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VT PULSE

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Quote of the Week

“It’s not like you’re just watching it. You’re part of it from the moment it starts. There’s no fourth wall.”

— Producer Jim Waters, on the revival of Barney, the life show.

- In this Issue**
- THE NEWS**
[Barney Touring Show Reboots with Help From VEE Corporation](#)
 - [North American Arenas Enter Playoff Mode](#)
 - [Labor Issues in Dispute at McCormick Place](#)
 - HOT TICKETS**
[Battle on the Boardwalk Takes Atlantic City to the Top](#)
 - THE BEAT**
[Deals: Ovation Adds Another AAA Ballpark; AEG to Book Mann Center](#)
 - [Faces & Places: INTIX](#)

Greetings,

Welcome to VT Pulse, your weekly guide to the "News Behind the Headlines." There will be no VT Pulse next week, but we will resume distribution on May 5.



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SHORT TAKES

>> SIMON TAKES IDOL BACK ON THE ROAD

—Producer Simon Fuller is taking American Idol's top 10 contestants from Season 9 on tour. The Live Nation produced show will make 49 stops, starting July 1 at the Palace of Auburn Hills (Mich.) and ending Sept. 14 at the Consol Energy Center in Pittsburgh.

Contact: Liz Morentin, (310) 975-6860

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VT NEWS

BOOKINGS

BARNEY TOURING SHOW RE-BOOTS WITH HELP FROM VEE CORPORATION

Barney and friends will hit the road this year with Hit Entertainment and VEE Corporation.



It's been four years since Barney the purple dinosaur went on tour. In that time, the lovable children's show staple has not lost any of his appeal to the diaper set, but it took a special pitch from a veteran live entertainment group to convince brand owner Hit Entertainment to put the prehistoric T-Rex back out on the road.

"It's the first show in four years and a brand new show all around," said Gary Krakower, Sr. VP for Consumer Products and Live Events at Hit. "We had the opportunity to hook up with [the team] at VEE [Corporation] and for the first time in a long time there was a concept presented that really resonated with us and was a no-brainer."

The cost of mounting the new Barney production is about \$1 million, not including the nearly \$1 million in equipment, costumes and lighting that were already on hand in the VEE collection that will be deployed as well.

Krakower said the team at VEE - who put on such popular shows as "Sesame Street Live!," "Bear in the Big Blue House!" and "Curious George Live!" - clearly knew the Barney brand; came with a fresh, original approach to the show that was unique to the brand; and integrated the core elements of the Barney experience.

Jim Waters, VEE's Sr. VP of Production and the producer of the new Barney show, said that new approach combined an attempt to bring Barney into a

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more contemporary space while presenting a fresh experience. In meetings that began more than three years ago, the two companies discussed the potential opportunities and Waters saw possibilities in one of the handful of evergreen, dependable family brands.

“We were looking for expansion opportunities, having more units on the road. Barney was still on PBS through 2013 and we’d gotten to know the people at Hit and their internal excitement about Barney, which is genuine,” he said about the first chance for VEE to tour Barney after years of seeing previous productions.

“In the past, it was very story driven and episodic. We’re looking at doing it more like a one-time event that the audience is participating in,” he said, explaining the “Barney’s Big Birthday Bash” theme, which will have some familiar elements from past Barney tours such as songs and the purple dino’s good friends.

The tour, geared at families with children 2-5 years old, will open in Tulsa, Okla., at the convention center arena in Mid-November and will be on the road through late 2011.

Instead of a traditional storyline, Waters said the new show will be more like a rock concert that the audience will participate in.

“It’s not like you’re just watching it,” he said. “You’re part of it from the moment it starts. There’s no fourth wall.” The show will be set up in arenas in-the-round on a circular stage that is 40 feet in diameter with seating wrapping around three sides and a large video screen as the back wall. Capacity will be 3,000-4,000, with a focus on making the setting as intimate as possible and concentrating seating in the bowl section with a curtain bisecting the arena. The substantial lighting rig – which Waters describe as a “pre-focused, self-contained rock and roll package” – will wrap all the way around the stage and there will be moats along the sides of the performance space so characters can easily walk out into the audience.

