



# Newsletter

Colorado New Mexico Oklahoma Arkansas Texas Kansas Mexico

May 2020

## Share Your Support Story

Hello, Region 6,

Normally at this time of year many of us are gearing up to host graduations, celebrating the successes of students in our local communities. It's so odd walking through a dark building and looking at an event calendar that is blank. There are still mornings I wake up thinking: *Wow, that was some insane dream!* And then reality sets in, and I'm reminded it's not a dream.

While our industry norm has been temporarily derailed, there are a lot of great things our venues and members are doing. Creating memories with drive thru graduations and award ceremonies. Supporting local communities by transitioning to testing, staging and food distribution sites. Promoting online engagement with the arts and musicians.... These are just a few examples.

In challenging times, our industry doesn't back down. We adapt and rise to the challenge. We actively look for ways to engage our communities, help provide services and meet the needs in the neighborhoods we serve.

Much of what we do may not be what people see as the "frontlines" today. It's more of a support role... a critical support role that helps keep the frontline going. While our work looks different today, it is rewarding to know we are in an industry that serves and cares.

There will come a day when the roles shift, when venues reopen, and events return. And when that happens, we'll all be on the frontline helping to put much needed smiles on faces and creating memories in a much more familiar way. For now, let us not lose focus on the difference we are making in our communities in unique ways.

If your venue is supporting your local community in a unique way, let us know. We would love to share your story with our members.

Jeff Davis, CVE  
Region 6 Director

## Topeka Performing Arts Center Marquee 'Sign of the Times' Says It All



**Schuler Shook is pleased to announce that the American Society of Theatre Consultants (ASTC) has awarded the title of Fellow to two of Schuler Shook's Partners: Jack Hagler and Todd Hensley.**



Jack Hagler, a theatre consultant for over 32 years, is a Partner at Schuler Shook where he manages the Dallas office. An ASTC member since 1994, he has served on the Board of Directors as Vice-President and has been the ASTC Liaison to the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) since 2005.



Todd Hensley has been a theatre consultant for over 32 years and an ASTC member since 1998, during which he has served on the Board of Directors and President and is currently active on several committees. Mr. Hensley has consulted on over 400 projects with Schuler Shook where he serves as Partner in their Chicago office.

## **GOING REMOTE IN VENUE MANAGEMENT**

By Ashley Peacock, CVP

In the age of a global pandemic shutting down many businesses and events to keep people safe, venue managers as well as event planners and promoters are looking toward the future of live events and the light at the end of the tunnel. Although many executive and top level leaders in venues must travel and work from the road periodically, many venue managers have found themselves and most, if not all, of their staff working remotely for the first time. They are navigating new waters in an industry that has largely always taken place in person.

No one person can shoulder the burden of managing an entire venue themselves, so those fortunate enough to still be working must band together to keep their team afloat. Most teams are still learning and adapting to these changing circumstances daily to find ways that work best for them and their events. In order to do this, many of us who have never had the opportunity to work remotely are having to quickly master a skill that can take a lot of time and effort to truly hone. There are a multitude of articles and webinars available online which can teach methods and best practices but figuring out how to bend these ideas to work for our face to face industry can be difficult. Not every tip will work well for every venue, but below are some gathered from various venue professionals who have been kind enough to share their experiences thus far in remote venue management.

**Set up a designated workspace for yourself.** To echo many other articles on remote work, it is imperative for most people that they set up a workspace of some kind, or even get dressed for work, in order to get in the right headspace. If you can, make it separate from your normal home relaxation and entertainment spaces or even set up in a private room where you can keep away from distractions during working hours.

**Use a remote desktop if you can.** There are many remote desktop applications out there like Team Viewer and Google Remote Desktop which allow the user to view a computer they can't physically access from a screen at home. Be sure to check with your venue's information technology or risk management departments first to ensure this is allowed and done safely per your organization's policies.

(Continued, next page...)

**Know your important websites URLs and log-in information.** Especially if you are unable to access your work computer remotely, it is imperative to know the website link and your log-in information for all sites required to get your work done. Much of venue and event management software is cloud-based and accessed online, so thankfully this is very conducive to being able to continue work from home computers and devices without necessarily needing to access a work computer remotely.

**Feel free to take breaks throughout the day.** Many of us in this industry are inundated in work constantly when we are physically in the venues and continue to be available 24-7 when not there as well. Take advantage of working remotely to be available by phone or email, but still taking that time to step away from it when you're not being called on. Don't feel like you have to sit down at your computer exactly at your work start time and stay there until close of business. Make sure to get a lunch and take a long one if you can. Go for a walk around your neighborhood block with physical distancing or spend some time in your backyard when weather permits. Take time to play or read with your kids if you are at home with them. Having that time to breathe away from work will help to clear your head of stress so you can go back to work more productively again.

