud between the *Daytona*

Beach News-Journal's Davidson family and Cox Enterprises, majority shareholder versus minority shareholder, respectively. It was the \$13 million, 26-year naming rights deal the *Daytona Beach News-Journal* inked two years ago that sparked the many days, months, and years of legal hours and expenses.

"I can't comment on that," Rand said. "It is not affecting the center. The community has really embraced the facility."

The *Daytona Beach News-Journal's* majority shareholder is the Davidson family, owning 52.5 percent. The Davidson family bought into the paper in 1928 and, since, has been involved in the day-to-day operations. Cox Enterprises, headquartered in Atlanta, has had a 47.5 percent stake in the newspaper. That company bought into the *News-Journal* in 1969.

The federal lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court by Cox Enterprises in May, 2004. Cox alleged, among other concerns, the family-controlled board of the newspaper misused corporate funds to further personal interests. Cox stated it had never been consulted on the naming agreement. Cox alleged the newspaper overpaid for the naming agreement on a project that might have failed without the newspaper's \$13 million. It has been reported the \$13 million was a cash upfront deal.

The newspaper, in turn, countered that Cox didn't care about the newspaper's support of the local arts community. The lawsuit, in turn, triggered an option the *News-Journal* held to buy out Cox's share. The newspaper exercised that option.

A two-week trial was held last December. The federal judge then had the job to

determine the fair value of Cox's shares.

After more than two years since the original filing, a verdict was handed down June 30. It went quite differently than the newspaper had expected it to go. The federal judge ruled the fair value of Cox's shares was \$129.2 million. The *News-Journal* had contended the shares had a value of \$29.4 million, based on what the company would be worth if it continued operating the way it had been.

Last Friday, July 21, Cox Enterprises and the *News-Journal* each filed payment proposals. At some point, oral arguments will be held in the federal court about each proposal.

A *News-Journal* story that appeared on the newspaper's Web site July 5, stated, "the newspaper likely would be forced to sell all or some of its assets," if forced to pay what the court ordered.

Just how all of this will affect the News-Journal Center is still not known.

Jon Kaney, general counsel for the newspaper, would not comment. His office simply said, "we are not commenting on anything."

Another article on the newspaper's Web site, dated July 5, gave clear indications the newspaper would appeal the federal court's decision.

The comment from the Cox team was: "The Cox family of businesses has a longstanding history of commitment to the arts, both through monetary donations and support through public service announcements."

Meanwhile, business continues at the center. The News-Journal Center has two halls with seating capacities of 859 in the main hall and 250 in the smaller studio center. The two major tenants are the Seaside Music Theater and the University of Central Florida, which is using the facility for their masters program in musical theater.

Lively Arts Center Inc. is the nonprofit organization that built the facility. Rand said all the funding for the building has been raised, except for about \$2.5 million of their \$3 million endowment. Although actual construction costs was \$23 million, addition of the soft costs and the \$3 million endowment brings the total to \$29 million. — Pam Sherborne

Interviewed for this story: Julie Rand, 386-226-1888; Jon Kaney's office, 386-255-1811; Cox Enterprises, 813-228-0652

CONCESSIONS

Hohokam Stadium



ONE DOWN, ONE TO GO AS MESA OUTSOURCES HOHOKAM CONCESSIONS

The City of Mesa, Ariz., is finalizing a seven-year deal that gives Ovations Food Services the right to merchandise and

concessions at Hohokam Stadium, spring training home for the Chicago Cubs of Major League Baseball.

In fiscal 2005, revenues at Hohokam, not including suites and corporate tents, totalled \$771,890 from concessions; \$579,308 from liquor; and \$970,263 from novelties, according to Rhett Evans, director of commercial facilities for the city.

Within the next three weeks, the city is issuing a request for proposals for the catering side at that stadium as well as catering and concessions for the Mesa Convention Center and concessions at the Mesa Amphitheater, said Evans. That package is worth about \$2 million.

"We were still under contract with Arizona Catering," he said of the five months difference in the contract proposals. Hohokam catering did between \$120,000-\$140,000 last year and the amphitheater accounted for \$300,000, the remaining \$1.5 million coming from convention center catering, he said.

The convention center catering had been run in-house with Lester's Catering behind the scenes. "We put the face to it," Evans said.

This new RFP is a fishing expedition. "We're trying to see what kind of commissions we could get when you look at our expenses versus commissions, seeing if it's better to outsource it," Evans said. If they do outsource it, someone will be contracted by December.

