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VT PULSE

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION FROM VENUES TODAY

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Quote of the Week

“This is basically like an NHL game. This is in an NHL-owned building and we’re playing with NHL rules on NHL ice, with NHL officials using NHL players. This reminded me of an NHL playoff game.”

— NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman on the Canada/US Game Sunday at the 2010 Winter Olympics. Bettman said he’s considering cancelling the NHL break in 2014.

In this Issue

THE NEWS
[NHL Ponders Pulling Out of Olympic Competition](#)

Greetings,

Welcome to VT Pulse, your weekly guide to the "News Behind the Headlines." There will be no VT Pulse next week as we complete the March issue. VT Pulse will resume on March 10.



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[Achieving LEED Gold Challenged the Rose Garden to Excel](#)

HOT TICKETS

[Top Gear Speeds Past Competition](#)

THE BEAT

[Q&A: Tom Benson, Director of International Programs for Tickets.com](#)

[Naming Rights Report](#)

[Opportunists: Wilson, Magid, Poe Take on New Challenges](#)

DEPARTMENTS

[Short Takes](#)

[HELP WANTED](#)

[CONTACT VT PULSE](#)

SHORT TAKES

>> **SNAP INTO IT** – Jerky makers Slim Jim have been named the presenting sponsors for Wrestlemania XXVI, March 28 at the University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale, Ariz. Slim Jim will also sponsor the Summer Slam at the Staples Center, Los Angeles in August. Contact: Justine Sacco, (202) 909-9302

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VT NEWS

OLYMPICS

NHL PONDER PULLING OUT OF OLYMPIC COMPETITION

Canada's Rick Nash checks USA's Jack Johnson during their Olympic matchup Sunday. Both are NHL players.



VANCOUVER - As the hockey fans watched the U.S. edge out team Canada during the final round-robin game of Olympic play, National Hockey League Commissioner Gary Bettman was establishing the talking points for the league's future negotiations with the International Olympic Committee.

"This is basically like an NHL game," Bettman said of the matchup at GM Place, renamed Canada Hockey Place during the Olympics. "This is in an NHL-owned building and we're playing with NHL rules on NHL ice, with NHL officials using NHL players. This reminded me of an NHL playoff game."

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Bettman said he was concerned that the two-week break the NHL takes every four years for the Winter Olympics was disruptive to the league's schedule.

"We're the only sports league that shuts down for a couple weeks to go to the Olympics. However, it's not without an impact on our season," he said.

Many of the league's best players, 143 in all, come back bruised and injured, right as teams are gearing up to make a playoff push. Unless the NHL is able to work out a deal with the Winter Olympics to offset some of the league's losses, Bettman said he was unsure the league would allow its players to participate in the 2014 games in Sochi, Russia.

"We'll take a deep breath after this experience and figure out whether or not it makes sense to go to the next Olympics, but we're glad we're here now. Vancouver in 2010 has been terrific," he said.

Bettman wouldn't specify what concessions he was hoping to draw from the Olympic Committee, but the discussions come at a critical time for the league. The league is about to enter its second round of collective bargaining with the NHL Players Association, and many of the league's players have expressed a common sentiment that they enjoy participating in the games.

"I'm just pointing out the discussion points. For anyone to suggest that there is no impact in taking a two-week break, that is a bit naïve," he said.

For Harvey Jones, general manager of the GM Place, hosting the Olympics is a bit of a mixed bag. The Vancouver Canucks are more inconvenienced than most as their team takes extended road trips during set up and tear down of the venue. And Jones said he enjoys little sponsorship benefits for hosting the hockey matchups – even the name of the building has to be changed from GM Place to Canada Hockey Place to comply with Olympics clean-building rules.

"Even if Canada wins gold, there's not a direct benefit for our arena," Jones said. "If Canada wins, it's good for hockey in Canada and it will create more fan interest and intensity. But unless the Canucks can follow it up with a playoff run, it's going to be difficult to carry over that enthusiasm."

Jones said he'll have a better idea how valuable the games were to his facility after tear-down.

"The big risk for us is the week that happens after the games when we have to tear everything out and turn it back into a Canucks building," Jones said. "There's a lot of damage. They will pay for everything, but it will be a big challenge to catch it all."

Other NHL facilities said they weren't convinced the Olympics were disrupting their own businesses. Brad Mayne from the American Airlines Center, host to the Dallas Stars, said they've made up the loss of two weeks of hockey by compressing the season into two large parts.