Waters is expecting a six-hour load-in and four-hour load-out, with the 100-date show hitting two to three cities a week, playing anywhere from two to six shows in each. The 30 songs will be performed by a 12-person cast through a combination of live singing and pre-taped sing-alongs. Waters and his team will write, produce and manage the show as it tours through North America, Canada and the Caribbean.

In order to enhance the rock and roll feel, Waters said a handful of live cameras will roam the audience for video reinforcement, shooting footage of children singing songs, playing games and participating in dance contests. “Kids are infatuated with other kids, so there will be lots of close ups,” he said.

Part of the marketing plan also involves a crossover that will gather material in advance that will be used during the show, including birthday cards sent to the audience in advance that will be integrated into the story, as well as photos from children’s birthday parties and short, localized interviews with attendees that help set up the activities.

Though the contracts are still being worked out, there will, of course, also be plenty of merchandise, from t-shirts, hats and fans, to books, spin lights, pendants, figurines, binoculars, balloons and plush, with most of it unique to the touring show’s theme. Waters could not speak to the cost of tickets, but said they would be “family friendly” prices within the range of

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Georgia Dome, Atlanta
-Event Coordinator

South Okanagan
(Canada) Events Centre
-Director of Marketing

University of Missouri
-Assistant Teaching
Professor (Sport Venue
Management)

Disney Theatrical
Group, New York
-Group Sales Manager

New Era Tickets, Exton,
Pa. - Director of New
Business Development

Royal Agricultural
Society of NSW,
Australia - Manager of
Event Services

the company's other shows (\$15-\$40 depending on the market.)

The companies are concentrating on North America and the Caribbean for now, but Waters said it's possible the show could expand internationally in the future and Krakower added that if it is successful, the partnership could extend to other Hit brands such as Bob the Builder, Thomas & Friends and Angelina Ballerina. — Gil Kaufman

Contacted for this story: Gary Krakower, (646) 467-5336; Jim Waters, (612) 852-2373

VT's 2010 Women of Influence Nominations Now Due!

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Samantha@venuestoday.com
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Include her name, title,
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description of her accomplishments.



Submit by **April 30, 2010**
to: samantha@venuestoday.com

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SPORTS

NORTH AMERICAN ARENAS ENTER PLAYOFF MODE

This sushi roll is designed to resemble the logo of the Philadelphia Flyers, one of eight teams to enter the second round of the National Hockey League playoffs.

[VIEW THE FULL LISTINGS](#)



It's playoff time for the National Basketball League and the National Hockey League, and venue managers for the 32 teams in the first rounds of the playoffs are watching each game carefully to ensure that their facilities benefit from the added exposure of playing at sports' highest level.

"Our team has had a great run so far, although we did get cheated out of two games," joked Allen Johnson from the Amway Center in Orlando. The schedule for the NBA is a 2-2-1-1-1 system where the higher seeded team plays the first two games at home, then goes on the road for two games, then back home, then back on the road, then if necessary, plays Game 7 at home.

But the Orlando Magic didn't need those three extra games against the Charlotte Bobcats, who lost the series 0-4 as new owner Michael Jordan sat courtside, looking mostly grim-faced as his team struggled through its first appearance ever in the playoffs.

"Last year was a fresh experience, having gone all the way to the Finals. The first round pales in comparison," Johnson said. "We haven't gotten a lot of the celebrities coming to the games yet. That will probably happen in the later rounds."

Among the missing are golfer Tiger Woods, who was a courtside staple at last year's playoffs. Johnson's not worried – he saw Woods at a Nickelback concert last weekend – sitting on the stage.

In Philadelphia, the excitement over the Flyers of the NHL is more palpable. After routing the New Jersey Devils 4-1, Comcast-Spectacor President Peter Luukko has taken an oath not to shave until the team either wins the Stanley Cup, or gets eliminated from the finals.

