



Region 5 IAVM Director's Message

For those of you who weren't able to join us at SEVT this year, we missed you. And you missed a good conference. At the closing luncheon, Frank Roach was recognized with the SEVT Lifetime Achievement award. Although Frank has now retired from the University of South Carolina, he's currently working as a consultant. The name of his company? Frank Advice, of course.

One of the sessions at SEVT provided insight from Venues Today's Women of Influence. Voting is underway for 2016. There are a number of Region 5 nominees, including past R5 leaders Carol Moore (Newnan Centre) and Michele Swann (Cobb Galleria Center). Deadline for voting is Wednesday, May 18. I'd advise you to vote early and often, but we've missed "early" and subscribers can vote one time (for three nominees). Note: by the time you read this, we may have missed voting for 2016 altogether, but do watch for the results.

Discussions are already underway about next year's Region 5 conference.; however, in the meantime, consider attending one of the organization's other educational and networking opportunities: VenueConnect in Minneapolis, Arena Management Conference in Tampa, Venue Management School at Oglebay, or one of the chapter meetings being planned. As you probably know by now, VenueConnect may undergo major changes by next year in Nashville. Those changes will probably affect the sector conferences as well.

You can read about this and other updates from Karen Totaro, CFE: Notes From the Chair.

On a sad note, in April IAVM lost one of our leaders, former President of IAAM, David Ross, CFE. 63 years young, David passed away after a lengthy illness. Growing up in Chattanooga, David and his wife Sue had returned to Region 5 in recent years. Most of

David's career was spent at the Show Me Center in Cape Girardeau, MO. A devoted family man who always brought his family with him to conferences, David was a wonderful man whose presence will be greatly missed by many. A celebration of his life is scheduled for 10 AM June 4 at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Cape Girardeau. His family has suggested memorials to David be made in his name to the IAVM Foundation.

As you make your plans for VenueConnect, note that the Region 5 business meeting is scheduled for Sunday at 8:30 AM. Keep an eye on the schedule for location.

I hope to see you there!



Region 5 IAVM Job Postings

Richmond, Virginia

The Greater Richmond Convention Center is currently hiring for the following full-time positions:

- Maintenance Laborer
- Lead Housekeeping-Setup Worker

A variety of on-call positions also are available on an event-by-event basis, including the following:

- Event Staff (Ticket Takers, Ushers, Door Monitors, Badge Checkers, Coat-Check Attendants)
- Event Cashiers (Ticket Sellers, Parking Cashiers, Service Desk Attendants)
- Housekeeping / Event Setup Worker
- Maintenance Laborers
- Event Security Guards

For more information and application guidelines, visit richmondcenter.com.

Slidell, Louisiana

The Northshore Harbor Center in Slidell, LA is currently seeking a Sales Manager.

Overview: The ideal candidate for this high profile position located in the Northshore area is an individual with a professional attitude, polished image, and commitment to quality. The ideal representative must be skilled at meeting new people, establishing solid working relationships and possess the ability to thrive in a fast-paced environment. Inside and outside business-to-business sales experience is a must as well as a love of being out in the field developing business relationships, and then turning those relationships into new business.

A basic knowledge of developing print materials, branded items, and other marketing strategies is a plus.

Our company offers a competitive salary, full health benefits, and retirement plan with company match, flexible hours and a friendly "family-like" work environment. For a full job description or

to send your resume, cover letter, and salary history to: Kathy Lowrey via email. klowrey@harborcenter.org.

IAVM News

The Region 5 Website is calling for updated photos of all region venues along with a short, promotional blurb highlighting your venue. Send us your best "glamour shot" along with up to 4-5 sentences describing your most notable attributes. These photos will be used throughout the website and cataloged in our Picture Gallery.

Our Region 5 Facebook needs a facelift as well. Let's get caught up with the present by celebrating the past, and send us your best, "Remember When?" photos for a #TBT series. Remember your first region or annual meeting? Sure, you do... But, are there pictures to prove it? We want to see them!

Please send photos and blurbs to Alexis Berggren at aberggren@mccno.com.

Alabama

Submit Your articles for next month!!

Florida



Orlando - Orlando's iconic football stadium, formerly known as the Orlando Citrus Bowl, has been renamed Camping World Stadium thanks to a new, long-term exclusive agreement as the venue's naming rights partner. The Camping World name and brand are already proudly on display at the stadium which recently underwent a \$207.7 million reconstruction. Camping World, currently celebrating its 50th anniversary, is the nation's top retailer of RV's, RV accessories and RV-related services.