"The fact of the matter is that we've done really well," Mayne said. "It was a little difficult for the Stars because they also had to play on the road during the All-Star Break since we hosted part of the event here," he

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EPIC, Australia - General
Manager

Subiaco Oval, Australia
-Facilities Maintenance
Coordinator

Royal Agricultural
Society of NSW,
Australia - Senior
Manager of Food &
Beverage

Goldstar, Pasadena,
Calif. - Marketing
Coordinator

Goldstar, Pasadena,
Calif. - Venue Relations
Manager

said. "But we were able to make up most of the down time. I think we only had four days that we couldn't fill with content."

Lee Zeidman from the Staples Center, which hosts the Los Angeles Kings, said his facility was also largely unaffected by the Winter Games.

"We're always in favor of anything that helps promote the league itself," Mayne said, "I know there were a lot of NHL fans watching the hockey games and that only helps." – Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this story: Gary Bettman, (212) 789-2780; Harvey Jones, (604) 899-7459; Brad Mayne, (214) 665-4220; Lee Zeidman, (213) 742-7255

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GREEN

ACHIEVING LEED GOLD CHALLENGED THE ROSE GARDEN TO EXCEL

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The Rose Garden, Portland, Ore.



Portland's Rose Garden, home of the Portland Trail Blazers, recently achieved LEED Gold certification for an Existing Building, a first for a major league sports venue. The internationally recognized green building certification system provides third-party verification from the U.S. Green Building Council that the venue, managed by AEG Facilities, implements strategies aimed at improving sustainability performance in areas such as energy savings, water efficiency, and environmental stewardship.

Although the certification marks a great achievement for the center, General Manager Chris Oxley said LEED was not the only driving force behind the greening of the facility. Discussions about the certification started more than two years ago, but the Rose Garden was working on operating sustainably years prior to that.

"We've been going down the road of trying to run a more efficient building for years," Oxley said. "For us, (obtaining the LEED certification) challenged us to really take an in-depth look at how we're operating this facility. It's really about challenging ourselves to be the best we can be."

Portland has been named the most sustainable city in the U.S. by SustainLane.com and for years has been considered one of the leading cities in terms of environmental responsibility. Pursuing green is a commitment to the community and Garden guests, he added.

Oxley said that the number of hours worked by employees for research, data collection, and individual project implementation is by far the biggest aspect of the investment in LEED certification and has yet to be calculated. Bottom line, he said, "I'm trying to do this because it's the right thing to do." He hopes the LEED accomplishment sets an industry trend.

The Rose Garden partners with a number of companies to maintain the certification and operate sustainably.

Working with Pacific Power under its Blue Sky Program and NW Natural under its Smart Energy Program, the venue purchases 100 percent renewable utility energy. They have also worked hard to greatly reduce water consumption and will hopefully take on a water reclamation project in the future.

The Rose Garden's concessionaire, Ovations Food Services, works with the purchasing department to ensure that roughly one third of all food

purchased is locally sourced and 68 percent of purchases qualify as sustainable. In addition, 95 percent of food and beverage containers are compostable.

As the main cleaning products supplier, UniSource is a vital partner in the facility’s green cleaning program.

Nancy Geisler, vice president of Corporate Sustainability for UniSource, said they work with purchasers to develop a list of materials for purchase that are deemed environmentally friendly by a third party. They currently supply the arena with portion-control paper towels and tissues, recycled content trashcan liners, and other cleaning products.

“A large venue can put forth truly sustainable options that can educate the consumer,” Geisler said. “These buildings want to be that model that consumers can look to and say ‘Oh, that’s what the future looks like and I want to do that.’”

Post-event cleaning and floor/carpet maintenance for the venue are outsourced to ServiceMaster, which sorts recycling and composting materials at the time of cleaning. Allied Waste Services is the arena’s main recycling partner for hauling co-mingled recycling and composting. Other vendors are contracted for recycling of used cooking oils, plastic bags, styrofoam, lights, equipment, and other materials. Nearly 70 percent of waste created by the facility is diverted.

“The facility has an aggressive recycling policy and our employees have a major part in making sure that the various types of recycling are properly sorted,” said Sam Okafor, vice president and general manager of ServiceMaster.

Associated costs and projected time consumption to ensure trash is properly sorted and recyclable and compostable items are diverted is negligible in the longterm. “After a while, you figure it out. It’s not costing us a whole lot more than it used to,” Oxley said. “We’ve made it easy and simple and it’s ingrained in our culture...you don’t get to a diversion rate of 70 percent overnight.”

