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From: venuestoday [venuestoday@mail.vresp.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2008 7:56 PM
To: april@venuestoday.com
Subject: VT Pulse, May 21, 2008



May 21, 2008 • VOL. VII, Number 16 • ISSN 1547-4143

Quote of the Week

"We're growing Verizon up differently, with its own audience for a complete classical experience and then the chance for us to have a stunning impact on the presentations of artists who fill 12,000 seats."

— Allison Vulgamore, president and CEO, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra on the new amphitheatre in Alpharetta, Ga.

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Greetings April,

Venues Today is on the move. Next week, we're relocating down the hall to a bigger office with more space to bring you the "News Behind The Headlines." To inspire creativity in our staff, we even painted the walls orange. Feel free to stop in and check it out if you're ever in Orange County, otherwise don't forget to update our contact information. Our new address is 18350 Mt. Langley #201, Fountain Valley, CA 92708.

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VT NEWS

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

MID-SOUTH FAIR PLANS MOVE TO RURAL MISSISSIPPI IN 2009

The Mid-South Fair will celebrate its last run in Memphis this August before relocating to rural Mississippi



Jim Rout, general manager and Chief Operating Officer of the Mid-South Fair, Memphis, Tenn., expects the next

SHORT TAKES

>> JACKSON ANNOUNCES TOUR
 — Janet Jackson will launch her Rock Witchu tour, her first tour in over seven years, at GM Place in Vancouver, B.C., Sept. 10. Announced dates include Bell Centre, Montreal, Sept. 29; Air Canada Centre, Toronto, Oct. 13; Verizon Center, Washington, Oct. 15; and Izod Center, East Rutherford, N.J., Oct. 17.
Contact: Patti Webster, (732) 469-5955

>> PBR FLYING HIGH
 — Professional Bull Riders, Inc. (PBR) unveiled its newest corporate sponsor, the U.S. Air Force (USAF), at the AT&T Center in San Antonio, Texas, May 17 at the Ford Best in Texas Shootout. As the "Official Armed Services Branch of the PBR," the U.S. Air Force will be an opening ceremonies partner.
Contact: Katharine Sherrer, (719) 242-2800

>> TACOMA DOME SCORES SEED MONEY — Tacoma (Wash.) City Council voted to issue a bond for \$250,000 to the Tacoma Dome as working capital to promote concerts and other events in-house. The agreement covers a period through May 20, 2011.
Contact: Mike Combs, (253) 272-3663

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few years to be an exciting time as the fair begins its transition from downtown Memphis, where it has been held for the last 100 years, to an open field in Tunica County, Miss.

The non-profit corporation has known for quite some time that it would have to move. The City of Memphis wants to redevelop the 170 acres where the fair currently sits.

But, deciding where the fair would move became quite a process. The decision on moving to 150 acres of rich farmland being donated by a private landowner in Tunica, however, has fair management excited.

"I have made a lot of good friends. But, sometimes, when it comes down to business, you have to do what you have to do," Rout said, later adding "And, quite frankly, the State of Mississippi was offering more incentives for us to move there than Tennessee."

Those incentives include a possible sales tax rebate, a possible community block grant of about \$500,000, a state road grant worth about the same amount and others, worth about \$5.5 million, maybe more. None of these incentives is a done deal, but Rout is very optimistic.

"I really feel we will be able to get approved for the sales tax rebate," Rout said. "All the sales tax we generate, except for the educational piece of the tax, would go back to our non-profit entity, which then could be used to help retire a debt."

Webster Franklin, president and CEO of the Tunica County Convention and Visitors Bureau, said they were excited to get the fair.

"Anything that would bring between 300,000 to 500,000 to Tunica during a 10-day time period, any destination would be happy to welcome. It is the next logical step. We now have 16 months to put on our first fair."

But, everyone agrees that the development of the property in Tunica will be an ongoing process. For what the fair is determining it needs over the next few years, the cost estimate is about \$70 million. It will be done in phases. Rout feels the first thing that needs to be constructed is the exhibition building.

"We can have our offices in a trailer for a while," he said. "When we open next year, we probably will have very few buildings."