**Let your venue clients and partners know what is going on.** Obviously you don't want to air any of your organization's dirty laundry, but be transparent where you can. Let them know if you are working from home and apologize for any potential delays in response. Make them aware of any weird schedules that may inhibit communication temporarily due to circumstances like furloughs or layoffs. Be up front with them about exactly who they need to get ahold of when you are unavailable and provide them contact information.

**Don't quit booking your venue and advancing events.** Seeing your calendar booked full of events in the future can provide hope for a path forward as well as ensure revenue returns. Most clients want this too, and they are happy to continue planning future events.

**Stay connected with your coworkers.** Whether you're checking in on the ones not currently working or keeping in a groove with those who are, make sure not to lose your connections. Group texts are an easy way to achieve team communication as well as the multitudes of tools out there like Microsoft Teams, Samepage, and other applications which allow you to communicate in a way that works for your team. Staying connected with your coworkers will help keep business moving while booking and advancing events as well as maintain a sense of normalcy for all involved.

**Do some professional development and networking in your down time if you feel up to it.** Everyone is coping with this quarantine in their own way. Those who are feeling up to it, regardless of whether they are still working remotely, should consider doing some professional development and networking with this newfound downtime. Organizations like IAVM, CSPI, IAEE, MPI, USITT, and so many others are offering webinars and training free almost every day. Many of these even qualify as credits toward professional designations if you are registered to do so. Companies such as Ungerboeck Software International, Event Booking, Cvent, and many more are offering industry summits, webinars, networking happy hours, and even free or discounted certification and training programs in event industry software and fields. Don't worry if you're not ready for this yet – but keep it in mind to add on when you are!

*Ashley Peacock, CVP, is Senior Event Services Manager of ASM Tulsa – Cox Business Convention Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma.*

## **Charles Mayer Retires**

Charles Mayer is saying Good-Bye to the Public Events Department after 15 years of service as the Director of Sales at the Fort Worth Convention Center. Charles has worked in the hospitality industry for 40 years including management and operations. He has been instrumental in attracting new convention business and establishing long and short term booking strategies at the convention center. Charles plans to spend time with his family and pursuing hobbies in woodworking and photography. Blake Moorman will be serving as the Acting Director of Sales and can be reached at [blake.moorman@fortworthtexas.gov](mailto:blake.moorman@fortworthtexas.gov) and 817-392-2692.

## Maude Cobb Convention Center and Longview Convention Complex Play Hand in Food Bank Food Distribution to 1,538 Households



Here's a short YouTube clip of this awesome event: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRZo5vzoYX4>

Laid-off restaurant worker Eva Martinez of Longview waited in a drive-thru line with hundreds of vehicles for an emergency food distribution Thursday morning at Maude Cobb Convention and Activity Center complex.

Martinez said it was the first time since she emigrated from Mexico in 1982 that she visited a food bank. She said she lost her job a month ago after state and local officials shut down restaurants and other businesses to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

She said she lives with her mother and two teenage children, relies on help from family and friends, and appreciated an event such as the one the Tyler-based East Texas Food Bank conducted Thursday.

“I want to say, ‘Thank you,’” Martinez said. “They are doing a great job. God bless everybody.”

Link to the entire article: [https://www.news-journal.com/news/coronavirus/east-texas-food-bank-distributes-food-for-1-538-longview-area-households/article\\_0fefc3de-8b05-11ea-a1fa-cf8e3cc3d043.html](https://www.news-journal.com/news/coronavirus/east-texas-food-bank-distributes-food-for-1-538-longview-area-households/article_0fefc3de-8b05-11ea-a1fa-cf8e3cc3d043.html)

## Longview Convention Complex Hosts Drive-Thru COVID-19 Testing

Learn all about it here: <https://www.longviewtexas.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2633>

## Berry Center Plays Key Role in Houston Food Bank Mega Distribution



The National Guard and local law enforcement were controlling the traffic as car after car filed the Berry Center's parking lot on April 29<sup>th</sup>.

The Houston Food Bank Mega Distribution hosts 4-5 food drives every week in various locations to cover the entire city since COVID-19 has put our country in quarantine, 2 of which were at the Berry Center of North West Houston. On April 29, 7500 vehicles came through the lines and 6050 on May 6. It works like a drive through. Each car drove through 4 different stations. Each vehicle received 20lbs of meat products (10 lbs. of sliced turkey, 10 prepared chicken fajita), box of can goods to include items like peanut butter, vegetables, macaroni, pasta sauces, gallons of milk, and fresh produce.

