

April Parnell

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Quote of the Week

"Boxing needs young people and mixed martial arts needs older people to grow."

— Art Pelullo, Banner Promotions, co-promoter of a combo event

Greetings April,

Welcome to VT Pulse, your weekly guide to the "News Behind the Headlines." We want to convey heartfelt thank yous from VenuWorks staff in Cedar Rapids to the industry for your calls, e-mails and support during the floods. Read more below.

July is our BIG, BAD MID-YEAR issue

This much anticipated issue will include:

- IAAM/NAC pre-convention information
- 2008 Venues Today Women of Influence Award Winners & bios
- 3rd Quarter INTIX report
- Hot Tickets & Top Stops Mid-Year Charts

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SHORT TAKES

>> LIVE NATION

VT NEWS**NEWS****RECORD FLOODS DELUGE CEDAR RAPIDS VENUES**

This Wurlitzer organ was destroyed after a record flood struck the Paramount Theatre in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

ACQUIRES TWO COMPANIES – Live Nation Sweden announced acquisition of the leading promoter of international acts Luger Inc AB and its sister company management Moondog Entertainment AB. The move served to bring significant promotion and festival experience to Live Nation.
Contact: John Vlautin, (323) 867-7127

>> OMAHA'S AWARD OF EXCELLENCE – The Omaha Performing Arts Center was recognized by the Omaha Chamber of Commerce with the receipt of the Chamber's 2008 "Non-Profit Organization of the Year" award. The award is given to an organization to recognize excellence in stewardship of resources and exceptional outcomes.
Contact: Jenni Boldra, (402) 661-8492



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At about 7:30 a.m. June 12, VenuWorks Executive Director Scott Schoenike and Operations Manager Jason Moyer waded through chest-deep water after their last-ditch efforts to save the historic Paramount Theatre in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, were thwarted by rapidly rising flood waters.

The historic theater and the US Cellular Center - managed by VenuWorks - were not spared from the flood that deluged the city with a record crest of 31.2 feet last week. At its height, the flood rose 20 feet above flood stage and was 12 feet above the record set in 1929, just a year after the Paramount Theatre was built.

On Tuesday, after days of torturous "what-ifs" and sleepless nights, Schoenike was finally able to re-enter the city-owned Paramount Theatre, which he said was ravaged. About 35 feet of standing water still filled the two basement levels and an inch of sludge - what Schoenike called stage-3 garbage and said is hazardous - blanketed the floor of the main theater.

"It must've been pretty rough, the current that swept through there," Schoenike said Tuesday night, after seeing the damage. "Anything that wasn't bolted down was basically destroyed."

The deluge that washed through the 1,901-seat theater also destroyed some irreplaceable items, including an original Wurlitzer organ, original lead glass and the restored gold-flecked paint in the building. Flood waters overtook the front doors to the theater, bashing them in and making them inoperable. The water filled the main floor and submerged about the first thousand seats.

"We only found one set of doors we could actually open to get into the main seating area, where there was a good inch of smelly black muck all over everything," Schoenike said.

Five years ago, the Paramount went through a \$7.8 million restoration project and this year was the first year the theater actually made money, he added.

VenuWorks Vice President of Venue Services Tammy Koolbeck said she "can't imagine there not being a rebuild" at the Paramount, but the damage is looking to be in the millions, Schoenike said.

The other problem will be with the building's safety since the water breached the walls and the building's foundation.

He anticipated the cost of cleanup at the US Cellular Center to be anywhere from \$60,000 to \$80,000, with added costs in case mold sets in, which could bump that figure up to \$150,000.

The VenuWorks staff started in recovery mode before the disaster really even hit, Koolbeck said. Early last week, when flooding was forecast, she and Schoenike hit the phones, talking to restoration companies that might be able to help once the water subsided. About 15 local

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Agricultural Society,
Sydney, Australia -
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Executive

AEG Live, Los
Angeles -
Independent
Contractors/Tour
Marketing Managers

VEE Corporation,
Minneapolis -
Promotion Manager

WA State
Convention & Trade
Center, Seattle -
Event Coordinator

Greater Richmond

staff members then started sandbagging at the US Cellular Center, the Paramount and the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena, which was not damaged by floodwaters. The Ice Arena became police and fire headquarters when those departments' facilities were flooded.