"He and the executives are doing it to raise money for local charities through the Flyers Beard-A-Thon promotion," explained spokesperson Ike Richman.

Also new at the Flyers' Wachovia Center is a sushi roll designed to look like a Flyers logo. Served in the arena's upscale Cadillac Grille, the roll includes tuna and salmon rolls, garnished with black and orange caviar. One roll is \$18.

For the fans on the concourse, concessionaire Aramark created the Flyers Superpretzel, shaped like a Flyers logo and retailing at \$3.75. The team also created something called the Flyer'd Up Funnel Dog for \$6. Only

Richman can describe this item.

“It is a hot dog, wrapped in funnel cake batter, deep fried and topped with powdered sugar. We’re taking our biggest fan favorite food item and combining it with our most popular dessert item to get a Funnel Cake Hot Dog (better than a corn dog!),” he wrote in an email. “The item is tentatively called the ‘Flyer’d Up Funnel Dog’ but we are open to suggestions.”

Over at the Staples Center in Los Angeles, Lee Zeidman had two tenant teams in the playoffs, but the NHL Kings have been eliminated by the Vancouver Canucks, while the NBA Lakers are one game away from eliminating the Oklahoma City Thunder, who are making their first appearance in the playoffs.

“We’re not really doing that much different for the first round of the playoffs, but check back with me in a few weeks,” he said. After all, this is familiar territory. The Lakers have been in the playoffs every year since the Staples Center opened in 1999, and have won four championships (and lost two).

At the American Airlines Center in Dallas, the team has seen an uptick in the number of fans who watch a simulcast of the away basketball games in AT&T Plaza, just in front of the facility.

“We’re getting about 750-1,000 people per game,” said Ken Cool, assistant VP of Event Development. “We’ve created some additional food and beverage options to activate those spaces.”

His tenant team the Dallas Mavericks are trying to hold on against their arch rivals, the San Antonio Spurs, whom the Mavs play on the road tomorrow. The teams truly hate each other, Cool confirmed. But it’s a respectful hatred.

Also locked into a bitter death match in the NHL are the Washington Capitals against the Montreal Canadiens. Verizon Center GM David Touhey said he’s surprised it went to a Game 7. The Capitals are the top seeded team in the league and the series had the potential to be a big money-maker.

“The playoffs are all about surplus revenue. If you think you’re going into the playoffs, then you budget for a round or two of the playoffs,” Touhey said. “Right now the Caps are on a sellout streak and during the playoffs, the consumer mindset is different. They buy more stuff and we open our doors and merch shop earlier. For some fans, going to the playoffs is a once in a lifetime experience.”

Well, it’s the last chance they’ll have this season. The top-ranked Capitals were eliminated right at deadline. Better luck next year. — Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this article: Allen Johnson, (407) 810-3055; Ike Richman, (215) 389-9552; Lee Zeidman, (213) 742-7255; Ken Cool, (214) 665-4220; David Touhey, (202) 661-5060



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mid-year Box Office Reports!
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Mid-Year Chart Deadline: May 19, 2010

July issue editorial content includes:

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CONVENTION CENTERS
LABOR ISSUES IN DISPUTE AT MCCORMICK PLACE

McCormick Place



In light of the recent defection of two major trade shows from Chicago's McCormick Place, the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MPEA), owner and manager of the convention center, along with state lawmakers, are taking action.

The MPEA has proposed allowing the venue's trade shows to bring in their own electrical and plumbing contractors as well as negotiate foodservice contracts with outside vendors.

Currently, the center's utility service is handled by Focus One, and MPEA is in its third year of its foodservice contract with Chicago Restaurant Partners. The foodservice restructuring should take about a year, and Chicago Restaurant Partners has agreed to continue operating during the transition, according to the MPEA.

"Four years ago, we established a labor management committee to identify issues and address complaints. Consequently, we have had one complaint from an exhibitor in the last four years," said Frank Libby, president of the Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters. "We also have had conversations with the MPEA requesting that all McCormick Place parties sit down and analyze what we can do to reduce trade show costs. It didn't take hold, and here we are today with this situation."