The Director of the Berry Center, Beth Wade says, “The ability and organizational skills of the Houston Food Bank (HFB) to give 100 lbs of food to 500 vehicles every 22-40 minutes is a fete to witness. Unfortunately since our area is prone to hurricanes, they get a lot of practice so they are able to respond quickly. On April 29, 7500 vehicles came through the lines and 6050 on May 6.”

## PITCHING IN WHERE WE CAN

The Amarillo Civic Center Complex has been pitching in across the city of Amarillo, TX, to help support the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The skills and talents of the staff are being used to help other city departments to help maintain continuity of certain services and increase levels of safety and health. Their detail-driven building crew members are working with the city to help provide cleaning and sanitation services at some of the local homeless shelters/resource centers, as well as maintaining high levels of cleanliness at public transit stations and on buses. Staff are helping at the city's animal shelter, managing supplies and deliveries for the Amarillo Office of Emergency Management, serving on the local incident management team, as well as serving as points of connection for the homeless to needed resources and housing.

## Walton Arts Center Stays Connected with Audiences Online



During this extended intermission, Walton Arts Center has implemented creative solutions to stay connected with its audience and keep them informed and engaged.

With performances suspended through May 9, Walton Arts Center created a [ticketing updates page](#) so that patrons could get details on the status of their shows, request refunds or donate their tickets back to the organization. Amazingly, Walton Arts Center has received \$27,000 in ticket donations to date.

The staff at the nonprofit arts organization wanted to do more than just inform their audience, they wanted to continue to engage them through digital content. Peter Lane, president and CEO of Walton Arts Center [recorded a short video](#) that let patrons know that they were missed, assure them that we were all still working behind the scenes to get ready for shows to resume and introduce the organization's new online programs.

[heARTs to homes](#) is a weekly webcast produced by Walton Arts Center that airs at 6 pm every Saturday on the nonprofit performing arts center's Facebook page and YouTube channel. Episodes are available for 48 hours after they air.

Each family-friendly episode features performances by local artists and arts organizations along with recommendations of other online performances that you can watch during the week and arts activities the whole family can enjoy.

As a way to support our NWA businesses, Walton Arts Center is also partnering with several local restaurants each week. Viewers are encouraged to order dinner from a featured restaurant and plan an arts night in.

For entertainment options that can be accessed at any time, [Walton Arts Center's Virtual Stage](#) provides a curated list of digital performances to help people connect virtually and experience the performing arts at their convenience.

Walton Arts Center has also used streaming services to deliver programming to audiences. The in-person performance of *Ābhā* by Parshwanath Upadhye and Punyah Dance Company and the Indie Films India Film Festival were canceled, so both shows were adapted to a digital format and delivered via a viewing link for free to ticket-holders and patrons who registered. Performances are available for viewing for 48 hours.

*Ābhā* was a beautiful three-camera video recording of the performance and included an exclusive creative conversation with Upadhye.

Indie Films India was a mini-film festival experience, presented in collaboration with the Fayetteville Film Fest, featuring five of the original eight short films selected submitted from filmmakers from across India. Recorded interviews with three of the filmmakers followed the screenings of their films.

For downloadable images visit the [Virtual Programming Dropbox](#)

# Henderson Engineers Doing Its Part Providing Information to Industry Partners During COVID-19 Crisis

Author: [Paul Villotti](#), [Henderson Engineers](#); Faculty Chair, IAVM Academy for Venue Safety and Security.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Henderson Engineers, along with many of our industry partners closed our office doors indefinitely, unsure of what is to come. It feels like yesterday that our IT group helped more than 800 of our workforce transition to the work-from-home life, boxing up laptops, monitors, keyboards, and miles of wires – anything that would be needed for our employees to do their jobs as best as possible from home. In what could have been a logistical nightmare, our IT specialists managed to get all of our employees, from New York to Los Angeles and everywhere in between, up and running on VPN and VDI in a matter of days. And during those first two weeks of working remotely, our firm held over 530 Zoom meetings, some of which included virtual site visits and construction inspections to keep projects moving. Never again will I underestimate the power of a Zoom call!

Due to the pandemic, we have seen venues across the nation close their doors in an effort to mitigate the potential spread of infection and keep staff, fans, and patrons safe. But when those doors start to reopen and the country begins to gather again, ensuring the public feels the venue is safe to reenter will be critical.

The best way Henderson Engineers can assist right now is to provide as much pertinent information to our industry partners as possible. Despite venue construction projects being put on hold or having delayed start dates, we've kept going full speed to develop and deliver relevant industry content so that, once shelter-in-place orders are lifted, venues can begin to reopen safely. By attending webinars, participating in AVSS IDG bi-weekly meetings and other COVID-19 response discussions, we've been able to learn firsthand information and discuss both challenges and successes that have informed the creation of new building systems guidelines envisioned to address life after the COVID-19 curve is flattened. As partners, we want your venue to return to its full potential with the public 100% confident in its safety.