"Florida is a key market for us as we have 14 Camping World SuperCenters in this state, more than any other. Having a stadium naming rights deal in place was extremely important for us as we look toward the future," said Marcus Lemonis, chairman and CEO of Camping World and Good Sam Enterprises and host of CNBC's 'The Profit.'

When Camping World Stadium reopened as a thoroughly modernized facility near the end of 2014, it ushered in a new era for the historic Central Florida venue. In addition to hosting signature annual events including the Buffalo Wild Wings Citrus Bowl, Russell Athletic Bowl, AutoNation Cure Bowl and the Florida Blue Florida Classic, the reconstruction has enabled the stadium to attract new high-profile events like three international Copa America Centenario matches (June 4, 6 & 8), Guns N' Roses (July 29) and Wrestlemania 33 (April 2, 2017). Furthermore, Camping World Stadium serves as home to Orlando City SC (MLS) and the Orlando Pride, currently in their inaugural NWSL season.

As part of the naming rights announcement, Camping World will also become the multi-year series sponsor of early season neutral-site college football games which will be

named the 'Camping World Kickoff.' The inaugural Kickoff will feature the Florida State Seminoles and the Ole Miss Rebels as they square off at 8:00pm EST on Monday, September 5 in a game that will be televised nationally on ESPN.

Orlando Venues' longtime partner, Florida Citrus Sports, entered into the multi-year partnership with Camping World while Denver-based Impression Sports & Entertainment brokered the agreement.



Tampa - Straz Center President and CEO Judy Lisi and Straz Center Board of Trustees Chairman Gary Sasso announced today the completion of the conceptual phase of the Master Plan.

As it continues to evolve, the Straz Center will become a beacon for downtown, a bright spot attracting people to the Riverwalk and to our campus as an attraction, not just as a destination for seeing a show or attending a class at the Patel. The drive is not to merely keep up with the field, but to continue to reach forward with new visions of what a community can achieve with a state-of-the-art performing arts complex. The Straz will become a gathering place, a cultural crossroads for the thrilling diversity of the Tampa Bay area's people and as a sustainable campus whose architecture reflects thoughtful uses of the surrounding landscape and Hillsborough River.



Since opening in 1987, the Straz Center has become an established cultural and economic anchor for the Tampa Bay region, with an annual average attendance of 600,000 people. Ever-seeking to fulfill its mission to the community in creative, sustainable and exciting ways, the Straz Center has created a vision that will light the way for the future by integrating the environment, the community and the performing arts and ensconcing itself at the heart of the Mayor Buckhorn's InVision Tampa plan.

The Master Plan, which was funded by the Frank E. Duckwall Foundation, has been approved by the Straz Center board and presented to Mayor Bob Buckhorn and city officials. A feasibility study, expected to take several months, is underway and will inform possible sources of funding for the projected \$65-\$100 million project.

In 2012, the Straz Center assembled a Strategic Advisory Task Force to address growth, enrichment and funding for the evolving role of The Straz for the Tampa Bay region and for the national arts scene. This task force, in collaboration with community leaders and planners, began to create a new vision to elevate The Straz's status as a cultural attraction and point of pride for the city.

A Straz Center Board of Trustees Master Plan Committee was then formed in 2014 and through a vigorous selection process engaged the services of architectural firm Westlake Reed Leskosky. The ensuing plans, developed and conceptualized by Paul Westlake and Jonathan Kurtz, call for the creation of a Grand Terrace that flows to the river front, expanding the Patel Conservatory, reinventing and enlarging the Silbiger Lobby in Morsani Hall and adding a multi-purpose events center to accommodate growth in food and beverage, education and artistic programming - all while establishing The Straz as a model for diversity and inclusion that supports the arts and audiences across communities and cultures in our area and beyond.

Georgia

Submit Your articles for next month!!

Louisiana

New Orleans - Elaine Williams, CMP, CEM, Director of Sales at the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, has been awarded a Certification in Exhibition Management from the International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE). The Certified in Exhibition Management™ (CEM) designation is a globally recognized designation that demonstrates the highest professional standard throughout the exhibition and event management arena. It was first created in 1975 to raise professional standards in the event industry and it continues to be the premier mark of professional achievement.