Last year, McCormick Place lost the 2012 Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society show to Las Vegas and the 2015 Society of the Plastics Industry Inc. show to Orlando.

The situation forced state lawmakers to take a closer look at the venue's management structure. The cost cutting recommendations were made by the MPEA's Interim Board of Directors, appointed by Chicago Mayor Richard Daley and Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn.

"The Board spent 18 hours on research over issues at McCormick Place and came up with recommendations," said Robert Fulton, business manager of Riggers Local 136, the first union to operate at the convention center.

The Board's goal is to improve the MPEA's ability to compete with other major convention centers without drawing upon Illinois' general revenue funds.

State sales tax funds were drawn on in the last two years to support the

MPEA's capital expansion debt. Draws from the fund are predicted to total as much as \$800 million without a restructuring plan, reports the MPEA.

"Electrical labor was a profit center for the MPEA when they lost their funding," Libby said. "I'm not convinced eliminating Focus One will be beneficial to exhibitors. The jobs can be privatized to general contractors, but that won't solve the problem."

Because the MPEA operates without a subsidy like other convention centers, it has had to generate operating funds by charging customers higher prices for labor and food. To overcome this obstacle, the Board has recommended that the Illinois General Assembly restructure MPEA's debt and utilize surplus tax revenues so as not to draw on the State's general revenue fund.

McCormick Place clients, including the International Housewares Association, National Restaurant Association and Graphic Arts Show Co., testified before a legislative panel on other issues hindering the venue.

This included multiple labor jurisdictions and inefficient work rules and labor practices that not only raise costs, but also increase the much publicized 'hassle-factor' for exhibitors and show organizers operating at McCormick Place.

There are currently five unions that operate at McCormick Place, Fulton said.

To offset customer dissatisfaction, the MPEA is proposing that Focus One and foodservice profit margins be eliminated. The Board will be analyzing significant additional cost reductions to help make up for the resulting decreased operating revenue and substantial operating loss.

"Exhibitors won't get the full benefit of labor reductions," Libby said. "Drayage costs alone are up two to one over labor rates. This will just shift costs."

In addition to restructuring existing labor contracts, the Board is proposing that the MPEA be given the right to review and verify contractor billing statements to confirm the accuracy of labor costs. The Authority also will provide exhibitor rights similar to other convention centers as well as clearly identify and communicate cost savings to all show managers, exhibitors, and other customers.

To achieve a higher level of sales effectiveness and accountability, the Board recommends that any convention-related marketing funds from the state or the city be re-directed to MPEA, which would develop a new sales and marketing effort that is focused on attracting business to McCormick Place.

In a recent letter to Illinois Speaker of the House Michael Madigan and Senate President John Cullerton, Interim Board Chairman John Gates urged the Joint Committee and General Assembly to act quickly on the Board's recommendations.

"We're in a state of confusion right now, because no one knows or can provide answers to the questions being asked by my members," Fulton said.
— Lisa White

Interviewed for this article: Robert Fulton, (708) 615-9300; Frank Libby, (312) 787-3076

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 6.