The National Trust is now involved in the cleanup of the Paramount Theatre because of its designation on the National Register of Historic Places list. They are able to begin pumping water out at a slow rate so as to make sure the foundation isn't "in trouble," Schoenike said.

VenuWorks got the okay to start cleanup at US Cellular Center yesterday. Contract cleaners are now on the job. The venue staff has set up temporary offices at the Ice Arena.

Very few bookings were disrupted by the disaster. "The nice thing is that as we run into summer, it's our slower season," Schoenike said.

At the Paramount they've had to cancel the last two weeks of ballet shows, which were moved to the high school, Schoenike said. Some of the larger acts scheduled to perform at the Paramount will be moved to the US Cellular Center, including an upcoming September appearance by comedian Ron White.

The symphony is now looking for an alternate location because the US Cellular Center's acoustics will not work, which Schoenike said will be one of the bigger losses.

Attempting to minimize damage and equipped with a four-inch water pump and a generator, which powered two lift stations in the basement, Schoenike was among those who stayed till they feared they wouldn't be able to leave the building.

"We probably could've kept up with what was coming in from the doors originally, but we were taking on so much water from the underground conduits and through all of the basement walls, even with the four-inch pump, we were still losing ground on it throughout the night," Schoenike said.

The US Cellular Center, which can hold anywhere from 5,500 to 9,200 people, depending on the event, has more concrete in its construction and had about an inch of water spread across about 30,000 square feet, Koolbeck said. But because of the nature of the floodwaters, the cleanup will require more than a mop and bleach bucket, Koolbeck said.

To maintain staff and community morale, Schoenike said he and other VenuWorks officials have decided to go through with their annual BBQ Roundup. Usually the event is held right on the river, but they are in the process of selecting an alternate location.

VenuWorks and the US Cellular Center promote the Cedar Rapids BBQ Roundup, in its 21st year. The festival-style BBQ is usually the last event of the fiscal year, which ends July 1, and features eight to 10 rib cookers, a family fun zone, sponsor booths and a main stage, where entertainers, including Kenny Wayne Shepherd, will perform. It is a good money-maker for the year for the city. More than 25,000 people usually attend.

"We want to actually use that as a rallying point for the city to focus back on the positive and give some of those stressed out people something good to enjoy.... It's good for my staff, too," he said. "It'll keep them focused - it's easy to get into a lot of what-ifs and now we have a definite event for the staff to concentrate on and put their heart into." - Amanda Pennington

Interviewed for the story: Tammy Koolbeck, (319) 929-5755; Scott Schoenike, (319) 213-7575

(Va.) Convention Center - Event Manager

The Broad Stage, Santa Monica, Calif. - Ticket Fulfillment Manager (Box Office)

Colorado World Arena, Ice Hall & Pikes Peak Center - Director of Event Services

SMG/Montana Expopark, Great Falls - Marketing & Development Manager

Colorado Springs World Arena, Ice Hall & Pikes Peak Ctr. - Business Manager

Colorado Springs World Arena & Pikes Peak Center for Performing Arts - Event Services Coordinator

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BEHIND THE HEADLINES ARENA OWNER FILES SUIT BASED ON E-MAIL 'EVIDENCE' IN GRAND RAPIDS



Joel Langlois

It is playing out like a movie script: rumors, innuendos, and suspicions with, finally, a confirmation falling like a gift from heaven (in this case, cyber heaven).

"I suspected that something fishy was going on," said Joel Langlois, owner of the 6,500-seat DeltaPlex Arena, Walker, Mich. "I have been in this business for a long time. What I have seen is that bands that normally draw 3,000, 4,000, 5,000 people prefer to go to facilities that are smaller than ones that seat up to 12,000, like the Van Andel Arena (Grand Rapids) does."

But, those shows were still primarily going to the Van Andel, only three miles away. DeltaPlex is privately owned by Langlois, who bought the 1950s building and completely renovated it 10 years ago. Van Andel Arena, which opened 12 years ago, is publicly owned by the entity of Grand Rapids-Kent County Convention/Arena Authority (CAA). It is managed by SMG.