Portland has a well-developed and well-used public transportation system and more than 30 percent of guests to the arena choose public or alternative transit, another factor in LEED certification. The venue also installed 30 new bike racks and an electrical vehicle charging station to further encourage employees and event attendees to commute in a more eco-friendly manner. — Lindsay Sandham

Interviewed for this article: Nancy Geisler, (770) 209-6552; Sam Okafor, (503) 285-5221; Chris Oxley, (503) 797-9851

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 Feb. 2.

TOP GEAR SPEEDS PAST COMPETITION

15,001 or More Seats	10,001-15,000 Seats	5,001-10,000 Seats	5,000 or Less Seats
1) Top Gear Live Gross Sales: \$4,636,001; Venue:	1) Cliff Richard & The Shadows Gross Sales: \$1,180,275;	1) Cirque du Soleil - Alegria Gross Sales: \$1,607,489;	1) Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

AcerArena, Sydney;
Attendance: 45,298;
Ticket Range: \$224.63-\$62; Promoter: Brand Events Australia; Dates: Feb. 11-14; No. of Shows: 8

2) UFC 110

Gross Sales: \$2,136,577; Venue: **AcerArena, Sydney;** Attendance: 16,270; Ticket Range: \$400.51-\$44.50; Promoter: UFC; Dates: Feb. 21; No. of Shows: 1

3) Billy Joel and Elton John

Gross Sales: \$1,790,533; Venue: **Pepsi Center Arena, Denver;** Attendance: 15,470; Ticket Range: \$181-\$55.50; Promoter: AEG Live, Goldenvoice; Dates: Feb. 22; No. of Shows: 1

4) Ricardo Arjona

Gross Sales: \$1,511,893; Venue: **Coliseo De Puerto Rico, San Juan;** Attendance: 27,441; Ticket Range: \$200-\$15; Promoter: Spanish Broadcasting System Inc.; Dates: Feb. 13; No. of Shows: 2

5) Black Eyed Peas

Gross Sales: \$1,035,318; Venue: **American Airlines Arena, Miami;** Attendance: 15,466; Ticket Range: \$92.50-\$49.50; Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West; Dates: Feb. 6; No. of Shows: 1

Venue: **Sydney Entertainment Centre;** Attendance: 10,790; Ticket Range: \$123.70-\$97.90; Promoter: Dainty Consolidated Entertainment; Dates: Feb. 21; No. of Shows: 1

2) Cliff Richard & The Shadows

Gross Sales: \$1,074,626; Venue: **Brisbane (Australia) Entertainment Centre;** Attendance: 9,571; Ticket Range: \$124.94-\$98.87; Promoter: Dainty Consolidated Entertainment; Dates: Feb. 18; No. of Shows: 1

3) Whitney Houston

Gross Sales: \$1,073,485; Venue: **Brisbane (Australia) Entertainment Centre;** Attendance: 7,386; Ticket Range: \$173.53-\$55.61; Promoter: Andrew McManus Presents; Dates: Feb. 22; No. of Shows: 1

4) Rob Thomas

Gross Sales: \$984,935; Venue: **Brisbane (Australia) Entertainment Centre;** Attendance: 8,243; Ticket Range: \$584.28-\$71.82; Promoter: Michael Coppel Presents; Dates: Feb. 10; No. of Shows: 1

5) 29th Annual Raggamuffins Festival

Gross Sales: \$867,823; Venue: **Long Beach (Calif.) Arena;** Attendance: 18,175; Ticket Range: \$56-\$38; Promoter: Moss Jacobs Presents, RaggaMuffins; Dates: Feb. 20-21; No. of Shows: 2

Venue: **Cedar Park (Texas) Events Center;** Attendance: 24,883; Ticket Range: \$95-\$40; Promoter: Cirque du Soleil; Dates: Feb. 17-21; No. of Shows: 8

2) Insooni Concert

Gross Sales: \$1,277,000; Venue: **Nokia Theatre L.A. Live;** Attendance: 4,081; Ticket Range: \$120-\$30; Promoter: Powerhouse Productions; Dates: Feb. 12; No. of Shows: 1

3) Taylor Swift

Gross Sales: \$569,303; Venue: **Newcastle (Australia) Entertainment Centre;** Attendance: 7,180; Ticket Range: \$88.90; Promoter: Michael Coppel Presents; Dates: Feb. 8; No. of Shows: 1