In her role as Director of Sales, Williams is responsible for overseeing the direct sales efforts of the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center - one of the six largest convention centers in the nation. Williams joined the staff of the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in 2007 and previously served as Assistant Director of Sales.

Williams has been with the Center in various capacities since 1997, starting as a Sales Manager with ARAMARK, the Center's former food and beverage provider. Over the years, Williams rose through ARAMARK's ranks to achieve the positions of Director of Sales, Director of Operations, and Interim General Manager before joining the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center's Sales Department.

In 2005, she successfully completed the CMP exam, becoming a Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) designated by the Convention Industry Council. A graduate of the University of New Orleans, Williams has completed several Hospitality Management Training programs consisting of both internal ARAMARK programs as well as those offered by Affiliate Hospitality Associations.

"Elaine is a seasoned industry professional who knows her customers and our operations well. Her proven ability to lead and cultivate strong customer relationships is a valuable asset to our sales initiatives. We are thrilled that Elaine has achieved this certification," said Tim Hemphill, Vice President Sales and Marketing of the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center.

New Orleans - The New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center has received a "Safest 70" award from the Louisiana Workers Compensation Corporation (LWCC). The award acknowledges excellence, outstanding performance, and commitment to workplace safety and is given to the top 70 of over 16,000 entities insured by LWCC.

The New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center was recognized based on the effectiveness of their safety efforts in preventing injuries and maintaining a consistent workplace safety history in 2015.

"It is an honor to receive this award from LWCC on behalf of our employees," says Bob Johnson, General Manager of the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. "Safety is a team effort, and we emphasize daily the importance of working together to keep our staff safe. We appreciate our employees' commitment to safety."



Mississippi

Submit Your articles for next month!!

North Carolina

Winston-Salem - The \$17.5 million renovation of the Benton Convention Center achieved another milestone as ground was broken to start construction in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Located in downtown Winston-Salem, the 100,000-square-foot Benton Convention Center will undergo a transformative renovation with a design from Atlanta-based architecture and interior design firm tvsdesign, which includes significant structural, design and technological upgrades to

the interior and exterior of the building. Key design elements will create more open, flexible meeting space and incorporate architectural nods to Winston-Salem's historic arts, tobacco and textile roots. The plans also include expanding the front façade to provide more practical, pre-function space. More windows and skylights will be added to give the venue a contemporary, open and inviting aesthetic. The center will remain operational throughout all phases of the project, which is expected to be finalized May 2017.



South Carolina

Submit Your articles for next month!!

Tennessee



Knoxville - At its 12th Annual Pauly Awards event, the Greater Knoxville Hospitality Association (GKHA) recognized two hospitality professionals associated with City of Knoxville venues: Knoxville Convention Center and Knoxville Civic Auditorium and Coliseum General Manager Mary Bogert was awarded the 2016 Pauly Award for Service/Supplier General Manager of the Year; Knoxville Civic Coliseum and Auditorium Office Manager Jamie Cunningham was recognized as Service/Supplier Employee of the Year.

The Pauly Awards, named after local hospitality industry leader the late Paul Sherbakoff, are held annually by the GKHA to honor and recognize the best of the best in Knoxville's hospitality and tourism industry. At the event, the GKHA also awards the 2016 Scholarship winners for students at the University of Tennessee and Pellissippi State Community College. This year's event was sponsored by the University of Tennessee Tourism Institute and Visit Knoxville.

In her nomination, Bogert was praised as an effective, forward-thinking leader and committed

team player by her employees and partnering organizations alike. Among those supporting Bogert's nomination were Visit Knoxville CEO Kim Bumpas and City of Knoxville Deputy to the Mayor Christi Branscom.

"In my capacity at the City of Knoxville, I have worked with Mary Bogert for the last four years," said Branscom. "She has proven to be an unequaled professional in her position as general manager of the Knoxville Convention Center, the city's largest and most valuable asset. I have come to rely upon Mary's expertise and appreciate her leadership. Under her direction the last several years, the Knoxville Convention Center is performing at a level the city has never experienced, and I have no doubt that Mary is the key to that success."

Jamie Cunningham was praised as by KCAC Human Resources Manager Kristy Todd as person who "walks in to work with a smile and a positive attitude every day even when things are complicated" and for taking the initiative to step in and handle tasks that fall outside her job description.