Plans for the future include:

- An exhibition building with 180,000 sq. ft. of usable space
- A 220,000 sq. ft. livestock facility
- A 15,000 sq. ft. office and administration building
- A warehouse with 25,000 sq. ft. of storage space

Rout expects fair programming will change some. "We know we have to have other things going on all year long. We are going to bring the best of the past with us, the creative arts, the livestock and youth talent. These are our anchors."

The thought of the blank slate just 45 minutes down the road has the creative juices flowing. One possibility is having something environmentally friendly, going green. Rout also wants to make sure they are technologically updated.

Fair management is picturing some type of outside entertainment venue, perhaps an amphitheater, that could be sponsored by surrounding casinos.

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"It would be on mutual grounds so they really wouldn't be competing here," he said. "Plus, the way this entire farmland has been irrigated has left irrigation canals around the property. We are even picturing using boats. Someone came up with the idea of a floating stage."

Rout hopes no one on the current staff "jumps ship" after the move, but he guesses it is possible. There is no reason for anyone to have to relocate to Mississippi because it is so close.

With all this excitement, planning and preparation for the new grounds and the move, there is still a fair coming up in Sept. 19-28, at the fairgrounds in Memphis. Last year, attendance was about 327,000. In 2006, it was 400,000. But, last year, there was no football game at the Liberty Bowl during the fair. With the stadium sitting adjacent to the grounds, football fans receive free admission into the fair with a football ticket.

"We can expect to get between 60,000 and 70,000 people just from football," Rout said. "We will have two games during the run this year."

North American Midway Entertainment, Jackson, Miss., will provide the carnival this year. Musical entertainment from Lee Greenwood, B.J. Thomas, Rick Springfield, Boyz II Men, and others are booked. —Pam Sherborne

Interviewed for this story: Jim Rout, (901) 274-8800; Webster Franklin, (662) 910-5234

Mid-Year Submission Deadline
venues
TODAY **TOMORROW!**
We're getting ready to wrap up the first half of 2008!

Our July issue will spotlight our much-anticipated [Mid-Year Hot Tickets and Top Stops](#) charts. Don't be left out, make sure your reports are submitted now!

The included events **MUST** have taken place between **Oct. 16, 2007 and May 15, 2008.**

The deadline to submit concert and event grosses for the mid-year charts has been extended one day to **TOMORROW, Thursday, May 22.** You may submit your reports via our website at www.venuestoday.com, e-mail them to HotTickets@venuestoday.com or fax them to (714) 378-0040.

AMPHITHEATRES

ATLANTA SYMPHONY STRIKES THE RIGHT NOTE WITH NEW 12,000-SEAT SHED

Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre at Encore Park, Alpharetta, Ga., opening night, May 10, with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. (Photo Credit: Chris Lee)



By all accounts and in the glow of a successful grand

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

**Kent (Wash.)
Events Center/SMG**
- Director of
Finance

**Kent (Wash.)
Events Center/SMG**
- Director of
Operations

**Kent (Wash.) Event
Center/SMG** -
Director of Sales &
Marketing

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LISTINGS](#)

opening, the 12,000-seat, \$35 million Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre at Encore Park in Alpharetta, Ga., is on track to accomplish its mission.

Donald F. Fox, vice president for Business Development and CFO, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO), listed two immediate wow-factors for the new venue: Selling out three shows for the Eagles in 90 minutes, 36,000 tickets (May 14, 16 and 17), which led to a fourth show May 20; and “seeing all of our ensembles play before the largest paid audience in the history of our institutions, folks who paid solely to see the symphony.” (May 10, the inaugural concert).

This is actually the third venue playing home to the ASO, and obviously the largest. The amphitheatre was built to be self-sustaining, hence the 26 pop and contemporary concerts booked; to enlarge the loyal ASO audience, a given with the opening night crowd; and to serve the community, Fox said.

Allison Vulgamore, president and CEO, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, noted that Verizon Wireless Amphitheater is another cog in a unique business model that sees ASO operating and performing in a symphony hall and two amphitheatres, one owned and operated, one a shared business venture (Chastain Park). “We have three ensembles plus two education groups performing at three different venues all a division of a parent company.” ASO performs its primary season at the Symphony Hall at the Woodruff Arts Center downtown; presents shows at Chastain Park south of Atlanta, part of their repertoire for 35 years; and now operates and presents at Verizon Wireless Amphitheater north of town.