4) Faith No More

Gross Sales: \$452,270; Venue: **Hordern Pavillion, Sydney;** Attendance: 5,435; Ticket Range: \$89.36; Promoter: Soundwave Festival Pty Ltd; Dates: Feb. 22; No. of Shows: 1

5) Espinoza Paz

Gross Sales: \$416,265; Venue: **Nokia Theatre L.A. Live;** Attendance: 6,882; Ticket Range: \$125-\$25; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: Feb. 13; No. of Shows: 1

Gross Sales: \$821,880; Venue: **Fox Theatre, Atlanta;** Attendance: 24,152; Ticket Range: \$60-\$10; Promoter: Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater; Dates: Feb. 18-21; No. of Shows: 7

2) Così fan Tutte

Gross Sales: \$555,722; Venue: **Keller Auditorium, Portland, Ore.;** Attendance: 7,578; Ticket Range: \$135-\$9; Promoter: Portland Opera; Dates: Feb. 5, 7, 11, 13; No. of Shows: 4

3) Celtic Woman

Gross Sales: \$464,750; Venue: **Fox Theatre, Atlanta;** Attendance: 8,007; Ticket Range: \$72-\$35; Promoter: Madstone Productions; Dates: Feb. 15-16; No. of Shows: 2

4) Cinderella

Gross Sales: \$355,572; Venue: **Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre, Atlanta;** Attendance: 7,415; Ticket Range: \$120-\$20; Promoter: Atlanta Ballet; Dates: Feb. 4-14; No. of Shows: 8

5) Miami City Ballet

Gross Sales: \$218,638; Venue: **Broward Center For The Performing Arts, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.;** Attendance: 5,210; Ticket Range: \$85-\$19; Promoter: Miami City Ballet; Dates: Feb. 12-14; No. of Shows: 4

THE BEAT

Q&A

TOM BENSON, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR TICKETS.COM



Tom Benson carries the Olympic torch.

VANCOUVER – If there were an Olympic event for box office professionals, Tom Benson from Tickets.com would be a medal contender. Having worked three of the last four Olympics, Benson knows the games like few others. *Venues Today* met up with Benson at Olympic Headquarters to discuss the ticketing challenges of this year's games.

How many employees from Tickets.com help with the Olympics?

We hired a lot of locals and brought up about a dozen full-time employees. We also brought in other box office managers, like Debra Duncan from the University of Southern California, to run all the box offices. We've got the best staff in the world right now.

What type of box office

employee excels at the Olympics?

Well, all of these guys have normal day jobs, so they need to get here about a day before the Opening Ceremonies. They've got to jump right in without a lot of questions and figure things out on their own with a team of people they've never met before, in a venue they've never been to, in a foreign country they might not have ever visited.

What are the unique challenges of the Olympics?

The amount of different venues and the amount of different sports we work with can't be underestimated. It takes a lot longer to sell tickets in a box office because people are much more indecisive. They have so many options and choices.

How have the secondary marketplaces worked for Tickets.com? Are the tickets selling over face value for many of the listed events?

Yes. Since the opening ceremonies, the prices have stayed very steady but really high. It's been very popular and it's exceeded our expectations in terms of the usage and traction. Walk around any of the venues and you'll notice there's still a big market for scalpers. The fact that we're giving people a legitimate option has been helpful.

Have you attempted to control the amount of the markup?

VANOC has decided to not have any limits on how much the tickets can be marked up, so the market is controlling the cost. We charge a fixed percent of the resale – 10 percent to the buyer and 10 percent to the seller. That money goes to defraying the costs of putting on the games – it's a very expensive undertaking.

Would you do anything different in the future on the resale side?

If I were to do resale again, I would probably insist on doing print-at-home. The sheer turn of tickets we've had are hard to deal with at the Will Call window.

Was there a lot of volume for the secondary sponsor tickets?

There was. They've done a good job moving the tickets back and forth to alleviate the empty seat issues. They've reported that they're very happy with it. The different Olympic Committees from the participating countries are also using the system because they exchange tickets among themselves. If you're from the Netherlands and have an affiliation with their Olympic Committee and you have some extra tickets, you can sell them to the Olympic Committee of France who might need them.

Is there a secondary site for the Paralympics?

We haven't turned that on yet. We're still gauging the demand. It's a much different animal than the Olympics. The price points are much lower and it's a lot of families and school children that attend.

What's next on your agenda?

For me, I don't know. I'll operate the ticketing system until after the Paralympic Games wrap and then see what my next assignment is for Tickets.com. The 2014 games in Sochi, Russia have not been put out to tender yet. – Dave Brooks

Contact: Tom Benson, (949) 436-0530

NAMING RIGHTS REPORT



Coolray Field, Gwinnett County, Ga.