The concessions contract at Hohokam had been with Cactus Concessions and that expired already. The decision to let it out for bid was based on the fact "there have been lots of changes in how you present food and beverage," Evans said. "Ovations is on the cutting edge of what needs to be done in these venues to bring products to life. Their proposal was great."

Other bids came in from Sodexo, Aramark and Levy, according to Evans. Ovations will pay an average of 45 percent of the gross, with escalator clauses for improved performance, and will invest \$1 million in equipment and improvements, he said.

Ken Young, president of Ovations, said the merchandising end of the equation is the sweetest side of the Hohokam concessions deal. Cubs merchandise has flown off the shelf despite the fact there was only one store. "Merchandise is huge there," Young said.

That one small merchandise stand "has been basically bumper to bumper. You're lined up and it takes three innings to get through it," Evans said. "With larger and second locations, we'll move more products. The volume, I think is definitely going to go up."

Ovations will add extra permanent locations and a number of satellite locations, Young said. "Number two, when the players and catchers get to camp, we'll take a [novelty] portable to the minor league complex, not just the stadium. The fans watch the spring training practices, not just the regular games. They get a lot of people, a big number."

Additionally, Young plans a big holiday push for Cubs merchandise. "From mid-November to New Years, we'll have the store open and publicize that. You can do a lot," he said.

The players report to spring training Feb. 15 and games run from the end of February to beginning of April. The Cubs sell out nearly all of their 16 home games, with 180,000-200,000 pouring through the gates in just one month.

Evans noted a lot of those people are Cubs season ticket holders, so they will be readily enticed to buy more when faced with variety, he believes. Young and Evans both said the former fare was basic: hot dogs, sodas and beer. Next season, spring training attendees will be seeing Mexican cantinas and a much more varied menu.

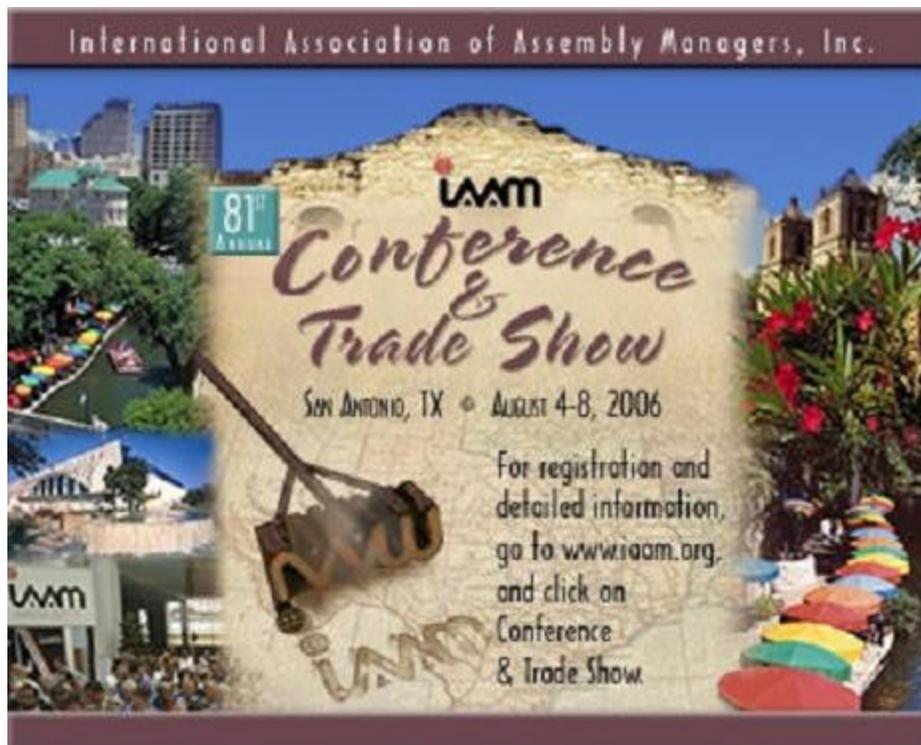
Food and drink per caps have historically been around \$7, Young said. "We can improve that tremendously. I don't think they dreamed they could draw that kind of attendance when the place opened."

The sold out situation lead to development of corporate tents in the outfield, Evans said. Budweiser hosted a 70-person tent last year. The patrons purchase a \$13 ticket plus catering.

Evans envisions as many as six tents in the outfield, maybe not this year, but eventually. That's the only way to grow attendance and revenues. The corporate village is part of the new RFP.