Langlois said he had heard about some type of "agreement" between Van Andel Arena and Live Nation. But, he couldn't confirm it.

Then, Langlois claimed, DeltaPlex Executive Director Rich Baylie received a misdirected e-mail sent from Cellar Door Productions, a Live Nation subsidiary, intended for the general manager of the Van Andel, Richard MacKeigan.

In the e-mail was what Langlois said was a "preferred promoter agreement" between Live Nation and SMG stating that if Live Nation promotes a concert at another competing Michigan facility in the area, it would pay Van Andel or SMG or CAA, however it is viewed, one-third of the profits. The competing facilities were named: DeltaPlex, Walker; Kellogg Arena, Battle Creek (about one hour away); Wings Stadium, Kalamazoo (about one hour away); and L.C. Walker Arena, Muskegon (about 45 minutes away).

In return, if another promoter arranges a concert at the Van Andel Arena, the arena must pay Live Nation one-third of the net revenues, he said. "They (Live Nation) have to make a lot more money per event at my building to make it worth playing."

After the email in January, Langlois said he and his attorney, Douglas Van Essen, asked the CAA for documents pertaining to this agreement. "They (CAA) denied they existed," said Langlois "So, we appealed through the Freedom of Information Act." Subsequently, the CAA attorney Steve Heacock reiterated, "The documents didn't exist."

On June 9, Langlois filed a lawsuit in Federal District Court in Grand Rapids, naming the CAA and SMG and claiming that this agreement was in violation of the state and federal antitrust laws, of the Federal Freedom of Information Act, and of his civil rights. He is asking for a monetary judgment, an injunction against using the agreement, and punitive damages.

"I am a private building. The Van Andel is a public facility, owned publicly and built using tax-exempt

bonds,” Langlois said. “It doesn’t pay taxes. They shouldn’t be allowed to do this. This is an unfair trade practice and it gives them an advantage over me.”

Langlois hasn’t named Live Nation in his suit and plans to continue to do business with the company. He is holding two dates for them now.

Neither the CAA nor SMG would comment about the case other than sending out a statement June 9 which reads, in part: “Unquestionably, the Grand Rapids-Kent County Convention/Arena Authority and SMG, its management, have worked hard to present as many high quality concerts as possible, in competition with comparable arenas in other mid-sized Midwestern cities outside of West Michigan. Ultimately, the artist chooses the desired venue, just as the artist authorizes ticket prices. Our primary objective is to make the experience as pleasurable for the artists, the promoters and our customers, so that we can continue to attract the best performances for the benefit of our public.”

The statement goes on to say that Langlois and “his counsel requested a meeting to discuss their concerns, at which they requested a number of documents, which we provided. In turn, we asked for DeltaPlex documentation that would be directly relevant to DeltaPlex’s claims, which Mr. Langlois and his counsel refused to provide. Nor did they offer any legal precedent that would tend to support their claims. We concluded DeltaPlex’s claims had no merit, and could only infer from their failure to provide any information that they had nothing to support their Complaint.”

Industry experts not wanting to have their names associated with how others do business confirmed agreements, including exclusive agreements, do occur between promoters and venues. The agreements differ with each case. In some cases, if another promoter wants to come into that building, then that promoter must deal with the exclusive promoter. The exclusive promoter becomes the middleman and does receive payment for providing that service. It will cut into the outside promoter’s profit.

And, it is about the money. Promoters want to make money. Venues want to make money. Acts want to make money. But, Langlois insists this type of agreement, where it guarantees the venue money when a promoter promotes at competitive buildings elsewhere, is an unfair act.

The CAA and SMG now have 28 days to file a response. — Pam Sherborne

Interviewed for this story: Joel Langlois, (616) 243-9000

BOOKINGS

THOMAS & MACK TAKES SELF-PROMOTES BACK-TO-BACK



Kim Couture

University buildings aren’t typically in the business to take risks, especially with self-promotes and sporting exhibitions. But when you’re a university arena that regularly ranks among the top five grossing venues globally, you’re inclined to take a few chances now and then.

Enter Daren Libonati, general manager of the Thomas & Mack Center at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. While most university buildings are hesitant to move on a concert without the backing of a major promoter, Libonati is promoting a

classic rock show for two major acts with tickets priced at \$25 – in a town that could easily fill a 2,000-seat building with tickets 10 times that price.

Eight days prior to the show, the Thomas & Mack Center is hosting its first combination boxing/mixed martial arts event. The bout will be televised on two separate cable networks, feature a female-female fight starring the wife of one of the biggest names in MMA along with \$100,000 in additional fight talent. Ticket price – free.

"Free for All, A Night of Combat" takes place on June 20 and features a heavyweight bout between Alonzo Butler and Friday "The 13th" Ahunaya, while the MMA card has five fights including the pro debut of Kim Couture, wife of famed UFC fighter Randy Couture, who will be ringside with his wife according to co-promoter Art Pelullo of Banner Promotions.

The boxing match will be televised live on ESPN Friday Night Fights, while the MMA event will be taped and later broadcast on a high-definition cable station owned by Mark Cuban. At the conclusion of the boxing event, the ring mat will be replaced with a mat for MMA title sponsor Major League Sports and Entertainment, which Libonati describes as a "company with a big announcement about being in the world of sports and entertainment within 30-40 days."

He expects 10-20 sponsors total to help cover the \$100,000 in talent costs, along with merch sales, which are typically high for MMA events. Banner is also helping to offset the costs for some of the fight talent, which Pelullo describes as a marketing cost.

"This is about exposing boxing fans to MMA and MMA fans to boxing," said Pelullo, an advocate for the two sports co-existing while many in the MMA community have predicted that boxing and its older fan base will eventually dwindle into a niche sport.

"Boxing needs young people and mixed martial arts needs older people to grow," he said.

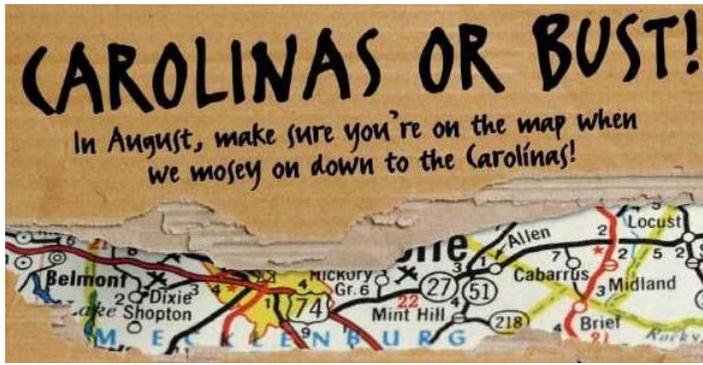
The Thomas and Mack Center gave away the tickets on its UNLVTickets.com site, moving 11,000 tickets through the first weekend and hitting its 16,500 capacity seven days later. Libonati said the building plans to give away another 1,700 tickets to corporate and media partners.

Eight days later, the Thomas and Mack Center will host a concert by Boston and Styx to celebrate the facility's 25th anniversary. Tickets are priced at \$25 apiece, with title sponsor DesertAutoGroup agreeing to buy 1,000 tickets in advance. Talent costs were rack rate and as of Monday, the show had sold 8,000 tickets. Libonati estimates that he needs to sell 10,000 to make the show a success.

"I know I'm going to do a per cap of anywhere from \$15 to \$18. Remember that these are mature people, and most of them are going to get two drinks," he said. "I feel very comfortable that we'll cover ourselves in food and beverage. At the end of the day, if I only break even, I drove 10,000 people into my building and my sponsors and suite holders are thrilled."

Libonati said he booked Boston and Styx because they'll appeal to an older demographic between 40-65 "who have money, who have a desire to get out but haven't found that right niche yet." – Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this story: Daren Libonati, (702) 813-5345; Art Pelullo, (215) 266-3360



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HOTTickets

HOT TICKETS is a weekly summary of the top acts and ticket sales as reported to VT PULSE. Following are the top 20 concerts and events, the top 5 in each seating capacity category, which took place since May 27, 2008.