Fox did not see constructing 12,000-seat sheds to extend the business model as a trend for orchestras, noting the Hollywood Bowl, Los Angeles; Riverbend Music Center, Cincinnati; Ravinia Festival, Highland Park near Chicago; and Tanglewood in Boston are all symphony homes, to name a few. “This is just another brick in the wall,” he said.

“We are clear about our own mission,” Vulgamore added. “Our mission statement calls for reaching ever broader audiences in newer venues; this is a continuation of the core music we have been presenting, but in an exciting new venue in which the orchestra will be able to perform.

“We’re growing Verizon up differently, with its own audience for a complete classical experience and then the chance for us to have a stunning impact on the presentations of artists who fill 12,000 seats.”

Patrick Leahy, 409 Inc., who is a consultant on this project, can imagine other orchestras sitting up and taking note. “The fact we’re doing the Eagles and [Tom] Petty and Rod Stewart, clearly the industry has recognized it’s a fine, magnificent facility. The amenities are second to none,” he said.

At the same time if the orchestra draws an “audience that says the orchestra is playing at our hip concert venue” and turns out for classical performances when they might not have in the past, that’s success, Leahy said.

Leahy, a veteran of seven venue grand openings who has been in the amphitheater business for decades, said Verizon Wireless is a “combination of being very fresh and new and full of all the amenities you would want from a consumer’s and performer’s standpoint.”

The setting features 80-100 foot trees that were saved during construction and another 1,300 planted nearby.

The stagehouse is set up for an orchestra, requiring expansive back-of-house amenities, including six main headliner dressing rooms, a large orchestra dressing

room, and a smaller chorus dressing room. It's built for much more than a touring rock show, he observed.

"The catering kitchen built backstage is the nicest catering kitchen in any amphitheater I'm familiar with and I'm familiar with 38 of them," Leahy said. Ovations Food Services is the concessionaire.

On stage, ASO added a portable, acoustical fabric shell to encompass the orchestra in white fabric and spectacular lighting, as opposed to encompassing the stage in black, which is the rock and roll method. The shell makes the shed flexible enough to go from the orchestra one night to loading in the Eagles the next.

"I can see other orchestras saying here's a model that could work for us," Leahy said. "I expect when we get through this season, Don Fox is likely to get several calls." The venue is being booked in house by Clay Schell and through Dave Lucas and his 360 Concerts. It will host 15-20 community events, a big part of the mission. "For us, it is as important, almost critically important, that the Alpharetta High School is holding its first graduation from the venue, alongside the Eagles, in how we measure our success," Vulgamore said.

James Drinkard, assistant city manager, Alpharetta, looked at the amphitheater's value to the city, beyond the straight line economic impact, as the next phase in developing small town/suburban America. Alpharetta has a population of 53,000, which swells to 120,000 during the work day. The city has concentrated on residential, office and retail development. Cultural amenities are the next logical step, enhancing the quality of life and making it attractive for the quality of worker that business needs to attract. The city put up \$1 million toward the land and the city's development authority worked on an industrial revenue bond, not an encumbrance on the city, just a conduit for the lending, Drinkard said.

He said they have gotten a few calls from other cities about what they did and how they did it, but when cities of comparable size find out this is a 12,000-seat venue, they back off. Most are still in the amphitheater-for-the-local-jazz-ensemble frame of mind, he said, but that might change with a success story to tell in Alpharetta.

The shed is available for rentals though, Fox said. ASO will promote most events.

Parking is included in the ticket, as is a facility fee. On the amenities side, the seats are wide, 21-22 inches, versus the 19-inch model, Leahy pointed out. The lower bowl seats are folding chairs so the venue can be set up cabaret style with tables and chairs as an alternative to row seating. In a row configuration, there are 7,000 seats in the bowl and 5,000 on the lawn.

"Not everyone in the business of promoting concerts is doing it purely to provide a return to a shareholder," Leahy said. "To be a music presenter, you have to do more than rock shows. You have to do more than the mainstream four country acts, six or seven rock shows, a handful of classic rock shows, and that's the span of your repertoire."