Date Announced: Feb. 17

Buyer: Coolray Heating and Cooling

Terms: 16 years

Ownership/ Tenant: Gwinnett County/Gwinnett Braves

Brokered: Locally

Comments: Just shy of a year after it opened, Gwinnett Stadium has a new name, Coolray Field. Coolray Heating and Cooling is a 40-year-old Atlanta-based heating, cooling

and plumbing company planning to expand in Gwinnett County. The company is a new sponsor for the venue.

"We are excited to get them," said North Johnson, general manager of the Gwinnett Braves. "It is a 16-year contract, and based on our research, it is the second largest minor league naming rights deal."

Johnson said the Braves will receive the first \$350,000 of naming rights revenue annually, and the second \$350,000 goes to the county. Anything above that is split 50-50.

As part of the deal, Coolray will receive a LED marquee sign on the highway near the entrance of the stadium, and at the entrance, and their name and logo on the scoreboard. The company will also have use of a luxury suite. "There is a whole hospitality and sponsorship package, that includes promotion nights," Johnson said. "[Coolray president Ken Haines] wants to be giving away air conditioning systems, perhaps as much as once a month."

Johnson said Haines attended the last game of their first season last spring, and realized there was no name on the stadium.

"He called the office and talked to the folks about what it would take," Johnson said. "We gave him a range, and he took a deep breath - it was a little more than an outfield billboard sign."

Johnson said they were aggressive with the hospitality pieces, including offering first shot at tickets for non-baseball events, so Haines can entertain employees and clients.

Contact: North Johnson, (678) 277-0300

State Farm Arena, Hidalgo, Texas

Date Announced: Feb. 4

Buyer: State Farm Insurance

Ownership/Management/Tenant: City of Hidalgo/Rio Grande Valley Killer Bees, Central Hockey League, Rio Grande Valley Vipers, NBA Development League

Brokered: Locally

Comments: National insurance provider State Farm has ventured into the naming rights market for the first time, putting their name on the former Dodge Arena in Hidalgo, Texas.

“They have a big presence here, and their brand is very big,” said Bertha Gonzalez, director of Marketing and Sales for the venue.

State Farm has 39 agents and 240 employees in the area.

Gonzalez said the deal includes signage, including the State Farm name and logo on the Jumbotron, scoreboards and on the ice for hockey games. They will also have a luxury suite for hockey games, and pre-sale opportunities for tickets to concerts and other events.

In addition, State Farm representatives will staff a kiosk during events.

“We are still working on cross-marketing,” Gonzalez said. “The city has BorderFest and they will be part of that.”

The venue’s corporate sponsorship sales staff and general manager and city officials brokered the deal, she said.

The 6,800-seat venue opened in 2003. Dodge opted not to renew their contract last year.

Contact: Bertha Gonzalez, (956) 843-6688

Bridgestone Arena, Nashville, Tenn.

Date Announced: Feb. 23

Buyer: Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations LLC

Terms: Five years with extension options, financial terms not released

Ownership/Management/Tenant: Sports Authority of Nashville and Davidson County/Powers Management Company/Nashville Predators of the National Hockey League

Comments: Bridgestone Americas, the Nashville-based tire manufacturer, and the Nashville Predators have agreed to a naming rights deal for the Sommet Center, pending the approval of the building’s owner, the Sports Authority of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County.

The Predators and Bridgestone Americas also announced a five-year extension of their existing marketing partnership.

In November, the Predators sued Franklin-based Sommet Group for nonpayment of their naming rights deal, though the pair later agreed to keep the name on the building until a new sponsor could be found.

According to the lease agreement reached in 2008, the Predators receive 100 percent of the naming rights revenue.

Contact: Dan MacDonald, (615) 419-4565

PPL Park at Chester (Pa.)

Date Announced: Feb. 23

Buyer: PPL Energy Plus

Terms: 10 years, \$20 million

Ownership/Management/Tenant: Delaware County/City of Chester/Philadelphia Union, Major League Soccer League, Philadelphia Independence, Women's Professional Soccer

Brokered: Locally

Comments: PPL Corp., the parent company of PPL Energy Plus, an unregulated subsidiary that sells electricity to commercial users, has purchased naming rights for the Union's \$120 million, 18,500-seat Major League Soccer stadium, scheduled to open March 25 in Chester, Pa., outside of Philadelphia.