"Do you know a person at work who you can trust with anything even if it doesn't pertain to her department? The person you can hand a project to and not have to think twice about it because you know she will complete it on time and above expectations? Jamie Cunningham at the Knoxville Civic Auditorium and Coliseum is that person," said Todd when summing up why she nominated Cunningham for the award.

Eligible Pauly Award winners are automatically submitted for the Stars of the Industry state awards sponsored by the Tennessee Hospitality and Tourism Association.

Virginia

Hampton - Joe Tsao, who has spent two decades as a key figure in shaping the cultural scene around Hampton, announced Monday he is retiring as director of the Hampton Coliseum.



Tsao, 58, also has served since 2012 as the director of the Hampton Arts Commission, which oversees the American Theatre in Phoebus and the Charles H. Taylor Arts Center. Since 2000, he has been the primary local organizer of the Hampton Jazz Festival, which celebrates its 49th anniversary next month.

"It's just time to go," said Tsao, who told city administration his decision last week. "I've been contemplating doing something different for a few years now. I agreed to stay on when I was asked to help merge the Hampton Arts Commission with the Hampton Coliseum, and that delayed my plans. But now that merger has gone smoothly and it's time to go."

Assistant director Terri Vander Vennet will serve as interim director until a replacement is hired. Bob Boester, chairman of the Coliseum Advisory Council, said: "Joe is one of the best in the

country at what he does. He really is. What he's been able to do while competing with LiveNation (the promoter at the Virginia Beach amphitheater) is amazing. And what he's done at the American Theatre, too. He turned profits where they were losing money before. To say he's done a great job doesn't even begin to tell the story."

Tsao, a native of Taiwan whose family moved to Toronto when he was 15, came to Hampton in March 1995 after spending the previous five years as director of marketing and events at the Pontiac Silverdome in Detroit.

He arrived at a time when the Coliseum, built in 1970, received annual subsidies from the city. Under his supervision, the 8,100-seat arena operated profitably. When Virginia Beach opened an amphitheater in 1996, and when Old Dominion University opened the Constant Center in 2002, many predicted the Coliseum would take a serious hit due to concerts lost to those venues. Instead, the Coliseum continued to draw well, establishing its niche in the local scene.

"It hasn't been an easy transition," he said, "but we focused on what we can do best. We found our livelihood. We changed with the time and lived within our means. One of the things that I'm most proud of is that the first surplus in the history of the Coliseum was in the first couple of years of me coming on board, and we have been able to operate at a surplus in most of the years since then as well."

Tsao said the surplus money in the operating budget was used over the years to save the city the expense of maintenance and upgrades.

City Manager Mary Bunting did not offer a time table for finding a replacement. In an emailed statement, she praised Tsao's performance at the Coliseum and at the Hampton Arts Commission.

"Joe Tsao has for many years provided two great benefits for our residents - a varied and impressive schedule of entertainment, and a budget that minimized the need for general tax dollars to operate," Bunting wrote. "Just recently, we've seen the circus, Chris Tucker, Pearl Jam and Amy Schumer.

"When I asked Joe to also take on the arts and combine back-office and marketing functions, he applied the same business acumen to those operations while maintaining the high-quality shows we have come to expect from The American Theatre and The Charles H. Taylor Arts Center. For all of these reason and many more, Joe Tsao will be hard to replace."

Eight months after Tsao arrived, the jam band Phish played its first show at the Coliseum. Front man Trey Anastasio and his bandmates fell in love with the building, and soon Phish and its legion of fans adopted it as their beloved "Mothership." The group has played 18 shows there, including the first three concerts of its 2009 reunion tour, and local hotels filled with fans traveling from across the nation to see Phish at the Coliseum.

Tsao is leaving on a high note - this year the Coliseum has hosted major shows by Carrie Underwood, Pearl Jam and comedian Amy Schumer.

Sixteen years ago, Tsao replaced John Scott as the primary local organizer of the Hampton Jazz Festival, which at the time was struggling financially. Within a few years, it once again was playing to sellouts and near sellouts every night. He calls that his proudest accomplishment in Hampton.

This year's festival June 24-26 - headlined by Gladys Knight, New Edition and Uncle Charlie Wilson - will be Tsao's farewell. His last day is June 30.

Tsao said he has no immediate plans for his future, but he does want to work again. His youngest child graduates from college this month, and he says it is a good time to look for a fresh start. "I'm still young enough and energetic enough and eager to do something else," Tsao said. "My immediate plan is to take a step back, decompress and try to reinvent myself. I need to take inventory of my skill set and see how I can apply it to something else. I'm ready."