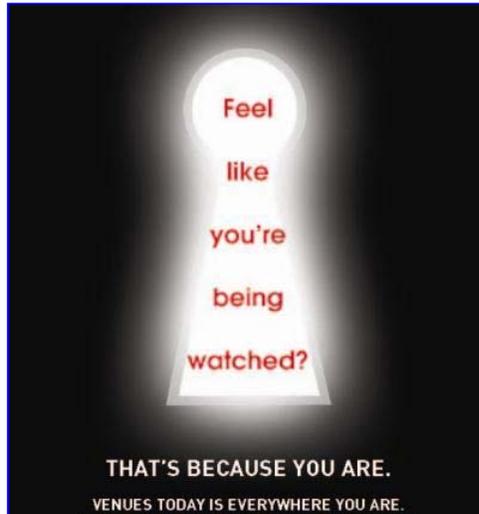
"Acts might say it's cheaper in this marketplace to play three shows, without the transportation cost of four shows in four cities," Leahy added, positioning the new venue. "The trend, with the way technology is going, is acts will say we don't have to truck all our gear from show to show, let's scale down our costs. Mid and smaller acts will start renting locally." The plan is to position Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre to handle it all.

His excitement, in part, after all these years in the business, is that this is a "legacy piece," he said, explaining that while some amphitheaters are being shut down because they are not making enough money, the

symphony isn't going anywhere and is not swayed by the stock market or money. "To be successful longterm, you have to be more to the community than just promoting shows," Leahy said.

And still, it came in under budget and on time. — Linda Deckard

Interviewed for this story: Don Fox and Allison Vulgare, (404) 733-4900; Patrick Leahy, (513) 898-1641; James Drinkard, (678) 297-6014



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TICKETS TICKETMASTER GOES TICKETLESS WITH TOM WAITS



A screenshot from a video created by Ticketmaster instructing consumers how to use the company's new ticketless system

Ticketing monolith Ticketmaster has joined the ticketless revolution, announcing plans to take an upcoming Tom Waits tour paperless.

The platform would allow consumers who purchased their tickets online to gain access to a concert simply by swiping their credit cards on a wireless hand-held device for entry. Ticketmaster officials said they plan to roll out the technology at major venues in the U.S. over the next year-and-a-half.

Ticketmaster isn't the first company to use ticketless technology, but the ticketing giant's clout and sheer size could push the practice into the mainstream and, more important, give the ticketing giant a means to rein in the growing secondary market.

There's virtually no way to resell, or even transfer the ticket to someone else (no buying tickets for friends unless you take them to the concert with you) since concert-goers will need to present the original purchase credit card, plus a photo I.D., explained Ticketmaster's new V.P. of Communications Alex Lopez.

"This system will keep evolving, but at this time, these are the parameters that were set up," he said.

A look at a Ticketmaster competitor paints a glimpse of

what's possible for the ticketing giant. Cleveland-based Veritix signed a deal with the Houston Rockets National Basketball Association team (April 23, VT Pulse) to serve as the company's primary and secondary ticket provider, using an electronic ticketing system similar to the one proposed by Ticketmaster. Rockets Chief Strategy Officer Chris Dacey said the electronic ticketing system gives the team an unprecedented amount of control over the ticket that essentially keeps it in team hands from purchase to fulfillment.

"Because we are endorsing an official marketplace, you'll see it start to eat away at [the secondary market] and it's a way for the teams to regain control of that market," Dacey said during an April 23 interview. "Scalpers have been making tons of money off us, really at our expense by creating limited value. This is our way of taking it back."

Ticketmaster's purchase of website TicketsNow (Jan. 23, VT Pulse) gives the company a platform to sanction the resale of electronic tickets, although Lopez said the company hasn't announced any plans to integrate the two systems.

The ticketless launch also comes a few months before Live Nation breaks away from Ticketmaster and launches its own ticketing system (Jan. 16, VT Pulse), powered by CTS Eventim. In a conference call with investors, Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino suggested that his company might offer consumers some type of ticketless options.

Lopez said Ticketmaster's launch of the ticketing system for the Waits tour – which is being promoted by Live Nation – came at the prompting of the artist.

"This was Tom's way of ensuring his fans got access," he said, later adding, "The fans are probably glad they can get tickets without dipping into the resale market."

Waits' 13-city tour will mostly play 2,000-3,000 seat theaters and performing arts centers through late June to early July. Lexie VanHaren of the Orpheum Theatre in Phoenix, where the tour is opening with two dates, said her team has been working with both Ticketmaster and Live Nation to prepare for the launch.

"We're working on a plan for when people arrive so it's a smooth process of entry," she said. "Operationally, we plan to accommodate this number of people through multiple entries."

Lopez said fans shouldn't have to arrive early to use the new system and estimated it would be quicker than waiting in line at a Will Call window to pick up tickets. – Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this story: Albert Lopez, (310) 630-9569; Lexie VanHaren, (602) 534-7633

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 April 29, 2008.

RADIOHEAD DEBUTS WITH ATLANTA GIG

15,001 or More Seats 10,001-15,000 Seats 5,001-10,000 Seats 5,000 or Less Seats

1) Jay-Z, Mary J. Blige	1) Elton John	1) Rush	1) Cher
Gross Sales: \$5,021,342;	Gross Sales: \$1,661,039;	Gross Sales: \$1,185,575;	Gross Sales: \$2,547,560;
Venue: Madison Square Garden Arena, New York;	Venue: Vector Arena, Auckland, New Zealand;	Venue: Nokia Theatre L.A. Live;	Venue: Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas;
Attendance: 38,678; Ticket	Attendance: 7,954; Ticket Range: \$190.62-	Attendance: 9,861; Ticket Range: \$154.50-\$69.50; Promoter:	Attendance: 16,870; Ticket

- Range: \$446.25-\$65.25; Promoter: Al Haymon, Live Nation; Dates: May 2, 6-7; No. of Shows: 3
- 2) Foo Fighters**
Gross Sales: \$2,725,179; Venue: **AcerArena, Sydney, Australia;** Attendance: 30,962; Ticket Range: \$95.60; Promoter: The Frontier Touring Company; Dates: May 2-3; No. of Shows: 2
- 3) Ednita Nazario**
Gross Sales: \$2,487,795; Venue: **Coliseo De Puerto Rico (San Juan);** Attendance: 32,490; Ticket Range: \$95-\$45; Promoter: Gianfi Communications; Dates: May 2-4; No. of Shows: 3
- 4) Kenny Chesney**
Gross Sales: \$910,237; Venue: **Ford Center, Oklahoma City;** Attendance: 13,295; Ticket Range: \$72.50-\$62.50; Promoter: AEG Live, The Messina Group, Varnell Enterprises; Dates: May 2; No. of Shows: 1
- 5) Radiohead**
Gross Sales: \$801,160; Venue: **Lakewood Amphitheatre, Atlanta;** Attendance: 18,870; Ticket Range: \$55-\$35; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 8; No. of Shows: 1
- \$119.30; Promoter: Capital C; Dates: May 14; No. of Shows: 1
- 2) Jay-Z, Mary J. Blige**
Gross Sales: \$1,077,819; Venue: **Atlantic City (N.J.) Boardwalk Hall;** Attendance: 9,494; Ticket Range: \$352-\$65.75; Promoter: Al Haymon, In-House, Live Nation; Dates: May 3; No. of Shows: 1
- 3) Westlife**
Gross Sales: \$867,779; Venue: **Vector Arena, Auckland, New Zealand;** Attendance: 10,411; Ticket Range: \$114.43-\$60.27; Promoter: Pacific Entertainment; Dates: May 10; No. of Shows: 1
- 4) Michael Buble**
Gross Sales: \$681,855; Venue: **Cox Arena at Aztec Bowl, San Diego;** Attendance: 8,316; Ticket Range: \$251.54-\$48.75; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 2; No. of Shows: 1
- 5) Rascal Flatts**
Gross Sales: \$629,829; Venue: **Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, Fort Wayne, Ind.;** Attendance: 10,280; Ticket Range: \$65-\$49.75; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 9; No. of Shows: 1
- AEG Live, Goldenvoice; Dates: May 6, 8; No. of Shows: 2
- 2) Divas With Heart**
Gross Sales: \$1,041,319; Venue: **Radio City Music Hall, New York;** Attendance: 8,099; Ticket Range: \$500-\$65; Promoter: New York Masonic Charitable Media, Inc.; Dates: May 4; No. of Shows: 2
- 3) Sheryl Crow**
Gross Sales: \$473,508; Venue: **Chastain Park Amphitheatre, Atlanta;** Attendance: 6,219; Ticket Range: \$82.50-\$39.50; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: May 3; No. of Shows: 1
- 4) Mother's Day Reggae Fest**
Gross Sales: \$449,886; Venue: **The WaMu Theater at Madison Square Garden, New York;** Attendance: 4,503; Ticket Range: \$145.50-\$70; Promoter: Dahved Levy Devonish Promotions; Dates: May 10; No. of Shows: 1
- 5) Erykah Badu**
Gross Sales: \$390,551; Venue: **Radio City Music Hall, New York;** Attendance: 5,961; Ticket Range: \$76-\$51; Promoter: CD Enterprises, MSG Entertainment; Dates: May 9; No. of Shows: 1
- Range: \$250-\$95; Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West; Dates: May 6-7, 10-11; No. of Shows: 4
- 2) Riverdance**
Gross Sales: \$770,894; Venue: **Fox Theatre, Atlanta;** Attendance: 15,356; Ticket Range: \$62-\$25; Promoter: Broadway Across America; Dates: May 13-18; No. of Shows: 8
- 3) Mamma Mia!**
Gross Sales: \$510,000; Venue: **Pasadena (Calif.) Civic Auditorium;** Attendance: 9,340; Ticket Range: \$65-\$20; Promoter: Theater League, Inc.; Dates: May 7-11; No. of Shows: 7
- 4) Larry The Cable Guy**
Gross Sales: \$354,106; Venue: **Ruth Eckerd Hall, Clearwater, Fla.;** Attendance: 7,913; Ticket Range: \$44.75; Promoter: In-House, Outback Concerts; Dates: May 15-17; No. of Shows: 4
- 5) Stomp**
Gross Sales: \$333,027; Venue: **Civic Center of Greater Des Moines (Iowa);** Attendance: 9,921; Ticket Range: \$42.50-\$25; Promoter: In-House; Dates: May 9-11; No. of Shows: 5