The stadium will feature 30 luxury suites, a 2,000-seat club section, and a full-service club restaurant, along with a built-in concert stage. The venue is part of a \$500 million waterfront revitalization project planned to bring urban renewal to Chester.

The deal will help PPL promote itself in a market that has newly deregulated electricity purchase. Since PPL is seeking to raise their brand awareness with businesses, not consumers, the deal includes ways for them to use the facility to woo potential clients at receptions and meet-the-team events. The company also sponsors a picnic patio at Coca-Cola Park in Allentown.

Contact: George Lewis, (610) 774-4687

—Liz Boardman

FACES & PLACES

OPPORTUNISTS: WILSON, MAGID, POE TAKE ON NEW CHALLENGES

Tom Wilson



One week after announcing he was resigning as president and CEO of Palace Sports & Entertainment, Auburn Hills, Mich., after 32 years, (VT Pulse, Feb. 17), Thomas S. Wilson has dropped the other shoe. He has accepted the position of president and chief executive officer of a newly-created, soon-to-be-named enterprise working across the Ilitch sports and entertainment businesses.

Interviewed today (Feb. 24), a little more than 36 hours after assuming his new position with what had been the regional rival, Wilson could only say his mission is to build Ilitch Holdings, Inc. "If we're the same business in two years that we are today, we have failed," he said.

Wilson will report directly to Christopher Ilitch, president and CEO of Ilitch Holdings, which includes Olympia Entertainment venues (Detroit's Fox Theatre, Joe Louis Arena, Comerica Park, Cobo Arena, Masonic Temple and City Theatre), the Detroit Red Wings of the National Hockey League and the Detroit Tigers of Major League Baseball.

As to speculation that he was poised to join a new ownership group for the Palace and the Pistons, his old haunt, Wilson said there is ongoing discussion with half a dozen groups but it is \$300-\$400 million. "You could be chasing your tail for a year or two, but I really had to look at it because that was my home."

He may be back in some form or fashion, however. The Red Wings lease at Joe Louis Arena is up in June and the options are renovate, build or move to the Palace.

The growth plan is fluid, but that's what Wilson finds challenging. "In talking to Chris over the last little bit of time, the vision he has, and the freedom they were offering me, it's a great time to be opportunistic. And this is what I love to do: build and create and purchase and grow."

Reporting to Wilson in his new position will be Dana Warg, president of Olympia Entertainment, and Steve Violetta, senior VP of Business Affairs for the Detroit Red Wings.

Like Wilson, who is staying in Michigan, Larry Magid has no non-compete, never has and never would, so whatever he does next will be in the industry and in the East. Magid stepped down from his role as chairman at Live Nation Philadelphia last week, about the same time Wilson left the Palace.

Magid still and always has had Electric Factory, the legendary Philadelphia nightclub which opened in 1968, and his myriad of longstanding relationships in the industry. He is co-producer of Billy Crystal's one man play, *700 Sundays*, which will resume after Crystal's movie commitments. And other projects are always in the offing. For the past two months, he has been discussing a role with Live Nation. "It's still an ongoing discussion but nothing to report as of this moment," Magid told *Venues Today*.

Magid is one of five promoters that basically created the concert promotion business - including the late Bill Graham, Barry Fey, Don Law, and the Belkin brothers. Now, he said, he plans to formulate a new business model. He sold Electric Factory Concerts to SFX Entertainment/Clear Channel Entertainment 10 years ago.

"Starting my own business once again is likely," Magid said. "I just have to decide what direction that business is going to go in. This is the first time in my life, since I was 13 years old, that I have absolutely no pressure on me to do anything, so I'm enjoying it."

"Whether I choose to be an everyday promoter or a select promoter or a promoter at all remains to be seen," Magid said. "Fortunately, I have options."

Frank Poe is also embarking on a new adventure, after his last move, which was a return home to Texas.

Frank Poe



Poe begins his new life as executive director of the Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, April 1. A 38-year convention center veteran, Poe is currently director of the Dallas Convention Center, where he also started his career in 1972.

He was general manager of the Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, from 1979 to 1980 and found his way back to Dallas for the next 17 years. He was executive director of Alabama's Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex from 1997-2004.

The most exciting aspect of this new challenge is negotiation to retain the Atlanta Falcons at the Georgia Dome, he said. He has dealt with the National Basketball Association and the National Hockey League. This will be his first NFL experience. It's also a great organization and among the top five convention centers nationwide, he added.

Poe replaces Dan Graveline, who retired at the end of 2009. – Linda Deckard

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