EAST COAST SHOWS DOMINATE TOP SPOTS WITH DIVERSE GENRES

15,001 or More Seats	10,001-15,000 Seats	5,001-10,000 Seats	5,000 or Less Seats
<p>1) Kenny Chesney Gross Sales: \$4,088,667; Venue: Heinz Field, Pittsburgh; Attendance: 45,770; Ticket Range: \$102-\$54; Promoter: AEG Live, Northshore Entertainment Works, The Messina Group; Dates: June 14; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>1) James Taylor Gross Sales: \$583,962; Venue: Mann Center for Performing Arts, Philadelphia; Attendance: 13,243; Ticket Range: \$79.50-\$20; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: June 1; No. of Shows: 1</p> <p>2) The Cure Gross Sales: \$486,499; Venue: Cox Arena at Aztec Bowl, San Diego; Attendance: 8,629; Ticket Range: \$65; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: June 3; No. of Shows: 1</p> <p>3) Birdman, Lil Wayne Gross Sales: \$268,400; Venue: Atlantic City (N.J.) Boardwalk Hall; Attendance: 3,322; Ticket Range: \$125-\$65; Promoter: The Pure Agency; Dates: June 8; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>1) 2008 Visa Championships - Women's Artistic Gymnastics Gross Sales: \$550,822; Venue: Agganis Arena, Boston; Attendance: 13,626; Ticket Range: \$275-\$25; Promoter: USA Gymnastics; Dates: June 5-7; No. of Shows: 4</p> <p>2) Chicago, The Doobie Brothers Gross Sales: \$548,125; Venue: Gibson Amphitheatre at Universal CityWalk, Universal City, Calif.; Attendance: 9,733; Ticket Range: \$125-\$40; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: June 5-6; No. of Shows: 2</p> <p>3) Armin Van Buuren Gross Sales: \$483,491; Venue: Hordern Pavilion, Sydney, Australia; Attendance:</p>	<p>1) Phantom of the Opera Gross Sales: \$4,413,922; Venue: Sacramento (Calif.) Community Theatre; Attendance: 74,670; Ticket Range: \$70-\$17.50; Promoter: California Musical Theatre; Dates: May 21-June 14; No. of Shows: 32</p> <p>2) Oprah Winfrey Presents "The Color Purple" Gross Sales: \$3,053,667; Venue: Fox Theatre, Detroit; Attendance: 52,222; Ticket Range: \$75-\$39.50; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: May 20-June 1; No. of Shows: 16</p> <p>3) Leonard Cohen Gross Sales: \$2,016,283;</p>

- 27,664; Ticket Range: \$95-\$75; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: June 5-6; No. of Shows: 2
- 4) **Iron Maiden**
Gross Sales: \$1,334,645; Venue: **Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre, Irvine, Calif.**; Attendance: 29,123; Ticket Range: \$89-\$15; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 30-31; No. of Shows: 2
- 5) **WWE Smackdown/ECW**
Gross Sales: \$1,160,609; Venue: **AcerArena, Sydney, Australia**; Attendance: 14,049; Ticket Range: \$330.55-\$47.22; Promoter: World Wrestling Entertainment, Dainty Consolidated Entertainment; Dates: June 15; No. of Shows: 1
- 4) **True Colors 2008**
Gross Sales: \$245,295; Venue: **Nikon at Jones Beach Theater, Wantagh, N.Y.**; Attendance: 6,663; Ticket Range: \$149-\$10; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: June 1; No. of Shows: 1
- 5) **Robert Plant & Alison Krauss**
Gross Sales: \$243,800; Venue: **Roanoke (Va.) Civic Center**; Attendance: 3,936; Ticket Range: \$67-\$47; Promoter: AC Entertainment, Outback Concerts; Dates: June 2; No. of Shows: 1
- 5) **Robert Plant and Alison Krauss**
Gross Sales: \$305,296; Venue: **Asheville (N.C.) Civic Center**; Attendance: 4,835; Ticket Range: \$69-\$46; Promoter: AC Entertainment, Outback Concerts; Dates: June 14; No. of Shows: 1
- 5,345; Ticket Range: \$119.88-\$71.32; Promoter: Future Tours; Dates: June 6; No. of Shows: 1
- 4) **WWE Smackdown/ECW**
Gross Sales: \$429,876; Venue: **Newcastle (Australia) Entertainment Centre**; Attendance: 5,131; Ticket Range: \$329.74-\$51.82; Promoter: World Wrestling Entertainment; Dates: June 16; No. of Shows: 1
- 5) **Robert Plant and Alison Krauss**
Gross Sales: \$305,296; Venue: **Asheville (N.C.) Civic Center**; Attendance: 4,835; Ticket Range: \$69-\$46; Promoter: AC Entertainment, Outback Concerts; Dates: June 14; No. of Shows: 1
- Venue: **Sony Centre for the Performing Arts, Toronto, Ontario**; Attendance: 12,591; Ticket Range: \$245.66-\$73.70; Promoter: Goldenvoice; Dates: June 6-9; No. of Shows: 4
- 4) **Mamma Mia**
Gross Sales: \$1,280,893; Venue: **Fox Theatre, Atlanta**; Attendance: 23,724; Ticket Range: \$64-\$25; Promoter: Broadway Across America; Dates: June 10-15; No. of Shows: 8
- 5) **Duran Duran**
Gross Sales: \$408,290; Venue: **Rumsey Playfield, New York**; Attendance: 10,061; Ticket Range: 65-\$45; Promoter: AEG Live, Live Nation; Dates: May 30-31; No. of Shows: 2