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

THE BEAT

TRAVELOG
IAAM'S INTERNATIONAL STADIUM MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

SAINT LOUIS, MAY 15-17

Brian Griffin of B.C. Place in Vancouver chats with fellow Canuck Ric Mallett of Plastic Solutions Inc., Delta, B.C.; (right) Wil Gorman of the Milwaukee Brewers Enterprises catches up with Rich Antonio of ISS Facility Services



Amanda West of Wrightson, Johnson, Haddon and Williams talks acoustics with Ron Stevens of Southern Methodist University in Dallas; (right) Richard Andersen of Petco Park in San Diego welcomes attendees to the opening ceremony at the Anheuser-Busch Brewery



The International Association of Assembly Managers wrapped up a successful ISMC conference on Sunday, bringing about 130 pre-registered attendees, along with an estimated 30 to 40 additional attendees for the last facility-specific meeting before IAAM's general session in Anaheim from July 25-29.

"The response has been great since we've moved the date, and we're really proud that we've been able to reach out to the baseball and football guys and bring in more members to the IAAM umbrella," said Richard Andersen, who noted the conference was relocated from its previous January date, which fell just a few weeks away from the Stadium Managers Association annual event.

This year's panels featured a prominent emphasis on environmental practices and ISMC Chair Scott Jenkins of the Seattle Mariners and Safeco Field said choosing this year's panel topics was easy considering the rising interest in the subject.

"People are going green in so many different ways and we wanted to create a platform where people can share their own ideas and talk about what works well and what still could be improved," he said. "This is going to continue to be a dominant topic for the next decade and a lot of these folks want to get an early foot in the door."

In fact, nearly all of the second day of the conference was dedicated to discussing environmental issues with panels on everything from implementing sustainable business practices to developing a green procurement. Over the course of three days of sessions, attendees heard dozens of examples of stadium managers taking their operations "green."

- The Air Canada Center in Toronto switched over to SCA's new biodegradable Tork material for its paper and tissue needs in an effort that is expected to reduce its annual landfill output by 210 cubic yards, explained Building Operations Director Bryan Leslie.
- The Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison, Wis., completed the first Silver Leadership in Energy Efficient Design accreditation in the United States for a convention center by implementing sustainable water use, recycling and renewable energy purchases, explained the Director of Operations Gregg McManners.
- The Cleveland Indians became the first Major League Baseball team to install 42 solar panels at Jacobs Field to power 400 TVs in the park, said their Assistant Director of Operations Brad Mohr.