Anyone interested in our most current COVID-19 resources should review the following:

## **COVID-19 Specific Information**

- [Optimizing Your Building During This Unprecedented Time](#)
  - This article provides highlights from our [joint webinar](#) with IAVM along with a link to the webinar recording.
- [Infection Control Technologies for Building Design](#)
- [Converting Alternative Structures for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Patients](#)
  - This article was shared on [IAVM's blog](#)
- [Negative Isolation Rooms: Responding to COVID-19](#)
- [E-Sports: An Isolation-Proof Pastime](#)
- [Construction State of the Market](#) (as of 3/25/20)
- [Preparing Construction Projects Now for Surge After COVID-19](#)
- [How COVID-19 is Impacting the Power Grid](#)
- [How Grocery and Warehouse Design Confronts COVID-19](#)

## Ratti, Schroder Hired to Fill Positions at the Walmart AMP



David Ratti



JC Schroder

For downloadable photo visit the [New Hire Dropbox](#).

David Ratti and JC Schroder have joined [Walton Arts Center](#), filling two key positions at the Walmart AMP. Ratti is the director of food and beverage, and Schroder is the production manager.

In his new position, Ratti will be responsible for the direction and coordination of the food and beverage operations at the Walmart AMP. He will oversee day-to-day functions, inventory, staff and finances.

Ratti comes to Northwest Arkansas from San Antonio where he was the director of concessions at the AT&T Center for the San Antonio Spurs. He has held various positions in the food and beverage industry and brings a wealth of knowledge to the team.

Schroder will work with the production and operations teams to provide production support for shows, concerts and events at the Walmart AMP.

Schroder came to Walton Arts Center from Atlanta where he worked as a production manager at the Sandy Springs Performing Arts Center. Schroder brings with him more than 18 years of touring, production and live event experience

B.B.F.N! Bye-bye for now!



Jeff Davis – CVE, CMP  
Region 6 Director

Executive Director, College Park Center/Texas Hall  
University of Texas at Arlington  
[jeff.davis@uta.edu](mailto:jeff.davis@uta.edu)

Meredith Imes

Region 6 Assistant Director/Vice-Director  
Associate Director  
United Supermarkets Arena  
[meredith.imes@ttu.edu](mailto:meredith.imes@ttu.edu)

Sherman Bass, CVE – Past Region 6 Director  
General Manager  
Amarillo Civic Center Complex  
[sherman.bass@amarillo.gov](mailto:sherman.bass@amarillo.gov)

Kyle Baun – Region 6 Treasurer  
Vice President of Ticket Sales and Event Sales  
Western Stock Show Association  
[kbaun@nationalwestern.com](mailto:kbaun@nationalwestern.com)

Kelly Graham – Region 6 Scholarship Chair  
Facilities Operations Coordinator  
Denver Performing Arts Complex, Arts and Venues  
[Kelly.Graham@denvergov.org](mailto:Kelly.Graham@denvergov.org)

Nick Zazal, CVP - Region 6 Secretary  
Director, Events & Patron Services  
Walton Arts Center/Walmart AMP  
[nzazal@waltonartscenter.org](mailto:nzazal@waltonartscenter.org)

Chuck Rogers – Region 6 Allied Representative  
Director of Business Development  
Allied Universal Event Services  
[Chuck.Rogers@aus.com](mailto:Chuck.Rogers@aus.com)

Tim Seeberg – Region 6 Newsletter  
Editor/Distribution ‘Guy’  
General Manager  
Fort Smith Convention Center  
[tseeberg@fortsmithar.gov](mailto:tseeberg@fortsmithar.gov)

[tseeberg1@gmail.com](mailto:tseeberg1@gmail.com) → Newsletter stuff



**Thank you newsletter contributors this month!**

- Sherman Bass – Amarillo Civic Center Complex
- Jeff Davis – Region 6 Director, College Park Center/Texas Hall/UTATickets - The University of Texas at Arlington
- Savvy Fairall – Henderson Engineers
- Larry Gawronski – VenueWorks/Topeka Performing Arts Center
- Dixie Golden – Longview Convention Complex/Maude Cobb Convention Center
- Tyler Kihm – Walton Arts Center/Walmart AMP
- Melinda Landry – Amarillo Civic Center Complex
- Lorna Luebbers – Schuler Shook
- Vicki Mitchell – Fort Worth Convention Center
- Ashley Peacock - ASM Tulsa – Cox Business Convention Center
- Jasmine Shannon – Berry Center
- Jennifer Wilson - Walton Arts Center/Walmart AMP

**Past Region 6 Newsletters:** <https://www.iavm.org/regions/region-6-newsletters>