BATTLE ON THE BOARDWALK TAKES ATLANTIC CITY TO THE TOP

15,001 or More Seats	10,001-15,000 Seats	5,001-10,000 Seats	5,000 or Less Seats
<p>1) Bon Jovi Gross Sales: \$1,625,390; Venue: Philips Arena, Atlanta; Attendance: 17,954; Ticket Range: \$139-\$50; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: April 15; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>1) Pavlik vs. Martinez - Boxing Gross Sales: \$923,350; Venue: Atlantic City (N.J.) Boardwalk Hall; Attendance: 5,786; Ticket Range: \$350-\$50; Promoter: Caesars Atlantic City, Top Rank; Dates: April 17; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>1) Tyler Perry's "Madea's Big Happy Family" Gross Sales: \$543,045; Venue: Constant Convocation Center at Old Dominion, Norfolk, Va.; Attendance: 9,973; Ticket Range: \$65-\$45; Promoter: Entertainment Services, LLC; Dates: April 20-21; No. of Shows: 2</p>	<p>1) Cher Gross Sales: \$4,910,221; Venue: Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas; Attendance: 35,343; Ticket Range: \$250-\$95; Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West; Dates: April 10-11, 13-14, 17-18, 21, 24-25; No. of Shows: 10</p>
<p>2) John Anderson Gross Sales: \$1,372,682; Venue: Honda Center, Anaheim, Calif.; Attendance: 12,398; Ticket Range: \$404-\$43.50; Promoter: Alvarez & Garner, LLC; Dates: April 13; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>2) Julian Casablancas Gross Sales: \$850,948; Venue: United Spirit Arena, Lubbock, Texas; Attendance: 13,029; Ticket Range: \$89.50-\$39.50; Promoter: In-house; Dates: April 12; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>2) Carrie Underwood Gross Sales: \$356,970; Venue: The Huntington Center, Toledo, Ohio; Attendance: 7,268; Ticket Range: \$55-\$35; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: April 24; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>2) Supernatural Santana Gross Sales: \$730,315; Venue: The Joint, Las Vegas; Attendance: 8,053; Ticket Range: \$151-\$51; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: April 21-22, 24-25; No. of Shows: 4</p>
<p>3) Kara DioGuardi Gross Sales: \$1,251,156; Venue: MGM Grand Garden Arena, Las Vegas; Attendance: 13,609; Ticket Range: \$94; Promoter: Andrew Hewitt; Dates: April 10; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>3) Carrie Underwood Presents 100 Years of Magic Gross Sales: \$436,175; Venue: Van Andel Arena, Grand Rapids, Mich.; Attendance: 9,193; Ticket Range: \$55-\$35; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: April 23; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>3) Disney On Ice Gross Sales: \$316,988; Venue: Pensacola (Fla.) Civic Center; Attendance: 15,245; Ticket Range: \$44-\$14; Promoter: Feld Entertainment; Dates: April 22-25; No. of Shows: 7</p>	<p>3) Keith Urban Gross Sales: \$290,700; Venue: The Joint, Las Vegas; Attendance: 2,786; Ticket Range: \$196-\$95.50; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: April 23; No. of Shows: 1</p>
<p>4) Elton John Gross Sales: \$1,102,920; Venue: Wells Fargo Arena, Des Moines, Iowa; Attendance: 14,250; Ticket Range: \$139-\$39; Promoter: Goldenvoice; Dates: April 16; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>4) Joaquin Sabina Gross Sales: \$411,581; Venue: Auditorio Telmex, Guadalajara, Mexico; Attendance: 7,781; Ticket Range: \$106.32-\$16.33; Promoter: IM*PRO; Dates: April 23; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>4) Steve Harvey Gross Sales: \$306,881; Venue: The Liacouras Center, Philadelphia; Attendance: 6,595; Ticket Range: \$52.50-\$45.50; Promoter: Nu Opp. Inc.; Dates: April 24; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>4) Sugarland Gross Sales: \$272,074; Venue: Santa Barbara (Calif.) Bowl; Attendance: 4,507; Ticket Range: \$76-\$44; Promoter: Nederlander; Dates: April 25; No. of Shows: 1</p>
<p>5) Kara DioGuardi Gross Sales: \$1,064,357; Venue: Bradley Center, Milwaukee; Attendance: 13,288; Ticket Range: \$89.50-</p>	<p>5) Styx Gross Sales: \$354,331; Venue: Hampton (Va.) Coliseum; Attendance: 7,384; Ticket Range: \$69-\$27.50; Promoter: In-house; Dates: April 10; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>5) Styx Gross Sales: \$276,350; Venue: Mohegan Sun Arena, Uncasville, Conn.; Attendance:</p>	<p>5) Shake It Tuesday Gross Sales: \$266,250; Venue: Rosemont (Ill.) Theatre; Attendance: 4,361; Ticket Range: \$75-\$49.50; Promoter: In-house; Dates: April 13; No. of Shows: 1</p>

\$48; Promoter: Jam Productions; Dates: April 9; No. of Shows: 1

7,682; Ticket Range: \$50; Promoter: In-house; Dates: April 11; No. of Shows: 1

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

THE BEAT

DEALS

OVATIONS ADDS ANOTHER AAA BALLPARK; AEG TO BOOK MANN CENTER

Venue: Sarpy County Ballpark, Omaha, Neb.