The cornerstone of the conference was the Philadelphia Eagles, who instituted a "Go Green" platform pioneered by Tim Sexton. The public relations campaign is centered on the team's 6.5-acre forest in Neshaminy State Park in Bensalem, Pa.

The team has instituted multiple solar panels throughout their practice facility and has created a carbon credits calculator on their website to help fans calculate their carbon impact in attending a game.

“We felt that it was important to empower the fan in the process as much as team management, because ultimately, they’re the ones who make the biggest difference,” Sexton said.

Interviewed for this article: Richard Andersen, (619) 795-5060; Scott Jenkins, (206) 346-4021; Tim Sexton (310) 459-5101

NAMING RIGHTS REPORT

Southern California Home & Garden Show, Anaheim, Calif.

Date Announced: May 15

Terms: Not disclosed

Buyer: IKEA

Venue/Producer: Anaheim Convention Center/DMG World Media

Comments: International home furnishing retailer IKEA has signed on as the title sponsor for the 54th Annual Southern California Home & Garden Show, the largest and longest running consumer home and garden show on the West Coast.

As part of its sponsorship, IKEA will furnish a model home on the show floor. Additionally, attendees will have the opportunity to win IKEA home furnishings, including a complete kitchen featured at the show. IKEA will promote the show on its Los Angeles and Orange County store web pages, as well as carry information about the show in its local circular and promote the event in-store.

Contact: Katie Casey, (310) 578-7050

Dallas (Texas) Center for the Performing Arts

Date Announced: May 12

Terms: Five years, a multi-million dollar deal

Buyer: Dallas-Fort Worth Lexus Dealer Association

Tenant/Ownership: The Dallas Opera, Dallas Theater Center, Texas Ballet Theater, Dallas Black Dance Theatre and Anita N. Martinez Ballet Folklorico/Dallas Center for the Performing Arts Foundation, City of Dallas

Comments: The Dallas-Fort Worth Lexus Dealer Association has signed on as the title sponsor of the Broadway Series, and also receives naming rights for the center’s two underground parking garages.

In addition, they will be the “official vehicle” of the center and its resident companies, and the official valet sponsor. Lexus-driving patrons of the Center will have the opportunity to park in a premier, designated area reserved for Lexus drivers.

The dealer association consists of Park Place Lexus in Plano and Grapevine, Texas, and Sewell Lexus of Dallas and Fort Worth.

“We are honored Lexus has committed to this far-reaching sponsorship that will benefit North Texas in so many ways,” said Howard Hallam, chair of the Board of Directors of the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts. “To have a partner like Lexus well in advance of the Center’s opening exemplifies their dedication to community.

When the \$338 million, 10-acre performing arts complex opens in 2009 it will include the 2,200-seat Winspear Opera House; the 600-seat Wylie Theatre; the Annette Strauss Artist Square, an outdoor venue that will seat up to 5,000; the 750-seat City Performance Hall, which will provide production space for the area’s smaller performing arts companies; and Performance Park, an urban park that links all the spaces together.

Contact: Maria May, (214) 954-9925 ext. 245

AEG Forms AEG Global Partnerships to Focus on Sponsorships

Date: May 12

Comments: Los Angeles-based AEG has sold more naming rights, founding

partnerships, suites and premium seats than any other company in the world, so it makes sense they would create a division dedicated to such deals, according to Michael Roth, AEG director of communications.

AEG Global Partnerships will be led by Todd Goldstein, president, and Shervin Mirhashemi, chief operating officer, and is expected to generate more than \$250 million in sponsorships in 2008. The men have been instrumental in the creation of such deals for AEG since 2001.

The new division will manage existing deals, as well as work with potential sponsors to maximize marketing exposure on properties AEG operates and consults with worldwide.

“Sponsorship and naming rights agreements are critical components of the overall revenue of our company,” said Timothy J. Leiweke, president and CEO of AEG Worldwide in a statement. “Our continued and focused priority for these partnerships indicates the priority we place on our sponsors, their satisfaction and happiness with AEG. The mark of a great company is one that is in the renewal business, not the sales business.” – Liz Boardman

Contact: Michael Roth, (213) 742-7155