Compiled by Rob Ocampo. To submit reports, e-mail HotTickets@venuestoday.com or fax to (714) 378-0040.

THE BEAT

TRAVELOG

EVENT & ARENA MARKETING CONFERENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C., JUNE 4-7, 2008

Bob Noces (left) and Jim Petsch of the Wachovia Arena at Casey Plaza in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.; Moderator Vanessa Kromer leads a panel on non-traditional marketing featuring James Cannella of Impact Mobile, Jitender Singh of Geopepper and Kristin Tanguay, Fanscape.



With opt-in being the key element to interactive campaigns, marketers are starting to find success with text-message marketing campaigns, explained James Canella of Impact Mobile during a panel at the Event & Arena Marketing Conference in Washington, D.C.

The concept is fairly simple – using some type of display, encourage fans to text a message to a listed number, often answering a simple question. Once the person sends over the text message, the marketer automatically collects their phone number and can use that information to market back to the consumer, keeping them abreast of on-sales and special events.

Canella held a special demonstration, prompting attendees to text the initials of one of three cities – Los Angeles, Chicago or New York – to a number he posted on a Power Point screen in the hopes of winning a prize.

“Great. Now I have all of your phone numbers, although I promise not to use them,” he joked with the group. “It’s a unique identifier because you know exactly whom you’re talking with and usually everyone in your audience is carrying some sort of mobile device with them.”

Text messaging is expected to increase by 20 percent this year with the demographic expanding into older audiences. Setting up a text messaging system is fairly simple – it usually takes a communication beacon to receive the phone numbers, and some software to decipher the phone numbers and collect them in a database. Canella said most telecommunication companies sell text messaging receivers, and will register a special text messaging phone number for about \$500-\$1,000.

“When you’re asking people to send you responses, really tap into the use of keywords. But remember to keep the required communications short,” said Jitender Singh of Geopepper. “And remember that most telecommunication companies require you to use standard opt-out codes for people to discontinue the service. If someone texts your service ‘quit,’ then they need to be removed from the list. If someone texts your service ‘help,’ then they should be sent instructions on how to use the service.”

Singh said Live Nation is installing a text prompter in most of its amphitheatres and clubs that allows visitors to text messages to their friends, which are then broadcast on a ticker screen.

“That technology is sponsored by Verizon Wireless,” Singh said. “I encourage all of you to speak with your telecommunication partners.”

Heard in the Hallways

- It’s been months since board member Vanessa Kromer left her position at the Greek Theatre in Los Angeles for a position at prestigious P.R. firm Rogers & Cowan. After moonlighting for the Greek for several weeks, her replacement was finally announced – Janette Baxa, formerly of Live Nation. Baxa will help handle P.R. for all of parent company Nederlander’s venues and live tours
- Global Spectrum has appointed Rich Trella of the Wachovia Center in Philadelphia to head up marketing efforts at the WFCU Centre in Windsor, Ont. Canada is his native country.
- EAMC’s current President Christy Ricketts is pregnant. Ricketts told Venues Today that after she has her second child, she plans to quit her post at the American Airlines Center and work part-time with Jim Delaney of Activate Sports to plan future EAMC conferences and develop additional content for the website. – Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this story: James Canella, (310) 424-5560; Jitendar Singh, (973) 386-4573

DEAL MAKERS

ROSE QUARTER, PORTLAND, ORE.