Eventually, Evans would like to tie it all back into the golf courses, which are also under his commercial facilities division. "The ultimate goal is to package that in with the division so we can move social events there." — Linda Deckard

Interviewed for this story: Rhett Evans, (480) 644-2667; Ken Young, (813) 948-6900, ext. 104



SHORT TAKES

BOSTON CONVENTION CENTER SETTLES DISPUTE

The Boston Convention Center has settled out of court with the building's designers over allegations of design flaws including a leaking roof drainage system, poor heating and cooling, frozen pipes and a malfunctioning public address system. Designers HNTB of Kansas City, Mo. and New York-based Rafael Vinoly Architects, along with R.G. Vanderweil Engineers of Milford, Mass., agreed to pay the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority \$22 million in a settlement. Firm Shen Milson & Wilke of New York has settled with the convention authority earlier this year for \$1.25 million.

Contact: Massachusetts Convention Center Authority, (617) 954-2000

TICKETMASTER ACQUIRES SPANISH FIRM

Ticketmaster has signed an agreement to acquire Barcelona-based Tick Tack Ticket. In the agreement, Tick Tack Ticket will become Ticketmaster's operating arm in Spain, serving about 400 event organizers in the country. Tick Tack Ticket's Managing Director Eugeni Calsamiglia Blancafort will retain his position at the company.

Contact: Bonnie Poindexter, (310) 360-2321

SHREVEPORT, LA., CONVENTION CENTER SURPASSES GOALS

The Shreveport (La.) Convention Center has surpassed its projected goals for events during its first half-year of operations. As of June 30, the center had hosted 103 events in 187 days, with more than 137,500 attendees and \$415,804 in rent, according to figures released from the city. The center's initial projection was 109 events for the entire year, bringing in \$398,000. The biggest event held at the convention center this year was the 2006 KTBS 3 Boat and Sports Show, which brought in an estimated 20,000 people from Jan. 17-21.

Contact: Shreveport Convention Center, (318) 673-5100

TOMA JOINS TURFAIDE

George Toma, National Football League Hall of Famer and the official groundskeeper for every NFL Super Bowl, is the new spokesperson for TurfAide. TurfAide imparts an invisible layer of antimicrobial on synthetic turf systems to combat the germs and dirt that accumulate on the artificial surfaces.

Contact: Wendy Othman, (248) 997-3270

HELP WANTED

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Everett Events Center - Chief Engineer

Minimum 5 years experience in general maintenance & repair of HVAC, ice refrigeration & building systems in a multi purpose complex. Specialized training in building management systems required.

[For more information and to apply, click here.](#)

Everett Events Center - Technical Services Manager

Responsible for IT, telecommunications, A/V. Degree in computer science or related field; supervisory and public venue experience preferred.

[For more information and to apply, click here.](#)

Everett Events Center - Assist Box Office Manager

Oversee box office staff, supervise financial reporting and ticket inventory. Prior Box Office experience required, proven customer relations skills.

[For more information and to apply, click here.](#)

The Lakeland (Fla.) Center - Client Service Manager

Candidate will oversee the organization of facility bookings, manage a part-time FOH staff, coordinate event distribution, review event plans, monitor contract compliance, invoicing, prepare budgets, conduct pre/post event planning mtgs, and assist the sales dept. Knowledge of USI (Ungerboeck Systems International), or other computer based event mgt systems, and Roomviewer is a plus.

[To learn more and apply on-line, click here.](#)

Las Vegas Motor Speedway - Ticket Services Assistant Manager

FT, Asst Ticket Services Mgr position with major motorsports venue. Responsibilities incl: assisting with ticket and event setup on the Ticketmaster ticketing system, including internet ticket sales setup. Resolve all issues/disputes involving customer ticketing and seating. Assist with preparation and execution of final event audits. Knowledge of Ticketmaster (Archtics and TM Classic) ticketing systems a +. Two or more years of box office exp at a supervisory level a +. E-mail resume and inquiries to jallen@lvms.com.

Visionworks - Open Positions

AGENCY LOOKING FOR GREAT PEOPLE

Do you have the skills to develop unique concepts and execute exciting promotions and events for clients ranging from theme parks and sports teams to tv networks?

Visionworks, a promotions and event agency based in Orlando, Fla., is looking for dynamic, motivated individuals who can lead key accounts, be creative and partner w/ a team of people who thrive on doing great work. If this is you, send resume & salary goals to kristen@vworkz.com.

Paciolan - Customer Service - ticketing

Paciolan (www.paciolan.com) is a leader in ticketing software solutions for performing arts, sports & arenas, in Irvine, CA. We're looking for an Applications Specialist with ticketing industry experience to provide technical support, troubleshooting and consulting on function and usage of Paciolan ticketing products to clients. Some evening & weekend work, some travel. Resumes to: careers@paciolan.com.

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