Owner/Operator: Omaha Royals Triple A baseball team

Concessionaire: Ovations Food Services

Terms: Ovations has been awarded a 10-year contract, based on an initial investment and a percentage of sales, to handle food and drink at the new ballpark, which opens in April 2011.

The Omaha Royals and the College World Series are leaving Rosenblatt Stadium, Omaha, next year, each for its own new stadium. The Omaha Royals are building a \$30 million, 10,000 capacity venue in Sarpy County, a location that research shows has a large percentage of their fans. The College World Series is staying downtown.

Ken Young, president, Ovations Food Services, said the Omaha Royals new venue marks Ovations' seventh Triple A client and they will be using their existing expertise to make the experience "royal" for the fans at the new venue. Ovations will be in on the design of the food service at the new park and it will definitely include the firm's "fresh" approach to food, plenty of points of sale and lots of portables.

Ovations Food Services accounts nearby include the Iowa Events Center and Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines; the Iowa Speedway in Newton; and the Sioux Falls Pheasants and the Sioux Falls Convention Center in South Dakota.

The new ballpark will feature a scoreboard bar in left field, 15 luxury suites, a stadium club, and four unique group party areas.

Contact: Ken Young, (813) 948-6900 X 104

Venue: The Mann Center for the Performing Arts, Philadelphia

Booker: AEG Live & Princeton Entertainment

Announced: April 22

Terms: AEG Live has signed a longterm agreement to book the 13,000-seat, refurbished amphitheater's pop and rock shows. This is the only amphitheater in the AEG Live family of booking deals, most of which have been NBA arenas to date.

The 2010 season already booked and announced by AEG includes one of only three East Coast dates with recently reunited alt-rock titans Faith No More July 3, an exclusive area performance by indie rock legends Pavement Sept. 17, and two nights with Furthur featuring Phil Lesh & Bob Weir July 10-11. Also on the slate are Tony Bennett, Cake, and Squeeze and Cheap Trick. First up is Passion Pit with Tokyo Police Club, June 27.

And that's just part of "half of what we have booked," said Mark Shulman, vice president - Northeast for AEG Live, who said this will be a "huge, huge summer" celebrating The Mann's 75th anniversary. "It's a building we've always believed had a lot of potential," he continued, and now, with AEG Live's increased presence in Philadelphia with ownership of the 1,500-seat Keswick Theatre in Glenside and

booking rights at the 1,200-seat Tracadero in Philly, “we have a great presence in the market.”

Another asset to the Mann Center for the Performing Arts is its versatility. With 4,500 seats under cover, it can be an intimate outdoor experience. For big shows, they can open up the lawn. Shulman said the Mann will also be announcing a new caterer next month and that, too, will impact the experience this summer. He compared the venue in terms of design and historical use to Wolf Trap.

Princeton Entertainment helped broker the deal, he said, and will be involved with tying pop shows with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Larry Vallon, AEG executive VP - North American regional offices, AEG’s mission is to bring popular music programming to the 75-year-old shed, located in Fairmount Park and long a part of the Philadelphia entertainment scene. It’s in the geographical center of the city, he said. — Linda Deckard
Contacts: Mark Shulman, (212) 930-5192; Larry Vallon, (323) 930-5777

FACES & PLACES

INTIX GOES VIRTUAL WITH OUTSOURCING PLAN; FREELAND HEADS TO QCUE; CHAN CONFIRMED IN PHOENIX; PRESSON LEAVING INTRUST

INTIX, the association for ticketing professionals, has restructured its association offices and plans to outsource most of its services, said President Jena Hoffman.

The association’s three-person staff has been let go, the Manhattan office has been closed and most of the association’s needs have been outsourced to other companies.

Hoffman said it’s part of her plan to turn INTIX into a “virtual association” and cut back on operating costs.

“It was an interesting decision that included a combination of looking at where INTIX was financially and what INTIX wanted to accomplish,” she said. “We’re attempting to get to a place where we’re delivering more value to our members.”

The company’s new headquarters is in Indianapolis, the location of its outsourced reception service. The association phone number, which has a Manhattan area code, will stay the same.

INTIX Board Chair Joe Carter of the Los Angeles Philharmonic said that not all of the outsourcing has been finalized — the group was still selecting partners to help with membership, communications and its annual meeting.

As for the annual conference, set for Jan. 18-20 in San Francisco, Carter said much of that work goes to the local planning committee, which is headed by Russ Stanley from the San Francisco Giants.

“We always depend on the local membership to help with the conference, but the company that will be booking the show hasn’t been hired yet,” Carter explained. “Our vendors are really important to us and we’re trying to make sure it is as easy as possible” during the transition.

Eric Freeland



Eric Freeland is a regular INTIX attendee, but he’ll be working for a different company when he attends the conference in his hometown. The former StubHub dealmaker has moved over to dynamic pricing company Qcue, where he’ll work as VP of Business Development.

At StubHub, Freeland handled the company’s 24 Major League Baseball accounts, and oversaw the company’s first non-sports integration with Tickets.com for all entertainment events at the HSBC Arena in Buffalo, N.Y. At Qcue, he’ll work with CEO Barry Kahn to sign up clients for the company’s dynamic pricing software system, which helps teams and venues set their prices. For now, Freeland said he would stay in the Bay Area, but he hasn’t ruled out relocating to Austin, Texas

where Qcue is based.

“The opportunity is there for Qcue to become (in dynamic pricing) what StubHub has become in the

secondary market,” Freeland said. “Qcue has a very legitimate shot at being the driver in the dynamic pricing industry, which is the direction I think teams and venues will go in the short to medium term.”

Chris Presson resigned his post as general manager of Intrust Bank Arena, Wichita, Kan., effective May 7.

He told Venues Today that opening the new arena in January was a demanding task and he has made a personal decision to find a job that allows more family time. The staff he worked with stays in place and booking is still being handled by Scott Neal. Gary Desjardins, SMG regional oversight manager and GM of the Ford Center, Oklahoma City, Okla., will head the search for a replacement, looking first within the SMG family.

Presson was named the general manager in June 2008 and worked with Sedgwick County to open the Intrust Bank Arena in January 2010. Prior to taking his position with the arena, Presson served as general manager of the Wichita Thunder hockey team.

John Chan



John Chan has been named director of the Phoenix Convention Center after a year as interim director. He replaced Jay Green, who retired, in May 2009.

Chan has been with the city of Phoenix since 1992 and oversaw construction of the convention center expansion. He will manage a \$50 million operating budget and nearly 275 employees.

Chan played a key role in the 2009 NBA All-Star game activities and 2010 WrestleMania events at the venue, and is helping with the bids for the 2012 Republican and Democratic National Conventions. – Dave Brooks and Linda Deckard

Interviewed for this article: Jena Hoffman, (323) 636-1101; Joe Carter, (213) 972-3165; Eric Freeland, (415) 297-6540; Chris Presson, (316) 440-9015; Scott Neal, (316) 440-9014; John Chan, (602) 256-3567

ON THE WEB

There's lots of activity on our [Facebook page this week](#), which hit a small milestone Friday when we reached 600 fans. If you're going to the Event and Arena Marketing Conference this June, [make sure to read our post on their closing night party](#).



And the [Venues Today podcast team has recorded its second episode](#). This week we discuss Coachella and the Final Four, plus interviews from the black carpet of the Golden God awards including Zakk Wylde, Alice Cooper and Kat Von D. And news on upcoming tours by Broken Bells, Muse and the CEO shakeup at Tickets.com.

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