New Management Company: AEG Facilities

Owner: Paul Allen’s Vulcan Inc./Portland Trail Blazers/Arena Management Inc.

Terms: Five year management agreement, booking and operating the Rose Garden and the Portland Memorial Coliseum for the Portland Trail Blazers of the National Basketball Association.

AEG Facilities will replace Global Spectrum as the arena management company on July 1. Bob Newman, chief operating officer, AEG Facilities, said the transition team is in place and the general manager will be announced soon. Ovations Food Services continues as concessionaire and New Era Tickets as ticket provider, both Comcast-Spectacor companies, as is Global Spectrum.

The Blazers sent out an RFP seeking a management company, to which AEG and Global Spectrum responded. J.E. Isaac, Blazers senior VP of business affairs, said the team was looking for a change but not at all out of dissatisfaction with Global Spectrum, which has brought more than 40 concerts a year to the venue.

“We were very, very impressed with AEG and the dynamic growth the company is experiencing,” Isaac said. “This is a chance to do even better.” A key is plans to develop the area around the arenas as a destination, along the lines of L.A. Live

around Staples Center in Los Angeles. The mixed-use development and a planned naming rights initiative both fit AEG's expertise, Isaac said, then added "event creation" to the list.

Peter Luukko, chairman of Global Spectrum, noted his company came in on assignment from the lender in 2006 when the Rose Quarter was bankrupt, before Paul Allen bought it back. "Whenever you come into a bankruptcy, it is contentious," he said, adding that Global Spectrum had a good relationship with the Trail Blazers management and a strong success record at the venue over its two-year term. "Our staff did an incredible job."

Newman called the new client a strategic fit and noted AEG Facilities now has agreements at various levels to work with seven NHL and/or NBA arenas.

He envisions Portland as a great place to create recurring events, such as festivals, especially because there are two side-by-side arenas to use.

Contacts: Bob Newman, (213) 763-5425; J. Isaac, (503) 797-9599; Peter Luukko, (215) 389-9530

SOUTHEASTERN KENTUCKY AGRICULTURAL & EXPOSITION CENTER, CORBIN, KY.

Cliff Clinger



New Management Company: SMG, with Savor food services in the kitchen and Cliff Clinger as general manager.

Owner: City

Terms: Year by year contract. The city will pay SMG a \$120,000 fee plus incentives based on qualitative and quantitative performance criteria. Savor, a division of SMG, will receive six percent of gross sales.

The 4,000-seat, \$20 million multipurpose venue opens March 1, 2009. With a floor sized 125 X 250 feet, it will host equestrian events, concerts, family shows, flat shows and conferences, said Bob Cavalieri, SMG senior VP for business development.

He noted the area already has "700 hotel rooms with more on the way" and it's located right on I-75.

Clinger, who is currently assistant general manager at Nationwide Arena, Columbus, is moving to Corbin in the next few weeks.

Contact: Bob Cavalieri, (215) 592-6628

MANN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, PHILADELPHIA

New Concessionaire: Oventions Food Services

Owner: Non-profit

Terms: Five-year management fee contract. Oventions will receive \$110,000 annually, plus a small percentage of the net. The gross potential is \$1 million-\$1.4 million annually from 40-45 shows, including performances by the Philadelphia Orchestra. Oventions made a small investment in equipment.

Oventions took over from an in-house operation. Ken Young, president of Oventions, said the first show with Oventions Food Services on the job was James Taylor (see Hot Tickets), a sold out performance, that grossed over \$100,000 from food and drink. Young said projections were to do a third less than that.

Adam Mascareno is manager on site. Linda Recke, the general manager for Oventions in Trenton, N.J., is in charge of the Philadelphia area and was on hand for the debut event. - Linda Deckard

Contact: Ken Young, (757) 622-2222 X 104