Allied Member News

BPI - Auburn University selected Basketball Products International (BPI) to supply portable basketball backstops for Auburn Arena - home of the Auburn Tigers men's and women's basketball teams of the Southeastern Conference (SEC).



EventBooking - A leading software provider serving the events and venue industries, EventBooking has made a key hire to support the technology company's strategic growth plan, naming industry veteran Steve Mackenzie as President.

The move bolsters the leadership of EventBooking, with Mackenzie bringing 30-plus years of international experience in the hospitality and event space, including more than 20 years focusing on IT sales and service. He will work alongside EventBooking founder and CEO John Platillero to launch the company's third generation of core software products. Mackenzie will officially step into his new role on May 1, 2016.

EventBooking was the first company in the world to offer web-based venue management software in 1999. Since that time, EventBooking has earned a reputation for applying best practices in its software, tailoring the technology to the specific needs and functionality required for the events and venues of its clients. With unmatched technical services and product support, the company currently works with more than 700 marquee venues around the world providing space scheduling, sales, and event coordination solutions for convention centers, arenas, theatres, and stadiums around the world.

"Steve has spent decades understanding the event business. He knows everyone, and everyone knows and trusts him," Platillero said. "He has taken several smaller software companies to the next level, and we're confident he will elevate EventBooking's sales, marketing, and strategy to help us reach our full potential as a global company. Most important, he shares our philosophy of product creation based on industry need and client input coupled with the best possible customer service."

Mackenzie comes to EventBooking from etouches, where for the last five years he has focused on growing the company's partnerships and channel offerings in the global marketplace. Prior to that, he was Vice President of Global Sales for ASP Events, a UK-based company providing websites for exhibitions and events. Mackenzie has been integral to the development of several technology-based entities, with much of his career spent working for Ungerboeck Systems International, where he established offices in Sydney, Hong Kong, and China before moving to their headquarters in the U.S. to oversee their expansion globally. During that time he was directly involved with the technology selection of hundreds of the world's leading venues.

"I have admired John and what he has built at EventBooking for some time," Mackenzie said. "Not only am I a huge fan of the product, but I've always been super impressed with the company and its people."

Mackenzie's reputation as a leader extends to numerous industry associations, including involvement with the VMA and IAVM as well as service on the board of the Meetings and Events Association of Australia. A graduate from the PAFMS in Oglebay, West Virginia in 2007, he also has been an instructor at the Venue Management School in Australia since 2011.

A native of New Zealand, Mackenzie's early career started in the hospitality industry working at various island resorts along the Great Barrier Reef for almost 10 years. The majority of those years were spent at the exclusive Lizard Island and Dunk Island Resorts, where he served in a variety of positions including Purchasing Manager, Food and Beverage Manager, Operations Manager, and Relief General Manager.

Mackenzie said one reason he is eager to make the move to EventBooking is that the timing for its next generation product is perfect.

"The marketplace really needs a fresh web-based product that combines the functionality with the customer service EventBooking has become known for delivering. Too many tech companies fail to recognize that we really must be service providers first, not simply a software provider," Mackenzie said. "My commitment is to maintain that core value of client service while ensuring our software grows to encompass the wider needs of the venue managers."

Newsletter Guidelines

Please submit information by the 15th of each month for inclusion in the following month's newsletter. If your submission is received after the 15th it will be published in the next newsletter.

Entries are published as received with little editing and cutting. Please send entries as you would like them in the newsletter. Please send in a word doc. format with pictures attached separately as a jpeg.

As you think about things to share, please keep in mind that we are looking for news items. Some newsworthy items of note include (but are not limited to):

- Expansions, renovations, new buildings
- New contracts
- Incidents or event surprises that occur at your building you think others should know about (heads up')
- How you handle/handled hot button topics
- Looking for suggestions on how others handle a concern
- RFP's
- Newly hired or promoted staff
- Certifications or awards for facilities and staff
- Notice of PAFMS grads, etc.
- Job Postings, searches for jobs
- Photos (not all can be used). Please identify all people in photo.

Because most of our members are employed in event buildings, event schedules and articles which list upcoming or past events will not be included in the newsletters. On the other hand, events which have led to some unexpected situations requiring fast thought and master handling could be considered newsworthy.

Submit to: nhcmarketing@harborcenter.org

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STAY CONNECTED:

