september 1994

RePlay magazine

window on the world of coin-operated entertainment



AMOA ... and the Play-By-Play cowboys ... welcome ops to San Antonio Expo roundup

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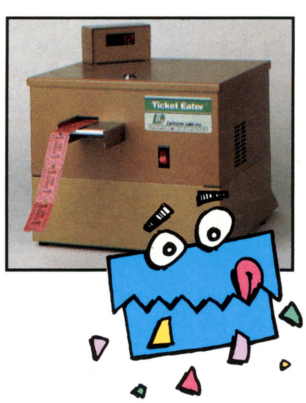

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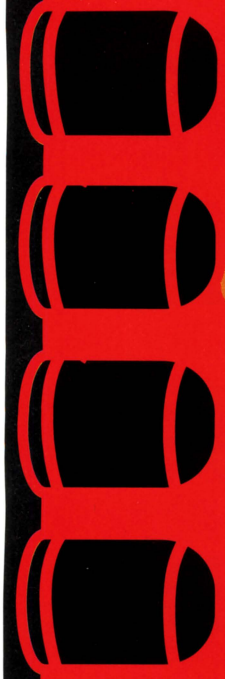

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HOT OFF THE PRESS

DAKOTA VLT'S GO DARK!

On Aug. 9, the **South Dakota Supreme Court** denied a request by the state's attorney general for a stay of the court's earlier ruling that video lottery terminals are unconstitutional. Result: all VLTs in the state (nearly 8,000 units) **were shut** down on Aug. 12, said Court officials. VLTs will remain inactive, at least until after a Nov. 8 referendum on the question. Operators and the state stand to lose tens of millions of dollars in the interim. The Music Vending Assn. of South Dakota remains strongly optimistic that citizens will vote to restart VLTs this fall; tradesters plan a million-dollar PR campaign to ensure a positive outcome. Also on Aug. 9, the Court refused to rehear the VLT issue so now it really is up to the voters.

WAL-MART BANS VIDEO GORE

Several big retail chains have already promised Congress they won't sell unrated consumer vidgames. Now a leading retailer is moving to ban violent coin-ops as well — rated or not, apparently. On July 11, Wal-Mart Stores exec **David Graham** memo'd all video game vendors that America's leading discount retail chain "has decided to modify our amusement equipment program to make it more appropriate for general audiences. We want to expand equipment in our stores such as indoor kiddie rides, play-till-you-win cranes, plush cranes, etc. and eliminate violent video games such as *Mortal Kombat, Mortal Kombat II, Time Killers* and *Lethal Enforcer.* Please make arrangements to have the above mentioned games removed from our stores by Sept. 30, 1994."

POGGIN' ALONG

Sega has signed a contract with **Kyle Hodgetts** (Tickets 'N' Things) to take on the marketing of that latter's *Tickee Tickats* video redemption game. The pact calls for Kyle's Foster City, Calif. factory to build the first 150 units (the last 100 will incorporate design improvements requested by Sega). Afterward (though it wasn't settled at presstime), Sega could begin the actual manufacturing itself. Sega dealers will have an exclusive on the product as long as Sega's involved...Regarding Tickets 'N' Things' *Pog Zone* pusher, Sega appears interested in handling this as well. Although nothing was inked at this writing, Sega does have "first refusal" on it till Sept. 16. We'll find out at Expo.

SNEAK PREVIEW

At this month's AMOA Expo, **Fabtek** will show *Raiden DX,* a deluxe version of the hit sci-fi shooting game, plus a baseball-themed redemption piece. **Jaleco** will have *Alley Cats,* an alley game combining rolldown and knockdown action with three rows of targets. **American Laser Games** will pop a competitively priced CD-ROM version of *Mad Dog II,* the second software title for that system (also available as a full upright). **Sega** will debut *Desert Tank,* an ultra hi-tech simulator presented as a joint venture with Martin Marietta; *Virtua Cop,* an upright shooting game using stunning polygon graphics; production models of their *Sonic the Hedgehog* redemption game; and a video novelty called *Sports Fishing* (more Sega show titles are listed in "News Digest"). **Moloney Mfg.** will have *The Redemption Shoppe,* a merchandise vender which is hardwired directly to two machines on location (players rack up electronically-recorded points, not tickets). This makes it possible to do redemption in street locations without the headaches of ticket jams, etc. (a nicely-tweaked version is shipping now). **EMT Kiddie Rides** will debut *Marsupilami,* based on a popular Disney character seen on Saturday morning cartoons. Already successful in Europe, it's EMT's first Disney-licensed ride. Inside this issue, we cover many more new games (including a batch of coin-op video game system cabinets) expected to debut at Expo.

SKEE-BALL BUYS NSG

Skee-Ball, Inc. (Chalfont, Pa.) will purchase Phoenix-based National Sports Games, with the latter's founders remaining aboard the combined entity: **Greg Sullivan** as NSG division veep, and **Marshall Cook** as director of product development. Skee-Ball execs **Joe Sladek** and **Mark Kane** said the deal, which closed Sept. 1, expands their product line, provides a strategic Western U.S. site, and greatly builds their engineering muscle. The NSG division will remain in Phoenix, expanding this year and building a bigger plant in 1995.

WMS REPORTS

WMS Industries Inc. (parent firm of Williams/Bally-Midway and WMS Gaming, Inc.) said year-end gross revenues were slightly up to $358 million. Net income was down, though. WMS attributed this to reduced hotel/casino earnings, plus long-term investments including home video and networked interactive video technology.

PERSONNEL NOTES

Namco America has promoted **Frank Cosentino** to VP of sales and marketing, while **Mike Cooper-Hart** has been promoted to VP of manufacturing (details next month). **Tim Jackson** will join **Rene Lopez** at GameStar in Chicago (708/797-6100) as of Sept. 1. Tim and Rene's prior home, Romstar, will remain active doing accounting and other operations (but not game sales) for the foreseeable future...By the way, that's the wrong **Bill Miller** whose photo was printed with his essay on AMOA charity work, inside this issue. Our apologies to both Williams Millers!



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PLAYERS' CHOICE • SEPTEMBER 1994

TOP GAMES NOW IN OPERATION, BASED ON EARNINGS-OPINION POLL OF OPERATORS

best upright videos

	MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
▶	**1 REVOLUTION X (Midway) (3)**	**8.97**	**25%**
	2 MORTAL KOMBAT II+ (Midway) (9)	8.75	92%
	3 VIRTUA FIGHTER★ (Sega) (8)	8.45	44%
▶	4 NBA JAM TOURN. ED.+ (Midway) (5)	7.94	69%
▶	5 LETHAL II: GUN FIGHTERS (Konami) (5)	7.82	25%
▶	6 SOLITAIRE CHALLENGE (Dynamo) (2)	7.73	11%
▶	7 UNDER FIRE (Taito) (3)	7.62	9%
	8 LETHAL ENFORCERS+ (Konami) (23)	7.48	67%
	9 RUN & GUN (Konami) (9)	7.35	29%
	10 NBA JAM+ (Midway) (18)	7.19	66%

\+ *indicates game was produced in both dedicated & software forms*
★ *indicates game was also produced in upright form*

best deluxe videos

(sitdowns, cockpits, arcade attractions)

▶	**1 DAYTONA USA (Sega) (4)**	**9.77**	**20%**
▶	2 T-MEK (Atari) (1)	9.67	5%
▶	3 SUZUKA II 8 HOURS (Namco) (6)	8.80	14%
▶	4 RIDGE RACERS 2 (Namco) (1)	8.80	5%
	5 OUTRUNNERS (Sega) (21)	8.71	19%
	6 RIDGE RACERS (Namco) (8)	8.67	14%
	7 VIRTUA RACING★ (Sega) (23)	8.37	49%
▶	8 THE LAST BOUNTY HUNTER+ (ALG) (1)	8.17	5%
	9 SUZUKA 8 HOURS (Namco) (23)	8.11	16%
	10 CYBERSLED (Namco) (9)	7.82	15%

\+ *indicates game was produced in both dedicated & software forms*
★ *indicates game was also produced in upright form*

best new games

FAST DRAW SHOWDOWN [deluxe] (ALG)

best video software

	MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
▶	**1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR [H] (Cap.) (2)**	**8.10**	**31%**
▶	2 GAL'S PANIC 2 [V] (Kaneko) (9)	7.80	7%
▶	3 DUNGEONS & DRAGONS [H] (Cap.) (5)	7.45	31%
▶	4 RAIDEN II [V] (Fabtek) (8)	7.33	38%
▶	5 AERO FIGHTERS 2 [S] (SNK) (1)	7.32	19%
▶	6 SAMURAI SHODOWN [S] (SNK) (14)	7.20	71%
▶	7 SUPER SIDEKICKS 2 [S] (SNK) (4)	7.17	17%
▶	8 WINDJAMMERS [S] (D.E./Neo•Geo) (6)	6.89	20%
	9 WORLD RALLY [H] (Atari) (13)	6.85	29%
▶	10 TWIN EAGLE II [V] (Seta) (3)	6.79	10%
▶	11 WORLD HEROES 2 JET [S] (SNK) (4)	6.74	29%
	12 GAL'S PANIC [V] (Kaneko) (10)	6.58	9%
▶	13 BLOOD STORM [H] (Strata) (4)	6.50	13%
	14 SUPER ST. FIGHTER II [H] (Capcom) (11)	6.36	62%
	15 ST. FTR II: C.E. TURBO [R] (Capcom) (19)	6.33	62%
	16 OFF ROAD TRAK PAK [R] (Leland) (36)	6.20	34%
	17 RAIDEN [V] (Fabtek) (49)	6.17	31%
	18 AERO FIGHTERS [V] (McO'River) (25)	6.02	31%
	19 DAIOH [V] (American Sammy) (10)	5.93	11%
	20 BUCKY O'HARE [H] (Konami) (5)	5.90	7%

[H] horizontal [V] vertical [S] system [R] retrofit

top pinball

▶	**1 WORLD CUP SOCCER (Midway) (3)**	**8.44**	**25%**
	2 STAR TREK (Williams) (7)	8.29	61%
	3 DEMOLITION MAN (Williams) (5)	8.15	37%
	4 ADDAMS FAMILY (Midway) (30)	7.94	76%
▶	5 RESCUE 911 (Gottlieb/Premier) (5)	7.76	24%
▶	6 GUNS N' ROSES (Data East) (1)	7.75	23%
	7 INDIANA JONES (Williams) (12)	7.43	46%
	8 TWILIGHT ZONE (Midway) (17)	7.33	72%
	9 CREAT./BLACK LAGOON (Midway) (18)	7.28	41%
	10 TERMINATOR 2 (Williams) (34)	7.00	58%

▶ *available brand new at certain distributors; number following brand shows months on chart including this one.*

RATING: *Operators were mailed "ballot sheets" listing games in active operation in U.S. locations and game centers and asked to "rate" the earning performance of each on the "1 to 10" measure: 10 for "power-house earnings," 9 for "excellent,' 8 for "very good game," 7 for "good game," 6 for "decent game," 5 for "just average," 4 for "below average," etc. The written votes were tallied up and divided by the actual number of times the specific game was rated. Hence, the decimal points.*

DIST.: *The percentage of the surveyed arcade and street location operators who have the item on location.*



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COVER

Showtime comes to San Antonio, TX with the Sept. 22-24 running of the AMOA Expo! And welcoming the world's amusement industry to "Alamo City" are the "cowboys" of Play-By-Play Toys & Novelties whose facility right there in San Antone supplies a wide line of merchandise for crane and redemption operators, and lately for the retail world as well. On the cover (and on the horses) are Play-By-Play's president Mark Gawlik (l) and CEO Art Torres. Standing (l to r) are Mike Cardinali, Bruce Chaffin, some short guy named "Fred Flintstone," VP Jay Foreman and Sid Karmia. The convention fun's already begun!

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EDITORIAL

Coin-op's nervous "calm before the storm" feeling has finally vanished, because it sounds to us like the storm has arrived. You've heard the "weather reports:" bad year-end numbers from Japan. Slumping sales at U.S. distributors and component makers. Less traffic in many arcades and gamerooms. Street video income off by as much as 60% in some cases. Layoffs at the operator, distributor and manufacturer levels. Abandoned locations. Bills backing up. Redemption and big simulators are earning great, and top hits still earn decent bucks. But nearly all else is flat — at best.

Some people enjoy thunderstorms. They love the dramatic display of electrical fireworks, the invigorating wind gusts, the nonstop sheets of rain. Certain segments of our industry are crackling with electricity and excitement, too — namely, the ones who have invested time and money finding new markets in recent years. That includes the big factories who are synergizing new technology, multi-level markets and pop culture. It includes one of America's biggest league operators, who's switching over 100% to modem-based darts. It includes redemption game makers and merchandise suppliers who have worked hard to build overseas business. It includes people opening new-concept simulator-centers and "VR cafes" here and abroad. It includes some who've figured out ways to cash in on the gambling craze, and those preparing to run "networked" games.

Is this storm just a passing summer blow? Or could it be the opening salvo in some industry seer's long-predicted shakeout? An AAMA's president publicly predicted a shakeout for manufacturers and distributors a few years ago. In recent times, several AMOA presidents have quietly predicted the same for operators. Our next storm-watch will come during this month's AMOA Expo. The show should be exciting and successful, full of strong new products. But long term, even a smash Expo with hit games can't save the dinosaurs. Let's hope some "Texas spirit" rubs off on the whole industry in San Antonio: bold, adventurous, visionary. Ready to try big, new things and tackle tough odds with a confident grin. Want to weather this storm? Then put up a lightning rod, (i.e. keep your eyes and ears wide open) recharge your batteries, (start dreaming and scheming again) and start thinking hard about where your company will be positioned this time next year..

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SEPTEMBER '94

INDEX

SPECIAL FEATURES

JAPAN'S RED INK
1993 fiscal year-end numbers are at last available for publicly held Japanese vidgame corporations. For most, profits were down due to Japan's recession and sluggish sales of consumer games, worldwide. A report from our overseas correspondent John Ryan....pg. 59

AMOA EXPO
The U.S. coin-op industry's biggest national trade show takes place this month. Our special Expo section includes a rundown of show logistics and schedules, exhibit floor plan, and comments from operators who plan to attend. Then we provide a huge report on AMOA association doings, starting with a major interview of incoming president Tami Norberg-Paulsen, plus reports from treasurer Randy Chilton and key committee leaders.....pg. 76

"MR. CD" SPEAKS
Seeburg patriarch Ed Blankenbeckler is the father of the CD jukebox. He spearheaded the drive for the "old" Seeburg to bow this seminal machine and has had the satisfaction of seeing it rejuvenate the jukebox biz. Now this visionary man predicts $1-per-song pricing by the year 2,000.....pg. 199

REGULAR FEATURES

ASSOCIATIONS IN ACTION....222
BOB RONDEAU 235
BIG TICKET 227
BUYERS' BULLETIN.....247
COVER STORY 141
DATEBOOK.....246
DISTRIBUTOR PROFILE.....152
FRANK TALK.....215
GRAPEVINE.....241
IN THE CROWD 88
JAPANESE CHART 234
LEGAL QUESTIONS.....221
LETTER FROM EUROPE.....48
NEWS DIGEST 31
NEW PRODUCTS.....237
ON YOUR MARK.....46
STEPPIN' UP.....26

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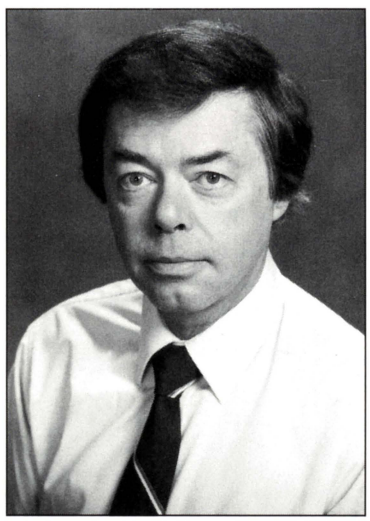

Back in the days of early television, I remember watching a drama about a midwest farm family that lost its wheat crop in a heavy duty hail storm. Just before their nightmare actually began, a scene took place between the grandpa and his little grandson. Both were staring up at the sky when suddenly, the gathering thunder stopped dead. Said gramps: "That, sonny, is what's called the quiet before the storm." Seconds later, ka-bam!! Down she came.

I'm not a sage, old grandpa yet, but I've been around this business long enough to know that the quiet of our summers disappears with the fall...when vacations end, the weather turns more temperate ("indoorsy") and new product hits the dealer showrooms. But as this is written, I can't tell you the number of times that guys have told me this particular summer's been generally soft-to-stinking in both product sales and collections on just about everything except the costly arcade videos and the redemption stuff.

It seems that every summer I've gone through has been criticized as "the worst", though one guy said, "this time it might be true." Maybe yes, maybe no, but one thing I'm certain is coming is a cycle up, because I've seen it happen so many times before. There's only so much we can all control, after all, and sometimes a cycle just has to play itself out. In other words, if you just go about your business (maybe with a tad more passion), the problem could go away all by itself (cross your fingers anyway).

The AMOA is coming in three weeks, but a number of manufacturers didn't wait for the show to kick off some nifty new things (a bunch are covered in this issue). Pog machines are coming (if you don't know what a "pog" is, you're gonna find out pretty quick) along with some mind-bending test collections being taunted on same. Also, it seems that SNK (which has done a standup job with their video system), won't be alone in that game. By our count, five other factories have plans to come forth with some kind of "quick change video game jukebox." So, there's all this and other "stuff" to look forward to in what I hope will be a general expectation of better days ahead.

Ed Rollman


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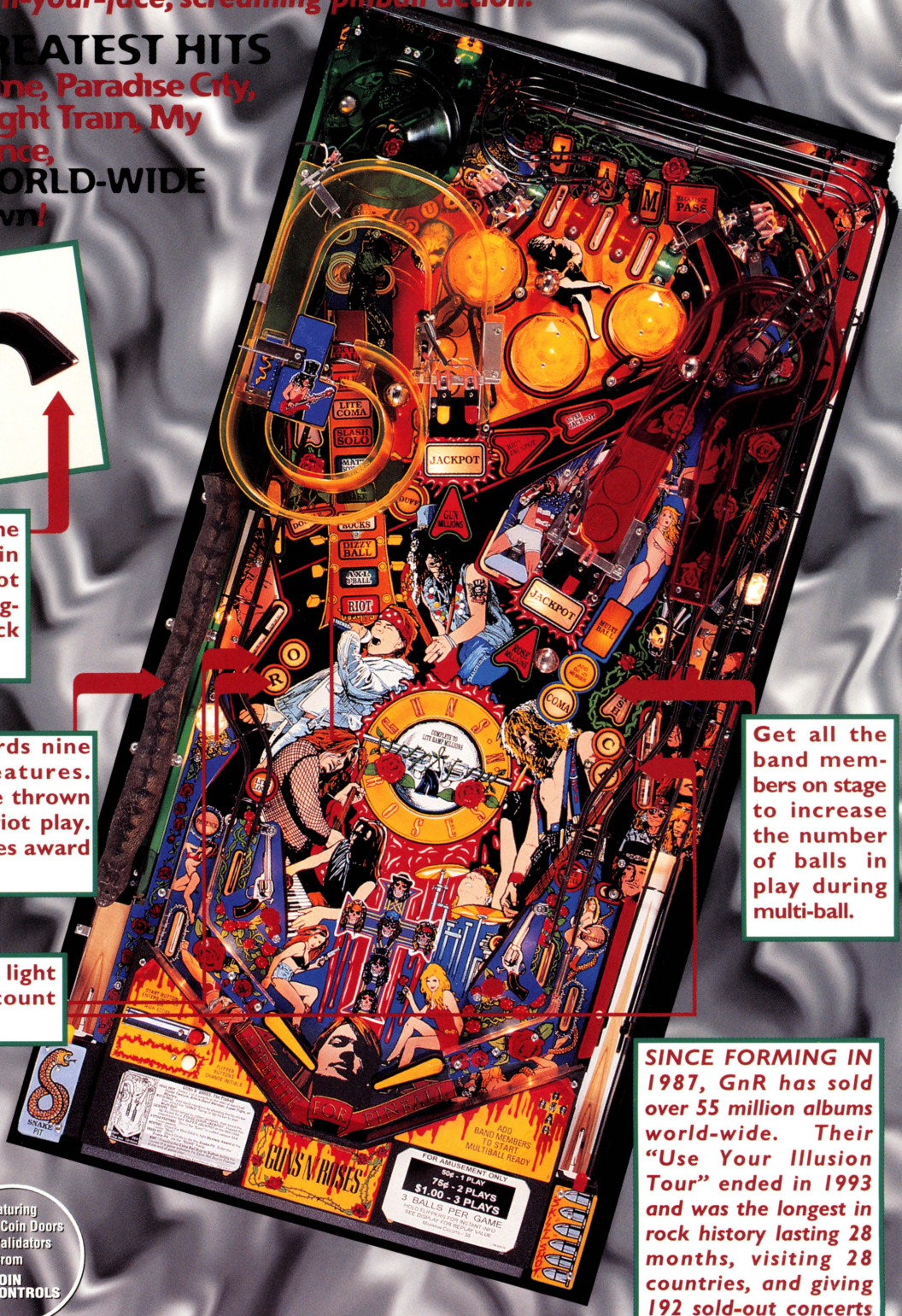

Slash's guitar shot rewards nine different riff-rocking features. Shoot 'em all and you'll be thrown into a mosh pit of 6-ball riot play. During riot play, all switches award platinum points!

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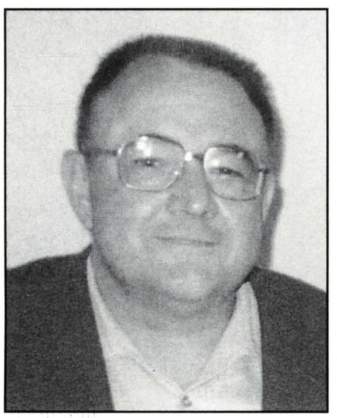

A 10-YEAR COIN-OP VET, STREET ROUTE OPERATOR DAVID D. LETHERT IS PRESIDENT OF MENDOTA VALLEY AMUSEMENT INC., INVER GROVE HEIGHTS, MINN.

BY DAVID LETHERT

SECURITY...FOR WHOM?

While preparing to write this article, I found myself perusing one of our popular trade magazines. In it I found three interesting advertisements by well-known manufacturers. The first was for a new high security coin door, the second for three different security level locks, and the third for new super video game cabinets. What do all three have in common? None of these manufacturers seem to give a damn for the real security problems we face as operators.

First, lets look at the coin doors used by most manufacturers on their new equipment. To say they are secure is like making the doors to our homes out of cardboard. Anyone over ten years old can open the door with an average size screwdriver and 30 seconds. Even when a hasp and padlock are added to the door lock, the whole eye bolt can be pulled right through the front of the cabinet (cheap composition board construction), and with a few more seconds, the hinge side can be opened and coin box removed. Notice I said a screwdriver; we have thieves running around with tire irons. Although considerable progress has been made in reliably getting the coins in the coin box, the problem of keeping the coins remains.

Next, lets look at locks. They are rated for security by the lock manufacturer for the number of tumblers, type of cylinder, and security of key duplication. The one thing they don't address is the poor quality of the cams that come with them. I have yet to see a coin machine lock cam that can stand a pair of average pliers. Screwdrivers and tire irons bend them even faster. No help for our problems there.

Finally, let's look at the cabinets themselves. If you look inside that fancy new cabinet, you find it's made of particle board. Particle board is the cheapest junk you can find in the lumber yard. We wouldn't make a doghouse out of it, yet we accept it as part of the many-thousand-dollar equipment we make our living with. If it gets wet it crumbles. When a coin door is put on it with a small hasp and padlock, our neighborhood thieves use their screwdrivers and tire irons to pull the eye bolt and two-inch washer right through the cabinet wall. Real security all-right!

A couple of game manufacturers have made some effort and should be commended. Premier supplies a good looking chrome safety bar with their pinball machines, and their cabinets are made of plywood and provide a much improved safety factor. Arachnid provides a three-point lock on their dart machines, but the door is still made of thin, easy-to-bend metal.

Now I am not naive enough to believe that we can protect our games from a well-equipped thief with plenty of time (our customers are notorious for having seen nothing after a break-in), but with a few relatively inexpensive changes we can make a significant improvement in our loss ratios for theft by break-in of our games. Some of these are as follows:

- Coin door frames should be made of steel, not cast metal.
- The doors themselves should be made of substantially stronger material. (At the last ACME show I looked at a door that was secure. It was made of steel and no kid with a screwdriver is going to open it in 30 seconds.)
- Lock cams should be made of treated steel that is much stronger. This will necessitate making the lock itself stronger so that the nut cannot be stripped off the cam stud and the lock mounting nut cannot be easily stripped off the lock.
- Cabinets should be made of plywood. Especially the front and the back door.

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The change to plywood would also greatly reduce cabinet weight and probably improve our workers compensation insurance cost. Steel security plates should also be added to the back doors along the opening side where the lock is located.

The changes I have listed would add no more than $50 to the cost of a new game. When you eliminate the cost of the after-market junk we now add to the cabinets, the price would just about wash.

While I was at ACME, I stopped at many manufacturers' booths to talk about game security. As if prearranged, each party placed the blame on everyone but themselves. Each game manufacturer blamed the coin door suppliers saying that they used the best they could buy. Each coin door manufacturer said it was the game people's fault because they would only buy the cheapest door they could find. One manufacturer told me that the reason cabinets were built so poorly is that the operators don't want to pay for good cabinets. That might have been true 15 years ago when break-ins were not very common, but I don't believe it's true today.

I say it is ultimately we, the operators, who are at fault. We have allowed the game makers to fill and secure their cash boxes at our expense. It is time we demand that our needs be addressed. For years we have let the suppliers tell us what we are going to get. It's time we adopt the slogan of Howard Beal from the movie "Network": "I'm damn mad and I'm not going to take it anymore!" The only way things will change is if we demand change and refuse to buy the new games if improvement is not forthcoming. It is ludicrous to pay $3,000 plus for a game and not require the makers to put in the small amount of extra security we need. ◆

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"We've operated Wacky Gators for years and its earnings are consistently among the best of our redemption products. It's an extremely important part of our redemption game mix." John Werner, Game Merchandising Manager, Namco Cybertainment, Inc.



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NEWS DIGEST



SAN ANTONIO
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OVERLAPPING SHOWS: AMOA '94 IS BIGGER, JAMMA '94 IS SMALLER

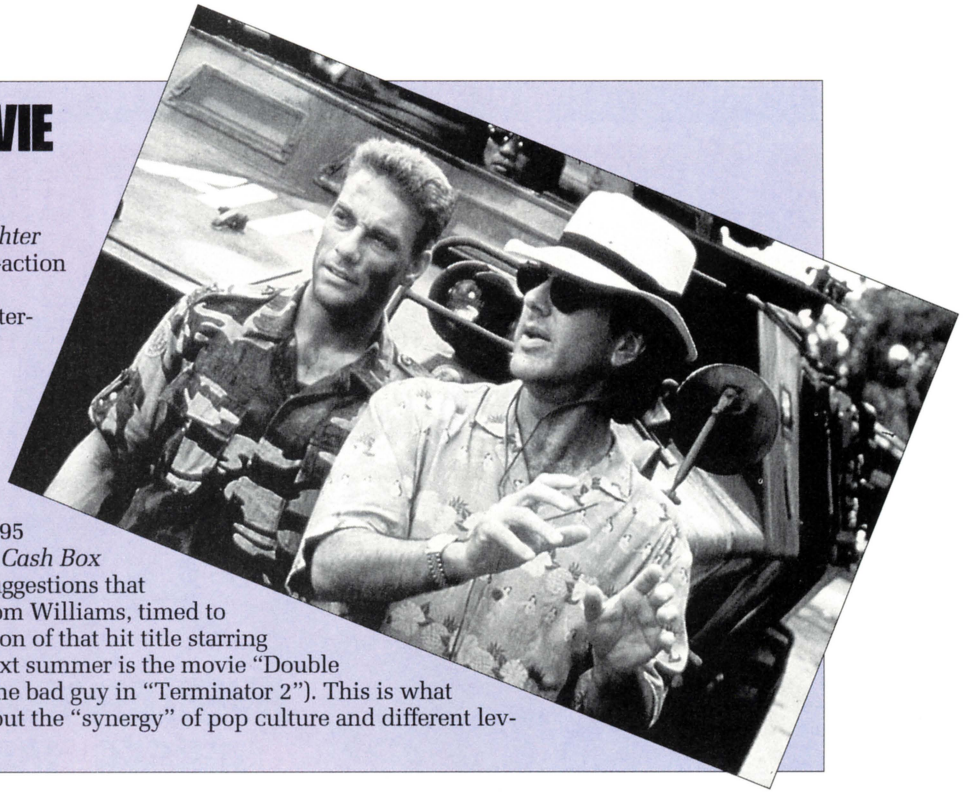
What if two of the industry's top trade shows were held at the same time? Europe learned the answer during the last couple of years — somebody's show gets bigger (U.K.) and somebody else's gets smaller (Germany). History repeats itself this month in North America and Asia, where AMOA and JAMMA are holding their shows at almost the exact same times. AMOA's **Expo '94** (San Antonio, Texas, Sept. 22-24) will be their biggest yet in terms of exhibitor numbers and booth space (well over 1,000). However, JAMMA '94 (Chiba, Sept. 21-22) didn't fare so well. According to *Game Machine Magazine,* JAMMA will have 65 exhibitors and 1,391 booths this year (last year they had 67 exhibitors and 1,510 booths). AMOA's Asian attendance may be off a tad, since many Japanese manufacturers are keeping more of their personnel at home this year for obvious reasons. JAMMA's attendance may be harder to track because they allow the general public in during the third day. Catch AMOA show coverage in our special section starting on **page 76**. Special thanks to the San Antonio Convention & Visitors Bureau for the gorgeous photographs that appear on the intro pages inour Expo section, as well as the photo above (photographer Al Rendon specifically provided the photos of the River Walk, La Villita and the Alamo on page 76).

"SNEAK" PREVIEW OF NEW PRODUCT AT AMOA EXPO

Not all companies could or would give details, but here's some of what you'll see at AMOA Expo '94 in San Antonio, Texas this month...**Sega** has placed a virtual reality sitdown shooting game (with head-mounted display) in its new Yokohama theme park and at Disney World-Orlando; could *VR-1* be headed for San Antonio as well? *Amusement Business Europe* advises that Sega's also got *Wing Warfare,* a two-player deluxe sitdown flying simulator with polygon graphics...**Williams/ Bally-Midway** should have its *Flintstones* pinball ready for U.S. shipment by Expo; it's already been sold in Europe...**Premier Technology** will bow a flipper called *Freddy: A Nightmare on Elm Street*...***Capcom*** will show *Armored Warriors,* a two-player head-to-head martial arts game (dedicated upright or kit), along with *Darkstalkers,* which was previewed last issue...Product at SNK Corp.'s booth will include *Aggressors of Dark Combat,* a Neo-Geo system game with eight characters, fighting and wrestling moves, and up-down motion as well as sideways scrolling...**Taito America** will debut its 32 bit "Cybercore System," the first to utilize cartridge software for coin-op. System software shown at Expo will include *Global Champion,* a two-player fighting tournament game with nine wild characters; *Bubble Symphony* features cute characters in a two-player adventure; *Hat Trick Hero '94* lets 1-4 players choose from 30 teams to compete for soccer's World Cup (zoom-in, instant replays, etc.); *Darius III* offers horizontal shoot-'em-up action for two players. Taito's also got two Neo-Geo titles, *Power Spikes II* and the cute character, puzzle-strategy game *Bust A Move.* Finally, Taito will release a dedicated gun game: *Operation Wolf III*...New product from **Strata Group** will include *Pairs,* a "concentration" style card game with family, redemption and adult (striptease) modes...**Utopia Technologies** will have an immersive "VR videodisc system" for preview by appointment only (call Steve Bergenholtz at 214/517-3377 to schedule a viewing)...**Rock-Ola** will have its *Rocket II: the Second Thrust* along with small but nifty upgrades for their *Legend* full-sized CD juke.

NEWS DIGEST

VIDGAME TO MOVIE TO...PINBALL?



Capcom's top-selling *Street Fighter* games are being turned into a live-action movie starring **Jean-Claude Van Damme** for the Christmas '94 theater-going season. (See story inside this issue for a sneak preview.) Capcom recently announced that digitized footage from this film will be used to create a future entry in the *Street Fighter* vidgame series. Coin-op release is set for 1995. And could it be that GameStar (the new Chicago factory with Capcom majority ownership) could release its first pinball in 1995 using the "Street Fighter" movie as its theme? *Cash Box International* floated that report, along with suggestions that 1995 may also see a *Mortal Kombat* pinball from Williams, timed to coincide with release of the silver screen version of that hit title starring Christopher Lambert. Due sometime before next summer is the movie "Double Dragon" starring Robert Patrick (who played the bad guy in "Terminator 2"). This is what major manufacturers mean when they talk about the "synergy" of pop culture and different levels of multimedia marketing.



THE SYSTEMS ARE COMING, THE SYSTEMS ARE COMING!

Software for SNK's Neo-Geo vidgame system appears all over *RePlay's* monthly vidgame earnings chart. Maybe that's one reason why Williams, Sega, Namco and Taito are coming out with coin-op systems of their own? (Or maybe they're getting in position to introduce their own modem-based networked video games downstream.) As reported earlier this year, **Williams'** system will be based on Silicon Graphics technology taken from Nintendo's advanced 64-bit home system. WMS promises their system will be much more advanced than what Nintendo players get at home. **Sega's** coin-op system "Titan" will be linked to its new 32-bit "Saturn" home platform, also as reported earlier. Now we hear from several sources that **Namco** will have a coin-op system as well, utilizing technology from Sony's forthcoming "PS-X PlayStation" home vidgame platform. Namco has helped develop Sony's hardware, and is already working on adapting its arcade hits (like *Ridge Racer)* to the Sony home system. **Taito America** will debut the coin-op industry's first cartridge-based 32-bit CPU platform, called the "Cybercore System," at this month's AMOA Expo. Conversions and maintenance are easy, said Taito; just plug a new cartridge into the main board. Taito promises vivid, beautiful images (with literally up to 17 million colors). A sound-dedicated 16-bit CPU is included; hi-fi stereo sound available. **Jaleco** says it will offer 32-bit "system" software too but plans for this remain unclear to us. By the way, we remind you that **SNK** itself has previously announced plans to bring out a 32-bit "super" coin-op system (alongside Neo-Geo, which they will continue to support with new software). Does this mean Japan has finally heard street operators' cries of pain, their pleas for cheap kits, and their requests for longer lead-times between coin-op and home game release dates? We'll see. Meantime, Acclaim Entertainment says the home version of *Mortal Kombat II* hits store shelves Sept. 9. With luck, operators could get a brief earnings spike on this title as kids revisit the game on location. This phenomenon happened with the original *Mortal Kombat* last year.

ATLAS OPENS IN DETROIT

Atlas Distributing added yet another branch office to its network Aug. 8, with the opening of a store at 32232 Eight Mile Rd. in Farmington Hills, Mich. Under the direction of **Tom Stewart** (formerly with CleCoin in the Detroit market), the outlet will offer operators "every line we handle in our Chicago headquarters," said bossman **Jerry Marcus.** Jerry and his partner **Eddie Pellegrini** say Tom's the man for the job. "He's made the Detroit area viable and he's very popular with customers up there," Jerry advised. Parts and service are also offered. Folks can ring Tom up at 810/615-1703 (fax is -0751).

HALF CENTURY CLUB MEETING

All club members and industry veterans with 25 or more years in the trade are invited to gather at the AMOA show in San Antonio, Texas on Friday, Sept. 23 (3-5PM) in Plaza "D" of the San Antonio Convention Center. Room is courtesy of AMOA EVP John Schumacher; Dynamo Corp.'s Bill Ricket springs for refreshments. Very important: if you plan to attend, please notify Steve Kordek (312/961-1548) or Jim McNeely (210/824-9223).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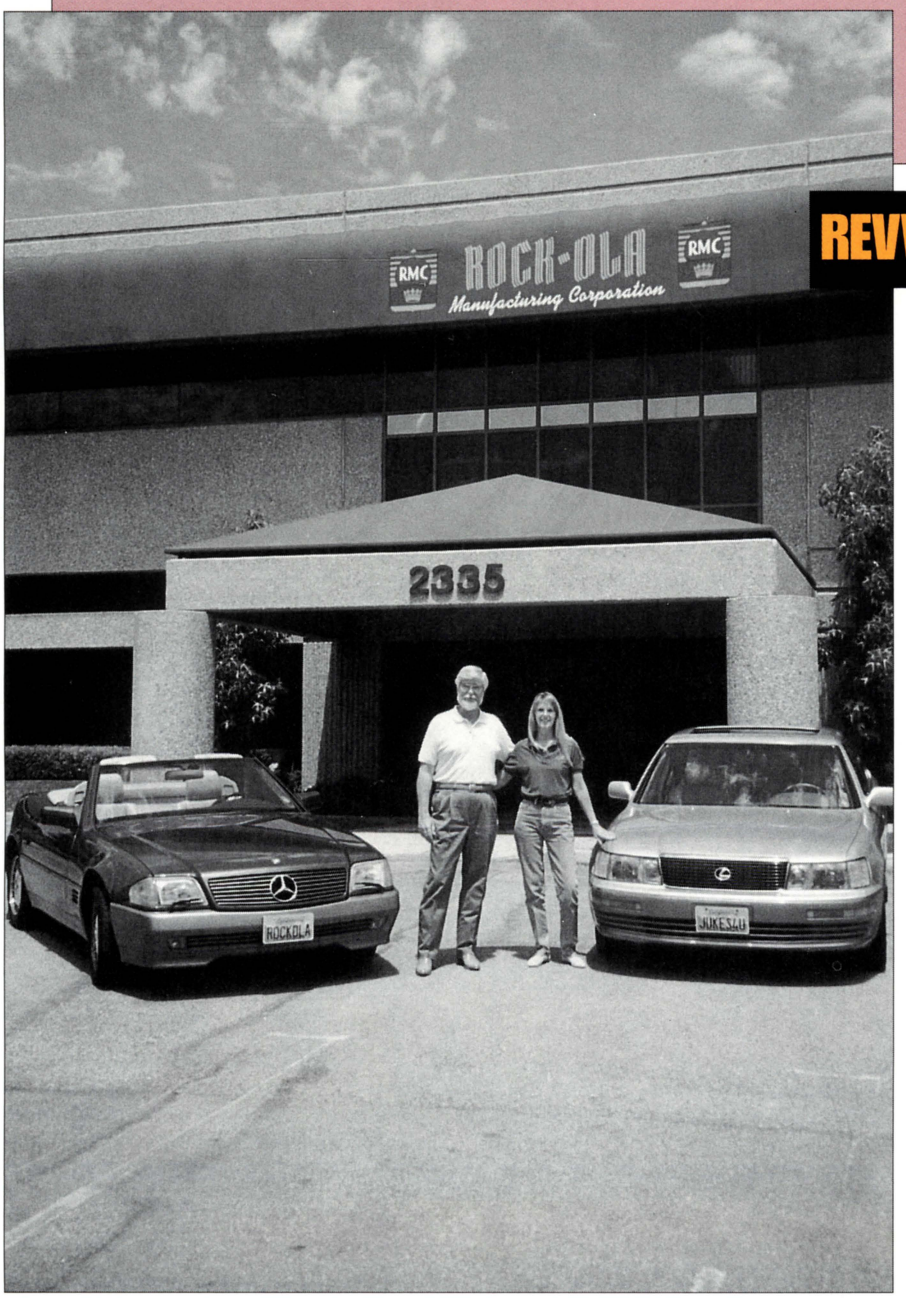
NEWS DIGEST

IDSA UNVEILS RATINGS FOR HOME GAMES; NOW IT'S OUR TURN

The Interactive Digital Software Assn. (IDSA) at last presented details of its plans for rating home video games on July 29. Speaking to joint hearings of two U.S. Senate committees, IDSA chairman **Jack Heistand** outlined five categories, each with suggested age ranges: "Early Childhood" (age 3 and up), "Kids to Adult" (age 6 and up), "Teen" (age 13 and up), "Mature" (age 17 and up), and "Adult" (18 and up). Along with these symbols, verbal content descriptions will appear on the back of the box for home game rental or purchase. These descriptions will explain what type of content earned the rating. For example, games in the "Teen" category could say "Realistic Violence" and/or "Suggestive Sexual Themes." Games in the "Mature" category could carry descriptions like "Realistic Blood and Gore"; "Adult" games might say "Strong Sexual Content." An anonymous, independent ratings board in New York will preview games of participating factories and will decide which rating each game receives. Manufacturers will pay a small fee for the rating procedure — $500 per title to start, although smaller firms might pay less. Leaders of AMOA and AAMA met with the ratings board's **Dr. Arthur Pober** in his New York offices on Aug. 8 to discuss how this system might be adapted for coin-op games. Learn more in our story on **page 53.**



REVVING UP AT ROCK-OLA

Here's Rock-Ola Mfg. Corp. president **Glenn Streeter** along with wife **Jody** and their stylized "coin-op" license plates (His: "Rock-Ola"...Hers: "Jukes 4U"). Glenn reports that R-O's sales are up 150% for the first six months of 1994 as compared to 1993's first half. (No mean feat, since total '93 sales had been up 37% over 1992). R-O and sister company Antique Apparatus just finished the best July in company history. "We're screaming into August," Glenn enthused. New distributors for the growing firm include Operators' Distributors (N.C.); Revenco (Pittsburgh); Wild Distributing (Houston); Willow Distributing (Maryland); Laniel (Quebec); Escape Electronics (Australia); Moorman Automaten (Germany); and Cah Distributing (Hong Kong). By the way, Glenn just turned 50 and Jody caught him off-guard with a surprise birthday bash.

CREDIT DUE

A Viewpoint response in last month's issue credited Steve Ritchie with developing the great *Space Shuttle* pingame. While Steve's done some outstanding pins (e.g. *Flash* and *T2)*, it was **Barry Oursler,** with team members Larry Demar and Joe Kaminkow, who designed the *Shuttle*. Barry's also credited with *Gorgar, Cyclone, Pinbot* & *Dracula* to name a few others.

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NEWS DIGEST

SEGA CHANNEL TEAMS WITH VIACOM

Over one million subscribers in five states are customers of Viacom cable TV programming, and they're going to have the Sega Channel added to their services on a phase-in basis starting at the end of this year. That should bring Sega Channel's total player potential to 31 million subscribers on various cable TV systems when they go online across the USA. TCI and Time-Warner are already participating. Sega's currently directing a three-month field test of the video game channel in 12 markets to determine the best pricing and programming mix. Players can tune in to Sega Channel 24 hours a day, hook up their Genesis home game system, and download their game of choice from a menu of 50 titles or so.

VENDING PROFITS UP IN 1993, NAMA REPORTS



1993 operating profit margins were up 3.7% (compared to 1.8 in '92), among vending firms participating in NAMA's recent survey. But on closer look, it was a story of "the big keep getting bigger, and the small keep getting smaller." The top 25 performers reported 8.8% operating profit margins, up very slightly (.3%) over last year. Firms with sales under $1 million reported a 2.7% operating loss in 1993, only half of 1992's losses. Stats showed the toal vending sales volume hit $1.8 billion in '93, up by $100 million. NAMA gives more details in its 1994 Operating Ratio Report, just published by the vending association. Call them at 312/346-0370 for a copy — it's $100 for members. Non-members pay more but can apply part of the price to membership fees.

NSM PUTS 2,000TH UNIT INTO MULTIMEDIA RESOURCE FIRM

NSM's nifty 100-CD changer has more uses than just coin-op jukeboxes. The changer can quickly grab and deploy those data-packed discs called CD-ROMs for various other purposes as well. For instance, a San Francisco firm called intouch (small "i") recently installed its 2,000th NSM changer for the "iStation" — an interactive, multimedia kiosk that lets retail music store customers sample selections from nearly 40,000 albums. Each CD-ROM holds samples from 150 albums. Each "iStation" kiosk can play snippets from up to 60,000 albums. NSM's sales agent for this product is Euroson America. NSM-America VP **Jurgen Jost** marked the milestone by presenting its first and biggest CD-ROM client with an NSM *Nostalgia Gold* jukebox and plaque. Photo shows, from left: Jurgen Jost, Euroson prexy **Kevin Byrne** and intouch CEO **Tom Silinski.** NSM expects to keep developing its CD-ROM technology, and keep expanding the line's sales and applications.



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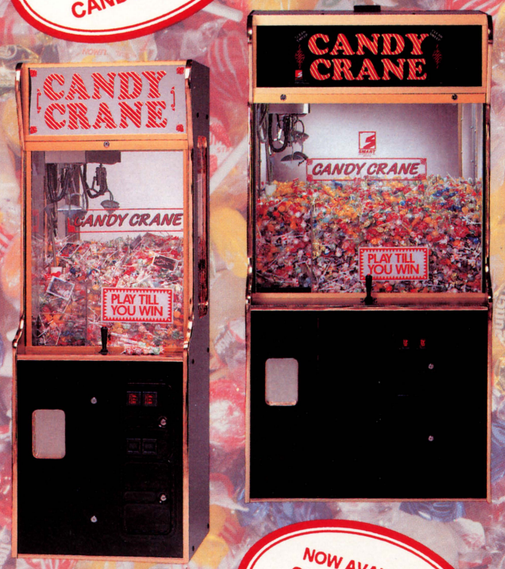

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• 66″ high	• 69¾″ high

REFRIG. CRANE

SINGLE	DOUBLE
• 24″ wide	• 47⅛″ wide
• 36″ deep	• 36″ deep
• 68″ high	• 69¾″ high

SUPER SINGLE

- 34″ wide
- 24″ deep
- 66″ high

WEIGHT:

- 325 lbs.
- 490 lbs. (REF.)



REFRIGERATED CANDY CRANE NOMINATED MOST INNOVATIVE NEW TECHNOLOGY BY AMOA 1994

WEIGHT:

CANDY CRANE		REFRIG. CRANE	
SINGLE	DOUBLE	SINGLE	DOUBLE
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-Frank Seninsky, ALPHA OMEGA

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SHOOT TO WIN BASKETBALL

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EYES AGO AT POG TESTS; TWO FIRMS NOW HAVE 'EM



As reported last month, **Steve Shoemaker** (Wedges/Ledges) put his creative genius to a pog pusher that's been licensed to Lazer-Tron and should be on the market by Expo. Patent process has begun. What's a pog? Baby, if you don't know, you'll quickly learn these little round cardboard discs (printed with an endless variety of symbols and logos) are red-hot collectibles with youngsters, especially in California and Hawaii where the craze started. Lazer-Tron will call Steve's machine *Pogger;* his own company will build some called *Pic'N Win.* Rumors from a competitor say a test unit in Steve's SoCal arcade did an incredible $21,000 in one month!

Kyle Hodgetts (Tickets & Things, Foster City, Calif.) has also developed a rotary pog pusher called *Pog Zone* (shown in photo below). Kyle says he did $1,500 in a 12-hour test at a California arcade. Conclusive word on his marketing plans may appear in "Hot Off the Press." Meantime, Expo-goers better write the word "pog" on their must-see list and Lazer-Tron's exhibit is an obvious place to start.

FACTORY NOTES

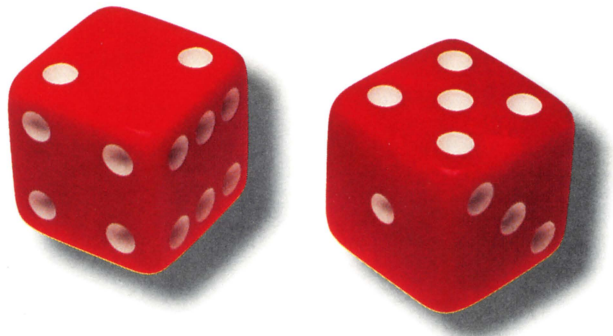


Could coin-op soon get a chance to operate today's hottest game in the desktop computer world? It's called *Doom,* from **id Software** (Mesquite, Texas) and one game reviewer claims it's "far and away the best game yet developed on PC or any other platform." Company execs told *RePlay* they're negotiating with one of our industry's mega-arcade chains for rights to license a coin-op version. *Business Week* reported Aug. 1 that nearly 100,000 consumers had purchased the complete $40 home game package (as a come-on, you can download the first few stages of the game for free, or buy them for under $5). Superb graphics and simple but non-stop "kill or be killed" action (in the tradition of their best-selling *Wolfenstein 3D)* are reasons why fans are ga-ga over this one. By the way, we're told players can already play up to against three others "via network, modem or serial link." *Doom 2* hits the retail shelves on Oct. 10 and id Software execs are already shopping around the movie rights...**Konami Co. Ltd.** opened its fourth Japanese R&D center on Aug. 1, a five-story building of about 13,000 square meters. It's dedicated to coin-op game development and production...**Data East** is extending the production run of their redemption classic, *Wacky Gator,* through 1994 — six months past the original planned date to shut down the line. Why? Sr. EVP Gary Stern said they "oversold" units at ACME and later... **Simon Deith** info's that his dealership has expanded its export department to fully cover Latin and South American markets. Professional translator Tony Flores is responsible for both areas and Simon says they're "vitally committed" to Latin American customers. Call Yony at 516/ 621-1234 (fax is -1238)... **Lazer-Tron** has received UL listings for nine of their games *(Aftershock, Awesome Toss 'Em, Jungle Rama, Ribbit Racin', Shake Rattle & Roll, Spin-A-21, Spin-To-Win, The Wave, Wild Thing).* They plan to obtain UL listings on all future games they manufacture.

NEWS DIGEST

GAMING NOTES

Bally Gaming, Inc. has entered into a preferred vendor agreement with the nation's largest hotel franchiser, Hospitality Franchise Systems, whereby HFS will market Bally's slot and video products to owners and operators of its affiliated gaming facilities. HFS has about 4,000 chain establishments on three continents — from Ramada Inns to Howard Johnsons and Super 8 Motels — and they've recently entered the gaming industry...Lots of news at **Video Lottery Technologies.** In July they announced an agreement to purchase Imagineering Systems, Inc. (world's leading suppliers of computerized keno games with 90% of the U.S. keno market), pending regulatory approval. The firm reported second-quarter earnings down a bit compared to last year's, and said federal judges in Montana would decide whether or not to approve their planned settlement of a stockholders' suit alleging inadequate disclosures, etc. The company has proposed giving plaintiffs over $2 million in cash plus issuing 400,000 shares of common stock...**Drew's Distributing** obtained approval for its *Treasure Chest* 9-line vidgame for Minnesota reservation casinos. Gaming Laboratories, Inc. tested and okayed the hardware, software and random number generator. Comes with 19" monitor, payout hopper, bill acceptor ($1-100), locking removable magazine and three internal progressive jackpots... Likewise, **Tekbilt** says New Jersey's gaming enforcement division has approved their *ICM 1000* casino changer. Basically, that means the state feels it meets quality and security standards (see New Products for details)...Colorado-based **Stuart Entertainment, Inc.** is humming. They've obtained investment financing to help acquire Canada's top bingo supplies and equipment manufacturer and distributor. They completed a major installment of their cashless, electronic bingo and gaming system at the prestigious Foxwoods (Indian) casino in Connecticut; it's called System 12 and can handle hundreds of terminals and several simultaneous live games via a central computer. Finally, the firm reported record second-quarter sales, leading to 30% increases in share earnings. Income from operations during the six months ending June 30, 1994 increased by 22% on record six-month sales, said the firm which is traded on NASDAQ.



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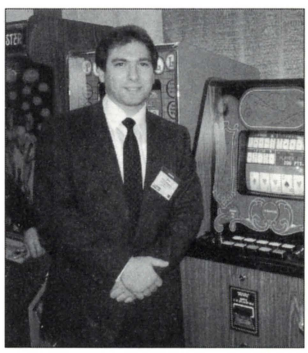
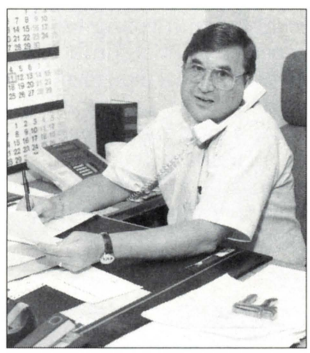


JIM PIETRANGELO



ART WARNER

Coin Concepts, Inc. (East Brunswick, N.J.) has completed an assets purchase agreement with Amutronics, Inc. (Asbury Park) giving them exclusive rights to certain technologies produced by the latter firm. CCI prexy **Art Warner** made the announcement on Aug. 8. CCI has also purchased the rights to manufacture Amutronics' coin-op redemption games including *Bouncing Bandit, Double Cross, Wacky Wheels, Three Ring Circus* and *Over the Rainbow.* As part of the agreement, CCI will provide service and support for all existing Amutronics products. Amutronics prexy **Jim Pietrangelo** thanked his company's supporters for making some of his titles "winners in a very competitive marketplace...Frankly speaking, it takes a great deal of capital to move a new manufacturing company up to the next level in the business cycle. After much soul searching, we decided our products would be better served if they were placed in the hands of a larger, more established concern such as CCI. Art and Gary Warner have done amazing things with that company in a relatively short period of time. We believe Amuntronics' line will prove to be deserving of their confidence." CCI's sales & marketing VP **Gary Warner** praised Jim's games as "moderately priced, high earners" and said CCI wished him the best (Jim's moving to Skilo-Bingo, a new firm under the A.R.M.S. auspices)...By the way, CCI was thrilled to announced it has shipped 700 *Home Run Hitters* since the AMCE show last spring. Art Warner thanked distributors for their support and predicted this nifty game would "remain a winner for a long time to come...it's still gaining momentum," he smiled.

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NEWS DIGEST

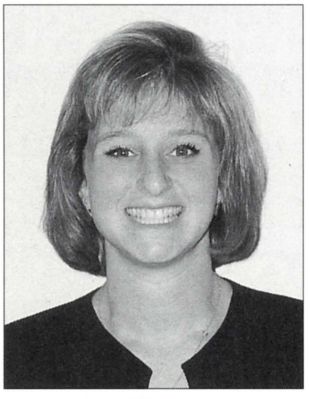
COIN-OP NAMES IN THE NEWS

Ryuichi Hirata became president of Capcom USA on July 1. Longtime subsid prexy **George Nakayama** had held this post for nine years; he was scheduled to return to the Osaka head office and assume special duties, working directly with company founder and chairman Kenzo Tsujimoto.

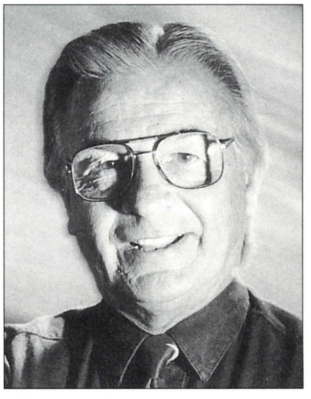
Alicia Sadoff, has joined EMT Kiddie Rides as sales manager for all U.S. and Canadian sales. She formerly held the same title with Strata Group and said joining the new firm (EMT's been here less than a year) offers fine growth potential, especially with all the new FEC's springing up. NSM-America's sales & marketing VP John Margold praised her "strong customer service attitude."

Bob Horjust is the new director of finance and administration for Acclaim Coin-Operated Entertainment, Inc., reporting directly to company president Tom Petit who cited his "business acumen and vital experience." Bob was previously Sega Enterprises' accounting chief. His prior posts include stints at Davis-Lay, Inc., Mallard's Restaurant, Inc., and Coopers & Lybrand.

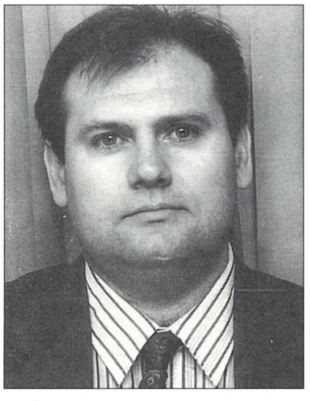
Over at Acclaim Entertainment (the parent firm), **Mark Chaves, Annmarie Koenig, David Mullins II** and **Mark Neumann** are new artists in Acclaim Entertainment's stable. They'll do character programming and design, scene animation and special effects using the firm's patented "motion capture" technology. Their collective experience includes work for U.S. and Japanese network TV, leading computer firms, Disney MGM Studios and commercial movies. **Joe Caioloa** has been promoted to senior manager of their management information systems, while **Jeremy Schwartz** was named senior R&D manager. **Robin Seaver** is the new director of engineering, where she'll oversee the engineering department as it designs and manufacturers games for home and coin-op, designs tools to help with software development, and implements the firm's motion capture technology. She'll also set up their motion capture studio at the new Glen Cove, N.Y. corporate headquarters. **Frank Forster** has been promoted from senior software engineer to engineering manager, running technical support and testing new game platforms.



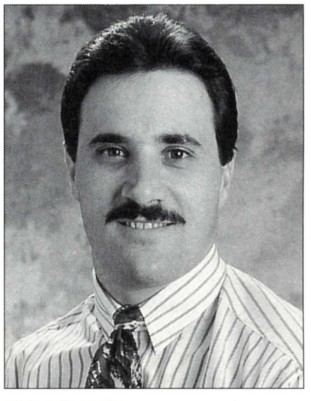
ALICIA SADOFF



STAN JAROCKI



STEVE NOVAK



RICK SHAFF

Stan Jarocki (sales & marketing VP at American Laser Games) has been named to the "Who's Who Registry of Global Business Leaders," reflecting the many successes of his remarkable 44-year coin-op career. This is the Bally-Midway veep who bowed *Space Invaders* and *Pac-Man* to the U.S., not to mention licensing the latter character to 125 firms. Stan also energetically defended their copyright/trademark claims. Stan's also associated with industry milestones at Seeburg, Universal Research Labs, and his founding co-partnership in Grand Products. Congratulations!

Steve Novak is the new technical support manager for the newly combined Data East USA and Data East Pinball's technical service departments. He moved to Chicago from DE's California branch and deals mostly with phone support for video and redemption games, RMA procedures and operator repairs of PCBs. He'll also keep helping DE's pinball service chief as they assist operators in flipper repair. DE praised Steve's seven years of experience and dedication to the firm.

Jerry Flynn has joined WMS Gaming, Inc. as midwest regional sales manager, where he'll head sales efforts to boost market penetration in a fast-growing region, develop new business and maintain existing relationships and opportunities. Jerry earlier held senior positions with Bally Gaming, United Coin Machine, and IGT.

Allan Ross has been appointed international marketing director for Leisure Games, Inc., the Norwood, Mass. manufacturer of coin-op games. He'll create an international outlet for their products. His previous post was national field sales manager for Rowe International. He's also managed a Rowe dealership in Florida and did sales management of Customusic in the New England region.

Bo Bowditch is the new California sales rep for Chicago Lock Co., bringing over 20 years' experience to the post (prior stints were at HPC and Weslock).

Rick Shaff has been promoted to Pacific Rim program director at IGT, where he'll lead all phases of international market development to provide products and services in that region. IGT already has a very successful Aussie subsidiary up and running.

Doug Sanderson is the new sales VP for Sega Enterprises' gaming division. He'll work from their new Vegas facility (6311 Industrial Rd., Las Vegas). The move follows Doug's prior stints at Bally Gaming and IGT, where he held sales director posts. Gaming division chairman Joe Robbins praised Doug's extensive knowledge of both the Vegas and worldwide gaming markets.

Gail Markels is the new general counsel for IDSA (Interactive Digital Software Assn.). Her prior post was VP of the movie ratings group MPAA (Motion Picture Assn. of America), so she has lots of experience with both the legal, political and creative aspects of rating entertainment products. She'll help IDSA work with Congress and state governments on vidgame rating issues. **Carolyn Rausch** has been appointed IDSA's senior VP. Another MPAA vet, she handled state and local government affairs and litigation for MPAA film studio members.

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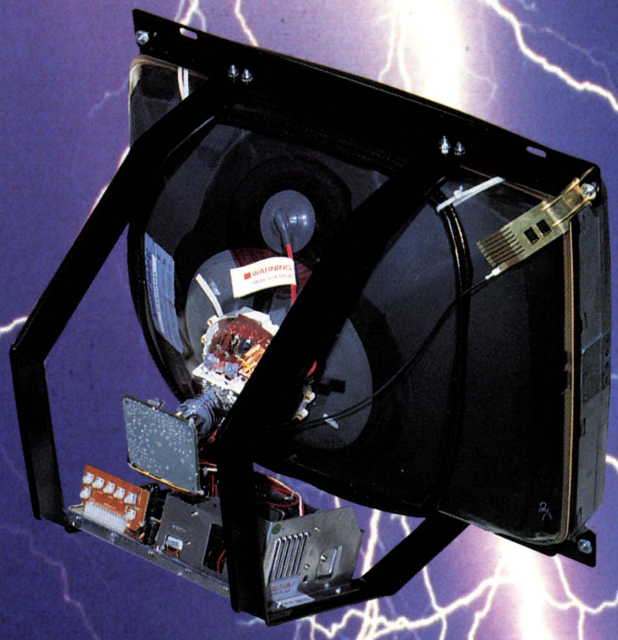

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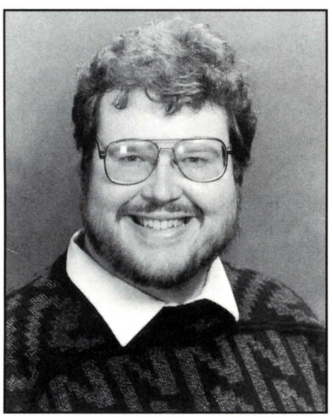

HOLLYWOOD DISCOVERS THE OPERATOR

Believe it or not, Paramount Pictures has released a movie whose hero is a coin machine operator. The movie is called "Flesh and Bone" (available on video cassette). It stars Dennis Quaid as Arlis Sweeney, a small route operator in rural Texas. He mopes through the story in a Stetson, blue jeans and (of course) a big set of keys dangling from his belt. Meg Ryan and James Caan also star.

What does this film do for the "image of the industry"? It's mixed. The good news is, Arlis Sweeney is a man of honor. He treats his customers fairly, rescues a girl in danger, and bravely confronts and overcomes evil (when he's finally forced to). The bad news is, Arlis is an extreme loner who would rather deal with machines than people. His face is about as expressive as a Coke vender. He makes long, lonely drives across the Texas badlands, hauling machines in the back of his battered pickup. That's his escape from human beings.

Arlis sleeps with a different woman in each town, servicing them with about as much passion as he restocks Milky Ways in his tired old vending machines. His life is predictable, dull, safe. His route has become a routine...his routine has become a rut...and that's exactly the way he likes it. "I'm a creature of habit," he says. "I go to the same places, see the same people, eat the same food. I don't like surprises." Arlis is the very definition of a neurotic — afraid to live, afraid to feel, afraid to be. He's as close to a living zero as he can possibly make himself.

The movie paints an equally dreary picture of the industry as a whole. Arlis' route is made up of dilapidated truckstops, restaurants, gas stations and motels. He runs vending machines, vinyl jukeboxes, and ancient novelties like a "Brainy Betty" (a tic-tac-toe game with a live chicken inside who competes against the player). The movie even passes along some coin machine lore as Arlis spray-paints rolls of dimes, leaving this "blue money" with location owners as a promotional tool. "A man will come into a place and if the jukebox isn't playing, he'll be too shy to start it up," Arlis explains. "He may not even notice it's there. But if it's already playing, he'll spend his own money to keep it going."

Arlis is shown playing dominoes with other operators in a bowling alley. He's also shown collecting and stocking his machines, and visiting a distributor whose dusty inventory predates the Kennedy Administration. Obviously, Arlis isn't a gung-ho member of AMOT or AMOA! Just as obviously, this movie isn't propaganda for the coin machine industry. Arlis Sweeney lives on the margins of society. The details of his lonely story were chosen to make a dramatic point about an alienated man.

"Flesh and Bone" wasn't intended to achieve documentary accuracy. But I wonder how many operators out there may resemble Arlis in more ways than we'd like to believe. At the States Council meeting last February, AMOA president R.A. Green talked about the nameless, faceless, "loner operators" out there who don't belong to their state or national associations...don't associate with their fellow operators...and don't coordinate their political strategy with the rest of the industry.

R.A. wisely said we need this loner, if only so he won't be a loose cannon next time the state legislature considers taxing or regulating the trade. And, goodness knows, that lonely operator needs his association. Cut off from the rest of the world, Arlis Sweeney is in danger of drying up and blowing away like a human tumbleweed. The tragedy is that if he did, nobody would miss him — or even notice he was gone.

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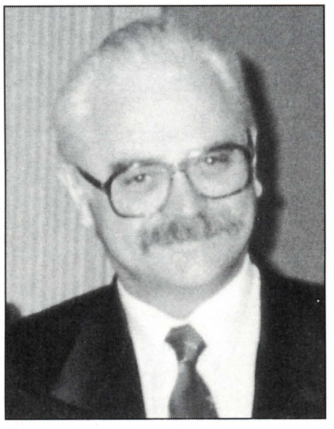

SLOT FEVER RUNNING HIGH IN EUROPE

BY DAVID SNOOK

Editor's Note: some respected veteran European trade journalists have founded a new publication called InterGame *which debuts this fall. Christine Butterworth, David Snook, Neil Barrington and their colleagues hail from the United Kingdom; theirs are all familiar faces to the industry worldwide. Their tireless travel, hard work and professionalism have helped keep the industry informed and honest. We wish them the best of luck with their new magazine.*

Beginning with this issue, RePlay *is pleased to present a new regular feature: a "Letter from Europe," penned by InterGame's David Snook. Readers of* InterGame *will also be getting a monthly update from our editorial staff regarding events this side of the Atlantic.*

Europe is continuing with its turmoil over **legalized gambling.** With Britain, Germany, Spain and Holland all with small-stake/small-prize slots, the rest of Europe seeks to emulate them. The rumors are that Italy, Israel and Portugal are all toying with the ideas of legalizing slots. The reasons are that governments with what are known as "amusements with prizes" reap a lucrative reward by way of taxation and if they don't legalize it and "police" it, then gambling will happen anyway without the government "rake-off." In Europe, of course, coin machine operators run video games and pinball alongside slots, wherever permitted — and often where not.

Greece is currently occupying all the attention of the manufacturers, as the government made it clear that it was going to permit casinos, and then made a very woolly statement which suggested low-level street-operated slots as well. Half the manufacturers in Europe have accordingly descended on Greece to investigate the possibilities and many of them have been unable to resist the temptation to get machines into Greece without the official go-ahead.

It is expected that slot machine sales in **Germany** this year will fall to 50,000, from a high point of 75,000 machines sold in 1991. However, experts feel that the figures will not fall any further. The situation was helped by a ruling in the European Court in May on VAT levied on earnings, which effectively eased the burden on operators.

The **Dutch Van Expo** show in Amsterdam in November will see the end of "piek" machines, so called from the periodic high peaks of payouts pioneered in the Rouvoet Random Runner. The machine was such a success that the industry asked Rouvet to stop production for the Dutch market, in fear of damaging government legislation. Incredible prices of Random Runners have been recorded in second-hand sales, and other "piek" machines such as Delta's Lucky 1000 will have to go. Around 20,000 machines will come out of the market in January 1995, when the operation of piek machines will cease.

TRADITIONAL AMUSEMENTS SOFT

Otherwise, Europe remains "soft" for video games and other forms of coin-op. The news that the world's leading manufacturers, **Sega, Namco** and **Nintendo** are planning to emulate SNK's lead with a "system" is welcomed. Most arcade operators have small locations without the room for too many big dedicated pieces; notwithstanding their inability to pay the mind-boggling prices demanded.

Eastern Europe remains the fascination for the world. But in reality, a healthy market for pinball, video, pool and jukeboxes is several years away. They have to get slots out of their system, either by controlling them or banning them, before anything else will find favor.

OTHER NEWS

Hazel Grove Superleague, the UK pool table manufacturer, has negotiated an arrangement with Swedish company Arcadia to access a larger market for its new Superleague Manhattan, American specification table...The $6 billion a year **UK National Lottery** has begun its testing program in Hertfordshire, overseen by chief executive of the Camelot Group, Tim Holley. The first draw will be televised on Nov. 19 by the BBC...**Kunick plc** of the UK has joined forces with brewery Allied Lyons, to launch a new

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company to promote new types of food/drinks establishments with coin-operated games. It will be targeted at the age group between 18 and 30...The **Italian** trade associations, Sindaut/CISL, is pressing the government for new regulations to allow the operation of prize-giving machines on the Italian market. The proposal is for ticket dispensers to be added to all types of machines with a maximum value prize of up to 30 times the stake...Experiments by **Capcom** in Britain and Italy has shown that regular localized game competitions increase the performance of the machines. This is due to players going to arcades to train themselves before the event, and the competition itself, which increases the take even further. Capcom has suggested that arcades in Europe should contact them for assistance in the organization of events. A recent competition in Italy, organized by Alma Giochi of Rome, became almost a national tournament with over 160 expert players taking part...The Dutch distributor **Veltmijer** is continuing to expand its operating and sales interests into other countries by running a distribution and operating company in the Czech Republic and a distributorship in Hungary. The company also has an alliance with the British manufacturer Subelectro, and through the connection, will be producing special machines for a number of countries.

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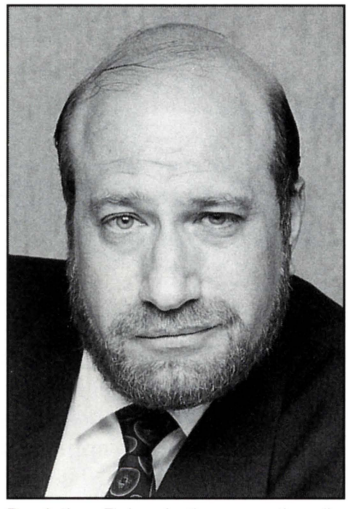
The DEVIL'S IN THE DETAILS

now that IDSA has finalized its home video rating system, group will work with AMOA and AAMA to adapt for coin-op

Congress and the coin-op industry both learned something important on July 29. They learned exactly what kind of ratings, symbols and content descriptions will appear on video games in the home market. Now the question is how — and if — a ratings system for consumer video, will also be applied to coin-op products.

Two different ratings systems were presented to Congress on that day. The one Congress likes best (and the one most likely to be adapted to coin-op) has five categories. Symbols will appear on game packaging, giving suggested age ranges for each of these categories. The categories and ages are: "Early Childhood" (age 3 and up), "Kids to Adult" (age 6 and up), "Teen" (age 13 and up), "Mature" (age 17 and up), and "Adult" (18 and up).



Dr. Arthur Pober is the executive director of the Entertainment Software Ratings Board, which will provide ratings for system-based home video games.

Along with these symbols, verbal content descriptions will appear on the back of the box (for home game rental or purchase). These descriptions will explain what type of content earned the rating. For example, games in the "Teen" category could say "Realistic Violence" and "Suggestive Sexual Themes." Games in the "Adult" category could carry descriptions like "Realistic Blood and Gore" and "Strong Sexual Content." An anonymous, independent ratings board in New York will preview the games and decide which rating each game receives. Manufacturers will pay a small fee for the rating procedure — $500 per title to start, although smaller firms might pay less.

GETTING WITH THE PROGRAM

If enough video game manufacturers (home and coin-op) adopt a congressionally-approved ratings system, then the federal government has promised to drop its plans to use the power of law to force ratings on the industry. However, quite a few individual state legislatures are thinking about passing their own, local ratings laws for video games...and it's unclear if all of them will drop those plans, regardless of what Congress does.

Chances are looking pretty good for coin-op to get with the program, but at presstime several issues remained to be ironed out before our industry officially gets aboard. AMOA and AAMA leaders are seeking further meetings with IDSA (the Interactive Digital Software Assn.) and ESRB (the Entertainment Software Ratings Board) to discuss questions like, "Do we have to put specific recommended ages on our games?" and "Where will the content descriptions go?" and "If there are different versions of a coin-op game, controlled by dipswitch, must the factory pay to have each version rated separately?" Another key question: "Just because the consumer market has to rate its games by Christmas, does coin-op have to meet the same deadline?" Of course, Congress has questions of its own. The most worrisome is: "Will operators physically separate the 'Mature' and 'Adults Only' games into restricted spaces on location?"

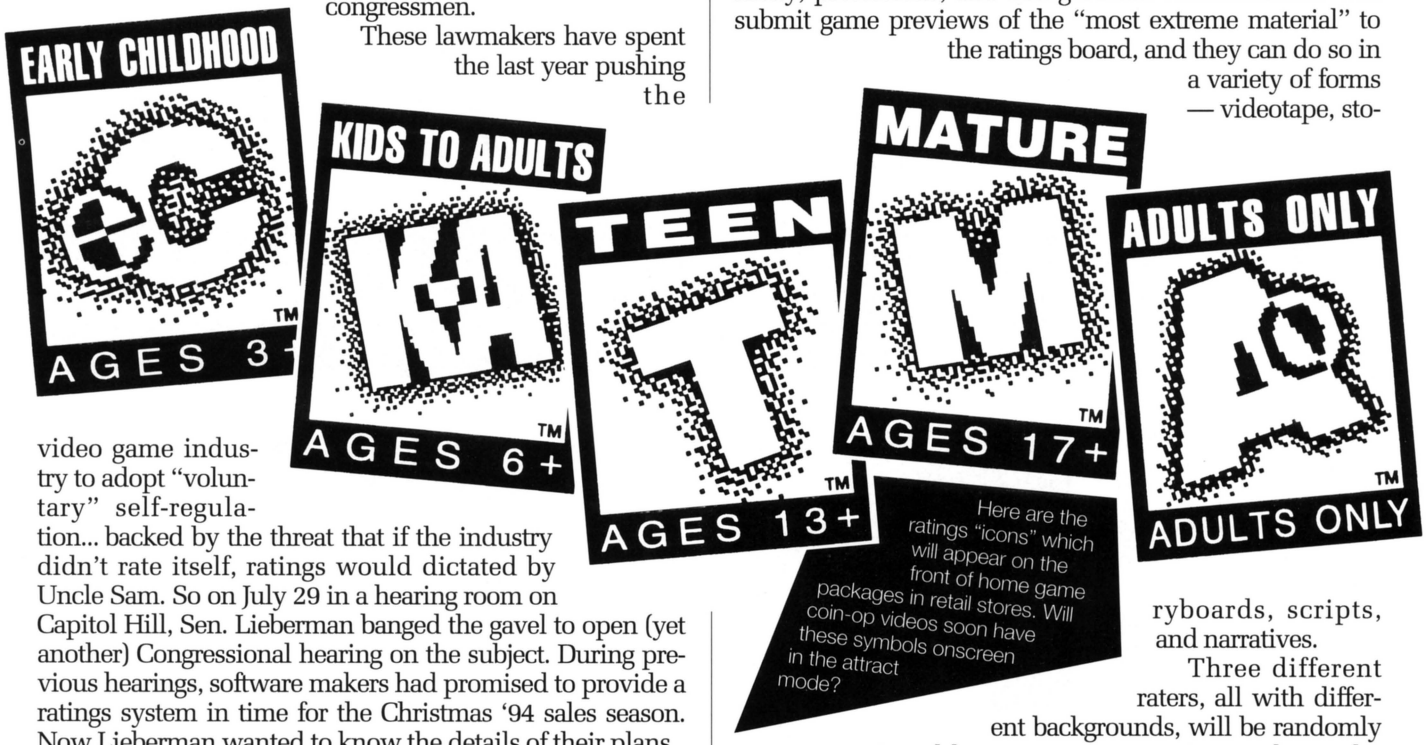
These and other questions are not easily resolved. But

the good news is, members of Congress and the ESRB (ratings organization) realize coin-op is a very different animal from consumer video, with its own special requirements and concerns. Some realize this better than others, of course...but coin-op leaders are hopeful that there's enough flexibility and maneuvering room for common-sense adjustments.

WHY HAVE RATINGS AT ALL?

The move toward vidgame ratings came about in the first place because consumers nationwide are pushing for more content information. Movies, broadcast TV and cable TV have all beefed up their ratings systems of late, for example. Pressure for ratings on video games began last fall, following worldwide, negative publicity about some super-violent games which hit the home market. Parents were "outraged," and so were Sen. Joe Lieberman and other powerful U.S. senators and congressmen.

These lawmakers have spent the last year pushing the video game industry to adopt "voluntary" self-regulation... backed by the threat that if the industry didn't rate itself, ratings would dictated by Uncle Sam. So on July 29 in a hearing room on Capitol Hill, Sen. Lieberman banged the gavel to open (yet another) Congressional hearing on the subject. During previous hearings, software makers had promised to provide a ratings system in time for the Christmas '94 sales season. Now Lieberman wanted to know the details of their plans.



Here are the ratings "icons" which will appear on the front of home game packages in retail stores. Will coin-op videos soon have these symbols onscreen in the attract mode?

So did the coin-op industry. AMOA and AAMA have felt heavy Congressional pressure to "go along," but up until July 29 they weren't exactly sure what they were supposed to go along with.

THE IDSA RATING SYSTEM

As stated earlier, Congress and coin-op heard about two different ratings systems. The one described above, with five age categories and explicit content description phrases, was created by IDSA (representing big home game makers like Sega, Nintendo, Atari, Acclaim, Konami and Electronic Arts). The other system was created by the Software Publishers Assn. (representing desktop computer software makers like LucasArts and others). While Congress strongly prefers a single, universal system, it appears that for 1994 at least, both IDSA and SPA are going forward with their separate systems.

Testifying for IDSA was association chairman Jack Heistand (Electronic Arts, San Mateo, Calif.). He said IDSA had created a ratings system that would "put the controls back in the hands of consumers, especially parents." He described how IDSA had hired Dr. Arthur Pober, a noted children's media and educational expert, to head an independent ratings board (ESRB) and design the ratings system based on input from parents, experts in psychology, and the public. And he described how Pober had consulted parents and experts to create a ratings system that could be applied to video games on any platform — cartridges for home systems, floppy disks, CD-ROMs, etc. Some consumer games will have ESRB ratings by mid-November, Heistand told Congress.

HOW ESRB WILL ASSIGN RATINGS

How will the ESRB ratings process work? Dr. Pober has hired a pool of several dozen "raters" who will be paid a small stipend for previewing and rating game materials. ESRB promises the raters are a "demographically diverse" group, representing different ages, educational levels, ethnicity, professions, and backgrounds. Manufacturers will submit game previews of the "most extreme material" to the ratings board, and they can do so in a variety of forms — videotape, storyboards, scripts, and narratives.

Three different raters, all with different backgrounds, will be randomly assigned by computer to review and rate the game. They'll work separately, and won't see the title. They'll fill out a form and submit it to an ESRB staff member who will "check their work." Assuming two raters and a staffer agree on the appropriate rating, that's what will be assigned to the game. The process is supposed to take no more than a week from submission to final report of an assigned rating.

The manufacturer can accept the assigned rating or appeal it for broader staff review. A couple of third-party organizations have been set up by ESRB to monitor the whole system. One is the Academic & Consumer Advisory Board, comprised of respected individuals like the editor of Child Magazine, leading child psychologists, etc. ESRB has also set up a Business & Industry Advisory Board, made up of AMOA and AAMA members, plus people from the Video Software Dealers Assn., WalMart, and Blockbuster Video.

THE SPA SYSTEM: FEW DETAILS YET

Mark Traphagen, general counsel for the Software

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Jack Heistand (Electronic Arts, San Mateo, Calif.) is chairman of the Interactive Digital Software Assn. He's done plenty of testifying to Congress on video violence.

Publishers Assn., testified about SPA's system. He said desktop software is mostly for educational and business applications, and that few of these products are games... and even fewer are of the "objectionable" type. Traphagen explained how SPA "will establish an independent ratings organization." He described a general ratings/informational system, but didn't go into nearly as much detail as ISDA since SPA apparently hasn't gotten as far in the process.

Traphagen assured Congress that the SPA system would have integrity, based on sworn statements by manufacturers to the SPA ratings board, describing "potentially objectionable content." Factories will be able to suggest their own ratings but the board will make the final determination, he said. He promised that a panel of parents and educators would investigate complaints about misrated titles, and SPA would punish wrongdoers with fines, product recalls, and other "tough penalties."

Traphagen spent half of his time attacking IDSA's system. It relies on factory self-disclosure, too, he claimed. Also, IDSA might become a tool for big vidgame factories to control market access, he charged. He also implied that the corporate greed of IDSA's members could become a roadblock preventing the open, creative development of an "information superhighway" in America.

Congress wasn't buying it. Sen. Lieberman lavished praise on the IDSA system and mildly criticized the SPA approach...in public. Privately, the senator, his colleagues and their staff reportedly blasted SPA very hard. "With such strong opposition from Congress, I have serious doubts about whether the SPA approach will survive long-term," three different observers told *RePlay* after the hearings.

COIN-OP WEIGHS IN

Following testimony by IDSA, SPA, and some retail store chain execs, AAMA President Steve Lieberman was called on to testify about where coin-op stands in all this. Politely, Steve explained that the coin-op industry generally supports the idea of a ratings system. But, he added, coin-op people had just now learned about details of the IDSA proposal, and would have to study it in detail before any definite commitments could be made. Steve has testified in these settings before and he's become an old pro at this sort of thing. Trade members universally praised his performance for making the industry look good.

The real nitty-gritty came on Aug. 8, when AMOA and AAMA members flew up to New York City to meet with ESRB's Dr. Pober and lay out their concerns. Industry people included AAMA's Steve Koenigsberg and government liaison Elliott Portnoy, along with AMOA board member Frank Seninsky and government relations manager Laura Olson. Tradesters identified their concerns and pointed out areas where the consumer system would have to be adapted for coin-op purposes. (For example, arcade games don't have packaging that people can turn over in their hands. That obviously means descriptive phrases can't appear on the back of any cardboard box!) Trade members also got the "tour" of ESRB facilities. They heard details of the ratings board's makeup, training, and procedures; and they saw how games would be reviewed and rated. Most were quite impressed with the overall setup and, once again, encouraged by the reasonable and friendly approach taken by Dr. Pober.

One big plus for coin-op: Pober has agreed to assign one ESRB staffer to specialize in coin-op concerns and issues. This staffer will also act as the "point man" for coin-op members to contact with questions and problems. Another big plus is that both coin-op associations now are in perfect synch. "We both want the same things and agree on what the issues are and what approach to take," insiders said.

What happens now? The next public development in this saga will take place at this month's AMOA Expo in San Antonio, where Dr. Pober will speak at a seminar on game ratings (see our show coverage, elsewhere in this issue, for exact time and place). It's a pretty safe bet that Pober will also hold plenty of private conversations with trade members about ratings and vidgame violence, too. As U.S. negotiators used to say during nuclear arms reduction talks with the Soviet Union, "the devil is in the details." But with goodwill and a bit of common sense on both sides, coin-op and IDSA should be able to find a happy compromise on the important issues. We'll report further developments in our next issue.

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RISING SUN MEETS RED INK

1993-94 fiscal year end reports for the Japanese game manufacturers
by John Ryan

The Houdini act is over for the Japanese video game industry. With last year's strong fiscal results, it appeared as if this sector of the economy was impervious to the recession. This year, however, reality finally caught up with video games, and the slump in overseas sales of consumer games combined with the peaking in Japan's operation boom to mount a drop in revenue and profits for several famous makers.

1994 FISCAL RESULTS OF PUBLICLY QUOTED VIDEO GAME MAKERS

	Sales	Net Profit	Profit/Sales
Nintendo	4,670 (-17.0%)	1,150 (-29.8%)	24.6%
Sega	3,540 (2.0%)	425 (-22.7%)	12.0%
Taito	935 (0.4%)	62 (6.1%)	6.6%
Capcom	844 (20.2%)	144 (10.3%)	17.1%
Namco	721 (10.3%)	46 (14.2%)	6.4%
Konami	378 (—)	15 (—)	4.0%
Jaleco	104 (-23.5%)	1 (-85.3%)	1.0%
Tecmo	102 (-28.9%)	11 (-33.2%)	10.8%

(Note: All figures in this report are in 100 million yen. As Konami's previous fiscal year was a 6-month period, comparison is not possible.)

NINTENDO

Revenue Breakdown

Leisure Machines	99.6%
Others (playing cards)	0.4%
Export ratio	50.8%

Forecast for Fiscal '95

Revenue	Net Profit
4,100(-12.2%)	1,230 (7.0%)

Nintendo blamed the large decreases in revenue and income on falling exports due to the raising yen and the consumer video game price war in Europe. In addition, there was a sizable payment to resolve a copyright suit in the USA.

Nintendo intends to introduce a 64-bit coin-op machine in March 1995. Their forecast for fiscal 1995 shows revenue down but profit up.

SEGA

Even though revenue increased, Sega suffered their first drop in profit for the first time in 12 years. Like Nintendo, the major factors were the strong yen and the confusion in the European consumer video game market. Overall export ratio was 64.2%, almost unchanged from last year.

	Share of Revenue	Revenue Growth
Coin-op	14.7%	-9.4%
Consumer	66.7%	2.9%
Operation	17.4%	4.8%
Royalties	1.2%	300%

Forecast for Fiscal '95

Revenue	Net Profit
3,600 (1.7%)	430 (1.2%)

In coin-op, domestic revenue was down 15.9% due to the fall-off in new locations and the end of the crane game boom. Overseas coin-op revenue was up 17.2%. In spite of the slowdown in the overall domestic market, operations income was up 4.8% due to the opening of new large-scale game arcades.

Sega's plans for the new fiscal year include the introduction of "Titan" in coin-op, a 32-bit machine in the consumer field, and game transmission by CATV. In the operations area, the emphasis will be on the development of mini-theme parks centered on large-scale attractions.

TAITO

Taito experienced a year of stagnant revenue and profits. With operations accounting for two-thirds of business, Taito is less prone to large swings in revenue and profits, and its results closely reflect the general economic climate. While Taito continues to open new locations, this increase in revenue is being cancelled out by the drop in income from existing locations.

While domestic revenue from coin-op machine sales was up 10.4%, overseas revenue fell a large 20.9%. The overall export ratio fell further from 4.8% last year to 3.1%.

	Share of Revenue	Revenue Growth
Coin-op	19.9%	6.2%
Karaoke	8.2%	11.4%
Consumer	4.6%	-2.8%
Operation	66.8%	0.4%
Other	0.5%	43.7%

Coin-Op Sales Growth

Export	-20.9%
Domestic	10.4%

Forecast for Fiscal '95

Revenue	Net Profit
950(1.5%)	65(3.5%)

CAPCOM

While the rate of growth was down on last year, Capcom again showed strong growth in revenue and profits. In coin-op, exports accounted for 43.2%, up from 36.3% last year, but exports' share of consumer revenue was down from 49.8% last year to 44.8% this year.

	Share of Revenue	Revenue Growth	Export Ratio
Coin-op	25.8%	13.7%	43.2%
Consumer	66.7%	23.1%	44.8%
Operation	5.7%	41.0%	
Other	2.1%	-15.2%	

Forecast for Fiscal '95

Revenue	Net Profit
900(6.6%)	159(10.1%)

Capcom's plans for the '95 fiscal year are to develop new software, cut costs and upgrade overseas offices.

NAMCO

Namco continues to exhibit steady growth in revenue and profits. With overall exports accounting for just 7.9% of sales (6.0% last year), no breakdown was given.

	Share of Revenue	Revenue Growth
Coin-op	31.4%	28.7%
Consumer	16.5%	23.3%
Operation	51.9	-1.4%
Other	0.2%	-25.7%

Forecast for Fiscal '95

Revenue	Net Profit
800(10.9%)	50(8.1%)

KONAMI

Although comparisons with last year's results are not possible due to a change in the accounting period, it is clear that Konami suffered large decreases in revenue and profits. Apart from the LSI Design division, all business sections experienced a drop in revenue.

	Share of Revenue	Export Ratio
Coin-op	20.8%	40.4%
Consumer	57.7%	59.8%
Pachinko LCD	12.8%	
LSI, Other	8.7%	

Forecast for Fiscal '95

Revenue	Net Profit
380(0.5%)	19(25.8%)

Consumer game exports fell below expectations and pachinko LCD sales suffered due to the voluntary restraints put on the sales of certain pachinko machine models by manufacturers.

The overall export ratio was 43.4%, down from 51.6% in the previous term. In its consolidated settlement of accounts, which includes the results of all its subsidiaries, Konami posted a net loss of 2,891 million yen. The company blamed the loss on the poor overseas sales of home use products, including 2,246 million yen for inventory disposal.

JALECO

Jaleco experienced a large drop in revenue and profits. The company blamed the fall in coin-op revenue on delays in the R&D schedules of the planned 32-bit machine and large dedicated games, and the disappointing consumer game results on the depressed US and European markets.

	Share of Revenue	Revenue Growth
Coin-op	62.0%	-26.7%
Consumer	25.3%	-24.3%
Other (incl. op)	12.2%	0.8%

Export Ratio

Coin-op	13.8%
Consumer	36.0%

Forecast for Fiscal '95

Revenue	Net Profit
145(39.4%)	8.5(750%)

TECMO

Tecmo also experienced a large drop in revenue and profits. Tecmo blamed the drop in coin-op revenue on the end of the crane machine boom and the effect of the recession on operation income. Export ratio was 42.8%, up from 32.1% last year.

	Share of Revenue	Revenue Growth
Coin-op (in-house)	10.5%	-12.5%
Coin-op (other co. game)	15.2%	-32.2%
Consumer	58.5%	-31.9%
Operation	15.7%	-21.5%
Other	0.1%	-70.0%

Forecast for Fiscal '95

Revenue	Net Profit
118(15.7%)	10.6(-3.6%)

◆



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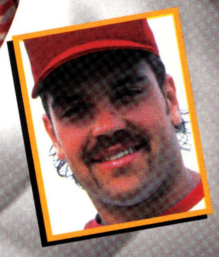
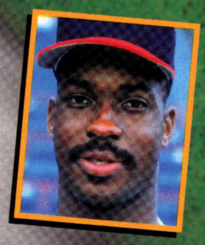
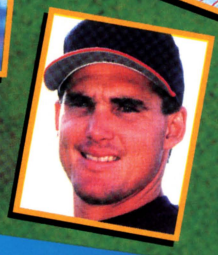






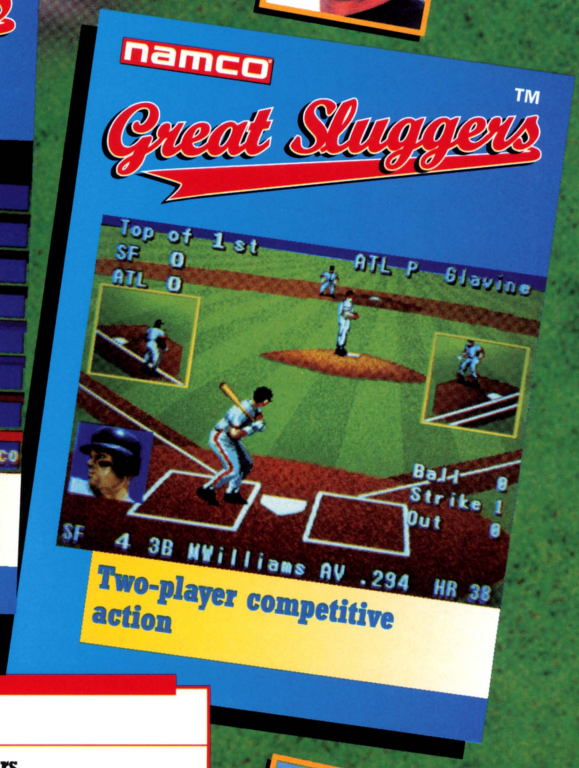




Zoom feature shows cut-aways of those real close calls



Season Game—Can you win the World Championship?



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MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYERS

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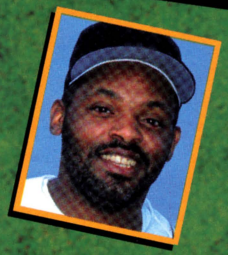

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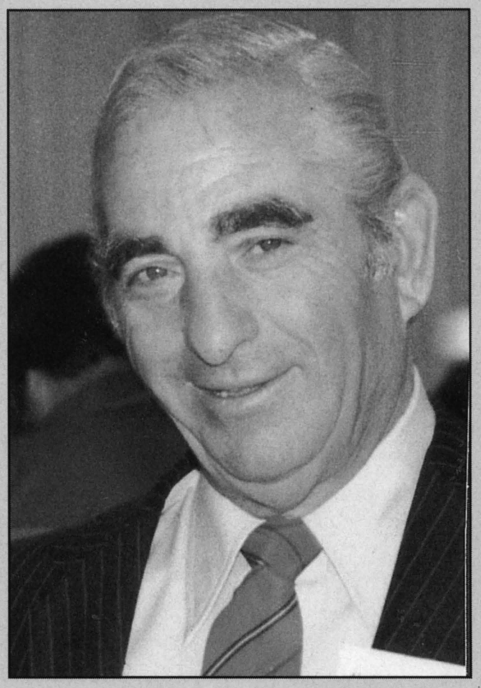
~*in memorium*~

AL MINIACI PASSES ON

over 800 attend services for the Patriarch of Paramount

There's a saying that the measure of a man's life can be totalled up by the number of people there at his death. On Saturday, Aug. 6th at the Forest Lawn Chapel in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., an incredible 800 or so friends and members of the family of Al Miniaci said goodbye to one of the industry's most popular operators of this or any other age. He quite obviously measured pretty tall.

Miniaci was 79 when his heart finally gave up after battling another illness. He'd been taken this time to Broward General Hospital for stomach surgery, which he survived. But complications set in which put him on a respirator. He died Wed. Aug. 3rd. Had he lived until Sept. 19th, he'd have reached 80 years of age. Had he survived until November, he and his wife Rose would have celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.



His son and company right hand man Albert said a big party was being planned to mark both key events in Al Miniaci's life. It is sad that such an affair had to have been cancelled, but it hardly dims his other achievements in both industry and philanthropic work that people have been pointing to in these time of mourning.

Al Miniaci started and ran a bunch of companies, and divisions within those companies, and helped countless people along the way, including (as his friend Zach Katz said, "people who never even knew he'd helped them"). But two careers stand out: his time as the "Jukebox King" of New York City when his Bronx-based Paramount Jukebox Co. and its well-labeled machines were as familiar in northern Big Apple taverns as was his face and cordial style to his string of location owners.

He sold that Paramount enterprises to ARA in 1969 and relocated to Florida. When Albert graduated college in 1974, father and son, and Al's popular brother Frank, started up again as Paramount Vending. That company today runs a very healthy music, games and vending route along with a successful coin telephone division headquartered in Pompano Beach.

Even though Al suffered some illness in recent years (including a bout with cancer), son Albert said he was active in company management throughout. He had an iron will combined with an affable way of doing business that impressed many over the years. Indeed, when he was on the respirator during his last days, doctors at Broward called him the "iron man" for the tenacious way he clung to life.

Al Miniaci is credited with many victories. His friend of many decades (as well as his political adversary at times in the hurley burley of New York State) Millie McCarthy said Miniaci once "saved" an early MOA show by making personal calls to some jukebox manufacturers to get them to show their wares there.

Another industry friend, Sol Tabb, called him a natural salesman who (like Tabb himself) loved the challenge of soliciting new locations. Also like Tabb, who'd sold his own original Brooklyn route and relocated to start up again in the Sunshine State, people loved to chat with him...to be with him at industry functions and trade shows.

Miniaci was good looking, spoke with a soft Italian accent, and made you feel special when he caught your eyes, smiled and strolled over to say hello. That magnetism, along with his position in business and his numerous charitable works all brought him testimonials over the years like the United Jewish Appeal's New York Man of the Year.

He also helped other organizations like the City of Hope, though his favorite charity was Boys Towns of Italy, founded by Msgr. Carroll-Abbing. But what he did best was those little personal favors here and there, including putting a couple of dozen singles out on Bronx jukeboxes recorded by a young rock 'n roller named Eddie Adlum.

Among the throng at the funeral services were such industry veterans as Sol Tabb, Mel Chasen, Benny Chicofsky, Carl Porto and a whole bunch of South Florida trade people, competitors included. Besides wife Rose (who is getting along as well as can be expected) son Albert and brother Frank, Al Miniaci is survived by his other son Dominick, four sisters, plus grandchildren including nine year old Maria whose poem read at the services brought out many a tear with its closing line "if you can hear me, grandpa, I love you so so so so much!" Maria was not alone. May Al rest in God's peace.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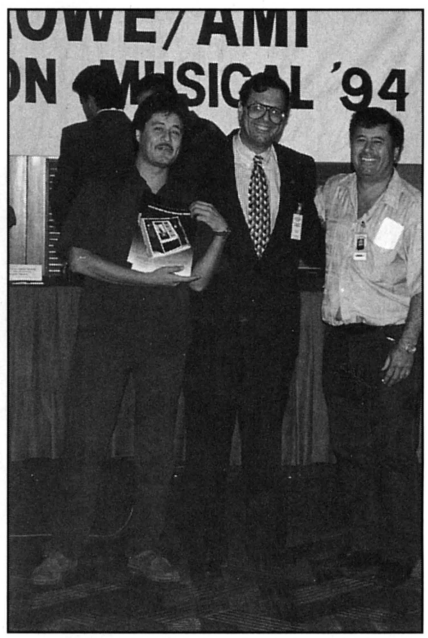
DIAMONDS IN MEXICO

Rowe bows new Diamante *CD jukebox at Rincon Musical*





Mexican operators and distributors with Joel Friedman and *LaserStar* Diamante.

Rowe International really is international...as they proved once again down in Guadalajara, Mexico on July 8-9. That was the venue for their third annual Mexican distributor's convention. And who is Rowe's Mexican distributor? Rincon Musical, of course, with representation in all 32 regions of Mexico...and they were all at the Crown Plaza Hotel for the bash. Rincon's prexy and board chairman Enrique Calderon thanked the assembled group of distribs for their tremendous sales efforts. Another big thank-you came from Rowe's senior VP Joel Friedman.

As Enrique and Joel unveiled Rowe's brand-new 1995 *LaserStar Diamante,* the dealers rose as one and gave the jukebox a spectacular standing ovation. They shouted the famous Mexican soccer chant, "Duro! Duro! Duro!" Also intro'd was the smaller, but also new, *MM1* CD jukebox. It received an equally enthusiastic reception from the group, Rowe said.

Joel presented Enrique with the Rowe Special Music Sales Award, which Mr. Calderon accepted on behalf of the entire Mexican distribution group. He thanked the Mexican family of distributors and invited them all to the grand opening of the new Rincon Musical offices in Guadalajara. On the evening of the 9th, the entire conference group moved on to visit that new facility. Distributors toured the plant and celebrated with Enrique, Joel and the Rowe team.



Mexican operators and distributors.

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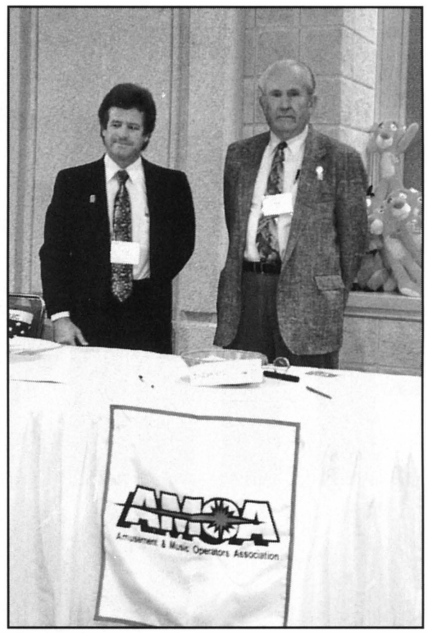
"STATE" YOUR CASE

tradesters attend two gatherings of state legislators

State legislatures are where many important issues are facing coin-op these days...video game ratings, VLTs, taxes, tobacco regulations, you name it. So AMOA and several state operator associations thought it might be a good idea to "show the flag" at a couple of national conventions of lawmakers from all 50 states. Idea is to chat with the public officials, show them we're small businessmen and good members of the community, let them play a few games, and learn what the industry's all about.

One of the groups is called the National Conference of State Legislators, whose 1994 convention and expo took place July 23-29 in New Orleans. The second group is called the American Legislative Exchange Council, which met Aug. 3-6 in Tampa, Fla. In a cooperative effort, two AMOA committees (the State Association Committee and the Government Relations Committee) hosted a booth during both events. To add a bit of fun and create goodwill, AMOA and other industry members sponsored a "high score" contest on some pinball games, set up gamerooms with equipment on free play, and gave away some fun prizes and merchandise. Jukebox pins, dart boards, thermos cups and plush were given as prizes. This material was provided by AMOA, Play by Play Toys & Novelties, the Ace/Acme Companies, U.S. Tops Merchandising Corp., Valley Recreation Products, Arachnid, and Smart Industries. Hosting AMOA's booth at the NCSL event were State Assn. Committee co-chairman Bill Treger (Betson) and operator Lee Wesson (Peachtree Music & Amusement). Joining them were a couple of Louisiana AMOA members — Charlies Pasqua, Charles Stoma, Mona LaCombe and distributor Bob Nims (AMA Distributors) who set up the gameroom. Over 800 conventioneers participated in the conference, and many of them — lawmakers, their families, or staff — got a very positive impression of the industry.

Below, from left, AMOA staffers Kim Rundle, AMOA VP Doug Minter, AMOA staffer Laura Olson and Florida state assn. prexy Rich Holley at the ALEC meeting.



Manning the AMOA booth at ALEC are operators Rich Holley (Southeast Game Brokers) and Doug Minter (Tip Top Amusement).

The ALEC meeting featured an AMOA booth hosted by Doug Minter State Assn. Committee co-chairman Doug Minter, AMOA board member Bill Miller (WGM Amusements), and FAMA president Rich Holley (Southeast Game Brokers, Tampa, Fla.). Birmingham Vending provided the equipment. Nearly 600 lawmakers, families and staff members attended this event.



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Add 50 machines	100.00	1,100.00
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Coin Tracker™ Data Interface	included	595.00
Telecommunications Software for Remote Control	included	not included
GRAND TOTAL (300 machine package)	**$2,095.00**	**$12,560.00**

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COIN CONNEXION

The Gold Standard In Amusement Software



MIDWAY'S

spectacular Cruis'n USA *sitdown has hit painted all over it!*

"We're here today to sell you some automobiles," said Joe Dillon to his distributors assembled July 27 at the Part West Theater in Chicago to see the unveiling of Midway's first video driver since *Spy Hunter*...the 1982 hit that spawned a sequel, a home game and even a pinball.

Called *Cruis'n USA*, this new beauty (which can be ordered in dedicated upright, a deluxe sitdown or a spectacular full motion simulator) should be another feather in Midway's many-feathered bonnet of winners. With over two years of effort in the R & D mill (that includes software licensed from Nintendo), the complete attraction was called by Midway's Jim Green nothing less than "the most advanced game ever developed for coin-op."

As appealing as the action on the screen may be, game operators will be very interested to learn that prices of the two sitdowns are also appealing. As Dillon put it: "Midway sells tremendous games at competitive prices." (The two sitdown versions will be available before the AMOA Expo, but the upright won't be on the track until the show.)

In the briefest terms, *Cruis'n USA*

IN THE FAST LANE

is a single-player where you race against drones in a linear fashion... along highways and city streets... rather than around a track. Fourteen selectable scenes (photographed and then digitized in eleven different states) provide the courses. The basic idea is to come in first against the drones by racing, braking, swerving to avoid obstacles, etc., all the while enjoying the passing scenery made breathtaking by the Ultra Graphics technique which uses hi-rez, 3-D texture mapped polygons.

The ideal mode of play is to drive across the USA. The arcade operator's ideal, even though the deluxe version is great, is to step way up to this full motion simulator...a knock out if there ever was one. Though less costly than some other great attractions we've seen in recent times, it's still quite obviously on the pricey side.

At the dealer preview, Dillon employed a couple of cute models to present the simulator in the same way a car company unveils its hot, new vehicles. Our coin-op car, done up in gleaming red, is a virtual motion/reality machine that tilts forward and back, side to side (by motor jackscrews rather than hydraulics) and in combinations to produce motion that's synchronized with the action on the screen.

When you coin-up, you have a choice of four cars to





"We're here today to sell you some automobiles," said Joe Dillon (pictured at right) as Midway presented the full motion simulator *Cruis'n USA*.

pick (each has different driving dynamics). You can turn on its radio (yes) and pick the kind of Midway-music you like to hear as you drive (there are seven musical styles). You can also choose which "view" you want (e.g. inside the car, behind your car or even above your car "helicopter style").

It's got a gear shift, sensation in the steering wheel, full digital dashboard instrumentation and over 200 sound effects. Apart from the pitching and yawing motion in the big simulator, most of these features are common to both sitdown versions.

GAME OBJECTIVE

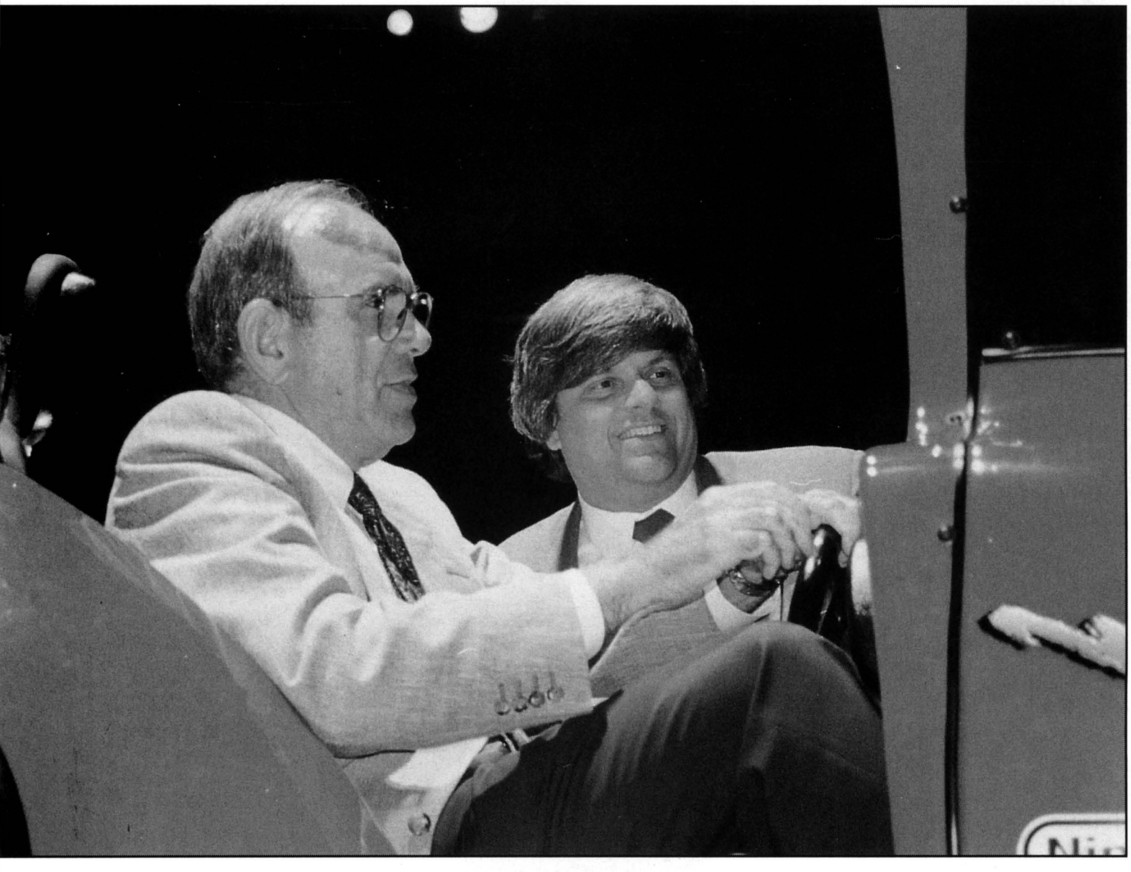
Besides all the thrills of weaving, spinning, speeding and crashing along the machine's various courses, there is a "game" here as well. It's ultimate object is to complete all 14 races across the U.S.A. In the purest sense, players begin in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park and traverse the remaining 13 to end up in Washington D.C. (players can also select a smaller group of courses rather than take them in sequential order).

Race courses include Route 101 in California, the Grand Canyon in Arizona and a charge through downtown Chicago. Thanks to actual motion picture film that's been digitized, the passing scenery is very authentic. There will be cases, for example, of local players seeing landmarks dash by that they've seen many times in person.

When a player ends up in first place, the operator (if he wishes) can set the machine to award a free race (just like in pinball). This is optional. Player positions are ranked after each race is completed and checkpoint awards give additional time for each to complete his or her race.

Besides the redwoods passing by on the Redwood Forest course and the steel pillars doing the same in subterranean Chicago, loads of other stuff come along that's more than window dressing...they are obstacles you have to weave around. These include police cars, lamp posts, animals, trucks, fire hydrants, potholes, pedestrians and lots more.

However, there are also some hidden features the players will discover as they move along, including shortcuts, turnoffs and secret vehicle selections that include a school bus. And



Prominent Minneapolis distributor Steve Lieberman (left) takes a spin (and a dip and a dive) to the delight of Ken Fedesna.

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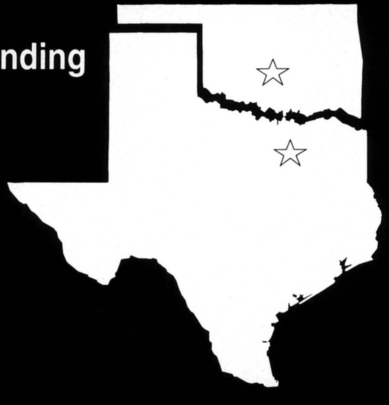

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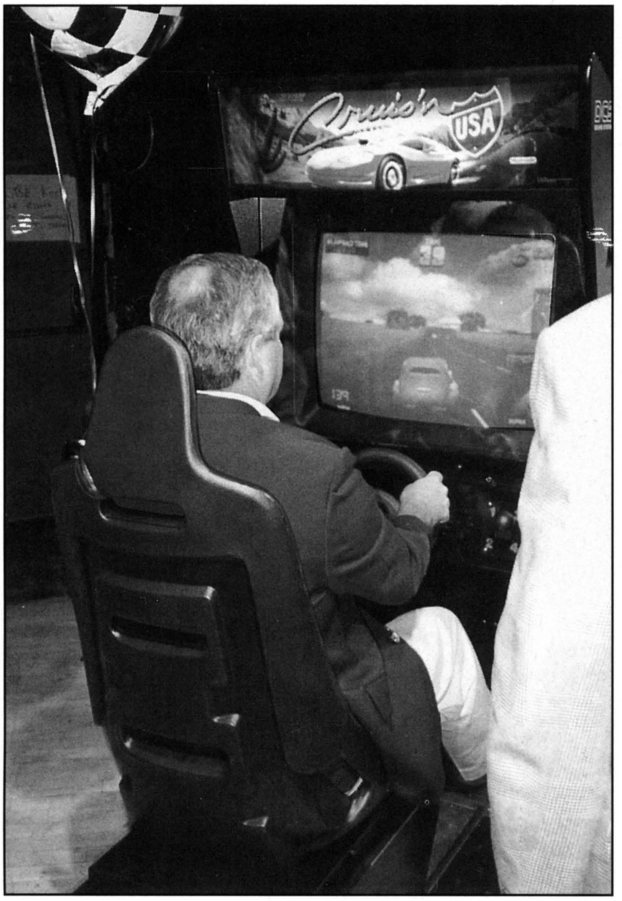




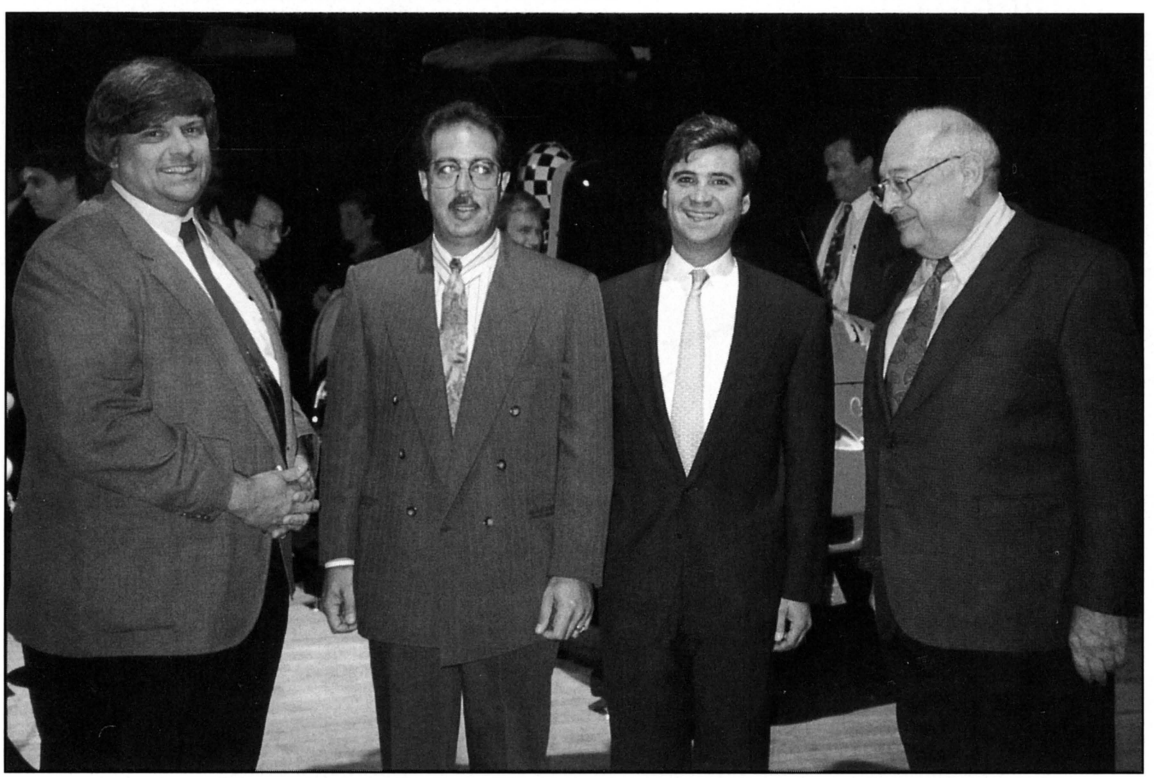
Dealers obviously enjoy themselves on the full-motion simulator. When set up at the arcade, the moving car stops when spectators get too close.

Above: Arthur Gage of H.A. Franz & Co. takes a spin on the deluxe sitdown. Most of the features of the big simulator are here as well. A dedicated upright of the game will be on stage at the AMOA Expo. **Below:** Feeling good after the product presentation are Ken Fedesna, AVS's Frank Gumma Jr., Williams president Neil Nicastro & Central's Lou Singer.

remember, *Cruis'n USA* has a stop motion button, so you can may be able to slow yourself down to catch a second or two to think what you're doing.

Dillon called the deluxe sitdown version (not the simulator) their "convertible" model, saying Midway has future plans to make multiple numbers of them linkable for head-to-head competition. As far as simulator safety goes, operators will be pleased to learn it comes with a plastic chain fence for location use. There are also optical sensors underneath the moving car which shut it down should a spectator get too close and hands or feet get beneath. Company exec Ken Fedesna advised *RePlay* that Underwriters Laboratory (UL) worked with them on simulator safety.

Fedesna also said the *Cruis'n USA* simulator should provide the basis for other game "platforms" in the future. For now, Midway's dealers... who will accent the full motion simulator, the deluxe sitdown or both at their showrooms... have a whale of an item to sell in the fall product sweeps. For many, *Cruis'n USA* was a delightful surprise. Catch it locally now or join the crowd at the Midway exhibit at the Expo. ◆



L E G E N D

Few Things Attract More Attention





David C. Rockola left an indelible mark on the industry that literally echoed his name. For sixty years the Rock-Ola name has stood for quality and durability at a resonable price. Legend has it that even the term, "Rock'n Roll" was coined from the name Rockola.

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Antique Apparatus carries on the Rock-Ola legacy with the new LEGEND. Built with the same attention to detail that David Rockola was famous for.



The LEGEND features: **All New Illuminated Pushbuttons** with gold contact switches for reliable and continuous "repeat play."

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280 WATTS

The LEGEND "Sweet - 16" Title Display shows 16 full size CD jackets and title cards at once.

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The Legend has everything you've come to expect from Rock-Ola, great looks, more features, attracting more attention, and best of all; more profit in the cash box!

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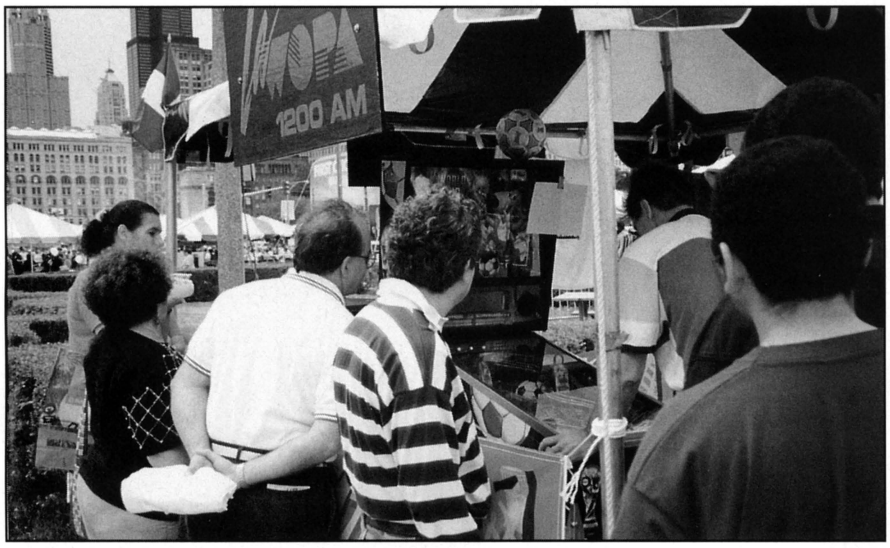
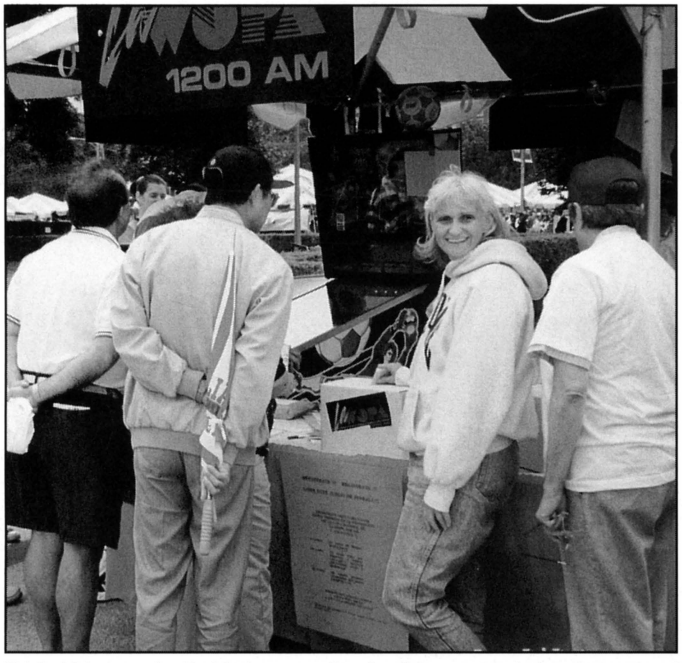
FANTASTICO, EDUARDO!

World Cup *pinball promotion hits jackpot*



Radio WOPA had the *World Cup* pinball on stage at their Taste of Chicago street fair booth for folks to enjoy. The radio tie-in promotion netted Velasquez Music a host of new pinball locations.



Eddie Velasquez' wife Marianne smiles for the camera during the taste of Chicago fair.

Combine a world class event that captured the attention of over a billion fans with the business vision of one of the industry's veteran operators and the result is success. Such was the case after Eddie Velasquez of Velasquez Automatic Music in Chicago asked himself: "How can I take advantage of the World Cup and the fact that Chicago is one of the site cities." Answer: he added 20 brand new pinball locations to his route.

Always promotionally minded while building up a business empire as the "king of jukeboxes" in the Hispanic community, Velasquez put his master plan into action with the aid of Williams Bally/Midway, American Vending Sales and the city's leading Spanish radio station, WOPA. As Eddie describes it all:

"I had done some jukebox giveaways with WOPA in the past, and went to them with an idea to give away the Bally *World Cup* pinball machine in a trade out for advertising spots on air. Next, I went to twenty of my better spots...places that had jukeboxes but never pinball machines and told them they were going to get promoted on radio and then guaranteed that if, after the promotion was over, they didn't want to keep the pinball, I 'd take it out.

"It was really a 'no lose' situation for these businesses, and I had already determined that they would be good choices based on their level of jukebox earnings. If they were doing at least $250 per week on the jukebox, I knew that they had the traffic to support a pin game," he declared.

"Well, we ran our contest from June 17th to July 17th," he continued. "The radio station encouraged listeners to go to any of the twenty locations and fill out an entry form for the chance to win the grand prize—which was a *World Cup* pinball machine. Second prize trip for two to Puerto Vallarta and third prize of an AM/FM Stereo Boombox with dual cassette and CD player were also advertised.

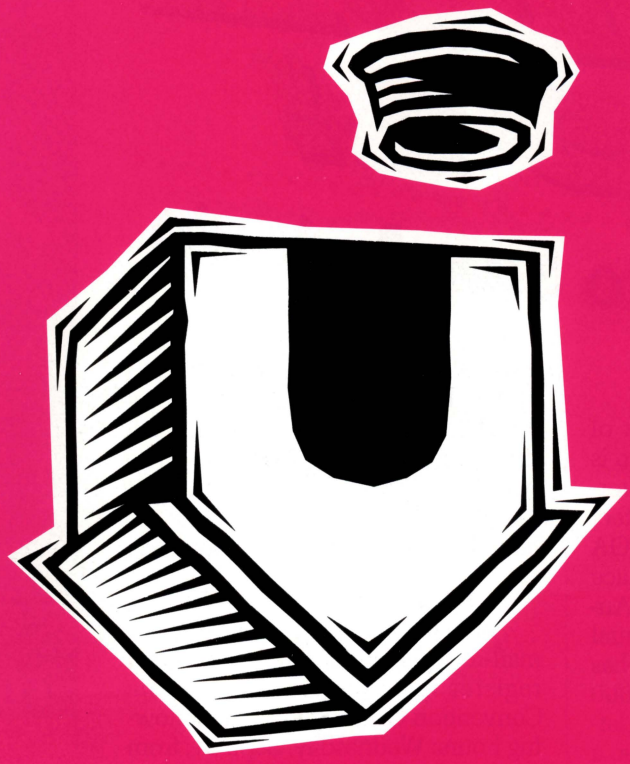
"Not only did we get more than 50,000 people to enter the contest, but WOPA also placed a pinball machine at The Taste of Chicago outdoor festival that attracts hundreds of thousands of people. Most importantly, almost every one of those locations kept their pinball machines," he stated. "A couple didn't, but I placed those elsewhere."

"Earnings have increased across the board. With one location, I was even able to put in an *NBA JAM Tournament Edition* and I know when the *World Cup* game runs its course, I'll be able to put in the next great pinball.

"I've always been a firm believer in promotions, but this time around, it has really proven itself in gaining me new pinball locations that never wanted the games in the past, were dead set against them. Now, they're believers too and we're all making more money than we were before.

"Last, but not least, I want to offer special thanks to American Vending for working so closely with me and supporting the promotion. As to other operators, I suppose the lesson is that with a little knowledge of your customers and a little luck, you can have some success," he declared.

we take amusement seriously



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AMOA 1994!

Welcome to San Antonio

Located deep in the heart of Texas, historic San Antonio is one of America's most visitor-friendly cities and a perfect choice for this year's AMOA Expo '94, which takes place Sept. 22-24 at the beautiful San Antonio Convention Center. The annual operators' meeting and exhibition has grown to include more than 1,000 booths showcasing the industry's latest products and ideas. There's also a topical line-up of educational seminars, the gala awards show and banquet, and a gamut of fun activities planned throughout the event. It's a rare opportunity to experience the best that coin-op has to offer, as well as make a few new friends and say hello to some old ones.

GETTING THERE

The Convention Center is located in downtown San Antonio, along the city's renowned Riverwalk, or Paseo del Rio. This 15-mile horseshoe shaped loop of the San Antonio River has become a popular tourist destination, and is lined by shops, restaurants and hotels. There is a wide range of housing choices, from charming historical hotels that capture the charm of the Southwest to large, modern complexes featuring every conceivable amenity, all within a short walking distance from the Expo center.

The San Antonio International Airport is approximately 8 miles from the Convention Center, so you'll have to take either a taxi, shuttle or rental car from the terminal. A taxi ride will cost about $14 one-way from the airport, while the airport shuttle charges $5 per person one-way. The shuttles depart every 15 minutes (to make a reservation, call 210/366-3183). Special discount rates with Alamo Rental Car (800/732-3232) have been negotiated by AMOA. To get the discount, just tell the agent you'll be attending the AMOA Expo and give them ID # 64806 and Rate Code "GR" (a 24-hour advance reservation is required).

IT'S SHOWTIME

August 23 was the deadline for mail-in registration, but you can still register in the arcade area of the Convention Center during the following hours: Wednesday, Sept. 21, from 3:00 to 8:00PM; Thursday, Sept. 22, from 8:00AM to 5:00PM; Friday, Sept. 23, from 8:00AM to 5:00PM; and Saturday, Sept. 24, from 8:00AM to 3:00PM. Badges and "Galaxy Expocards" will be printed and given out upon each person's arrival.

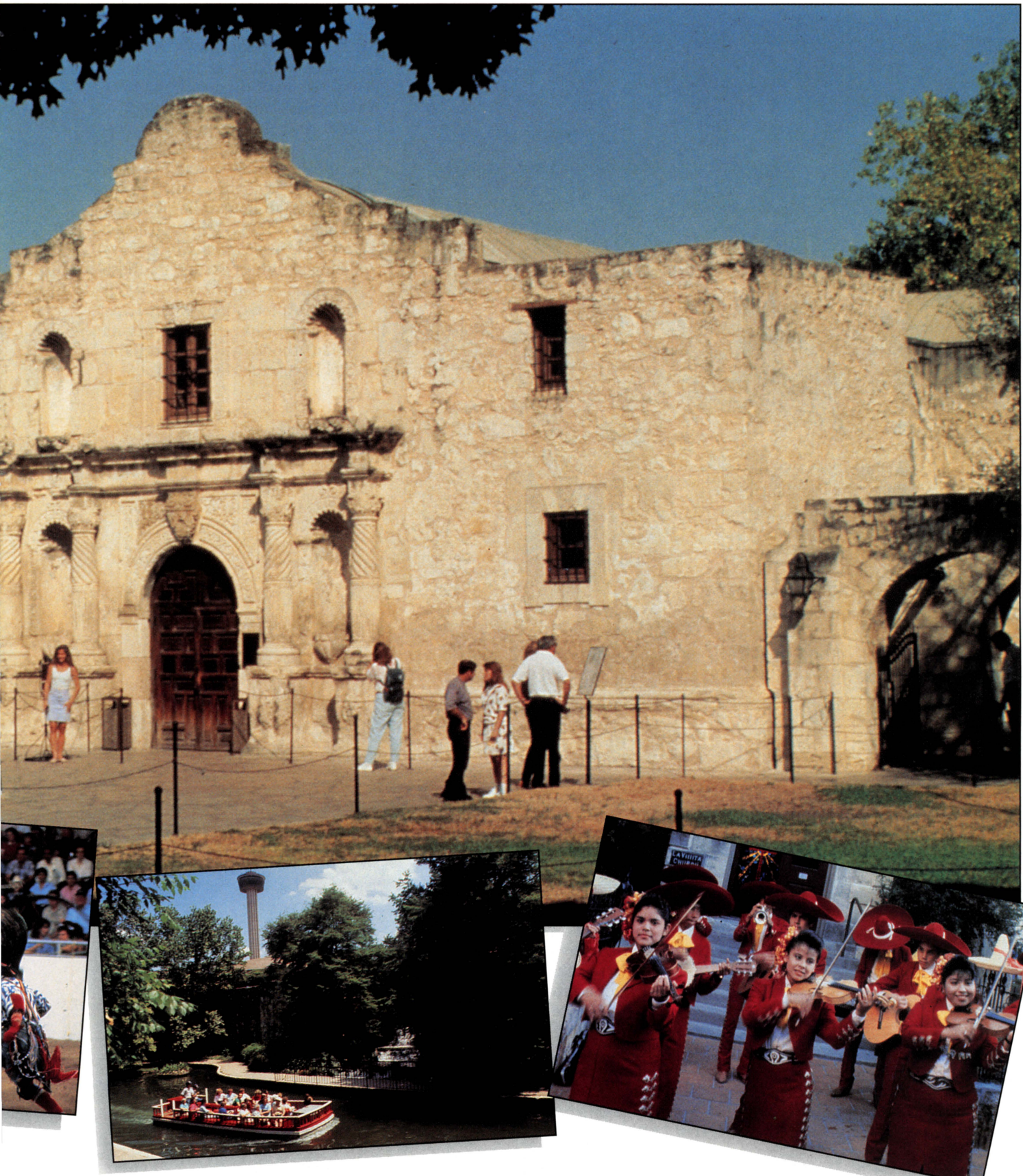
Badges must be worn at all times during the Expo, and are needed for admittance to the exhibit floor, special functions and seminar programs. Show hours begin Thursday, Sept. 22, with a special Distributor Hour from 9:00 to 10:00AM; the Exhibit Hall then opens from 10:00AM to 5:00PM. On Friday, the exhibit arrangement remains the same (9:00-10:00AM, distributors only; 10:00AM-5:00PM, Hall opens), and on Saturday, the show opens at 10:00AM and closes at 5:00PM.

Seminars are planned throughout the day from Thursday to Saturday, so check the accompanying schedule for specific times. All of the seminars are to be held on the Upper Level of the Convention Center, and if you happen to miss one, audio cassettes will be available for sale in the registration area at one hour past each session.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The annual awards show and banquet will be held Friday, Sept. 23 at the Marriot Rivercenter from 6:00 to 11:30PM. The cost is $100 per person with tickets assigned on a first-purchase, first-seats-assigned basis, with any available remaining tickets to be sold on-site. This year's headliner will be music legend Kenny Rogers, himself a 1990 inductee into the AMOA's "Jukebox Legends Hall of Fame."





The awards portion of the program will recognize the best Jukebox Singles and CDs of the year, as well as the annual AMOA Games and Cigarette Vending Promotion Awards. And of course, new inductees into the "Jukebox Legend Hall of Fame" will also be honored.

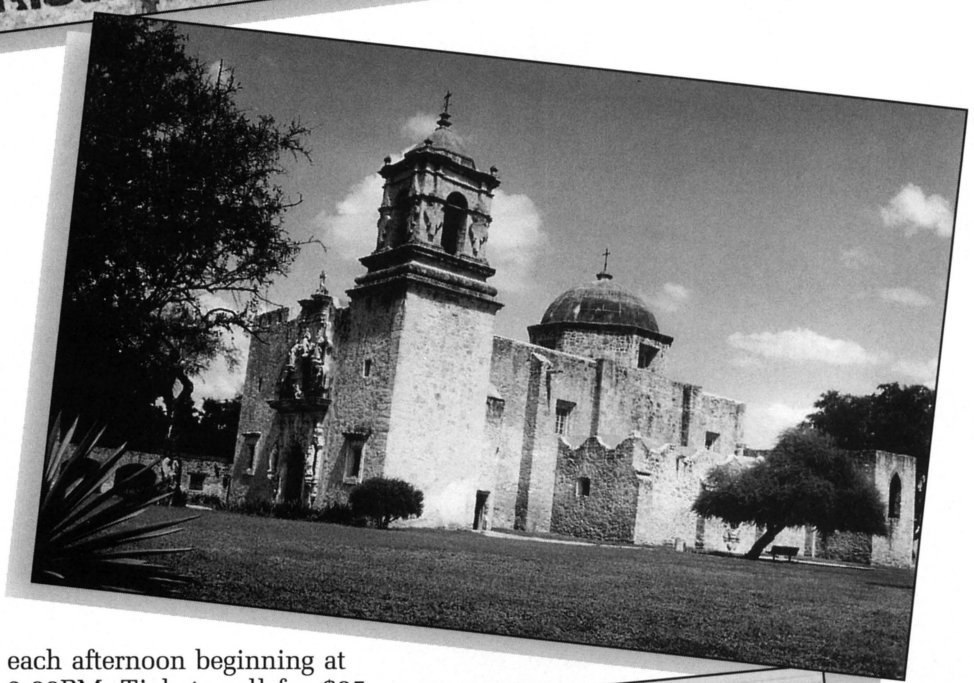
An AMOA Member Welcome Reception is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 22 from 6:00 to 8:00PM. All members are invited to take part in the festivities at the River Court area of the Convention Center. There'll be plenty of food, drinks and entertainment, and it's free!

On Friday morning, the AMOA



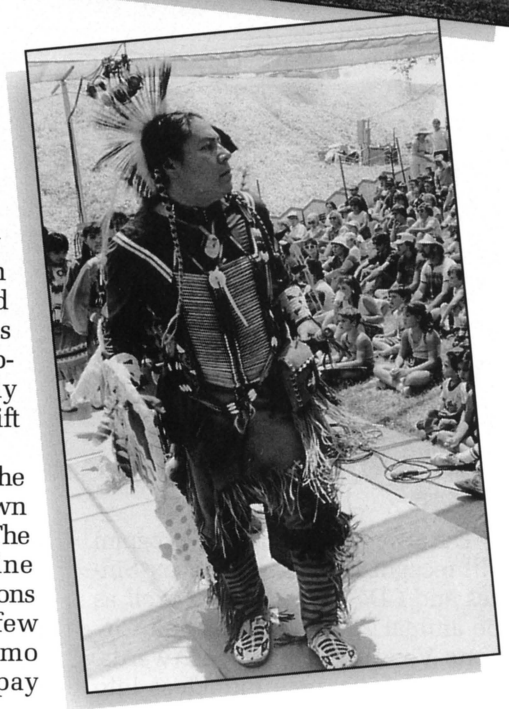
homage to the brave men who fought there. A little further away, San Antonio's newest theme park, Fiesta Texas, features thrilling rides, shows, a waterpark and children's playground, and Sea World of Texas offers the states largest display of marine life, plus specials shows and rides. Discount coupons for both attractions can be obtained from the AMOA registration area.

This is just a quick rundown of the many things in store for those fortunate enough to make it out to San Antonio for AMOA Expo '94. If you have any questions about the show, call the Expo '94 Hotline at 312/245-1021.



will hold its annual business meeting with keynote speaker Michael Singletary, a former Chicago Bear, successful businessman and captivating motivational speaker. The meeting runs from 8:00 to 10:00AM and will contain updates on AMOA's many activities as reported on by officers and committee chairs.

Throughout the Expo, Hesch Foundation Drawings are to be held each afternoon beginning at 3:00PM. Tickets sell for $25 each, or in books of five for $100, and can be purchased at the Hesch Booth located near the Exhibit Hall main entrance. Proceeds go to the Hesch Scholarship Program, which has awarded 181 scholarships to worthy young people since its inception in 1985. All of the equipment and merchandise given away was donated by manufacturers and suppliers, and there will be a daily grand prize of a $2,000 travel gift certificate.



As if the Expo wasn't enough, the city of San Antonio offers its own fair share of sites and activities. The scenic Riverwalk has many fine restaurants and shopping diversions along its banks, while just a few blocks away, the historic Alamo awaits visitors who come to pay

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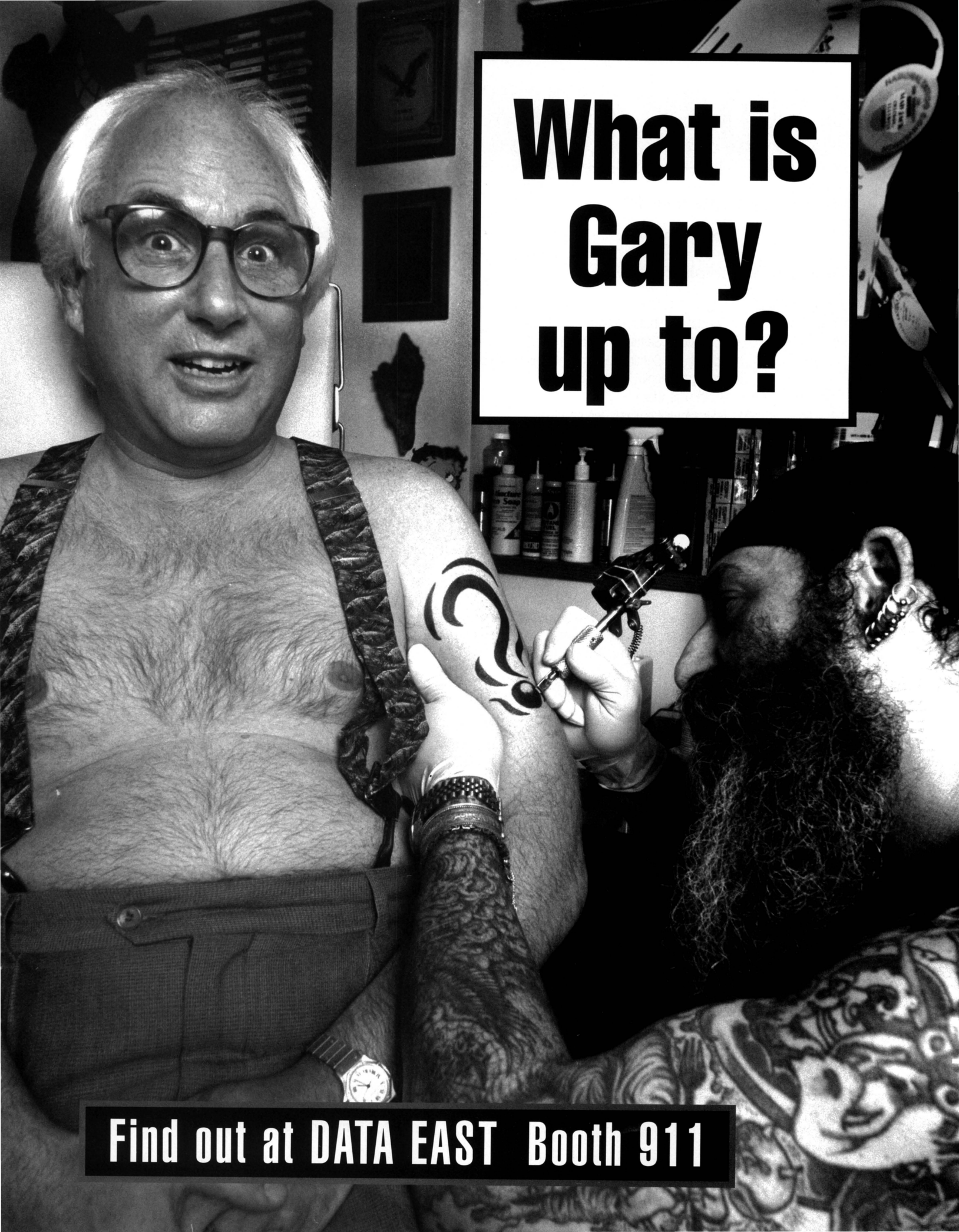
What is Gary up to?
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EXPO '94 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, September 21

3:00-8:00PM	Registration Open	San Antonio Convention Center Arcade

Thursday, September 22

8:00AM-5:00PM	Registration Open	San Antonio Convention Center Arcade
9:00-10:00AM	Special Distributor Hour in Exhibit Hall	San Antonio Convention Center
9:00-10:30AM	Educational Seminar: Videogame Violence	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Centro A)
9:00AM-4:00PM	Educational Seminar: How to Interview and Hire the Right People	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Plaza A)
10:00AM-5:00PM	Exhibit Hall Open	
10:30AM-12:30PM	Educational Seminar: Depreciation	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Centro B)
11:00AM-3:30PM	Spouse Program & Luncheon	Depart from San Antonio Convention Center
Noon-2:00PM	State Association Luncheon (By invitation only)	San Antonio Convention Center
1:00-2:00PM	Educational Seminar: Vending from A-Z	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Centro A)
3:00-5:00PM	Educational Seminar: Leagues	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Centro B)
3:00PM	Hesch Drawing	San Antonio Convention Center Arcade
6:00—8:00PM	Welcome Reception	River Court, San Antonio Convention Center

Friday, September 23

8:00AM-5:00PM	Registration Open	San Antonio Convention Center Arcade
8:00-10:00AM	AMOA Annual Business Meeting & Breakfast (Keynote speaker: Mike Singletary)	Mission Room, San Antonio Convention Center
9:00-10:00AM	Special Distributor Hour in Exhibit Hall	
10:00AM-5:00PM	Exhibit Hall Open	
10:00AM-Noon	Educational Seminar: NANI: The National Amusement Network, Inc. Networking in the Amusement Game Business	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Centro A)
Noon—3:00PM	Educational Seminar: How to Give Exceptional Customer Service	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Plaza A)
3:00PM	Hesch Drawing	San Antonio Convention Center Arcade
2:30-4:30PM	Educational Seminar: Innovative Technology	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Centro A)
3:00-5:00PM	Educational Seminar: Team Building	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Plaza A)
6:00-11:30PM	AMOA Awards Show & Banquet (featuring Kenny Rogers)	San Antonio Marriot Rivercenter

Saturday, September 24

8:00AM-3:00PM	Registration Open	San Antonio Convention Center Arcade
8:00-10:00AM	Educational Seminar: Family Entertainment Centers: New Trends	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Plaza A)
8:00-10:00AM	Educational Seminar: Legalized Gaming	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Centro A)
10:00AM-4:00PM	Exhibit Hall Open	
10:00AM-Noon	Educational Seminar: Intelligent Payphones: A Smart Addition to Your Vending Mix	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Plaza B)
10:00AM-Noon	Educational Seminar: Redemption Workshop	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Centro B)
12:45-2:45PM	Educational Seminar: Securing Your Future: Selling Contracts to Locations	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level (Plaza A)
1:00-3:00PM	Educational Seminar: Video & Pinball Tournaments	San Antonio Convention Center, Upper Level
4:00PM	Hesch Drawing	San Antonio Convention Center Arcade

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Ace/Acme Co. 1225-1231, 1330-1324
Action Lighting. 1103, 1105
Advanced Games and Engineering 1332
Alter Enterprises 949
Alternate Worlds Technology 121, 220
Amer-A-Can Consultants/Suppliers 1625
American Changer Corporation. 1417
American Int'l Shuffleboard Corp. . . 847, 849, 946, 948
American Laser Games 777-783, 876-882
American Sammy Corporation 1741-1763
AMOA - National Dart Association. 1800
AMOA Education Foundation 1803
Amusement Emporium 1042, 1044, 1046
Amusement Equipment Exchange. 1303, 1305, 1402, 1404
Amutec Kiddie Rides. 1560 1562
Antique Apparatus/Rock-Ola, Mfg. 550, 552, 554, 556, 558, 560
Arachnid, Inc. 1575-1581 1674-1680
Arms International, Inc. 1541, 1543, 1545
Asahi Seiko USA, Inc. 1425-29
ASCAP 585
Atari Games . . 621-629, 720-728, 721-729, 820-828
Atlus Software, Inc. 1375, 1377, 1474, 1476
Automatic Products, Inc. 1565, 1567

Bafco/Kiddie Rides Int'l. 1210, 1212
Baton Lock & Hardware Co. 929
Bay Tek, Inc. 1561, 1563, 1660, 1662
R.H. Belam Company, Inc. 842, 844, 846, 848
Benchmark Entertainment 1279, 1281, 1283
Best Amusement, Inc. 696, 698
H. Betti Industries 752-766, 753-767
Big Electronics, Inc. 1804
Bob's Space Racers, Inc. 1149-1157, 1248-1256
Bonita Marie Int'l. 1240, 1242, 1244
Dan Brechner. 1023, 1025, 1027, 1029
Broadcast Music, Inc. 1101
Bromley Inc. 1079, 1081, 1083, 1085
Bundra Games . . 1217, 1219, 1221, 1316, 1318, 1320

C.B. Sales (Circuit Board Sales) 980
California Games, Inc. 595, 597, 599
Canadian Coin Box Magazine 1733
Capcom USA . . 543-549, 642-648, 553-561, 652-660
Carousel International 843, 845, 942, 944
Central South One Stop 416
Chicago Lock Co. 693
Chugai Boyeki (America) Corp/Kaneko 1549, 1551, 1553, 1648, 1650, 1652
Classic Creations 1118
Classic Inc. 1715, 1717, 1719, 1721
Clever Devices Ltd. 1269
Coastal Amusements Inc. 677-85 776-84
Coin Acceptors, Inc. 1805, 1806
Coin Concepts 1361-1369, 1460-1468
Coin ConneXion 1113
Coin Controls International 654, 1656
Coin Journal Co., Ltd. 657
Coin Mechanisms 743, 745

D & R Industries. 1148
D & S Vending, Inc. 692
Dart Mart Inc. 538, 540
Dart World Inc. 1331, 1333, 1430, 1432
Data East USA, Inc. 911-925, 1010-1024
Deltronic Labs, Inc. 883, 885, 982, 984
Digital Disc of America. 304, 306
Dillon Importing Co. 688, 690
Dixie-Narco 643, 645, 647
Doyle International 1261-67, 1360-66
Duzall Toys, Inc. 1280
Dynamo Corp. 933-941, 1032-1040, 1033-1041

Eagle Lift 1048
Effective Systems & Products 795
Electronic Arts 1649-1657, 1748-1756
EMT America 565, 567, 569, 664, 666, 668
ESD (Equipment Systems & Dev.) 799
Euroslot 1150
Exidy, Inc. 1475-1479, 1574-1578
Extra Effort, Inc. 695, 697

Fable Toy Corp. 1400
Fabtek, Inc. 771, 773, 870, 872
Falgas U.S.A. 989, 991, 1088, 1090
Fawn Engineering Corp. 1664, 1666
Fun Industries (div. Johnston) 1566, 1568

G.D.C., Inc. 785
GaMCO Int'l. Inc. 977, 979, 1076, 1078
Games of Tennessee, Inc. 1724-1730
Gametime 897, 899
Gemini Chemical Company 1233
Global Billiard Mfg. Co., Inc. 653, 655
Globe Ticket & Label Company 769
Good Stuff Corporation. 1679, 1681
Grayhound Electronics Inc. . . . 1239-1245, 1338-1344
Great American Billiards. 1774, 1776
Great Lakes Dart Distr. 1152, 1154, 1156

Hamilton Mfg. Corp. 1028
Hantarex Corp. of America. . . 1419, 1421, 1518, 1520
Happ Controls, Inc. 510-522
HMS Monaco. 1327, 1329
Hoffman & Hoffman 1516
Hollywood Pop 1321
Hot Hits 300, 302
Huebler Industries, Inc. 1119, 1121
Hugfun International. 596, 598

I.T.B.A. Inc. 1910, 1911
IAAPA's Family Entertainment Ctr. 1500
Imagination Leisure, Inc. 665, 667
Imonex 1675, 1677
Impulse Amusements 1807
Infinity Group, Inc. 1403, 1405
Innovative Concepts in Entertainment (ICE) 501, 503, 505, 600, 602, 604
Int'l Game Technology (IGT) 1045, 1047, 1049
Intellicall, Inc. 1278
Intercard Inc. 1300
Intergame 1428

J & H Watch Service, Inc. 1409
J & S Toys. 1502, 1504
J-S Sales Company, Inc. 742, 744, 746, 748
Jaleco USA, Inc. 1501-1521, 1600-1620
JCM 1200, 1202, 1204
Just Kiddie Rides . . 1617, 1619, 1621, 1716, 1718, 1720

Kaneko . . . . . see Chugai Boyeki (America)
K-Scale 546
Kemac. 1461
KIC Products 1117
Kiddie Rides U.S.A. 865-873, 964-972
Klopp Coin Counters 114
Konami Inc. 1126-1132, 1125-1133, 1224-1232

LA East, Inc. 202
Laramie Interests (also see Play-By-Play) 1349
Lazer-Tron 1524-1532, 1525-1533
Leisure Entertainment Ltd. 965-969, 1064-1068
Lock America 1569, 1668
Lynde-Ordway Company, Inc. 1401

Machine-O-Matic Ltd. 1211, 1213, 1310, 1312
Mars Electronics Int'l 1055, 1057, 1059
Mayoni Enterprises, Inc. 1416, 1418, 1420
Mazzco 1061
Medalist Marketing Corp. 1900-1904, 1583, 1682
Meltec, Inc. 1260, 1262, 1264, 1266, 1268
Merit Industries, Inc. 532, 534, 536, 533-541, 632-640
Micro Manufacturing, Inc. 669-673, 768-772
MicroTouch Systems, Inc. 204, 206
Midway Manufacturing, Inc. (also see Williams)z . . . 601
Mobile Record Service Company 200
Moloney Manufacturing Inc. 1410, 1412
Mondial International Corporation . . 689, 691, 788, 790
Muncie Novelty Co., Inc. 540A

Nadel & Sons Toy Corp. 852, 854, 856, 858
Namco-America Inc. 853-861 952-960 953-961 1052-1060
Nanco-Nancy Sales Co. Inc. 747, 749
National Amusement Network, Inc. 1801, 1802
National Sports Games 1339-1345 1438-1344
National Ticket Co. 943, 945
Neonetics, Inc. 1093
Neotec Graphic International, Inc. 1274, 1276
New Image Technologies, Inc. 571, 573, 670, 672
New Orleans Plush, Inc. 1096, 1098
Noel Industries, Inc. 1465, 1467, 1469
Nortech Engineering & Mfg. 1218, 1220
NSM America, Inc. . 301-309, 400-408, 405, 407, 409

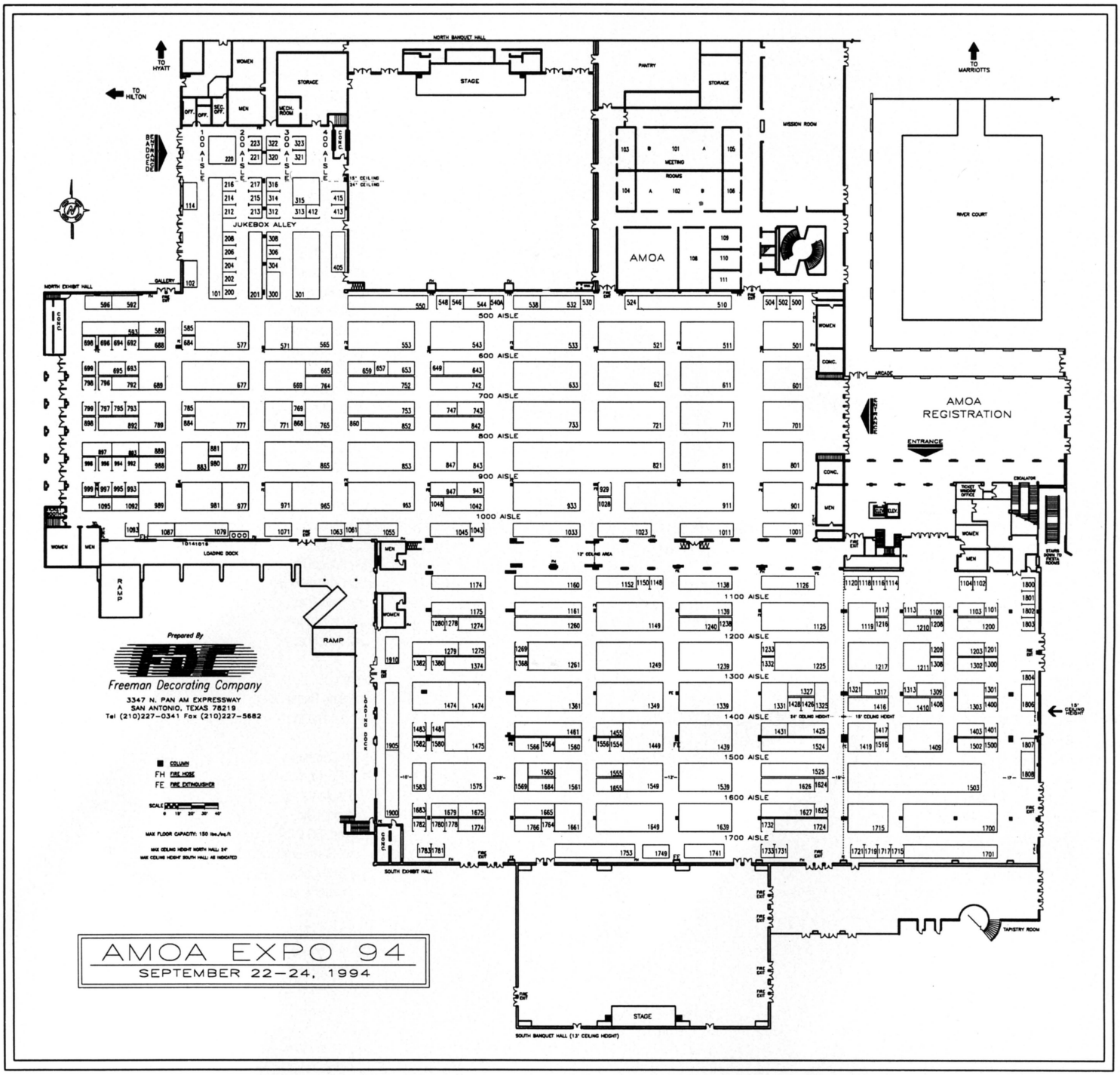
Omni 1639, 1641, 1738, 1740
One Stop Redemption 893, 895
Oriental Trading . 1449, 1451, 1453, 1548, 1550, 1552

P & H Company, Inc. 1317, 1319
Pars Electronics, Inc. 1808, 1809
Peninsula Vending, Inc. 889, 891
Pentranic, Inc. 1325, 1424
Perfect 360 Controls 649
Planet Earth Entertainment . . . 1626-1632, 1627-1633
Play Ball! Cards and Novelties 1455, 1457
Play Meter Magazine 1043
Play-By-Play Toys/Laramie Interests 1349-1357, 1448-1456
Plush-4-Play. 981, 983, 985, 1080, 1082, 1084
Plush Appeal 1665, 1667, 1669
Premier Technology 901, 903, 905, 1000, 1002, 1004, 1001, 1003, 1005
Prizes! 659, 661
Promax Industries Inc. 1302, 1304
Purple Star, Inc. 1379

QRS Music Rolls, Inc. 212
Quick Silver Development . . . 1411, 1413, 1510, 1512

RMK Sales, Inc. 214, 216
R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company 500
Rainbow Crane Inc. 1766, 1768
Reality Concepts/P&F Enterprises 1208
Rebecca's 792, 794
Red Baron Distributing 868
Repeat the Beat 413
RePlay Magazine 502
Revenco Corporation 548
Rhode Island Novelty 892, 894, 896
Romstar, Inc. 1249-1257, 1348-1356
Rowe International, Inc. . . 101-117, 102, 104, 114, 116

Scan Coin, Inc. 542, 544
SD Tech. Div. of General Video 308
Seeburg International, Inc. 577-583, 676-682
Sega (U.S.A) . . 633-641, 732-740, 733-741, 832-840



Selectra International Designs. 684
Seta USA, INC.. . . . . 592, 594
Sharp Image Electronics Inc. 992, 994, 996, 992
Kevin Sharp Enterprises, Inc. 1374, 1376, 1378
Silent Partner, Inc./Allstar Music. 864, 866
Skee Ball, Inc. 1138-1144, 1139-1145
Skilo Bingo Inc. 1539, 1638, 1640, 1642, 1644
Smart Industries Corp. Mfg. . . 1160-1180, 1161-1181
SNK Corporation of America. 1601-1613, 1700-1712, 1701-1713
Southland Distributing 1092, 1094
Space Age Electronics 524
Sportech, Inc. 1661, 1663, 1760, 1762
Spotlight on Hits/Home Juke Box Service 208
Standard Change-Makers, Inc. 1780 1778
Standard Metal Typer, Inc. 1238
Steiner Manufacturing & Sales, Inc. 860
Strata Group, Inc. 1063, 1065
Sunsoft 1439-1445, 1538-1544
Superior Toy & Novelty Corp. 1071, 1073
Superior Wholesale Supply Co. 1216
Taito America Corp. 511-529, 610-628
Tecmo Inc. 877, 879, 976, 978
Tekbilt, Inc. 1905-1909
Tellermate 1556
Theisen Vending 1309, 1311
3 Koam, Inc. 1308
Tornado Table Soccer, Inc. 589, 591

U. S. Toy Company, Inc.. . . . . 1555, 1557
U.S. Amusement Auction Co. 1104
U.S. Games, Inc. 971, 973, 1070, 1072
Ultimate Pool Table Mover-Reed Sales 798
United Plush Company 881
USA Darts 1508

Valley Recreation Products 821-841, 920-940
Van Brook of Lexington 1102
Vending Times. 1301
Vendors Exchange, Inc. 1120
Vendtron, Inc. 884
Victory Vending and Sales, Ltd 1408
Video Lottery Consultants Inc. 789, 791, 888, 890

Wells Gardner Electronics Corp 1109, 1111
What's New For Family Fun Centers 1116
Wico Corporation. 1011, 1013, 1015, 1017
Wideway, Inc. 1275, 1277
Williams Bally/Midway . . 601-617, 700-716, 701-717, 800-816, 801-817, 900-916
Roger Williams Mint 504
World Class Tables, Inc. 1313
Worldwide Industries 1368
Wurlitzer Jukebox Co. 201, 203, 205, 207, 209

XCP, Inc. 1426
Xytek. 1087, 1089

Zamperla, Inc. 1431, 1433



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NOVA

AMOA EXPO '94 SEMINARS

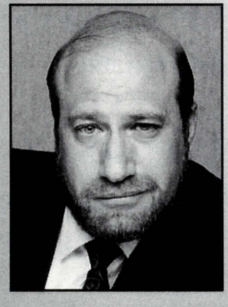
from networked games to video violence, educational lineup has it all

An important part of any coin-op trade show is the educational component, and AMOA Expo '94 is right on the cutting edge with topics, speakers and panels to keep tradesters informed about the industry's latest developments. All seminars will be held in the South Meeting Rooms on the upper level of the San Antonio Convention Center. Here's the schedule and description of each session.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 22

How To Interview and Hire the Right People
9AM-4PM (Plaza A)
Who should attend? Owners and employees with hiring responsibilities. Speaker is Steve Carline of CareerTrack On-Site Training, who says 50% of all new hires last just six months on the job. He'll cover techniques you can use to boost long-term employee retention, staff productivity, and morale.

Video Game Violence
9-10:30AM (Centro A)
Who should attend? Company spokespersons, state association reps, and vidgame factory execs. Speaker is Dr. Arthur Pober, the exec director of the IDSA Ratings Board. He'll explain what kind of ratings system has been adopted by the consumer vidgame market and how coin-op will be affected.



Depreciation
10:30AM-12:30PM
Who should attend? Owners and employees responsible for company finances. Panelists include two AMOA past presidents (Craig Johnson and John Estridge), along with Von Wallace from the top national accounting firm of Deloitte & Touche. They'll explain how you can use the income-forecast method to cut your tax exposure.



Vending From A to Z
1-3PM (Centro A)
Who should attend? Owners and top managers who want to expand their business. Panelists are AMOA past president Dick Hawkins and VP Don Hesch. Considerations for entering the vending market, plus new ideas for people already in it.

Leagues
3-5PM (Centro B)
Who should attend? Owners and managers who run leagues and tournaments. Hawaii op Glen Anderson moderates a panel including Valley's Greg Elliott, and AMOA-NDA's Joe Conway. This is a two-parter. The first hour covers the "how to" of league start-up and why it pays to get involved. Second hour covers keeping up the excitement for established leagues.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 23

NANI: AMOA's Hi-Tech Network
10AM-Noon (Centro A)
Who should attend? Owners, top managers, manufacturers. Speaker Craig Johnson, TVPhone's John Klayh and EDS execs explain how multimedia networks will impact coin-op and why AMOA is creating its own network. They'll tell how operators can get involved and how it's all going to work.

Exceptional Customer Service
Noon-3PM (Plaza A)
Who should attend? Any employee who's on the front line with your customers. CareerTrack's Lloyd Arnsmeyer will fire a battery of ideas for good first impressions, better listening, less time-wasting, keeping positive attitudes, and how to calm upset customers.

Innovative Technology
2:30-4:30PM (Centro A)
Who should attend? Owners and top managers who make purchases and oversee technical enhancements. Speaker Mike Getlan, a leading arcade operator, will cover everything from virtual reality to networked games and tell you if — and how — you can make the most of it.

Team Building
3-5PM (Plaza A)
Who should attend? Owners and top managers. Speaker Lloyd Arnsmeyer (CareerTrack) will explain methods of getting your people to work smoothly together as a team for peak performance and greater commitment.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 24

New Trends in FECs
8-10AM (Plaza A)
Who should attend? Owners and top managers who want to expand their business. Arcade whiz Norm Pink moderates a panel including arcade owner Bill Beckham, redemption pros Rorie Keller and Sue Monday, operator's computer pro Ted Furkin, and Asahi Seiko's Rick Mines. They'll chat up every phase of developing your family entertainment center — from barcodes to equipment mix and incentive programs; from realty issues to food and price questions.

Legalized Gaming
8-10AM (Centro A)
Who should attend? Owners, managers and factory execs who are interested in this market. AMOA's Dean Schroeder and WMS Gaming prexy Rick Currie discuss what role operators will have in tomorrow's gaming biz.

Redemption Workshop
10AM-Noon (Centro B)
Who should attend? Owners and top managers who want to expand their business. Redemption expert Frank "the Crank" Seninsky moderates a panel including arcade topper Mike Getlan and Jersey Shore vet Tony Storino. You'll learn the varied ways of running redemption from these guys, each of whom does it his own unique way.

Intelligent Payphones
10AM-Noon (Plaza B)
Who should attend? Owners and top managers who want to expand their business. Intellicall's Bob Gallagher advises how to replace dropping tobacco revenues with a private payphone route. He'll talk profitability, equipment longevity, long distance and local call revenue, and tell how to enter this demanding — but potentially quite profitable — niche.

Selling Contracts to Locations
12:45-2:45PM (Plaza A)
Who should attend? Owners and employees involved in location procurement and contracts. Rosemary Coin's Steve Powers and law professor Dr. Richard Hunter explain how contracts can secure your future, especially from possible threats of multimedia competition.



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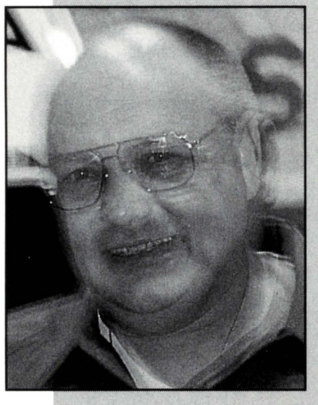
OPERATOR
OPINIONS

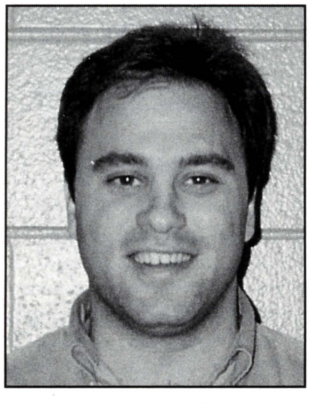
IN THE CROWD

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO GET OUT OF GOING TO AMOA EXPO '94 IN SAN ANTONIO?



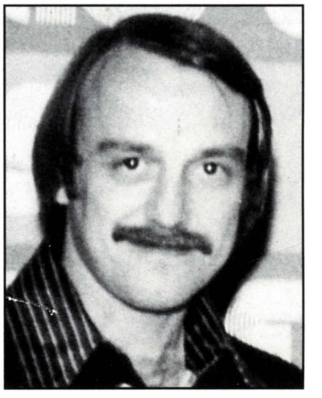
RAY BLONDEAU
Happy House Amusement, Inc.
Goffstown, New Hampshire

We're going to be looking at redemption equipment, the new releases. Most of the manufacturers should have new pieces; we'll be taking a look at all of them. I think you're going to see more and more redemption. It's going to dominate the show.



GREG BROWN
B & B Music and Video
Cleveland, Ohio

My focus at the show will be on making contact with other operators. We always learn the most at these shows by meeting and taking with the operators about our business strategies. At the Expo, we can get a good cross-view of operator strategies from the whole nation. You really can't talk like that with local operators because we're all competing with each other, but at the show, things are more open because we're from all over and not in direct competition. The information we gather at these events is invaluable to us. As for equipment, our focus is going to be on redemption.



LEE MARTIN
Martin Amusement Co.
Macon, Georgia

One reason I'm going is because I like San Antonio, and I expect to have a good time there. In general, I'll be looking for reasonably priced equipment that gives a good return — I don't know why anyone would want anything other than that. The most important thing about the show, though, is the contact you get with other operators. It's a great place to share what you know and get a little free information. I've spoken with a lot of operators and brought back many good ideas, and maybe they were able to use a few of my ideas. That's what the show is all about.



JUNELL DUNAGAN
Alexander Amusement Co.
Deming, New Mexico

I really like to see the new jukeboxes in person, instead of just looking at pictures in an ad or brochure. I used to always go for the seminars, and there's at least one this year I want to attend. Although we have games, I'm not really going to see the new videos. They're not making much money right now, and are really just an evil necessity. Of course, I really like being able to meet other people in the industry. I've gotten a lot of good out of just talking with the other operators. I think that's what everyone says is a big reason for going.

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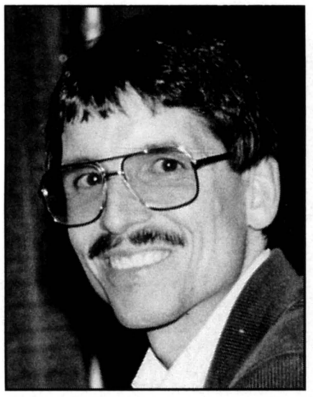
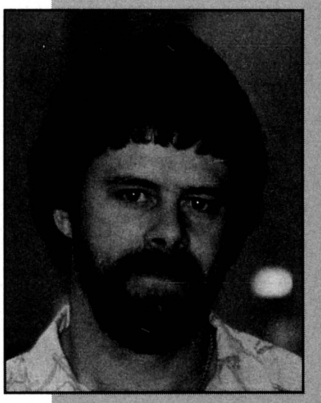


RICK LaFLEUR
I.F. LaFleur & Sons, Inc.
Devils Lake, North Dakota

I think at all these shows you can find all that you could want in whatever area you are looking into, whether it's information, trends, equipment or so on. This year we're going to look at what they've got and try and pick the winners; we'll talk to manufacturers, look at the charts and find out what appears to be hot. I go mainly for the exchange of information — it doesn't matter if it's new equipment or techniques. We try to do that year-round, but at the show there's less distractions and the opportunities are better.



ALAN CHAMBERS
Chambers Music Co.
Ogden, Utah

Everyone is probably going down there hoping that they'll see something new besides video. Business has been really bad lately for street operators. If you're running an arcade or amusement park, that's great — but we don't have that kind of flexibility. I just don't think there's much happening for us with these new videos. When I went to the last show, I saw that game, *Virtua Fighter,* and had a great time playing it, but when I looked at the price and figured out how much I needed to take in, it got kind of spooky. Eighty-five percent of our business is in taverns, so we'll be looking for new things that are bar oriented. It's nice to go down and see what's what, but the show really isn't so much for going over the games; it's more of a chance to talk to people and pick their brains.



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Madame PRESIDENT!

Tami Norberg-Paulsen takes leadership reins of AMOA this month; third-generation operator is upbeat, progressive and experienced



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If that's the job description, AMOA could hardly do better than Tami Norberg-Paulsen — because the above paragraph also describes Tami to a "T." At the close of this month's Expo in San Antonio, this third-generation operator who grew up in the coin machine business takes on the mantle of the AMOA presidency. Bright and cheerful, Tami possesses a quick smile, an even quicker mind, and a well deserved reputation as a super-hard worker.

"I feel an awesome sense of responsibility about all this," she said upon learning that she was destined for the AMOA president's desk. She has some ambitious plans and hopes for the association under her leadership. Knowing of Tami's very deep sense of duty, her immediate predecessors Craig Johnson and R.A. Green told her in unison: "Relax and have fun with it!"

Tami's only the second woman in AMOA history to hold the top job, and she's the third member of the "30-something" generation in a row to serve as AMOA president. She brings an impressive record to the post. Her coin-op association resume starts at the state level with the Minnesota Operators of Music & Amusements (MOMA), where she served as board member, legislative chair, vice president and president.

Her catalog of prior experience continues at the national level where she has toiled for AMOA as a director, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and — most recently — first VP and chairperson of the Government Relations Committee. She has also chaired AMOA's committees on jukebox promotion, membership, education, awards, and expo planning. Co-chairing with Rus Mawdsley, she ran an ad-hoc committee which assessed the group's finance/ investment status and strategies. Another ad-hoc group she chaired was called Expo International Attendees.

Tami was the first-ever president of AMOA's National Dart Assn., and she served as VNEA's national publicity chairman, as well as serving on VNEA's executive and tournament committees. This year she was honored with VNEA's "Meritorious Service Award."



C&N Sales, one of America's largest coin-op routes, maintains its 25,000 sq. ft. headquarters building in Mankato, Minn.



Interior of "Fun 'N' Games," one of C&N Sales' mall-based retail stores for leisure products.

At home, she's secretary and treasurer of C&N Sales (Mankato, Minn.), one of America's largest coin machine operations. This rural-based chain of routes covers four states — Minnesota, South Dakota, Iowa and Nebraska — with several thousand games, mostly in street locations. C&N also operates some arcades and four mall-based retail stores that sell a wide variety of home entertainment products (i.e., home pool tables, bar furniture, dart and billiards supplies, board games, etc.).

C&N's mammoth league operations — 8,000 weekly pool players and 5,000 weekly dart players — make it the single largest member in both VNEA and AMOA-NDA. Seven full-time C&N employees do league management, data entry and league administration. They're strongly considering opening their first big-scale family entertainment center, with a hefty redemption component.

Tami knows all of these facets of the industry first-hand. "I grew up in the business all my life," she said. "I've worked in the family concern since I was 12 or 13, helping with clerical work and programming music. I worked through high school and in college I worked during summer vacations." Since taking her degree in marketing and management, Tami's been with C&N for 12 years as a co-owner.

Chairman of C&N is her dad, Harlow Norberg, while her brother Tim Norberg is C&N's president. In fact, if you wanted a picture-perfect "family business" to stress coin-op's wholesome, apple-pie side, you couldn't do much better than C&N. The company was founded in 1928 by Tami's grandfather, Fred Norberg. Today, practically every family member works there. Tami's sister Sheri is merchandising manager for the retail stores; Sheri's husband Bob Lund manages C&N's Iowa offices. Tim's wife Marilyn is buying manager for the retail store operation. "It's fun," Tami said of the "all in the family" personnel picture, "and fortunately we all get along very well!"

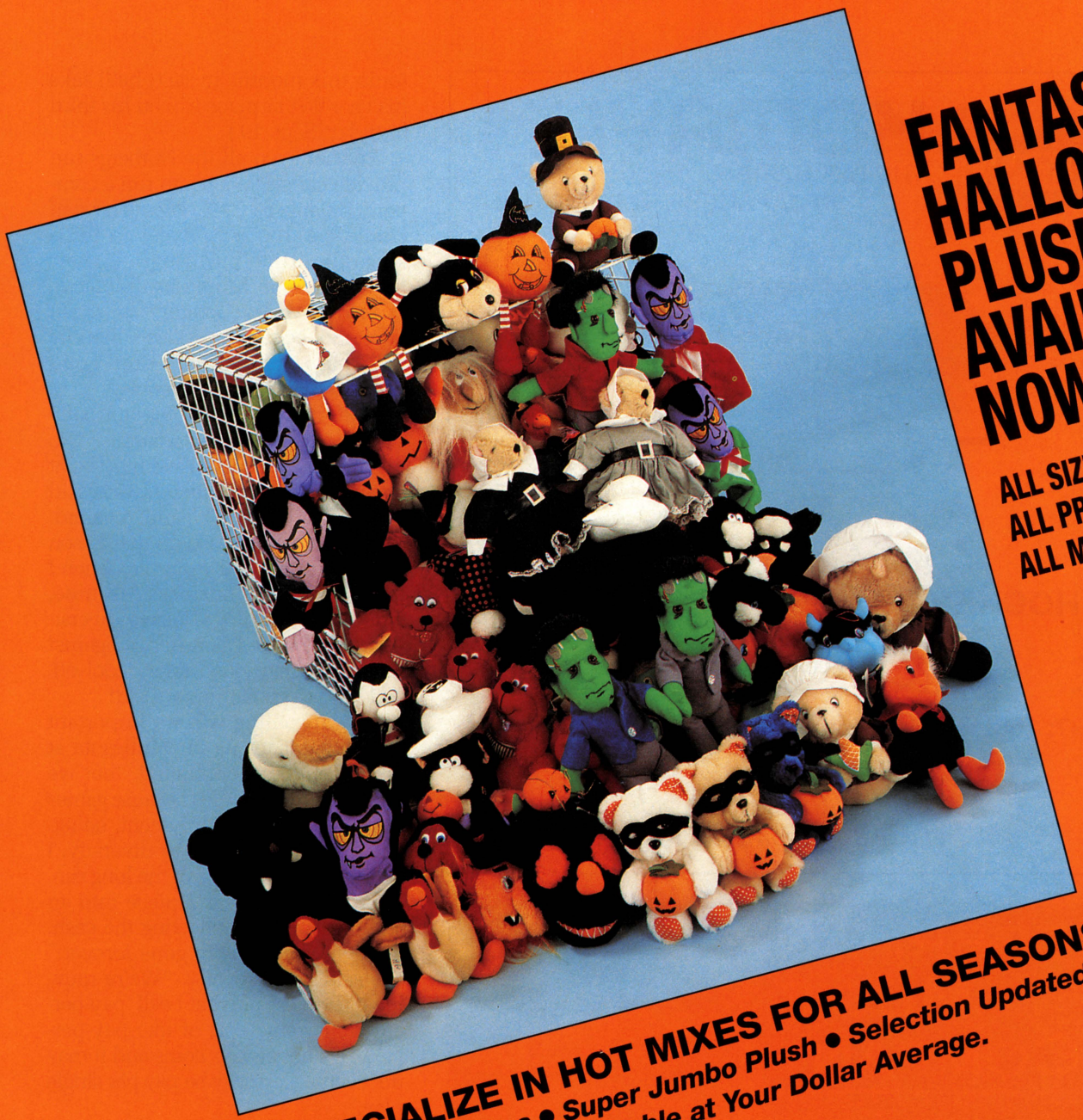


Tami with husband Brian Paulsen, a successful architect, and son Jonathan, who will be 3 at this Expo.



All those Norbergs! At a recent wedding we find this happy group. Back row (l-r): Tami, brother-in-law James Graham, sister Dr. Shani Norberg-Graham, mother Marlene Norberg, father Harlow Norberg, sister-in-law Marilyn Norberg, brother Tim Norberg and sister Sheri Lund. Front row (l-r) from left: Tami's husband Brian (seated) & son Jonathan, nephew Jory & Jimmy Lund, and (seated) brother-in-law Robert Lund.

Tami's own immediate family includes her husband Brian Paulsen, a successful architect. "Brian is my Rock of Gibralter," Tami says. They have a preschool-aged son named Jonathan, who is already an avid game player. (He'll be making his first AMOA Expo appearance in San An-



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tonio this month...in fact, he'll take his very first airplane trip on his third birthday, Sept. 19.)

But not even all the Norbergs can provide enough people to run a company as large as C&N Sales. The staff comprises 100 employees in three separate office buildings — their headquarters in Minnesota, plus two in Iowa. "Many operators who visit us cannot believe how close, friendly and sharp our staff is," Tami commented. "They're good people."

C&N didn't get this big and successful by resting on its laurels. "No matter how successful we may be at any time, my grandfather always said nothing is forever," Tami recalled. "Our dad really passed on that lesson to Tim and me. For example, when I first entered the business full-time, video was booming. But we diversified into leagues as a hedge against the time when video might cool off, and it was a good thing we did!

"Legal gaming was an important profit center for us in Minnesota at one time," Tami continued, "but we moved into retail sales because games of chance weren't permanent, either. Operators who refuse to diversify, I believe, won't survive in the long run. The days of putting a piece into an account and just collecting the cash, are over...and they're gone forever," she said emphatically. "We're moving into an era of what I call 'pay-per-entertainment,' sort of like pay-per-view. It's not always coins and it may not even necessarily be pay per single play."

Her "change-oriented" philosophy makes Tami well-suited to leading AMOA these days. The entire industry has been talking about change for a long time, and now many long-anticipated changes are finally about to hit...changes like networked games (from AMOA and other sources). Changes like ratings for video games. Changes like an explosion of land-based casinos and even more Indian gaming. Changes like more debit cards and new U.S. currency (for higher denomination bills, anyway).

How should AMOA and American operators respond to all these changes? "Aggressively!" smiled Tami, echoing the favorite word of the "30-something" association leadership. What follows is an interview with Tami as she prepares to assume leadership of the national operator trade group. ◆

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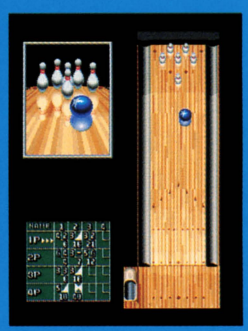

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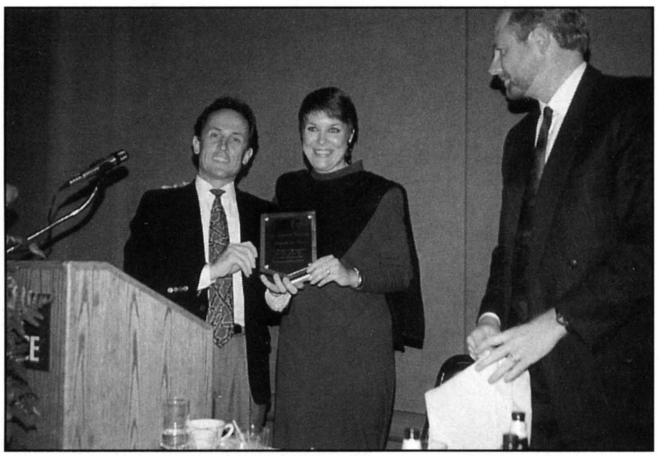
TAMI NORBERG-PAULSEN

INTERVIEW



Gene Winstead presents Tami with a plaque upon completion of her 2nd term as president of the Minnesota operators association.

A CHAT WITH TAMI

"I'm a strong believer in marketing and public relations; we can and must do much more," says new AMOA president

REPLAY: Tami, are there any special projects or goals you hope to accomplish or achieve as AMOA President?

TAMI: The most important goal is to keep effectively guiding the association on the progressive track it's currently on. With so many issues and challenges facing AMOA, that must be the president's main responsibility. But in terms of special projects, one item I hope to accomplish is to help put forward a plan for AMOA to market this industry to the general public and the outside business community, and for AMOA to better market itself as an association to its broad membership.

REPLAY: What have you learned from serving in the other three officer chairs?

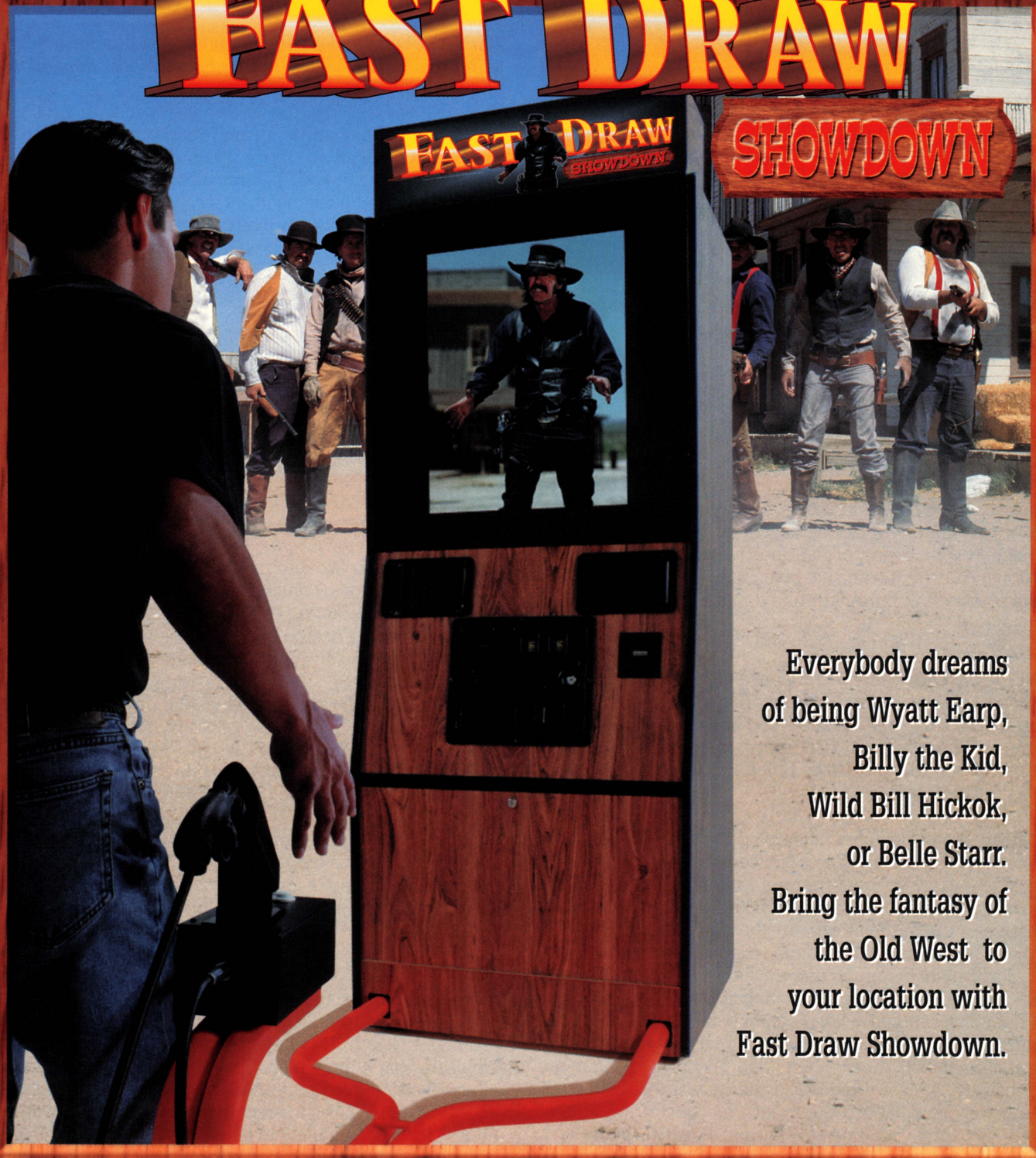
TAMI: Mainly I've learned that AMOA is really a big business today. We've got over a budget of $2.5 million, with so many programs and committees and areas of concern to keep track of. Being president of AMOA is really like being president of a big company, and I believe you need to run it as such. Over the past few years, my immediate predecessors as president — Gene Urso, Craig Johnson and R.A. Green — have really worked as a team with me and the other line officers. When those individuals were president, they delegated many important responsibilities to the first vice president, treasurer and secretary. As AMOA becomes more involved with more programs, there's no way the president can do everything. You simply must have strong officers and committee chairs — and if you delegate and share responsibility, that gives the president more of a chance to focus on accomplishing specific tasks.

REPLAY: You're the second woman to serve as AMOA president, in what you've called a "male-dominated industry." Is coin-op as a whole more enlightened about gender issues these days?

TAMI: Definitely yes, the industry has become more enlightened over the past 10 or 12 years. I believe that's mostly because our business has really changed during that time from more mom-and-pop, to what *RePlay* calls "hi-tech and global." As a result, we in coin-op are exposed to many other businesses outside our industry — and believe me, the business world is changing. You meet males and females, as well as people from different races and many cultures. This has helped us in this industry view each other more as peers, based on our individual talents and experiences, rather than "categories."

REPLAY: Have you received any advice or comments from Leoma Ballard, AMOA's first woman president, that you especially like on this score?

FAST DRAW



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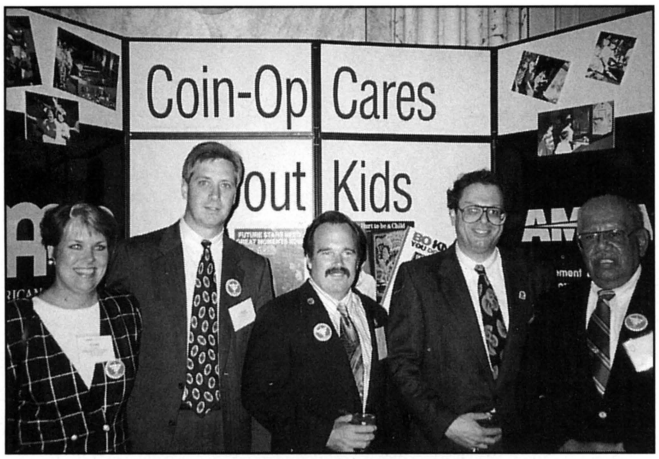

Tami, seen here at 1993's Washington Conference, served as chairman of AMOA's Government Relations Committee this year. From left: Tami, Craig Johnson, Alan Deustchmann, Rowe's Joel Friedman and Dr. Green of the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse.

TAMI: (Smiles) As a child of the industry, I've known Leoma all my life. Now that I'm close to becoming AMOA president myself, I admire her even more for accomplishing what she did — at a time when the business climate was very different. Her achievement is quite significant. She's always been very supportive and helpful to me. (Grins) And yes, Leoma has given me some good advice — but if you don't mind, I think I'd rather keep the specifics to myself!

REPLAY: Okay, our feelings aren't hurt! You're also a representative of the "30-somethings" who have lately stepped into top AMOA leadership. This group promised to make AMOA more open and democratic. Has this been done? How much more is there to go in this department?

TAMI: We've definitely attempted to make AMOA more democratic and I hope we've accomplished it. Our major goal was to create more communication between AMOA's executive committee and the board at large, as well as between the association and the membership at large. We've helped make that happen in several ways.

First, by being much more responsive and open to the trade press; second, we initiated the Government Relations Committee's monthly fax program to all AMOA members; third, committee meetings are much more open: non-committee members are welcome and encouraged to attend. For instance, over three-fourths of the board attended our Government Relations Committee meeting at the time of our last mid-year board meeting. Fourth, we've also attempted to institute many more conference calls for all the committees, with pre-published agendas given to all the members. That allows people to think about the issues and raise questions. That's what those calls are for: to get input, answer questions, have good discussions and come to conclusions.

A fifth move toward greater openness is that AMOA will soon publish its first annual report, which is the brainchild of Executive VP John Schumacher and myself. This report totally outlines AMOA's financial picture and openly discusses our committees' activities. It will be a great public relations tool that tells who we are and what we do. And it's a necessity for the membership to have.

All this helped make AMOA more open and democratic. Obviously this is only a beginning and we hope to continue on this track.

REPLAY: You've also tried to make selection for leadership posts inside AMOA more objective, less dependent on the old-boy network.

TAMI: Yes, there's now a prescribed application form. Anybody who wants to move up on the board must fill it out and send it in well before selections are made. All nominating committee members receive these forms ahead of time, so they can objectively assess what each person has achieved during their time on the board. We just started this procedure at the last board meeting, and we've had excellent feedback on it.

REPLAY: And, as you said earlier, there's been more power-sharing lately.

TAMI: There's been more willingness to delegate and share responsibilities, but that was also a necessity. One or two people simply can't handle everything anymore. Today if a person gets assigned one or two issues, they can learn them in-depth and manage them very well. For instance, I've been working closely on video violence with board member Frank Seninsky and our government liaison Laura Olson. We inform everyone of what's going on with weekly reports, conference calls, pre-published agendas and the GRC faxes. This lets everyone participate in making the major decisions. That same pattern holds true for NANI, where Craig Johnson is taking the lead.

REPLAY: Have the 30-somethings had any other notable impact?

TAMI: AMOA has had presidents in their 30s before, but Craig recently mentioned that he, R.A., myself — and next year, presumably, Randy Chilton — are the first case where AMOA has had several presidents in a row, who are this young. This has a couple of interesting effects. For one thing, the younger group may be more willing to delegate authority, because most of us didn't start off as "100% hands-on" in every aspect our own businesses. That's been healthy for the organization.

Also, in different stages of people's careers, they have different aspirations. At the "30-something" stage, as you call it, people are still hungry, still trying to grow their businesses, less in a "maintenance" mode. Because of the ambition that comes with this stage of life, I think this group of officers has been more risk-taking and aggressive about taking AMOA in new directions. The "30-somethings" have been willing to delve into projects like NANI, hire a full-time staffer in Washington D.C. like Laura Olson, and make other unconventional moves.

REPLAY: Gene Urso agrees with you. He said new blood and new ideas are a great benefit to AMOA.

TAMI: Gene some of the other past presidents like Dick Hawkins, John Estridge and Jack Kerner have been incredibly supportive and helpful in these last couple of years, as the new generation of leadership tries to make these changes. It's also healthy for AMOA to have people like Jerry Derrick and Don Hesch coming along, people who have more experience and the wisdom that we younger officers don't possess. I agree with Gene that we need both;

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Those Minnesota operators sure can lobby on Capitol Hill! This 1988 photo shows, from left: Norm Pink, Bob Latz, Dick Hawkins, Sen. David Durenburger, Al Eggermont, Tami and husband Brian.

AMOA benefits from this mix. Updating AMOA's procedures and launching projects has been important in recent years because of all the changes that have been thrust upon us. At first these changes were not the most popular ideas with everybody! But we benefited from the support and counsel of past presidents who said, "Good idea, go ahead" and who gave us useful pointers about how to get where we wanted to go.

REPLAY: What do you see as AMOA's greatest strength today?

TAMI: The greatest strength I see right now is in the current board and our staff. The board is very professional, talented and eager. The last couple of years I've seen a great willingness for board members to dive into projects, roll up their sleeves and take care of them. Partly that's because when you delegate issues — give people a job and let them do it — they are more willing to get deeply involved. The board has really come through on some key projects. None of this would have been possible without the incredible support of our staff, with Smith-Bucklin's diverse resources. That's a key strength because there are so many challenges and issues.

REPLAY: You and other officers have repeatedly said you can brainstorm and come up with these new, creative ideas, then John Schumacher and his team are very good at translating those notions into step-by-step plans and procedures.

TAMI: Exactly.

REPLAY: What do you see as AMOA's greatest weakness?

TAMI: I think our biggest weakness — or at least something we need to work on — is that we need more involvement by our membership in general. I'm not sure how to accomplish this. More open communication has helped start this process. For example, after our GRC fax on video violence, a Chicago member called up and said he knew Rep. Tom Lantos, and that he could help. He came to Washington D.C. and participated in a meeting with Congressman Lantos. That was great! We have other members around the country who can make similar contributions in politics and other fields. We need to get them more active.

REPLAY: Can you briefly update us on AMOA's current thinking and/or latest action on a few "hot button" issues and major projects? Let's start with video game ratings, which you just alluded to.

TAMI: The Interactive Digital Software Assn., IDSA, has publicly released the formal draft version of their rating system, with five rating categories. The icons (visual symbols) and exact titles or verbal labels are not completely finalized to my knowledge. This system has initially been endorsed by consumer video manufacturers; as of early August, neither AMOA or AAMA has publicly endorsed any ratings system. A major issue for coin-op is, exactly what will we have to display in the attract mode of a video game? We'll discuss this face to face on Aug. 8 in New York with people from IDSA and AAMA. Dr. Pober, executive director of the IDSA ratings board, is a tremendous individual and he understands the problems coin-op has and the practicalities of implementation. He's very willing to address our concerns. So that meeting may determine if AMOA and/or AAMA endorses the IDSA system.

REPLAY: The IDSA system is not the only one floating around, right?

TAMI: The Software Publishers Assn. has proposed an alternative ratings system, but I honestly believe in my heart they'll never get by with it. So much political pressure will be exerted by Congress that I believe SPA will eventually have to compromise. At this point, I believe IDSA's system as presented in late July will be adopted, and that market pressure will make the manufacturers adopt it...but we'll just have to see.

REPLAY: Okay, how about an update on NANI, AMOA's National Amusement Network?

TAMI: NANI continues to move forward. We are finalizing our agreement with Williams/Bally-Midway, which will provide the initial network-compatible hardware to AMOA specifications, and will also provide the first software. NANI president Craig Johnson told me, and this is a direct quote: "We believe we will have a network-capable unit at Expo to demonstrate. We've put together a tournament committee composed of various experts from throughout the industry to address issues about procedures, prizes, and so forth. NANI's test program will be on the street and operating before the end of the year." We're all very excited about NANI and believe we're on the right track.

REPLAY: Good! Now, a less happy topic: video lottery and Indian gaming.

TAMI: Video lottery is a very difficult issue. I was just sick when I heard the news from South Dakota. *[Editor's note: on June 22, the S.D. Supreme Court ruled VLTs unconstitutional.]* It's paramount that operators stay active on this issue in their state legislatures. Even if they're not actively pursuing a market for operator-run video lottery, they need to be just as active in monitoring it. My fear is that state associations may become exhausted in the pursuit of

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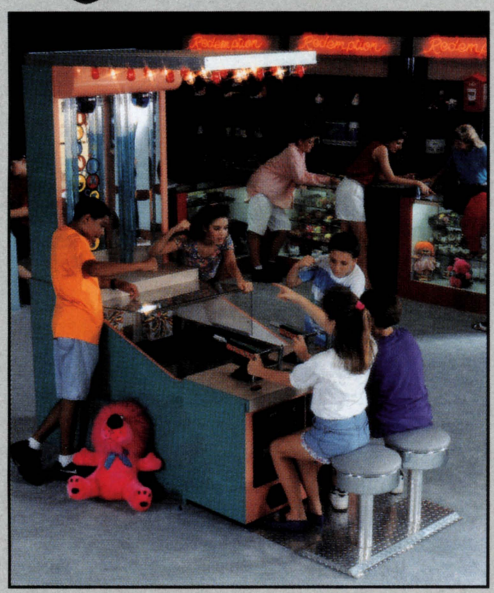

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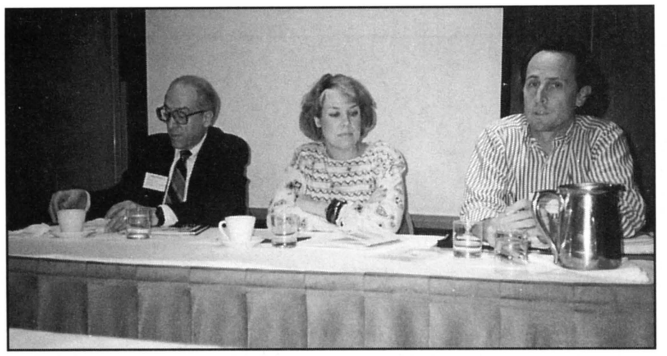

Tami served as MOMA's legislative affairs chairman in 1991. Here she's seen with co-chair Gene Winstead and counsel Bob Latz.

VLTs, withdraw from the political arena, and leave the door open for a competitive system to come in. Based on what I've seen over the last few years, plus personal experience in lobbying for VLTs in the midwest, I have to say I'm not roaring with optimism that more states will permit operator-run gaming any time soon.

REPLAY: A related problem is the explosion of gambling on Native American reservations across the country.

TAMI: Indian gaming is obviously a real threat to our industry because it draws heavy customer traffic and a flood of entertainment dollars from our traditional coin-op locations. But an equally serious threat comes from Vegas-type casinos and riverboats, which are not owned by Indians. They're spreading just as fast or faster than games on the reservations, and they have the exact same impact. Almost every major city has a proposal to get into the action. My advice to operators in any state where such proposals are coming up, is this: get involved and let your legislators know how a major gambling source will detrimentally affect other small businesses, if small business is not allowed to compete. If the big gambling interests get in first, they quickly accumulate a lot of money to fight the small bars, the operators, the hospitality industry, and our other small-business allies. The pro-casino and pro-riverboat forces are big, well-financed, highly professional Las Vegas interests. They must be watched and fought on a state level...and they must be fought early, before they become completely unstoppable.

REPLAY: We hear you. Back on the national political beat, what's the prognosis for dollar coins?

TAMI: I believe there's no way dollar coin legislation will pass in this election year. The only way to get dollar coins is with White House backing. But AMOA, AAMA and NAMA have all hired professional lobbyists to assess the White House's stand on this, and these experts have all come to the exact same conclusion: the Clinton Administration has absolutely no interest in this issue. AMOA will continue to monitor the issue, but we won't make a full-court press on dollar coins until something changes in the Administration. The Coin Coalition is still trying to change public opinion, and I think that's where movement has to happen first. Once the people are for it, then the White House will go along. Ultimately, I believe our industry should pursue debit card systems for our games. At C&N Sales, we've done a college gameroom that way. It allows us to increase play pricing without customer resistance. Gas stations are using cards, and so are telephones and other industries — it's all over the U.S. economy! Why aren't we doing that in our industry? "It's too expensive right now," is the answer you hear...but I don't think it has to be.

REPLAY: So there's hope for higher play-pricing, even if dollar coins aren't the vehicle to achieve it. What about AMOA's National Dart Association and the International Flipper Pinball Association — how are they faring these days?

TAMI: AMOA's National Dart Association continues to be extremely successful. Operator membership and the player base are still growing. NDA is adding new events this year, a singles and doubles tournament, and these contests will be moved around to different geographic areas of the U.S. to spark more player interest. NDA is continuing to become more financially independent, as well. I believe it's been one of the most successful programs that AMOA has ever undertaken, and most of our board would agree with that. As for IFPA, most people would agree that it has unfortunately not matched that record — for a variety of reasons — and it's currently under assessment. We'll probably have more to say about this at Expo.

"AMOA is really a big business today. We've got a budget of $2.5 million, with a large array of programs and projects. One or two people simply can't handle everything anymore. The greatest strength I see right now is our talented, professional board and our very diverse, accomplished staff."

REPLAY: You have always stressed your belief in the importance of marketing — in fact, your "inaugural address" at the mid-year board meeting returned to this favorite theme. How will this marketing orientation affect your leadership of AMOA?

TAMI: Basically I feel marketing and public relations are two things our industry has done poorly in the past, and they are still nearly non-existent today. I'm a strong believer in marketing and public relations for the success of any business or public endeavor. As I indicated earlier, I hope to put forth a plan for AMOA to market and publicize itself, probably by establishing a committee to market our industry to the general public, and to market AMOA to the general membership. Our annual report will be an important first step in accomplishing that mission. Our recent

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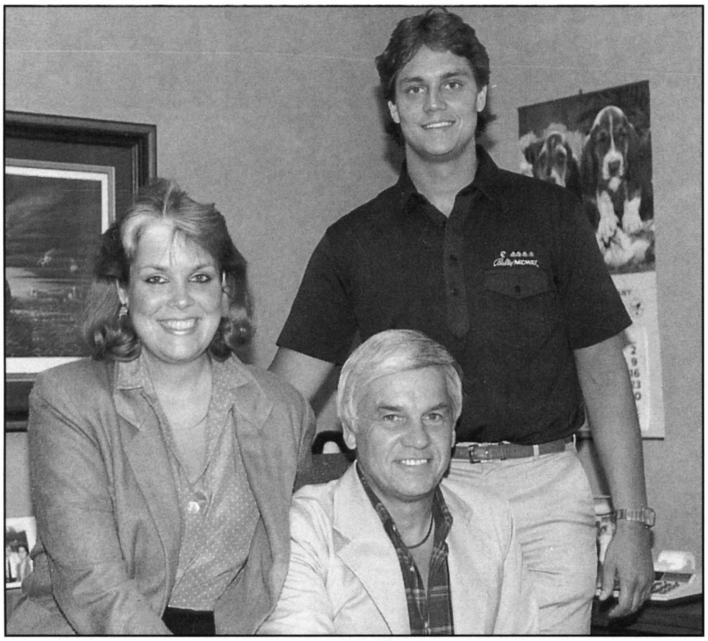

Tami Norberg-Paulsen is a co-owner of C&N Sales with her dad Harlow Norberg and brother Tim Norberg.

media packets on video violence and jukebox promotion are other good, first steps. But I think there's much, much more than we can and must do.

REPLAY: Trade members have talked for years about "improving the image of the industry." Do the old black-mask stereotypes still loom large in the public mind?

TAMI: We're all concerned about our industry's poor image. And that is true in some cases. But as I've traveled the country, I find rather than having a poor image, with most people we have no image at all. They don't even think of amusement machine operations as being a business! This public "invisibility" may be even more damaging than having a negative image. Many AMOA and industry members are true professionals with modern, well-run, constructive businesses that make a positive contribution to their communities. Individual firms may have built good local reputations for their activism, and that's great. But nationally, our industry is not known for this at all...or known for anything whatsoever, for that matter. We have to create and foster a good, professional image. We must be widely recognized as an entertainment entity, because we're competing against so many other segments for the public's entertainment budget.

REPLAY: This year's AMOA Expo conflicts with the JAMMA Show in Tokyo. Has this had any notable impact on Expo so far — such as lower booth sales, any drop in planned attendance, etc.?

TAMI: In general, there's been no effect. Our booth sales are the highest we've ever had. Pre-registration looks good so far, and I think it will be an excellent show. I'm sure JAMMA will have the same experience. Still, both groups would rather avoid these conflicts and we're putting together a master calendar through Euromat to coordinate our schedules in the future.

REPLAY: Will there be any AMOA-AAMA meetings in San Antonio? What about the traditional "summit" meeting with JAMMA?

TAMI: We will meet with AAMA during our Expo to discuss next year's Washington Conference, which is set for May. We're looking at a revamping the program and working to sponsor a major charity during our reception. I'm sure we'll also discuss video violence, dollar coins, and other industry issues. Since it's AMOA's turn to host the traditional "world summit" meeting, we'll hold that meeting at the IAAPA Show in November, which takes place in Miami.

REPLAY: Now we'd like to get a feel for your view of the industry's overall conditions. What's the biggest opportunity facing operators today — and what's the biggest danger?

TAMI: I think the biggest opportunity for today's operators lies in technology. If we position ourselves correctly and are willing to take the leap, we can be successful. But technology is also our biggest threat as well. It brings formidable competition. Technology will be the downfall of operations that refuse to change and embrace it.

REPLAY: Your own company is a great example of "how to do it right."

TAMI: We're sure giving it every effort. At C&N Sales, we're totally computerized. Every department has its own hardware and software, with different personnel in charge of operation and administration of leagues, coin-op, retail, billing, personnel, accounting, and so on. We are up to model 586 computers, and I don't believe we could run C&N without them! We're also changing over to modem-based dart games and league systems. We experimented with this last year; except for a few minor bugs, we found it was really, really successful. It's been a smooth transition and it really helps when you're routes are as spread-out as ours.

REPLAY: What's your assessment of the U.S. coin-op market these days? Are most operators having a good or bad year, in terms of earnings? What are the bright spots, where are the problem areas?

TAMI: Right now the market is really soft. Earnings are generally down, not just flat, for the summer months. This is especially true in standard video, where this year's games are basically jazzed-up versions of last year's. The weather has also hurt us: in the Midwest, great climate conditions are sending people outside, while a heat wave on both coasts is keeping people there at home. The bright spots on the street for C&N Sales are still darts and pool, and most recently table soccer. It's another good piece for the street: it's not expensive and can make a lot of money with proper promotion. Mall video arcades are hurting, but FECs and redemption are doing quite well, as are large advanced video simulators. Problem areas for operators across the country are the inundation of increased competition like Discovery Zone, Leaps 'N' Bounds, legalized gaming and free music in more taverns. Operators across the country are also seeing greater concentration of traffic in fewer locations, which means a falling-off in many tra-

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ditional street stops. Everyone we talk to around the country is saying the exact same thing. I'm hoping new equipment and other market condition changes — like better weather, added promotions, and so on — could help boost earnings this fall.

REPLAY: Coin-op is continuing to change from a localized, low-tech, mom & pop trade to a global, hi-tech, corporate industry. How are U.S. operators faring in this environment, and how will they adapt in the future?

TAMI: Frankly, I expect the number of small operators will continue to shrink — unless they're willing to adapt to technology and to think of themselves as "entertainment providers," not just "coin machine operators." But the good news is, some are. I'm happy to say the number of true professionals in the operating business is growing.

REPLAY: One maker of route management software estimates that fewer than 30% of today's operators are on that progressive track. What plans does AMOA have, to try to help the rest of the operators come up to speed?

TAMI: Right now AMOA's main plan to help operators meet the future, is our NANI project. I think NANI represents a major opportunity for AMOA to help operators become more professional. We will offer our very first seminar on NANI at Expo this month, to acquaint operators with what networked games are all about. During that educational session, we hope to present the actual software that operators will use on their office computers to program and run NANI-linked games. To launch the program successfully, we'll have more seminars and training programs in several other venues in the coming months, for operators who wish to become involved. Operators whose companies are not computerized, will have to learn how to use computers or hire someone who understands them, so they can update their businesses and be qualified embrace this new technology of networking. That's what it will take for operators to keep up with the communications challenge. Also, AAMA has been very interested in, and supportive of, the NANI program. Their president, Steve Koenigsberg, has suggested that distributors may be able to help in that project of educating operators about the new technology. Our view is that distributors will have several important functions in NANI, and cooperating in educational efforts would certainly be an important role.

REPLAY: Do you have any special thank-you's or acknowledgments you'd like to make?

TAMI: The main thank-you's must go to my family. My husband Brian has been my Rock of Gibralter. Anyone who's been in this position knows the tremendous commitment of time that it requires — not only during the year serving as AMOA president, but also the prior years in officer positions. My father and especially my brother have given me great support and shouldered some of my responsibilities in running C&N Sales, to allow me to devote more time and effort to AMOA. They have always been very proud of my career and have helped me as much as they could. And they know how much I appreciate it!

REPLAY: We appreciate this interview, Tami, and wish you the best of luck for the coming year. ◆

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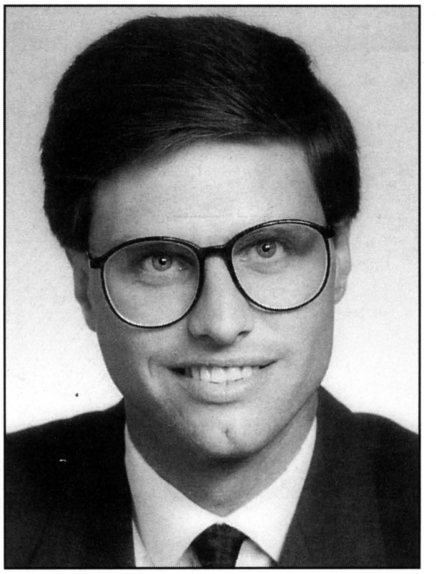
by RANDY CHILTON, AMOA treasurer

TAKING IT TO THE BANK

AMOA revenues and investments continue to grow



Randy Chilton

The AMOA financial picture has changed dramatically over the last eight years, and it's all good news for our members. What I would like to do in this article is show you where the money comes from, and where it goes.

The short version is that the Association's revenues continue to reach record-breaking levels every year. This year is no different. The revenues for 1994 are on target to reach $2,500,000. This is due largely to the expanding size of our trade show. This year we will present over 1,000 booths at the Expo in San Antonio, another industry record. We will invest a minimum of 5% of that revenue into our rainy day investment fund, which over the years has become very substantial. For comparison, in 1986 our revenues were right at $1,000,000. Our expense budget for 1994 is $2,319,000. In 1986, our expenses were limited to $795,000. As our association grows, we are able to put more financial resources into providing many more services to our members than at any time in the Association's history.

The industry trade show produces 72.6% of the Association's income. Other areas of income are from member dues and seminar fees (19.8%), jukebox promotional income (3.2%), and then the interest earned from our investments revenues (4.4%).

The $2,319,000 that the Association will spend in 1994 is spent in the following areas:

Convention 37.2%
Committee work 45.3%
Administrative 17.4%

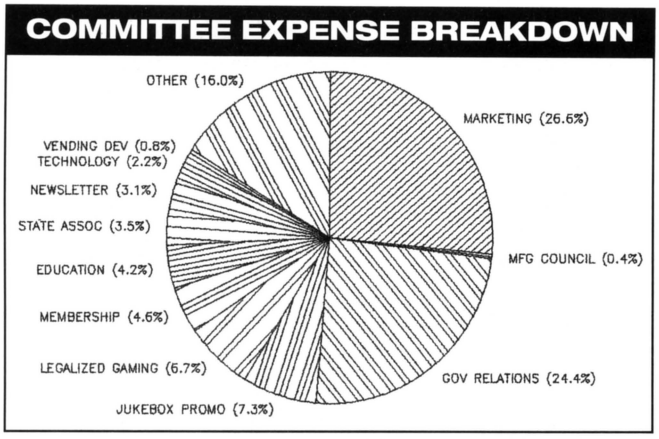
The most significant statistic is that the Association spends almost one-half of all the money brought in from all operations directly back into the numerous committees that are working in all facets of the industry. The Association will spend over $1,000,000 in 1994 on committee projects to better our industry.

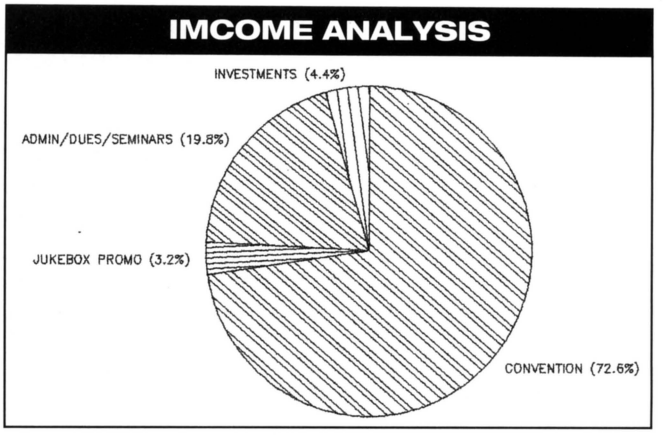
The Marketing support line is 26.6% of all committee expenses. This category consists of the new National Amusement Network (NANI) which is the joined efforts of AMOA, Electronic Data Systems and TVPhone of Canada. This is the project that will be in place by the end of the year and will allow the operators to network their equipment together in multiple locations. Also in this category is the highly successful National Dart Association and the Jukebox Promotion committee budget.

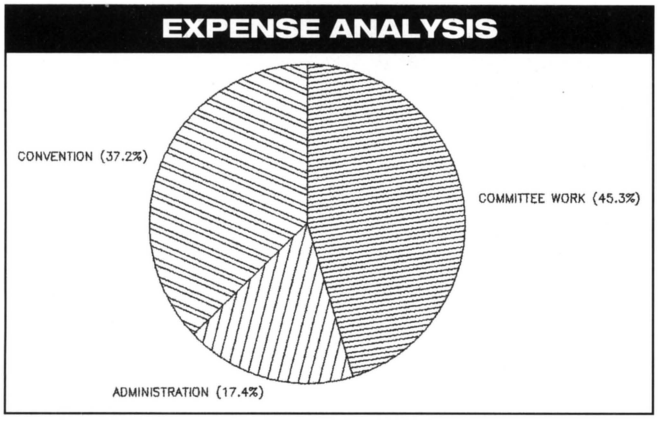
The Association's Government Relations functions, which consists of all of our Washington D.C. activities including our lobbying and the spring legislative conference, is the next largest category of committee expenditures. In 1994, the Association will spend over $250,000 addressing legislative issues that will affect our industry. The growth in this area has been phenomenal. Our total expenditure in this area in 1986 was $52,000.

The hottest legislative issue, which came out of nowhere, is the video game rating issue. The Association has testified twice at congressional hearings, attended numerous meetings with various organizations addressing this issue. AMOA's full-time legislative liaison, Laura Olson, has done a tremendous job of coordinating not only this issue, but many others including promoting the dollar coin. The industry is being influenced by the laws and policies coming out of the government more than at any other time in our history, and this isn't likely to change. AMOA will be there representing our members.

The Association spends 7.3% of it's resources promoting the jukebox through the efforts of the Jukebox Promotions Committee. Other areas that receive funding are:







Legalized Gaming Activities Committee
Membership Committee
Education and Seminars
State Associations
Newsletter
Technology
Vending Development

The Association continues to be profitable despite the expenses for committee projects being at an all-time high. This could only be accomplished by running a very efficient budgeting process. Smith-Bucklin, the Association's management firm in Chicago, does an excellent job of maximizing our revenues and instituting financial controls that allow the Association to run at full throttle without fear of running aground. ◆



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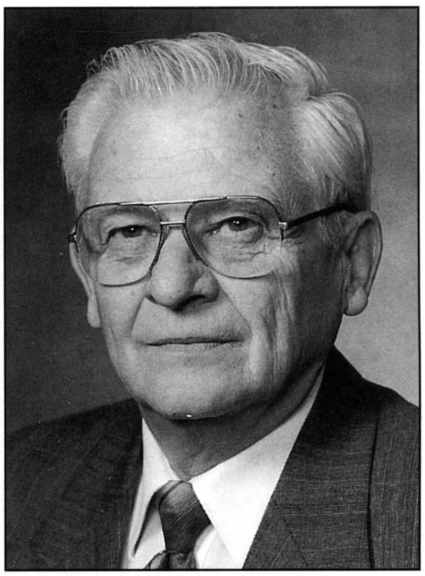
by DEAN SCHROEDER, chairman

IN THE CARDS

AMOA's Legal Gaming Committee "deals" in information



Dean Schroeder

The purpose of AMOA's Legal Gaming Committee is to provide informational assistance to a variety of individuals and groups interested in legal gaming — including state operator associations, government policymakers, and the press. The idea is to support the industry with accurate, credible facts and figures, whenever information is requested. Another major objective is to ensure that the operator's point of view is communicated to the public and government officials, when gaming issues are at stake. This year, the committee has undertaken several important actions and established some effective programs to achieve those goals.

• Most visibly, perhaps, we began publishing a monthly newsletter called the *Video Gaming Guidepost* which reports key developments relating to video lottery and legal gaming. This newsletter is mailed or faxed to all the leaders of state operator associations, as well as other key coin-op industry figures. We also encourage state associations to reproduce this newsletter for their state representatives and other policymakers — such as local law enforcement, revenue officials, lottery regulators, or anyone whom operators feel could be helpful to them.

• Committee members and AMOA representatives have also attended several national conferences on legal gaming. These conferences give us valuable opportunities to learn about gaming trends and events that may affect our industry, and to give the operator's perspective in face-to-face dialog with important individuals. We hope to continue doing this in the future.



• The committee has established a speaker's bureau, under the direction of Bob Correa. At the request of various groups, Bob has made several trips to explain AMOA's views of legal gaming. Other speakers are also available.

• AMOA members frequently contact our committee with requests for a wide variety of gaming-related information such as university studies, updated market figures, and current details about laws and conditions in various states. Such information has been provided from the Legal Gaming Committee, working through AMOA staff in Chicago.

It is the position of AMOA and this committee that any state which is considering legalized gaming, should and must allow participation by small business and independent entrepreneurs, in the full competitive spirit of free enterprise. The efficiency and profitability of operator-run gaming have been clearly established. The experiences of Montana, South Dakota and Louisiana have proven, in dollars and cents, the superiority of this type of system to any other. Conversely, legalized gaming which excludes operators and most locations is not only unfair; it can be quite harmful to the local coin machine and hospitality industries, the tax base and the job base.

The AMOA Legal Gaming Committee continues to become more effective at spreading this vital message. The committee's next meeting will be in San Antonio, Texas on Sept. 22.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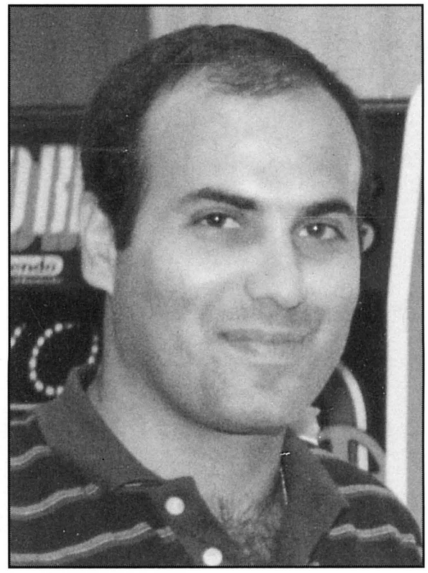
by PHIL ELUM, chairman

IT PAYS TO BELONG

AMOA Membership Committee seeks to recruit and retain members



Phil Elum

The goals of the AMOA membership committee are to recruit new members from the large pool of U.S. operators, distributors and manufacturers; and to retain current membership at the highest possible levels. By the end of this year, we expect our rolls to stand at about 1,650 members in good standing. AMOA typically enjoys a membership retention rate of more than 90%, which is outstanding for any association at any time...an achievement to be proud of.

How much of the operator population belongs to AMOA? There are varying estimates of the total number of operators in the U.S., but most believe the total is anywhere from 4,000 to 7,000 operators. At the very least, then, AMOA probably represents close to 25% of the American operating community. On the upper end, we may approach 45% representation. Those are fairly good percentages — but of course, we'd ideally like to count 100% of American operators as active members of our association.

The problem is, it's often difficult to identify and reach non-members. Who are they? And where are they? Some non-members are very small operators, people who may run only one or two machines as a sideline while they drive a bus, teach school, or even walk a police beat. Some non-members could be owners of very large routes with hundreds — even thousands — of machines. Or they might be owners of 50,000 sq. ft. family entertainment centers.

One mission of the AMOA Membership Committee is to reach as much of this spectrum as possible, and recruit them into our association. Frankly, some of the smaller operators are nearly impossible to find. They may not belong to their state association. They may not visit a major distributor, nor attend state or national trade shows. No operator licenses or machine registrations may be required or available from their state. Somehow, these fellows pick up a game or two (maybe used equipment from the trading circuit) and bingo, a new operator has entered the trade.

But despite their relative lack of visibility, these smaller operators are still desirable as AMOA members. Maybe we don't "see" them on our own radar map, but their local public does see their equipment, and their operation. Accordingly, their level of professionalism reflects on our entire industry. The more professional they are, the better we look. Recruiting these small operators to AMOA membership can make them better operators, which makes us a better industry. Also, these "missing" operators represent the potential for increased political clout for AMOA and for state associations. "There is strength in numbers" — the more members we have, the stronger we are.

What about larger operators who are not AMOA members? They may be brand-new to the industry in many cases. Perhaps they are successful entrepreneurs who have decided to invest profits from a successful restaurant or hotel business, into arcades or pocket parks. Despite their professionalism, it's just possible some of them may not even realize there is a national trade association for coin-op machine owners. But like smaller non-members, these larger businessmen are also desirable recruits. Their resources, contacts expertise, and work ethics could be major assets for AMOA.

To track down potential new members, the Membership Committee routinely contacts distributors, to ask them for names of potential recruits. We keep track of new state association members. We create customized "Join AMOA" mailing cam-

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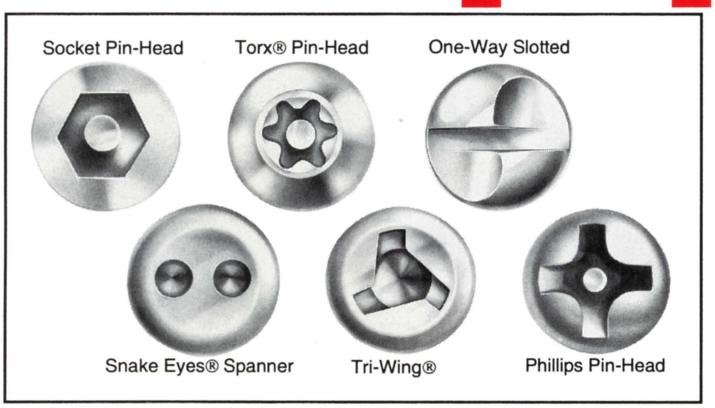
paigns every so often, and blanket a region with pro-association literature. We encourage existing members reach out to their fellow operators who are not members. At each AMOA Expo, we sponsor a hospitality suite or booth where we welcome prospects and tell them about the benefits of belonging.

Retaining current members is a streamlined operation, using computerized mailing lists generated by our staff, and drawing upon the professional resources of our association management firm Smith-Bucklin. A steady stream of communication, opportunities and benefits flows from AMOA headquarters to the membership. If you're a member, you're already well aware of these association activities, so I won't recount them here.

Let me just say that AMOA members receive all these benefits at an average price of only $1 a day. They know very well that "it pays to belong" — and that's why the overwhelming majority of members stay aboard, year after year. Your AMOA Membership Committee continues to work to get that important message out to potential future members as well. ◆

Tamperproof



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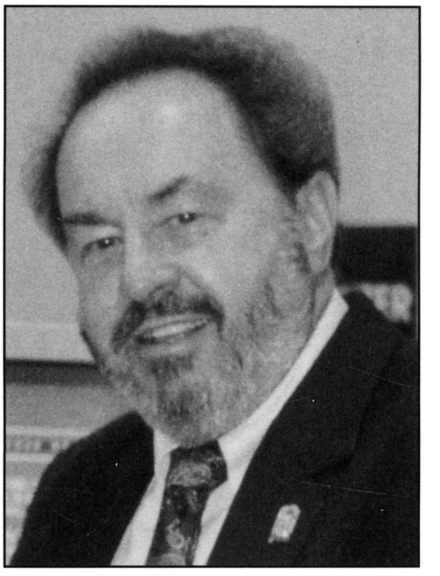
by TED FURKIN, chairman

BE PREPARED FOR CHANGE

Education Committee provides guidance and "early warnings"



Ted Furkin

Remember mechanical pins, shuffleboard, and the mechanical jukebox? Then came the video game era followed by digital pins, CD jukeboxes, redemption, etc. What's next? Our industry has undergone tremendous change through the years. One thing I guarantee, is that additional change is inevitable. It will come today, tomorrow or the next day.

How will change affect your organization, family, and future? Over the years, our investments of capital and labor have allowed us to reap substantial rewards both personally and professionally. But now, being in the black is not enough. To maintain a competitive posture in today's hi-tech commodity marketplace requires training and education.

Education not only increases awareness of industry trends and directions, but facilitates new ideas...ideas that may ultimately lead to a more efficient and profitable business. The AMOA Education Committee's primary goal is to offer the finest educational opportunities in the marketplace to our members.

One offering which is sometimes overlooked by our membership is the curriculum provided by AMOA and Notre Dame. The excitement of learning at Notre Dame is unbelievable (not to mention the beautiful coeds and campus, and the chance to relive your younger days by staying at the Morris Inn, where the accommodations look like dorm rooms). Having graduated in the second group to go through AMOA's executive development program at Notre Dame, I can say without hesitation that this is the opportunity of a lifetime. It's a chance not only to gain knowledge, but to network with the best and brightest minds in our industry. The benefits greatly outweigh the costs, so you and your key employees should attend. AMOA continues to keep you informed of class dates and new class offerings through publications and newsletters. If you need further information, contact AMOA world headquarters in Chicago, Ill. at 1-800/YES-AMOA (937-2662).

Another great educational opportunity is our annual convention, to be held this September in San Antonio, Texas. Bill Stone, chairman of our seminars committee, and his team have worked hard to develop a broad range of sessions to help prepare you and your employees for the challenges you face in the future. I urge you to attend as many seminars as possible, and encourage your employees to do the same. In addition, consider buying audio tapes of the other seminars to take home and share with your key employees. These tapes will provide you with valuable information which you otherwise would have missed.

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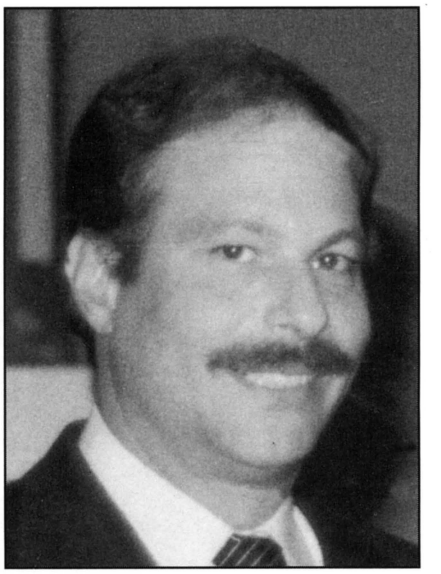
Profit from the Fun

by TONY PARINA, chairman

THE K.P. PATROL

Vending Development covers everything — including the kitchen sink!



Tony Parina

AMOA's Vending Development Committee is the "king of the kitchen cabinet" because we serve as the garbage disposal, trash compactor and recycling service to everyone in our industry! Our committee addresses many aspects of the coin-op business — not just obvious vending areas like bulk vending, merchandising products for full line vending, and tobacco, but also newer subjects like telecommunications and even redemption (both of which can have important vending components).

At this month's AMOA Expo in San Antonio, your Vending Development Committee will once again offer a seminar titled "Vending from A to Z." Important areas of our business will be covered by an intelligent group of panelists. Their remarks will be followed by a Q&A session. Owners and route service employees will benefit equally from attending.

Of course, tobacco remains a vital issue for the VDC. Presently our tobacco subcommittee is engaging in an updated market study in Dallas. We're trying to have an objective, non-partisan group determine who buys our cigarettes, when, where and in what quantities. Results will be presented at our San Antonio seminar. We've been experimenting with new initiatives on the tobacco front. One example: your VDC has established a monitored 800 number which passes your questions and problems on to the tobacco companies for their direct reply. So far, members' use of this service doesn't seem to warrant the expense, so the VDC will review the program. If we determine that the costs outweigh the benefits, we may discontinue it.

The VDC's primary responsibility is keeping this chair knowledgeable and informed about vending issues. Currently, nothing escapes us (re-read the first sentence of this report). When asked, we share information with other AMOA committees to help with their problems. The experience of this committee will provide answers — or at least updated information — on the vending aspects of topics such as state associations; international difficulties; legality of redemption vs. lottery (pros and cons); and whether you should wade, jump, or dive into new ventures like OCS (office coffee service), PLV, bulk vending, payphones, NANI, and even coin-op laundromats. We also track trends and provide information concerning contracts, insurance, vehicle leasing, and financing as they affect vending operations.

I myself am an operator and personally will help you with vending issues. If you see me around at an industry event such as our upcoming Expo, introduce yourself! We're all in San Antonio to achieve a common goal: learning and developing our skills. So take advantage of all that AMOA has to offer, and have fun doing it!

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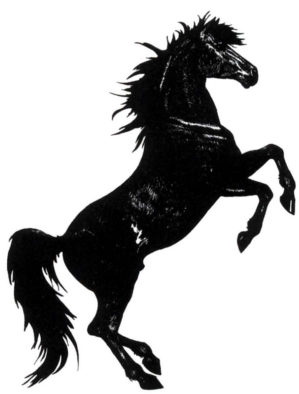

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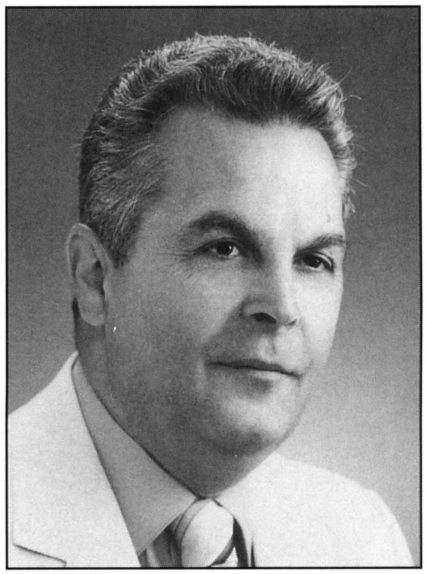
by GENE URSO, chairman

WAVE OF THE FUTURE

AMOA Technology Committee created a National Amusement Network



Gene Urso

The AMOA Technology Committee was started about three years ago. AMOA believed our industry was on the verge of great changes, due to the explosion of technology. AMOA believes we owe it to our membership to be in on the ground floor and find out how the operator could participate in new methods of providing pay-for-play amusement to the public.

A gentleman from Canada by the name of John Klayh (TV-Phone, Inc.) approached our committee with a proposal for coin-op game tournaments, with prizes, to be held on electronic telecommunications networks. Mr. Klayh holds certain key patents which would facilitate the creation of such networks, and his proposal became our first project. We sketched out a possible agreement between AMOA and John which would make us partners in a proposed amusement network. Working in good faith, the prospective partners put together a game plan and began taking steps to implement, even while our attorneys worked to finalize details of the agreement.

We soon realized we needed a "carrier" — a group or company which could transport the tournament play data from individual games on location to a central source and process it. We chose Electronic Data Systems (EDS), a leading telecommunications network management firm. EDS brought unbelievable resources, experience, technology and professionalism to the project. The first thing EDS did was call our network team together in "JAD" (Joint Application Development) sessions. In these sessions, the partners basically told EDS what we wanted our network to do, and they figured out how to do it. It blows your mind to realize what can be accomplished with today's technology, and anyone who has become acquainted with EDS's capabilities can only imagine what the future holds for the amusement industry. For me, the experience of participating in the JAD sessions at EDS was worth all the work and time I put into this project.

While working with EDS to develop the technical specifics of our proposed network, our committee also started looking for a manufacturer to work with our team. We began by seeking to recruit a video game developer which could provide software for our network, and which could also adapt its hardware for network capability. Committee member Craig Johnson and I spent quite a lot of time travelling the country, talking face to face to different manufacturers about joining the team. A gentleman by the name of Ken Fedesna at Williams/Bally-Midway stepped up to the plate with a very strong commitment. Through talking with Ken and WMS President Neil Nicastro, we reached a meeting of the minds and agreed that Williams would build the first network-capable games for our system.

Another set of attorneys was called in to draft an agreement between the parties.

Meantime, AMOA and TVPhone were at last in a position to formalize their agreement. Together we formed an independent company called NANI, the National Amusement Network, Inc. under the leadership of AMOA's Craig Johnson as president and R.A. Green as director. John Klayh is also on the board in an officer position and will name another director at the appropriate time.

NANI is a 50-50 partnership with TVPhone. AMOA's share of the profits will be turned back to operators who participate in the network. As chairman of the AMOA Technology Committee, I can report to AMOA



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member operators that "You are in on the ground floor of what the future holds for this business. This is only the first tiny step...and the possibilities are unbelievable for us."

As this report is written, NANI is still working on final details of the technical specs for its network-capable game hardware. Once these details are settled, NANI will test the network with a number of units on line in Kansas and Ohio. Testing was originally scheduled for June and July but has been rescheduled for this fall, to give us time to make sure we truly do have the best possible system for the operator. NANI is working to lower the operator's purchase cost for network-compatible equipment. Mr. Johnson was given the responsibility for overseeing NANI's launch and ensuring that all is done properly, and he has accomplished this task. Testing is expected to take about three months. Then NANI will evaluate the results and inform all AMOA members how they can participate in the network.

Networked games are the wave of the future...but I believe the future is here already. Operators, if you don't have a computer in your business, buy one — and get some kind of software management program, too. If you're worried about cost, start with a cheap one! Experiment with it and with some kind of management programming. Your business must be ready to move into the new era of telecommunications.

Responsibility for administration and expansion of networked games has now passed from the AMOA Technology Committee, to NANI itself. Meantime, the committee is responsible for investigating and evaluating other forms of new technology which may benefit or otherwise have an impact upon our industry. Operators, if you see any kind of technology that fits this description, please contact AMOA headquarters so we can look into it.

◆

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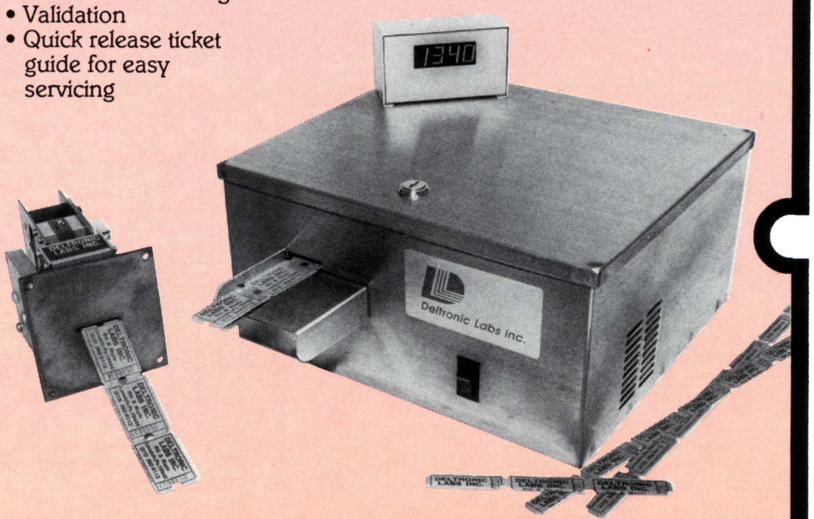

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Craig S. Moorhead
Vice President Boardwalk Operations
Santa Cruz Beach, Calif.

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Thanks to your staff for all your help and support.

Michael P. Drew
Director of Purchasing
Malibu Grand Prix Corporation
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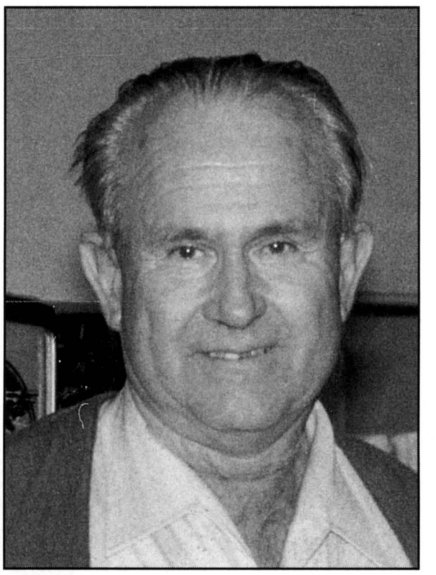
by DOUG MINTER, chairman

IN NUMBERS LIES STRENGTH

AMOA State Association Committee takes on new missions



Doug Minter

The AMOA Council of Affiliated States is continuing to work to bring state associations together for grater strength at the state and national levels. We are working to find a better and easier way of interstate communications, so that each state may share and benefit from the experiences of the others. Five states still lack any operator associations at all, though operators from some of these states do belong to associations in adjoining states. Attempts have been made to organize associations in some of these five states, but without result so far.

In addition to continuing these traditional functions, the Council has also taken on two new missions this year: supporting and promoting the charitable work of "Give Kids the World," and coordinating state activity with two separate national conferences of state legislators. Details on these projects are given below.

The most recent meeting of the Council of Affiliated States took place in Las Vegas in February of 1994. Represented were 27 state associations plus New York City. Total attendance was 42 persons, including AMOA President R.A. Green who gave a memorable presentation. Also in attendance were AMOA Executive VP John Schumacher, Executive Director Marian Griffin, Administrative Coordinator Kim Rundle, Government Relations Manager Laura Olson, and my co-chair William Treger.

At this meeting, the group unanimously passed a resolution requesting each state association to donate $500 per year for two years to "Give Kids the World," a charitable organization with which Florida operator Bill Miller has become closely associated. The donated funds will help buy new games for the children of Kissimmee area, enabling us to tour the "Give Kids the World" facilities.

Another important function has been placed in the hands of the State Association Committee. It is now our job to coordinate the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and the American Legislative Council (ALEC) with the local operators and distributors in the areas where each of these organizations holds its meetings — a different state each year. AMOA sponsors a booth at each function, asking local trade members to furnish equipment and manpower for the booth itself as well as for a free gameroom. The local state association also arranges for plush for prizes and giveaways in these booths. The program gives AMOA, state associations, local operators and distributors a chance to meet their representatives face to face. It's also an excellent opportunity for some good public relations and to get our ideas across to our representatives.



this charity. The resolution was presented to the AMOA board of directors at their mid-year board meeting, and they passed it as well. Each state association executive is now requested to present the motion to his or her own state board for approval and action. At this time, eight states have donated a total of $3,950, in addition to which the AMOA National Dart Assn. has donated $7,000. Thank you one and all!

By the way, at our February meeting, the Council also voted to hold its 1995 winter meeting in the Orlando/

State associations are growing in importance and strength. Their members make contact with individual state and national representatives at the personal level, where our lobbying efforts are most effective. Keep up the good work; it is extremely important to our industry. Remember, in numbers lies strength.

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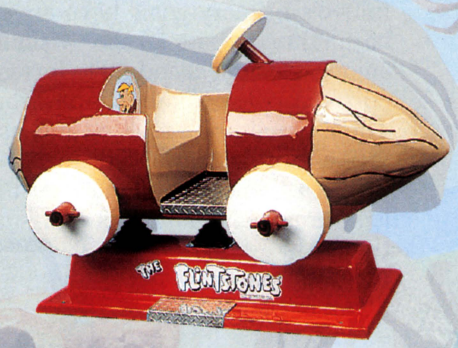

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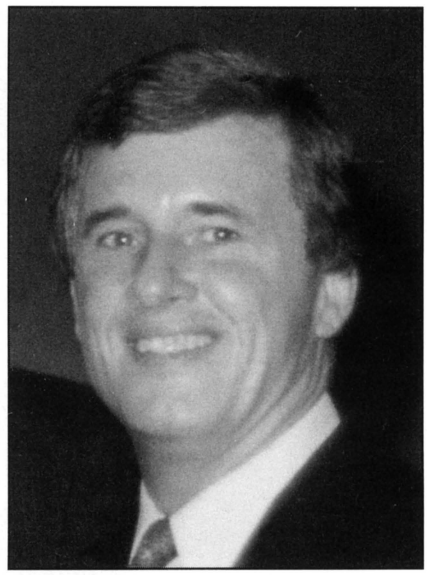
by JIM HAYES, chairman

THE SOUND OF "NOW"

Jukebox Promo Committee seeks broader spotlight on today's jukebox



Jim Hayes

The AMOA Jukebox Promotion Committee (JPC) laid some important groundwork in redefining jukebox promotions during the last year. This reflected a 1993 reevaluation of our efforts. The committee's primary goals have always been (1) to increase jukebox visibility among consumers and (2) to increase coin-drop for jukebox operators. These remain our goals — but now we're adopting new strategies to achieve them. Preliminary results look promising, but realistically we know that progress will be better measured later this year and into 1995.

When the committee was founded in 1988, our marketing "hook" was the 100th anniversary. But six years later, as CD jukeboxes continue to increase their market share, our goal is to position the jukebox in a more modern context — its longevity, continued consumer popularity, and its CD technologies — to a new, younger generation. The running taglines of our ads and marketing pitch has been, "Today's Jukebox: Think About It!"

The committee's refocused effort in 1994 has been to reach out to national advertising, promotion and marketing executives, as well as their creative staffs, and encourage them to utilize jukeboxes in diverse promotions. To do this, we created a marketing arm called the Jukebox Advisory Council. We also developed a comprehensive, first-class marketing package loaded with information on jukeboxes and promotional ideas.

The goal is to tap the creative minds and resources outside of the immediate industry to showcase jukeboxes in national advertising (both print and electronic). We hope to see jukeboxes used as promotional themes and/or as the focus of point-of-purchase retail and location promotions. In short, trickle-down visibility for the jukebox vs. the sometimes limited-in-scope promotions we have conducted in the past. If enough consumers see jukeboxes appearing in, say, print and electronic ads...or in a food or liquor manufacturer's promotion at the local grocery store...or as a sweepstakes theme, etc....then this visibility will, in turn, result in — at minimum — subliminal jukebox marketing. Consumers will start to think "jukebox" and, when in locations where jukeboxes are located, play them.

To reach these key marketers, the committee's Jukebox Advisory Board has placed targeted ads touting the jukebox in *Advertising Age's* monthly *Creativity* magazine, as well as *Brandweek* magazine. The committee has also sent the marketing kit to key marketing, promotion, advertising agency and creative personnel at a diverse array of top consumer products companies. Among these are Anheuser-Busch, AT&T, the Big Three auto makers, General Mills, McDonalds, Procter & Gamble, and Sears to name just a few. In total, the jukebox package went to nearly 200 key decision-makers at some 100 national companies and brands, with more to follow. The annual promotion and advertising budgets of these targets are easily in the billions. Additionally, we have targeted the creative staffs of large stand-alone promotion agencies, many of which these large corporations depend on to develop and recommend promotional themes and strategies.

We are optimistic about the eventual results of this strategy. At the same time, we are very cognizant that our new strategy will take some time to pay off. Our package is first-rate; however, in the real world, new concepts and ideas may not receive immediate attention. That comes

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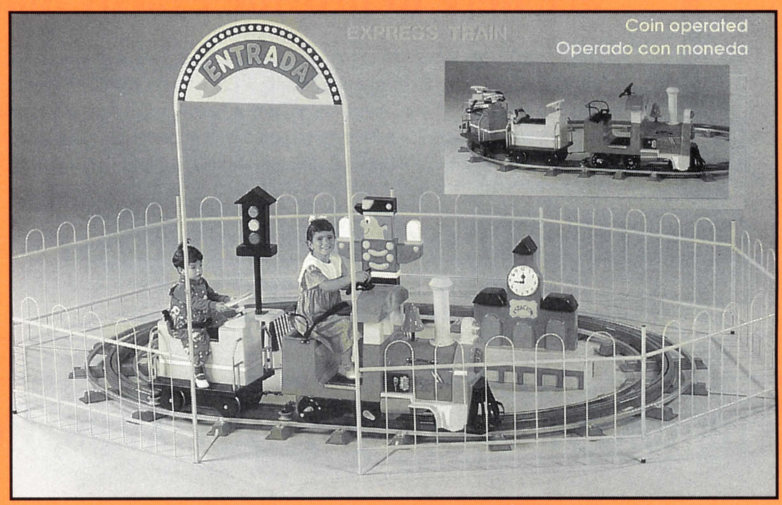

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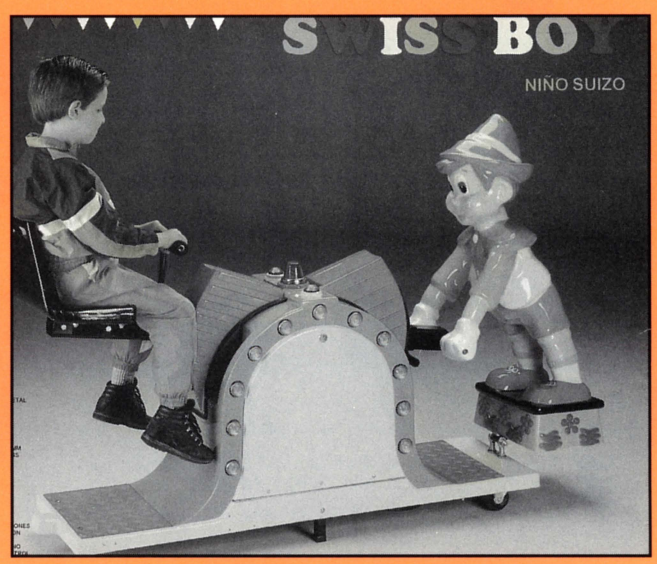

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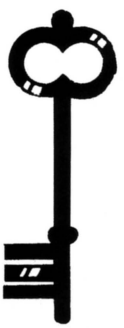
somewhere down the road, depending on *their* calendar year, promotion planning, and budgeting schedules. So far, we've received inquiries from the ad agency for Seagram's Coolers, the promotion department of an Atlanta radio station, as well as from a Connecticut-based promotion agency serving several major clients. We expect to receive many more such inquiries during the coming months.

Some notes on other committee projects: we have contact the U.S. Stamp Advisory Council — the folks responsible for determining who or what gets a stamp — requesting that they consider issuing a jukebox stamp in 1996-97 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the best-selling jukebox of all time. We're also in an ongoing process of contacting several celebrities in the fields of music, movies, publishing, sports, politics and television to provide us with their favorite jukebox songs for a consumer press release. As easy as this request might seem, we have found it painstaking. Despite constant follow-ups, many celebrities respond by saying they are too busy, don't give out favorites, and other myriad reasons. Still, we keep trying because a similar "favorites" list (the committee's own Top 10 Jukebox Singles of All Time) won strong response from the consumer media, and it continues to be in wide demand.

Finally, the JPC continues to be a universally recognized resource to consumer media figures who are writing stories on jukeboxes. And, we constantly attempt to work with AMOA's awards, stage show and Expo committees to find promotion synergies (i.e., AMOA's Annual Jukebox Awards) to promote the jukebox to artists, record labels and consumer media. ◆



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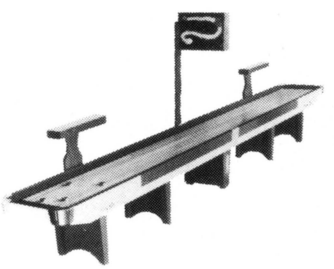

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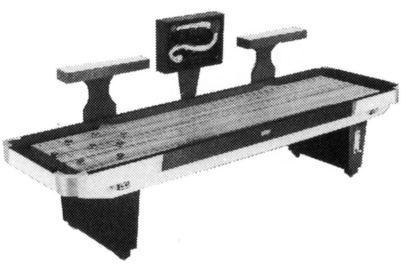

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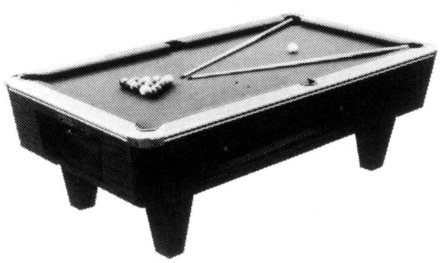

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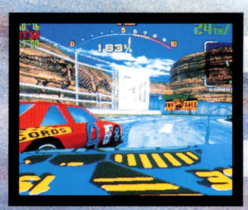



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by FRANK SENINSKY, co-chairman

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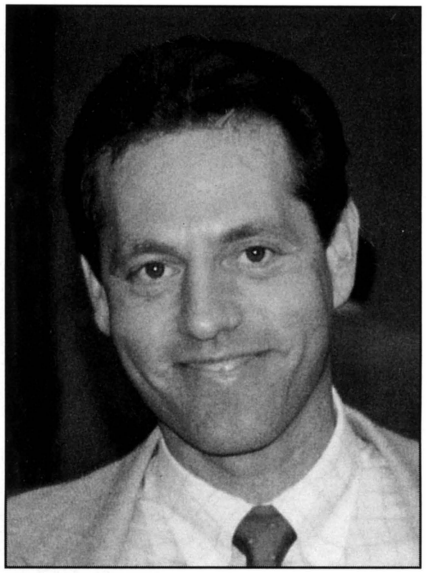

Frank Seninsky

The AMOA/AAMA Industry Standardization Committee is working to smooth the road to our hi-tech future. We're seeking uniform approaches to tomorrow's pay-for-play entertainment experiences. Here's a quick review of the committee's recent successes:

- There are currently 35 standards for videos and pinballs; seven for jukeboxes; and five special standards for redemption games. There will soon be standards for bill acceptors, pool tables and dart machines.
- The newest standard is No. 35: "All machines shipped within the US. shall be listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory for compliance with the Standard for Amusement & Gaming Machines, ANSI/UL-22 or ARL 523 or appropriate standard."
- Our Wire Color Assignments Chart was adopted to conform with European standard colors and the number of colors has been reduced (Standard 17).
- Standard 19 was revised to require all games to have a plywood bottom.

The Standardization Committee is chaired this year by Ken Price and myself on the AMOA side, while the AAMA sister committee is co-chaired by Richard Ditton and Larry Brady. Still serving on the committee are immediate past co-chairman Ed Tolisano, along with AMOA's Ralph Ceraldi and Ross Todaro. Our last committee meeting was attended by 60 people.

For the future, your Standardization Committee is continuing to expand and take on new challenges in the areas of hi-tech, security, product safety and video game ratings. We haven't adopted final standards in these areas yet, but we're working on them!

Amusement & Music Operators Association

Hi-tech communications. The Protocol Communications Committee has been working this past year to get a consensus among factories for a flexible system to network games over cellular or standard phone lines. Ongoing litigation between some factories makes it difficult for them to cooperate in committee work. Other firms are developing proprietary systems and want theirs to be the first — a confusing, competitive situation which makes standardization harder, not easier. However, AMOA's National Amusement Network is setting network standards for its own system and NANI cabinet standards (similar to VLT standards). I have a strong feeling that these standards will become the industry standard.

The importance of standardization and cooperation in hi-tech was underscored when Stephen Marano addressed the committee at our Oct., 1993 meeting. (He's the AT&T director of business development and multimedia services.) After outlining various revenue opportunities for coin-op that can be achieved via advanced communications, Mr. Marano strongly stated that "No one company can dominate the marketplace; we must all work together. Industries don't take off until they standardize."

Game security standards for alarms, control panels, back doors and additional plywood supports for cash boxes are being finalized for the next meeting. We're developing a standard to eliminate problems with hooking up large-screen monitors to video games. Also under development is an "anti-stringing" standard.

Committee members are investigating what's involved with getting blanket approval for games in all European Economic Community (EEC) nations. Herb Foss (WMS) made a detailed presentation at our

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March, 1994 meeting about EED electrical standards and electromagnetic compatibility requirements. Committee members attended a conference at the University of Madison this summer dealing with the "CE" mark (similar to our UL mark).

Your co-chairman has been a close participant of, and observer in, industry-wide discussions on a proposed video game rating system. Once the consumer, computer and coin-op segments have agreed on a final system, the committee will begin drafting a related standard for coin-op, requiring manufacturers to display ratings in the attract mode.

Our industry is making great strides to prepare for a hi-tech future. This committee is leading the way by investigating areas such as product safety, additional revenue opportunities, FEC requirements, and networking communication protocols. But the committee doesn't only set standards; it serves as a non-political forum for 120 manufacturers, distributors, operators and component suppliers to work together for our common advantage. Standardization is good for everyone. ◆

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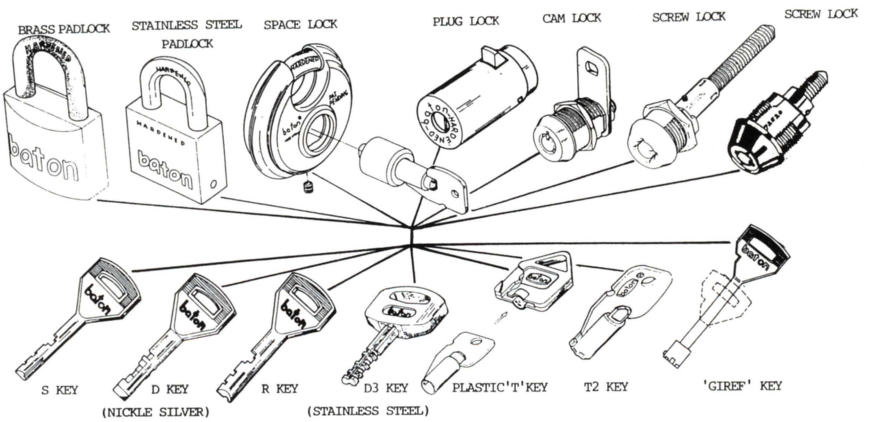

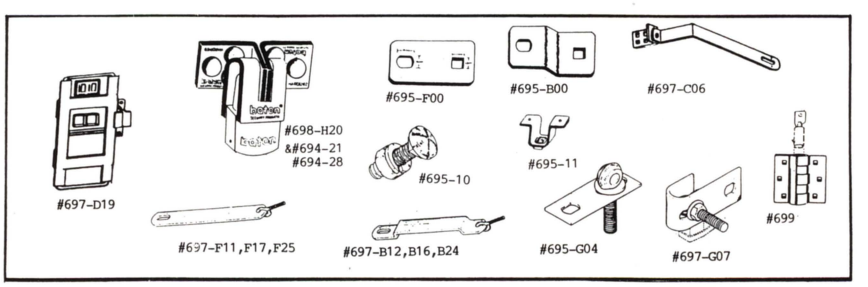

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by LAURA OLSON, government relations manager

EYE ON D.C.

revamped AMOA government relations committee tries new strategies



Laura Olson

The mission of AMOA's Government Relations Committee is to monitor national issues affecting the coin machine industry, define where the industry's interests lie, and to formulate and carry out strategies to promote those interests. The GRC focuses largely on federal legislation, but it also monitors regulation, state-level legislation, court rulings, and general debates on issues impacting AMOA which may be translated into government action sometime in the future.

The most obvious change in GRC activity this year is that we did not hold our traditional Washington Conference. Last year, AMOA's board of directors determined the Conference is a great public relations tool, but that more highly-focused activity is appropriate at times.

Nevertheless, AMOA's profile in Washington remains high when it needs to be. For example, this spring you may have seen President R.A. Green III on a national TV broadcast, testifying before a Senate committee on the subject of video game violence. Likewise, our visibility to AMOA's membership is also higher, thanks to a monthly "broadcast fax" newsletter from GRC called *News Flash,* which reports on political developments and GRC actions.

Some changes in the GRC this year are less obvious, but equally important. AMOA's board has indicated its wish for the GRC to be more methodical, more open, and more responsive to the general membership. Accordingly, the GRC has now adopted a formal structure of organizational hierarchy, regular communications channels, and consensus-based strategies for dealing with each political issue of interest to AMOA.

So far, these procedural changes seem to be working very well. The GRC now has clear lines of authority and responsibility, yet there's enough flexibility for quick action when needed. The GRC sends and receives plenty of information internally and externally, and it regularly consults with committee members and non-members alike. Finally, the GRC adopts well-thought-out strategies for dealing with each issue, so that everyone inside and outside GRC understands our goals, priorities and tactics.

Here's a quick review of GRC issues and actions as of mid-summer, 1994:

• *Video game violence* remains the industry's hottest issue. Two software associations have drafted ratings systems for consumer games, and the GRC's subcommittee is now consulting with one of these groups to see how its ratings system will be adapted for coin-op. The GRC has arranged for Dr. Arthur Pober, executive director of the Entertainment Software Ratings Board, to give a seminar at AMOA Expo in San Antonio this month (Sept. 22, 9AM) to explain this issue to the membership.

• *Dollar coin* legislation remains in the hopper, but prospects for Congressional action during the election year seem dim. AMOA has concluded that public opinion about dollar coins will have to change first, before the White House provides crucial backing for this idea.

• Meanwhile, planning has begun for AMOA's next *Washington Conference,* slated for May 20-23, 1995. The event will include a Congressional Reception, hosted jointly by AMOA and AAMA, plus new ideas for other Conference programs. Hopes are high for an excellent and exciting event.

• *State Governments* are a new focus for the GRC. GRC members or staff attend several national conferences that affect state governments (such as the American Legislative

Exchange Conference, the National Conference of State Legislators, and the North American Gaming Regulators Association). We're working to provide greater support to state operator associations. We sent a "media kit" on video violence to the associations in June of 1994, and we expect to provide similar resources on other key issues in the future. We're also monitoring legislative and regulatory trends at the state level, and will continue to do so.

**Other issues* monitored by the GRC include the usual (telecommunications, copyright, taxes, tobacco regulation, etc.); but our scope has been broadened this year to include employee/labor issues, worker's comp, and other general concerns of small business.

Much of GRC's activity goes on behind the scenes. Members of your GRC are constantly meeting with senators, congressmen, and state and federal legislators...often in person, either in Washington or at their district offices back in their home state. Committee members and staff attend congressional hearings in Washington and congressional-sponsored "town meetings" back in the home state...sometimes testifying, consulting or providing position papers. A steady stream of letters, faxes and phone calls goes back and forth from the subcommittee members and GRC staff to each other, to the main committee, to government officials, and to AMOA leadership.

One thing in Washington is always constant: change. With so many levels of government involved in so many aspects of our industry and our individual businesses, it's more crucial than ever for AMOA to keep a close eye on Washington, the courts and the states. The Government Relations Committee is your eyes, your ears — and your voice — in the democratic process. ◆



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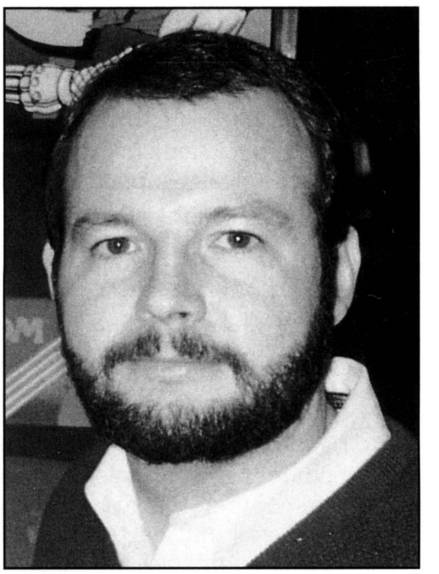
by WILLIAM MILLER, chairman

AMOA ADOPTS A CHARITY

new committee formed to help "Give Kids the World"



William Miller

Give Kids the World," a globally supported and globally active charity for children, has become the focus of a newly-formed committee within AMOA. The charity's mission is to fulfill the vacation requests of children who have terminal illnesses. The city of Kissimmee, Fla., is the site of GKTW headquarters and of its Holiday Inn Kids' Village — a 35-acre resort for the children and their parents. In most cases, the time families spend here is their very last vacation as a whole family.

The idea for creating an AMOA committee dedicated to supporting this charity came about when AMOA's then-president Craig Johnson and his lovely wife Jana visited the Sunshine State's operator convention and trade show. I took the opportunity to show them the Kids' Village. They were so taken with it that Craig said he would recommend appropriate action by the AMOA's Committee on Committees. True to his word, Craig phone back within a week to say AMOA had officially established a GKTW Committee. Our first formal meeting took place in Marco Island, Fla., during AMOA's midyear board meeting. Present were committee members Don Hesch, Bob Correa and Clyde Knupp, along with AMOA administrative coordinator Kim Rundle.

AMOA's involvement with GKTW predates the forming of the committee. Five or six years ago, during Clyde Knupp's term as AMOA president, I was asking coin-op manufacturers to donate games to the Kids' Village. Clyde supported that request and introduced me to AAMA Executive Director Bob Fay, who was very helpful in turn. Once AMOA formed its GKTW Committee, Bob helped again by giving us a chance to address AAMA's board of directors.

The AAMA board responded by donating many machines. The board also acted on our suggestion for a way to make the donation program self-perpetuating (we purchased the initial set of games at reduced prices, then resold them 6-12 months later at near or above the purchase price).

Meanwhile, AMOA's board of directors voted to start the program of game purchases with donations funneled through its Educational Foundation. At this time, monies have been coming in from several different sources. Among them:

- The AMOA Council of Affiliated States voted to have AMOA invoice each state association for $500 per year, for two years, with funds to be earmarked for the AMOA Educational Foundation/GKTW. The first invoice went out this spring.
- The AMOA National Dart Assn. has selected GKTW as its official national charity. At the soft-tip dart championships held in Las Vegas from April 26-30, the hardworking members raised over $7,000 for GKTW. We are challenged to beat that at the Orlando, Fla. NDA Championships in October.
- A fundraising raffle was run from a booth during the most recent trade show of the Florida Amusement Machine Assn. Show attendees purchased chances to win various prizes — including weekend stays, dinners for two, a Valley dart board, and a WMS *Popeye* pinball. Proceeds went to GKTW; the booth was run by my wife Jaci and myself.
- AMOA's International Flipper Pinball Assn. has also been working on raising funds for GKTW.

Many good people have made serious efforts to help realize the goals of the GKTW Committee. Our number one goal is to have the very best games at all times in the gameroom of the Castle of Miracles (a $2 million fantasy centerpiece of the GKTW Kids' Village). We believe the termi-

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nally ill children and their families, deserve the very best for the short time they have together at the Village.

At present, the committee's Don Hesch is working with American Vending Sales' Frank Gumma Jr. to establish a network of manufacturers from which we can purchase games. Also, the AMOA Manufacturers Council continues its discussions of ways to promote involvement by all manufacturers in the program.

We're exploring possible ways of raising enough "seed money" to start off with a bang. Committee member Bob Correa is developing ambitious fundraising plans. I myself can envision an annual AMOA Give Kids the World golf tournament — four ball scramble — held any time of year, as one possible fundraising event. There are probably many great ideas out there which we can use to raise funds for this worldwide charity, and if you have any suggestions we would appreciate hearing from you.

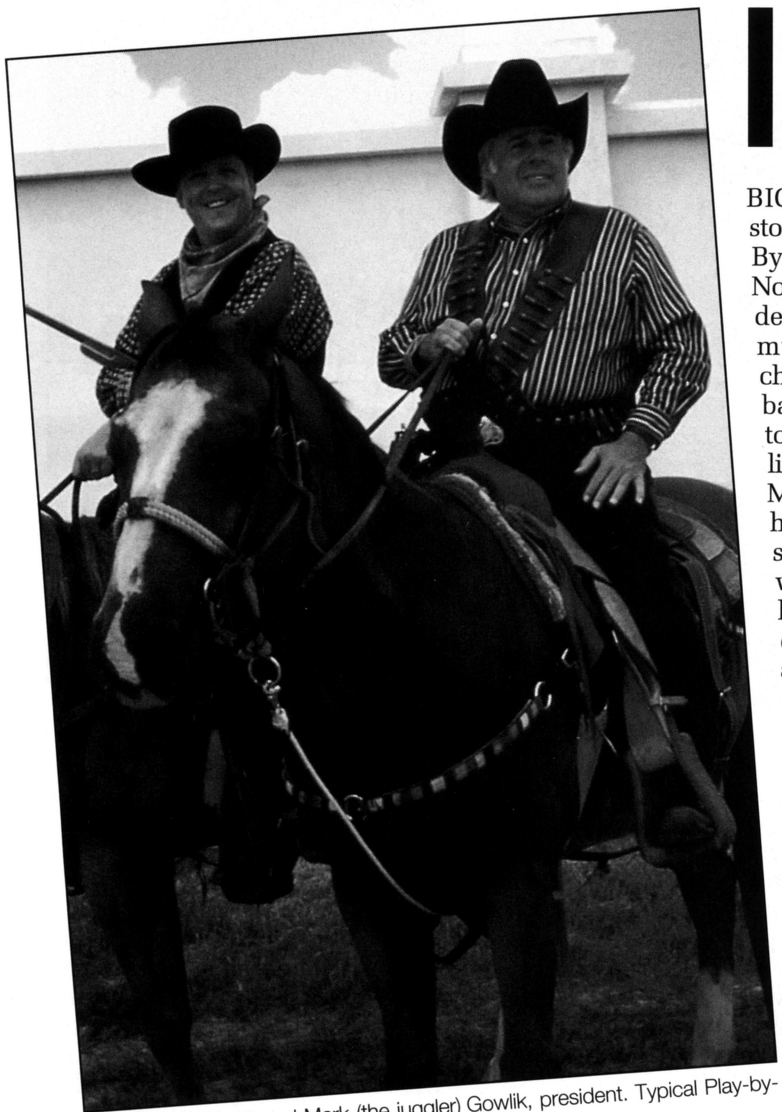
Write to me at WGM Amusements, Inc., Kissimmee, FL 34745-0115. Anyone wishing to make a donation for purchases of new games, may send a check to AMOA Educational Foundation/GKTW. If you have a new game donation (dedicated or kit) please contact me at 407/ 846-8500. ◆



COVER STORY

Redemption RODEO

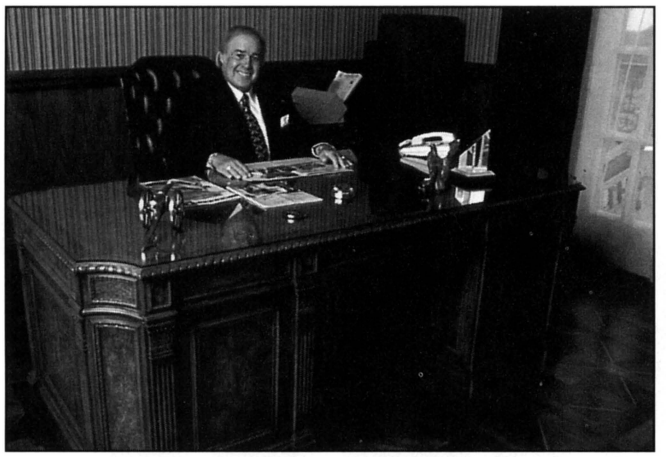
cowboys and cowgirls at Play-By-Play lasso the redemption merchandise



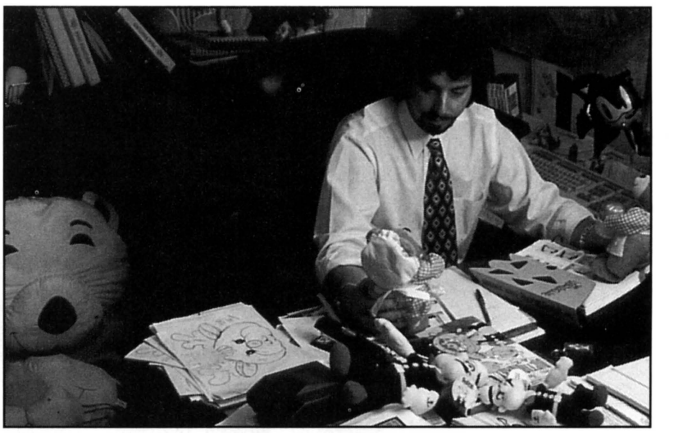
Arturo Torres, CEO and Mark (the juggler) Gowlik, president. Typical Play-by-Play strategy meeting.

If you want a job done right, do it yourself. And if you want it done Texas-style, do it up BIG! That's the story behind Play-By-Play Toys and Novelties...the redemption and amusement merchandise supplier based in San Antonio, Texas. Established in 1986 as Pizza Management, Inc.'s in-house plush supply division, the venture began with a 6,000 sq. ft. warehouse. Play-By-Play quickly grew into a Texas-sized success, putting its "brand" on the merchandise supply market in a big way.

Today, Play-By-Play is one of the largest suppliers to the amusement industry. It operates three distribution centers in San Antonio, New York and California with a total of more than 270,000 sq. ft. of warehouse space. Over 100 employees keep the goods pouring in and streaming out like a herd of



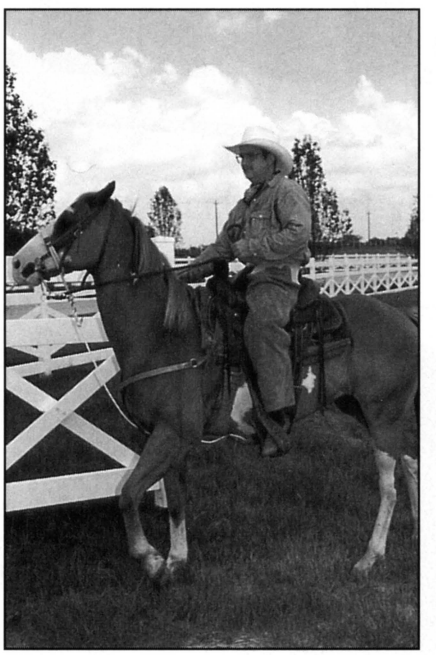
Arturo Torres, chief executive officer.



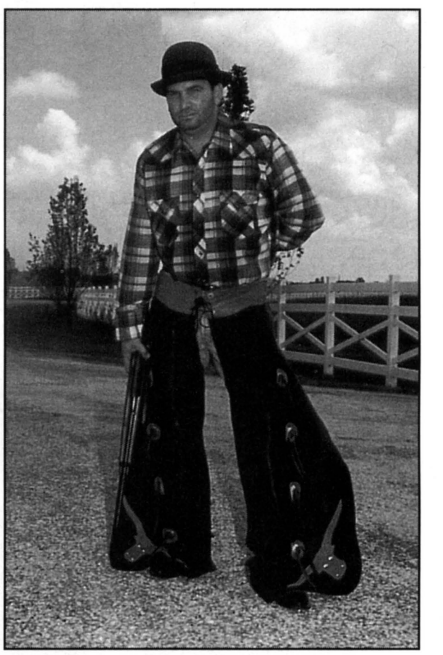
Jay (Sketch) Foreman, vice president working out the details of his latest license.



Michael (the dealer) Cardinali, sales manager crane and redemption, reflecting and projecting.



Bruce (Doc) Chafin, general manager amusement division. A pure bred Texas cowboy.



Sid (the patch) Karmia. 3 balls, 50 cents.



Leslye Hillman, marketing director. You need it by when???



Art Stopper, art director. She needs it by when???



Da boys workin' it out.

stampeding longhorns. But despite this phenomenal growth, Play-By-Play still strives to achieve the same basic goals that inspired its original launch: quality, service, variety and innovation. "Fulfilling each of those needs for every single customer has always been Play-By-Play's overriding mission — and it always will be," declared company founder Art Torres, chief executive officer of PMI.

FOUNDING A "REDEMPTION RANCH"

As Art knows first-hand, it's important to get a reliable supply of high-quality, affordable plush. Back in 1986, PMI was servicing 500 cranes in Pizza Hut restaurants and street locations. "Business was booming," Art recalled. The only problem was, PMI faced periodic shortages or delays in getting the top-quality plush it needed, at prices it liked. "I was pretty sure I was not the only operator experiencing these supply problems," Art said in a Texas-sized understatement.

He soon realized the best way for PMI to ensure a steady supply of product, was to do the importing himself. "Most industry professionals advised me to stick to operating," he recalled. "However, I was certain that my company's hard work ethic and

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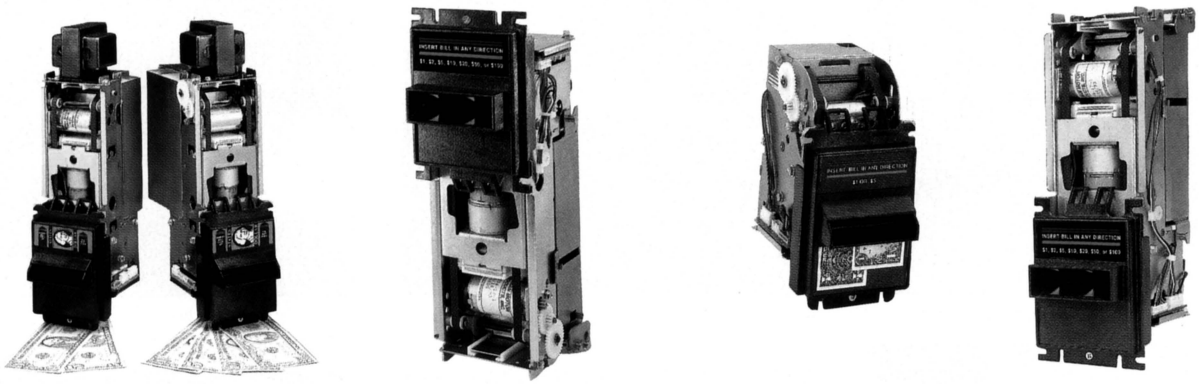



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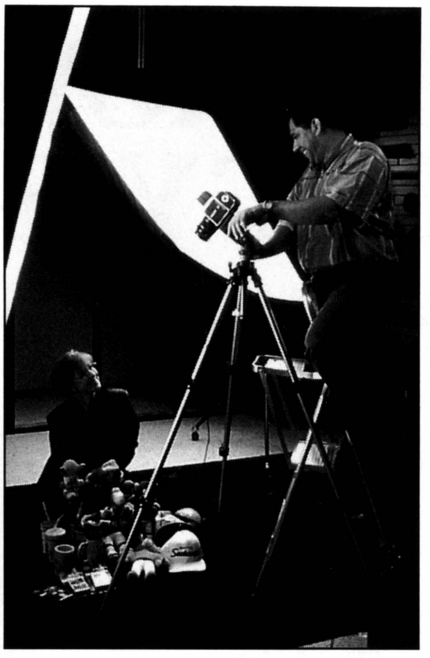
commitment to customer service would prove as successful in this market, as it had been in the restaurant business."

He was right. The cowboys and cowgirls at PMI proved they could lasso the merchandise, hogtie those foreign market distribution deals, and drive stuffed animals and other goods along an international coin-op version of the Chisolm Trail to deliver a "prime cut" to U.S. operators. (As it happens, Torres also runs one of Texas' largest cattle ranches...so he has plenty of experience with roundups!)

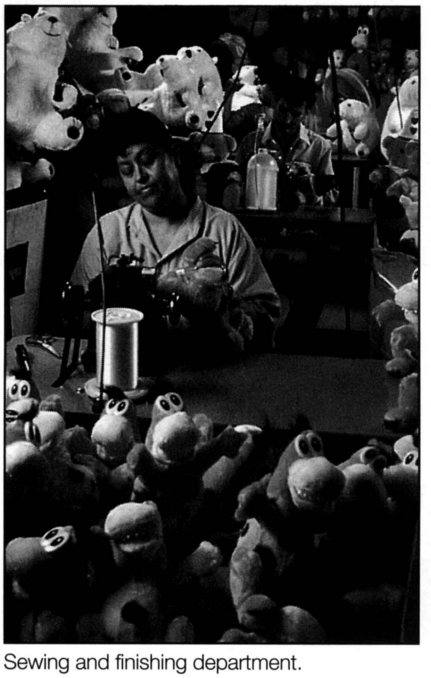
After corralling his herd, the next



Art and Leslye in their fully equiped in-house studio.



Juan Hernandex, international sales and Michael Cardinali show the line to a South American buyer.



Sewing and finishing department.

thing a good cattle baron needs is a couple of top trail bosses. Once Art Torres had Play-By-Play up and running, he turned over the reins of day



Dora Esparsa, director of M.I.S., keeping those systems humming.



In-house stuffing department.



Clean up and prep department.

to day management to President Mark Gawlik and Executive VP Jay Foreman. The pair describe themselves as a classic "odd couple" whose varied strengths mesh to cre-

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Sample area.



Coca-Cola polar bear hits the spot.



She loves those Coke bears.



San Antonio warehouse.

ate strong leadership. Mark is the "management nuts & bolts guy" with a CPA and an impressive background in finance and information systems. Jay is the "creative/inspirational guy" with experience in design, licensing, marketing, and sales management.



Shipping department.



Flintstones rule at bowler roller (Fiesta Texas).



Another happy customer.



Pear Apple County cranes with Coke polar bears.



Pear Apple County with Flintstone banks.

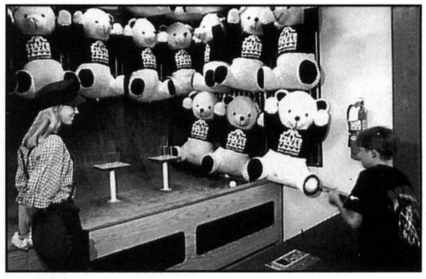
Together, Mark and Jay assembled a team of real pros to handle sales and marketing (see sidebar).

ROPIN' AND RIDIN'

Whether you're selling beef on the hoof, or plush in a box, there's a simple Code of the West that defines



Beauregard cleverly flashed a Fiesta Texas.



Our custom Fiesta Texas bear.



Rolling with Harley bulldog.



Pear Apple County redemption with large plush.

Play-By-Play's corporate philosophy. "Give the customer a great product at competitive prices, deliver it on time along with friendly, courteous, professional service, and they will be back time and time again," Mark Gawlik said. "We strive to exceed the expectations of our customers."

Play-By-Play also strives to bring a fresh, original perspective to all aspects of importing, marketing and distribution. And they don't hesitate to draw pointed comparisons, to prove it. "We started buying broad when our competitors were buying deep," Jay Foreman said. "When our competitors were abandoning licensed product, we jumped in with both feet. When some companies were closing distribution centers and

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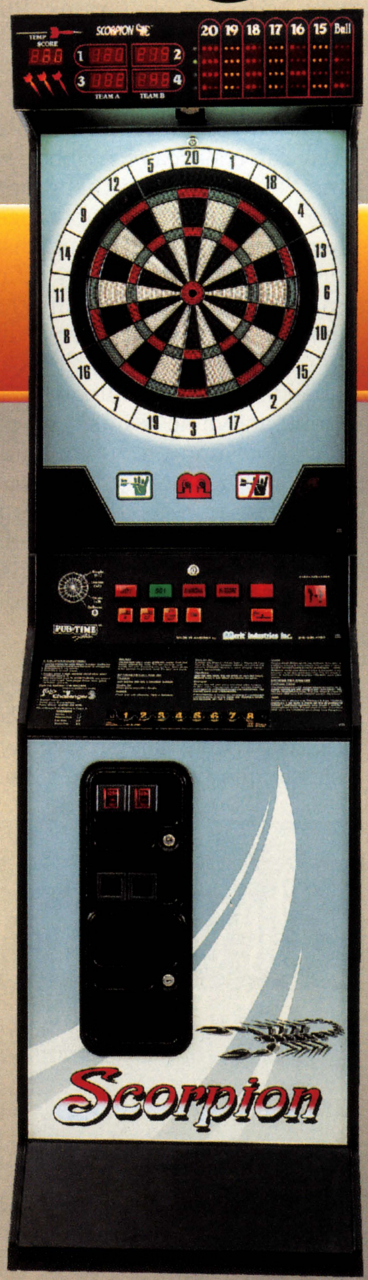

"IT AIN'T OVER 'TIL IT'S OVER" ...YOGI BERRA

Was Yogi referring to '01 DARTS??? We don't know, but his immortal words ring true when the game is played on the new SCORPION STINGER '94. Our exclusive player selectable '01 EQUAL DARTS™ feature adds an entirely new element to the game – STRATEGY – and keeps the tension mounting 'til the last player throws the very last dart.

* **'01 EQUAL™ HOW IT WORKS** — THE GAME DOESN'T END WITH THE FIRST PLAYER TO REACH "0". INSTEAD, EACH REMAINING PLAYER IN THAT ROUND HAS A FINAL TURN TO GO OUT, IF POSSIBLE. THE PLAYER WHO FINISHES WITH THE LEAST DARTS THROWN IS THE WINNER.

It's now stricly a game of skill – the disadvantage of unfavorable throwing order is eliminated. With '01 EQUAL™, players sharpen their skills by setting up the most strategic "out" shots, and then going for the win with the fewest darts. The feature opens up a completely new form of league competition.

'01 EQUAL™ is part of the STINGER '94 expanded game menu - the widest choice ever available. We've added the entire range of '01 games, 301 thru 1001, with the touch of a single button. Check out all the new features that continue to make SCORPION the BEST game in town . . . right, YOGI ?!

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SOLO CAN SUB FOR AN ABSENT TEAM PLAYER
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MORE FUN FOR THE PLAYERS

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MEGA BLASTER™ SOUND SYSTEM

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consolidating operations, Play-By-Play expanded to New York and Los Angeles."

When it comes time to play "computer cowboy," the folks at Play-By-Play can collect a blue ribbon for that, too. The company installed fully-automated, totally computerized system to process orders and distribute product. "It's incredibly efficient," said Mark Gawlik. "Using this system, we can process orders within 24 to 48 hours of receipt. That's a major undertaking for a company with over 6,000 active accounts!" he pointed out. "We innovate by implementing the latest technology to reduce operating costs, while increasing our sales volume for the purpose of holding down prices." (Or, as Jay likes to tease: "Mark can't get his mind off the bottom line.")

LONGHORNS, TOYS & NOVELTIES

Every cowpoke has to answer that classic question, "Where's the beef?" Product is king, no matter how good your management skills may be. Jay Foreman has the responsibility of developing and guiding Play-By-Play's line. "Our goal is to have a comfortable mix of licensed and generic products," he said. "We're producing a broad line of both classically and fashionably styled plush and novelties, while always looking for the next *hot* property."

Throughout the amusement industry, licensed products are enjoying a rising popularity that just doesn't seem to quit. But companies who pay for the license rights have to strike a fine balance between the cost and the payback...not to mention the issue of timing and longevity. Pressed about his licensing strategy, Jay said "Licensing is like gambling: some win, and some lose. We try to make bets on sure things and we've been very lucky so far. This year, for example, we have the industry's two hottest properties — the Flintstones and Coca-Cola." As for predicting next year's hot licenses, Jay only laughed. "Just see us at the AMOA Expo or the Parks Show and I'll tell you all about it!"

FINDING NEW PASTURES

Part of Play-By-Play's growth has come from constantly blazing new trails in the "plush cattle drive," and successively targeting new market niches. In 1986, it was crane toy distribution. In 1990 they began supplying amusement parks and carnivals. In 1993 they got into novelty and redemption goods for FECs. Their latest coup is entering the mass market retail chains, selling to Toys R Us, WalMart and K-Mart.

Any other new pastures for 1994? Play-By-Play recently acquired Laramie Interests, a "pre-pack powerhouse," from its Houston-based founders. This move puts Play-By-Play squarely into the market for smaller, independent operators. LI is headed by veep Steven Chernin who manages product mix and sales from a 60,000 sq. ft. warehouse in Brooklyn, N.Y. Also, LI products are shipped from the San Antonio facility, making LI the only pre-pack supplier with multiple distribution capabilities.

In a sense, this expansion has obvious logic to it. "We design, develop and import stuffed toys and novelties," Jay Foreman pointed out. "Why sell to just the crane market? Diversity will make us stronger in the long run — not only for ourselves, but especially for our customers." The firm's steady growth has been deliberate and carefully calculated. "We elected to move into those markets that made sense," said Mark Gawlik. "And we had just one rule: if you're going to do it, do it right."

HAPPY TRAILS

As they continue "riding the range" of redemption merchandise, Play-By-Play's execs see nothing but happy trails ahead. "The overall economy is still shaky, but our sales have increased dramatically every year since we opened the doors," Mark Gawlik smiled. "We see nothing to slow us down now. Our people are the heart and soul of this company. The diverse talents of our team has helped us branch into a whole

The Cowboys & Cowgirls of Play-By-Play

Play-By-play's president Mark Gawlik and VP Jay Foreman are proud as punch of their carefully assembled management team. "We attract the very best," Mark declared. (As they say in Texas, "If it's true, it ain't bragging.") Mark continued: "We've recruited only professionals who are veterans in their respective fields for every management position in the company. They are excellent individually, but more important, they are even better as a team because their backgrounds are complimentary." Jay agreed. Pointing to the staff's enthusiasm, stability and dedication, he said: "I'm very confident of this management team's ability to guide the growth of our dynamic young company."

Michael Cardinalli, sales manager in crane & redemption, brings an extensive background in direct sales and sales management. He runs the network of regional and international sales reps, and he's the in-house liaison for major accounts in this market. Marketing director **Leslye Hillman,** a former advertising manager with J.C. Penny, also spent eight years as merchandise & games manager for Opryland USA. She manages the San Antonio in-house sales staff, along with the advertising and catalog production in their in-house studio. **Bruce Chafin** has 21 years with Six Flags in food & games management; he's GM of the amusement division. **Sid Karmia,** with 25 years' experience working in and distributing to the carnival industry, is the amusement division sales manager. Regional sales reps include **Barry Lederman** (midwest); **Greg Bickerstaff** (southeast); **Ari Ohnona** (northeast); **Terry Higgens** (New England & mid-Atlantic); **Mark Rasnow** (south central); Tony Lawlor (west); and **Brad Finn** (north central). "This is the finest and most energetic sales force ever assembled in this industry, and our growth shows it," said Jay Foreman.

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Personal Computer	IBM compatable with 1 meg of memory
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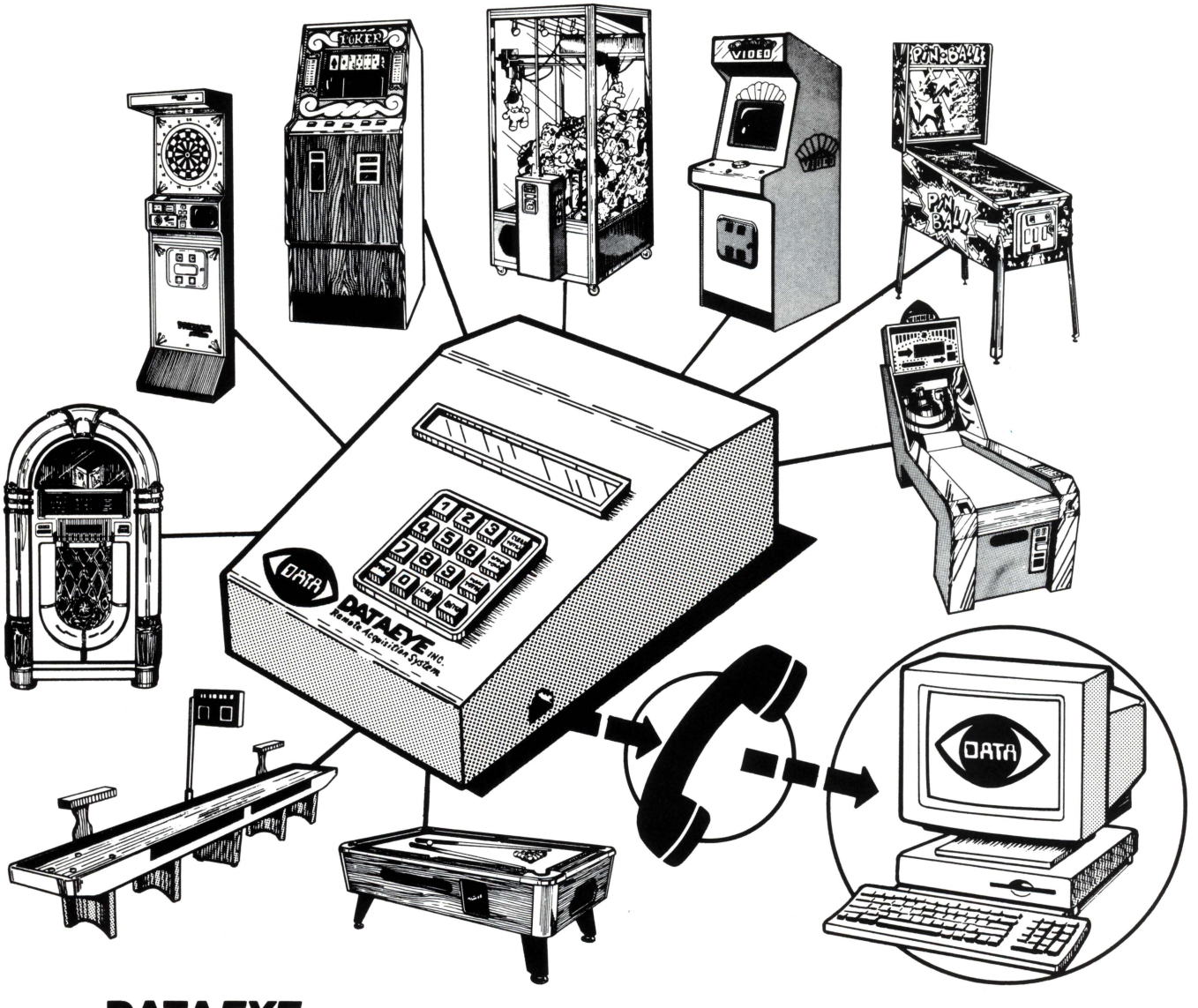
CONNECTIONS

Inputs	40) 5-24VDC
Cable	Std. modular telephone cables
Printer	Std. DB25



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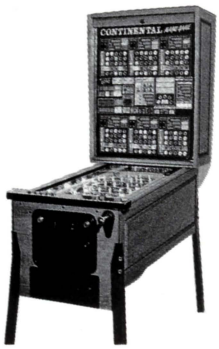

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series of new markets over the years, and they're poised to bring us into even greater growth in the future." Jay Foreman asserted that "Even in the slowest of times, great companies do great things." (There's that Texas modesty again.) He added: "Our growth is a direct reflection of the growth in the amusement industry and our own innovation."

Play-By-Play's ranch hands cordially invite all industry operators and distributors to "come by the barn" and visit their San Antonio facilities during this month's AMOA Expo. The company will open its doors on Wednesday, Sept. 21 and Saturday, Sept. 24 (contact your sales rep or the company for an appointment). Whether you're an experienced saddle-tramp or a blushing tenderfoot, drop by to see the spread and enjoy the Texas hospitality. Phone is 210/829-4666 (or call toll-free at 800/426-2211). Or visit them at the show itself: that's the San Antonio Convention Center, booth numbers 1349-57.

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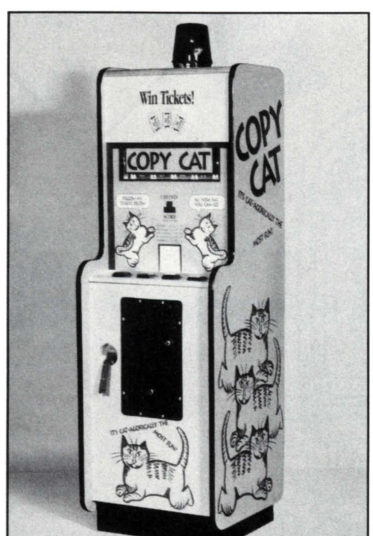

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DISTRIBUTOR

PROFILE



Southgate Distributing president John Gatens Jr. and his brother, corporate secretary Mike Gatens.

QUIET CONFIDENCE

SOUTHGATE DISTRIBUTING'S JOHN GATENS HAS SEEN IT ALL, DONE IT ALL AND SAYS "CHANGE IS THE KEY TO OUR FUTURE"

What are the U.S. astronauts like? Somebody once said that despite their astounding achievements, most of them are quiet professionals... "men who move with the careful thoughtfulness of experts who realize that no matter how good you are, things can still go wrong."

John Gatens, president of Southgate Distributing (San Antonio and Houston, Texas), is a little like that. A 20-year trade veteran, he knows the basics, keeps on top of the current trends, and carefully studies the forces of hi-tech and high finance that are reshaping the industry. He's optimistic about tomorrow, and passionate about "being part of the solution, not part of the problem — helping make things change, not letting them stagnate."

But for all his aggressive business philosophy, there's no Texas braggadocio in John. He's a gentlemanly, softspoken fellow with good Southern manners who takes time to stop and listen carefully to the other point of view. Over the course of his career, he's been "on top of the pyramid" in terms of machine sales...and he's been so far in debt that he once owed a million dollars for every year of his age. Like the astronauts, he's learned that no matter how good you are, things can still go wrong. A quiet, sure professionalism is his hedge against the uncertain world of the amusement industry.

"It's our responsibility to make sure the operator knows enough to feel comfortable taking the next step," John said. "I can't guarantee he makes money...but I can sure improve his odds with good training and support. You can buy equipment anywhere. We want to add value and earn our money. I think our customers are pretty satisfied with our performance. They continue to come back to us, in many cases after 20 years, even though we're not the bargain-basement guys. But our customers have allowed us to expand, and I think they trust us to provide value for value."

SOUTHGATE'S FACILITIES AND STAFF

Southgate opened its doors in March of 1987. The San Antonio headquarters is a one-story, 14,000 sq. ft. building, about 50 years old. When John moved in, he had it extensively renovated with big glass windows to show off the product to any and all passers-by. As a result, he gets plenty of drop-in visitors since a major highway runs next to the site. "We've had strangers and members of the public come in and say — gee, I always wondered where these games came from!" John smiled.

Southgate is a family business, stable and growing. The team includes John's brother Mike Gatens (San Antonio sales manager), his nephew Ted Schweitzer (Houston sales manager), and son-in-law Jim Aitken (Houston administrative manager). The staff of 23 includes sales, administration, technical support, parts and warehouse staff. Fifty-year industry vet Jim McNeely also handles sales in San Antonio. Eddie Palmer is service manager; he's been with John for 18 years.

Southgate's territory runs from El Paso in the west, into a few Louisiana counties in the east — about 900 miles! Their region also goes from just north of Austin, to the Mexican border. "We travel the territory and see most of our customers every six to eight weeks," John said. "Our salesmen travel in our fleet of pickup trucks. At least twice a week, we've got fellows in Austin 50 miles away." The sales team does quite a bit of

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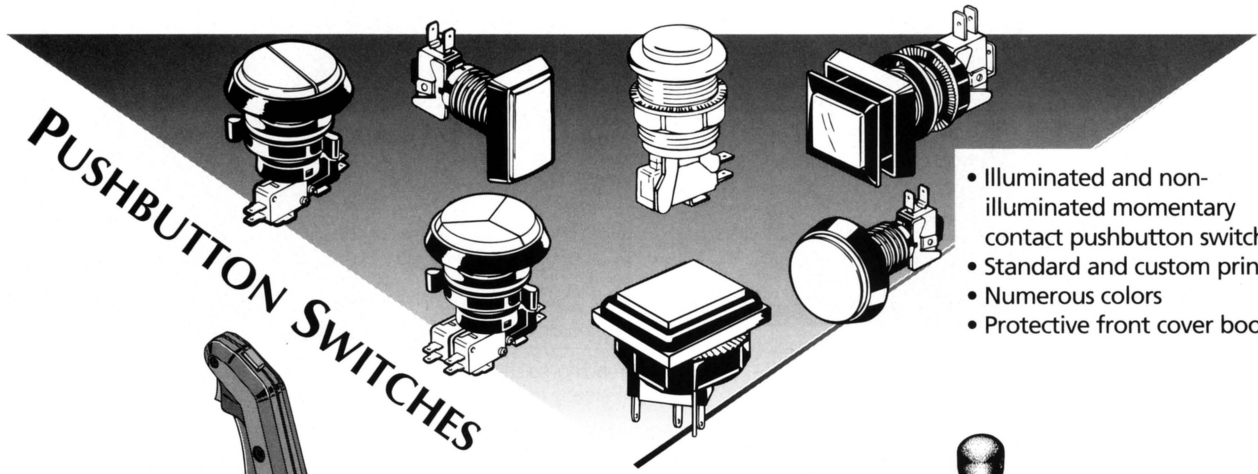

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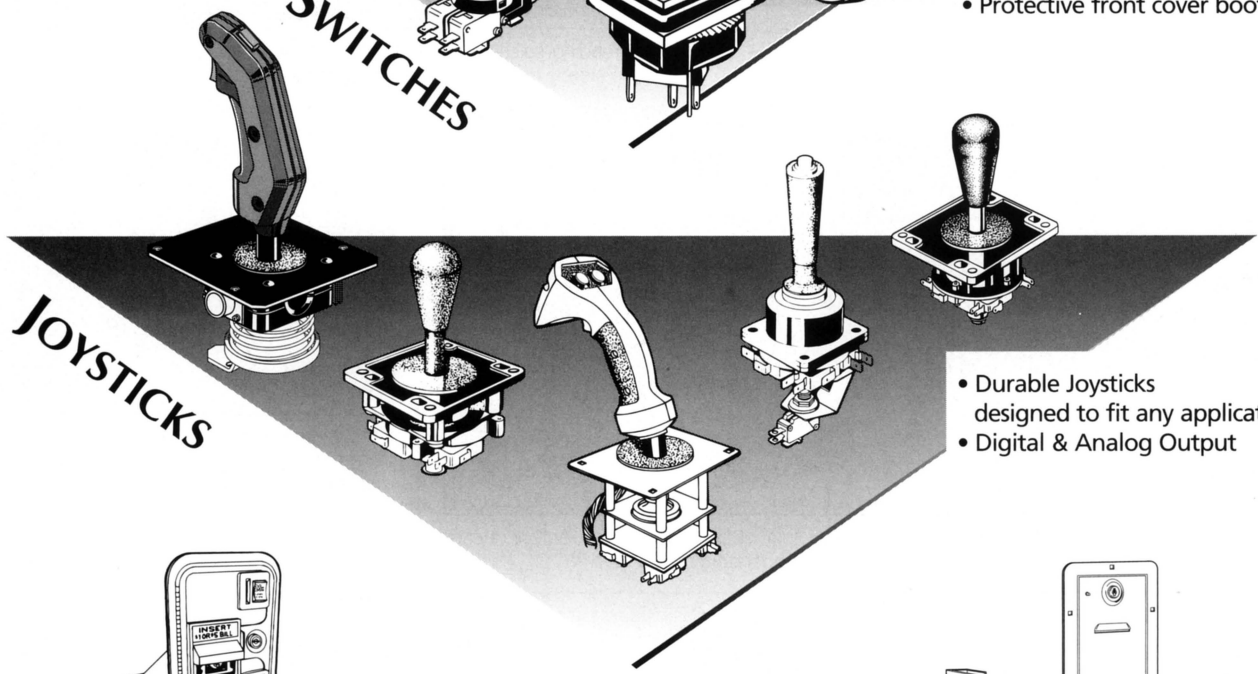

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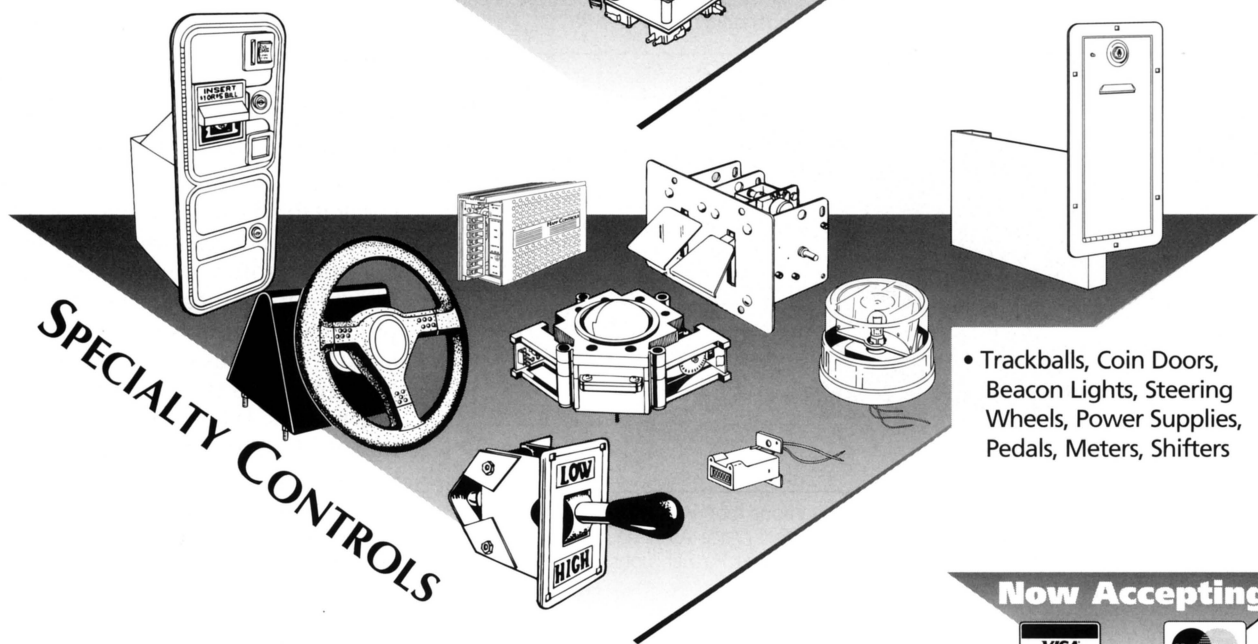

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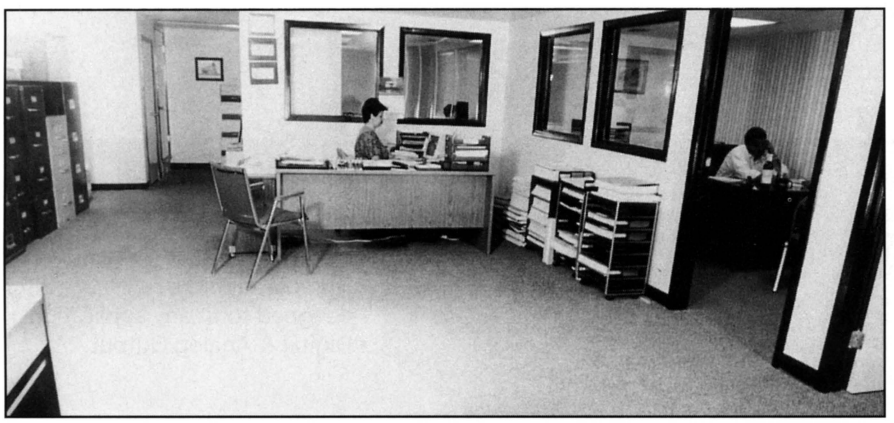
The San Antonio sales team includes Joe Epperly, Judy Holbrook and Jim McNeely. The sales staff regularly covers hundreds of miles, visiting far-flung customers in Southgate's fleet of Ford pickups.



Vending salesmen John Dean and Terry Schopfer. Vending equipment is steady business and has always been part of Southgate's line.



Administrative offices are found on the 3,000 sq. ft. top floor of Southgate's San Antonio headquarters. Looks like all the salesmen are on the road visiting operators today!



Here's accountant Jean McNeely. Judging from her big smile and clear desktop, payments must be pretty much on schedule!



Southgate's San Antonio team in front of the city's most famous monument, the Alamo. From left: Gene Daniel, Jean and Jim McNeely, Joe Epperly, Mike Gatens, Alice Allen, Jason Granato, John Gatens, Ruben Sloan, Judy Holbrook, Debbie Colombrito, Eddie Palmer, John Dean, Ben De la Garza and Terry Schopfer.

equipment delivery and setup, as well as taking back machines for repair. Much of Southgate's equipment to further destinations is shipped (although they'll drive out just about anyplace on zero notice if the customer needs it).

A new 10,800 sq. ft. Houston office opened Feb. 1. It comprises a showroom, four sales offices, parts department, and service department. It's located at 4555 Airline Dr. (phone is 713/691-7335). "We're very pleased and encouraged by our experience in Houston so far," said John. "Sales and customer acceptance are good for a branch that's been open just seven months."

SALES, CUSTOMERS, AND TODAY'S MARKET

Sales are holding steady at a comfortable level, John said. "A lot of our equipment sells itself — jukeboxes, pool tables, countertops, and vending machines are not seasonal products. Our sales staff travels the territory and calls on customers. I do, too...and I want to! We're not just order-takers. When you call on a customer regularly, and in person, you get to know him and he gets to know you. The better you know each other, the better your relationship is. You're able to make good recommendations based on the specifics of his locations and the clientele. So it's easier to sell. And it's easier to collect if they know you're going to visit in person, instead of calling them on the phone and asking them to send a check."

John's looking forward to hot new product at this month's Expo, but says his business doesn't stand or fall on hit games. "From a distribu-

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Strike Zone turns natural competitiveness into those grand slam profits you've been looking for! Watch the fun as friends gather at this new attraction to pitch for speed, accuracy and bragging rights. They'll score 45 points if they can pitch the ball into the "**Strike Zone**" at 45 MPH without hitting the bat. Who is the best in their group? Who holds the score to beat? The money pours in to **Strike Zone** as fast as the pitching.

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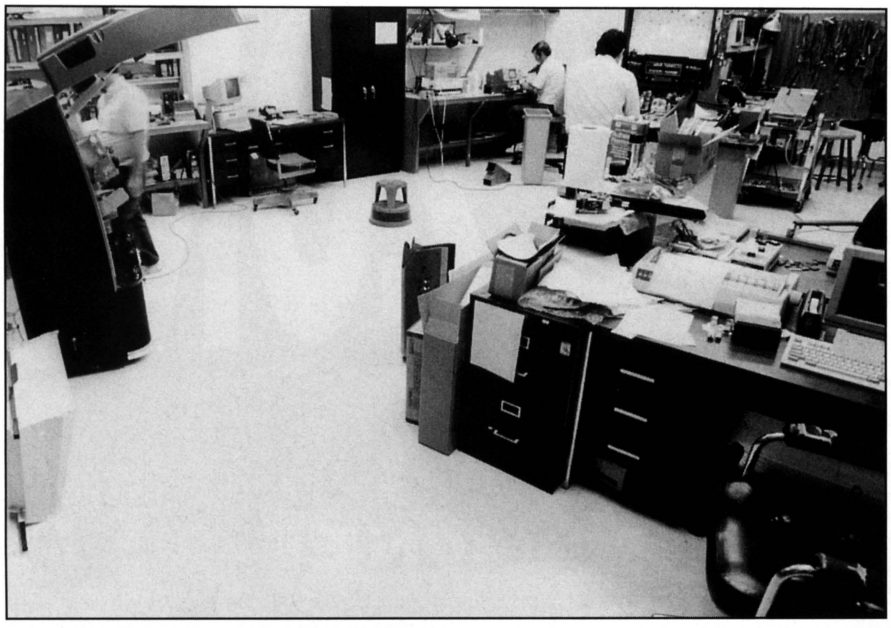


At the San Antonio headquarters, a 2,000 sq. ft. service department is behind the showroom, as is the 6,000 sq. ft. warehouse.



Entering Southgate's front door, you walk into a 2,200 sq. ft. showroom with around two dozen machines on display — everything from videos and vending equipment, to pins, jukeboxes, bill changers to redemption.

tor's point of view, it's actually better for us when there's not a hit dominating sales," he explained. "A hit is sold on price and delivery dates, and you wind up owing lots of money to one supplier. When there's not a hit, you sell 'one of this' and 'one of that.' You have to work harder, but sales don't have to suffer because we get better margins and get more involved with our customers. Right now, aside from Sega's *Daytona*, there's not an overwhelming hit out there — and that's fine with me. If this is as bad as the industry gets, we'll be in good shape!"

Southgate's customers include many rural operators and small town operators, along with some city operators. "Many of our customers are second- and third-generation operators," John said. "We have many decent-sized operators who run 300 or 400 pieces of equipment. We try to help develop younger, smaller operators with advice and financing, too." Southgate's equipment winds up in classic street stops, regional and national restaurant chains, and a growing number of FECs. Although Southgate covers a very large geographic area, their territory includes mostly widespread small towns and some medium- and good-sized cities like San Antonio, Houston and Austin with two to four million people in the greater metropolitan areas.

Texas operators' routes and gamerooms tell John their revenues are off 10 to 12% overall these days. "Payments are somewhat slower, but not to a level that causes concern," John reported. "We have more people asking about financing. That's because they want to spread the term of payments out, and also because the cost of equipment has accelerated substantially."

LOOKING FOR CHANGE

Things may be OK today, but John has no intention of letting tomorrow take care of itself. Get him going on the subject of the trade's future and he becomes a passionate, articulate advocate for aggressive modernization. "One thing is for certain: the industry is going to change," he declared. "I don't think anybody knows what direction it will take at this point. We have a tendency to dislike change, especially as we get older. But there's an old saying that nobody coasts uphill. We must change in order to progress. Otherwise, stagnation will lead to dissipation."

The most necessary change, John insists, is in the industry's point of view. "We keep saying we're in the coin machine business, but I cringe whenever I hear that phrase. Aren't we really in the entertainment business? Technology is going to force many changes and we must accept those changes. Many operators are talking about going to debit cards. This will have some problems — the price has to be right — but it's around the corner for us. Also, there's been a lot of discussion of AMOA's NANI system and I'm sure a certain portion of our business will be networked games in the future. Personally I'm not afraid of that. It can be very positive. And not all of our business will be hi-tech. But most important, our industry must progress or we'll bore the player and lose the public's entertainment dollar to some competing format."

John believes manufacturers, distributors and operators must all accept the responsibility to improve industry conditions...and their own business practice. Factories need to take a long, hard look at financing, he said. "I think financing will continue to become a more important part of the business," he said. "After all, every other industry that sells products in the several thousand dollar range, has financing. The idea of the manufacturer getting paid in 30 days really isn't practical in today's market. Yes, it's the traditionally the responsibility of the distributor, but the manufacturer has to share some of that responsibility as well. It's an industry problem. Coin-op is a more capital-intensive business today. The

Ford Credit Company or GE Credit, Inc. would agree! But financing comes with a lot of difficulty because coin-op is a very misunderstood business. It's a cottage industry and very little published information is available about it."

Operators, too, must be change-oriented, John insists. "Operators in the future will certainly be different," he said seriously. "A narrow spectrum of old-time operators will be able to exist who just operate jukeboxes, pool tables and the occasional pinball 'when I have to.' The operator of the future must operate a wide variety of equipment including redemption and video in whatever forms they may take. Operators who still run their businesses the same way they did decades ago, won't make it. I hate to say this, but the people who are doing best in our industry, are the ones who've been active in it less than 20 years. The younger operators don't have as much of a preconceived notion of what the business should be in the future, based on what it's been in the past. And they don't care how it's been. They have a great interest in how it will be. Anybody who is aggressive and progressive wants change, because change generally creates opportunity."

John says he's ready to take responsibility for modernization himself, and ready to face whatever the future brings. "Change is going to happen, and I want to be part of that change," he said. "We'll work very hard to learn about new conditions and opportunities, wherever we find them. It's part of my responsibility as a distributor to be a conduit between the manufacturers and my operator customers, and to help inform and educate. When new technologies and new business practices come along, from networking to debit card billing, I believe our distributorship will be able to learn and adjust and contribute value to the process. We must continually earn our place in the industry, and I'm confident that we can."

JOHN'S CAREER

John never figured himself for a coin machine man. "When I was growing up in Iowa and Oklahoma in the 1950s, coin machines were pinballs, pool tables and phonographs," he remembered. "They were mostly found in pool halls, taverns, and other types of places where I wasn't supposed to be!" So young John Gatens took his business administration degree at Denver University, intending to become a stock broker. But prior to his post-graduate Wall Street training, in 1974 he took a "temporary" job with an Oklahoma coin machine distributor called Sutherland Distributing. It turned into a full-time job.



Southgate's San Antonio headquarters is a one-story, 14,000 sq. ft. building, about 50 years old, extensively renovated with big glass windows.

By then the industry was being transformed by computers and electronics. "It totally changed the nature of the games and their appeal," John said. When Sutherland went out of business, John founded his own Southwest Vending Sales in Oklahoma City, opening his doors in 1976. Phil Oldham was a co-owner, as was their CPA was Ray DeRieux. (Phil's now with SunBelt.) Southwest's first line was U.S. Billiards; the manufacturer's Al Simon helped John get the Seeburg and Williams lines as well. With that, Southwest was set. "In the middle to late '70s, the bulk of your business was pool tables, phonographs and pinballs," John recalled. "People were a little suspicious of video games."

Business was good. Southwest opened a San Antonio office in 1978 and a Dallas office in 1980. John got the Midway line as video games began selling starting with *Gunfight* and then moving lots of *Space Invaders*. Southwest eventually acquired more prestige lines like Atari Bally, and more. By the end of 1981, John believes Southwest did more business of any distributorship in the country (outside the huge national chain of Bally dealerships).

"There were crazy days," John recalled. "We sold all the equipment to Southland, which had 2,000 7-Eleven stores in Texas. To give you



Parts manager Jason Granato and Alice Allen in the 2,000 sq. ft. parts department, with close to 8,000 different components cross-listed on computer.



Southgate opened a 10,800 sq. ft. Houston branch this year at 4555 Airline Dr. (713/691-7335).



Smilin' Ted Schweitzer and Jim Aitken handle sales and administration at the Houston branch.

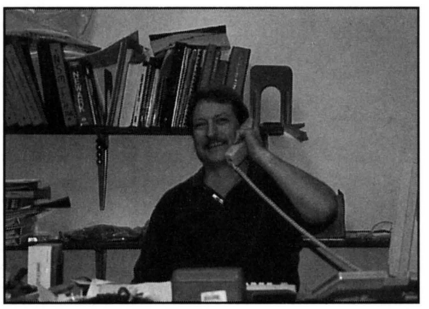
an idea how much the business has changed, we sold 3,860 *Defenders* and Williams gave me a gold watch to commemorate it. Our opening order on an Atari game called *Tempest* was 2,500 and we bought more after that!"

Southwest was sitting pretty at the peak of the video boom. "And then the business just went ka-blooie," John smiled. "By the end of 1982, I was 31 years old and owed about 31 million dollars. It was nearly impossible to adjust overhead and expenses. But I paid everybody."

Southwest cut down its expenses, liquidated some of its assets (including many routes which added up to 6,000 machines). John also worked terribly hard selling goods on consignment and writing off his commissions against what he owned. "It's certainly a credit to the industry that they allowed people like me to stay in business, come back and repay my



Houston parts manager John Palasota.



Steve Neal is the service manager at Southgate's Houston office — obviously a man who's happy in his work!

debts, and remain part of the industry," John said. "Everybody was very gracious to me."

After five or six years the company was back in the black, but John was ready to ease up on the hectic pace. He sold his Dallas office to longtime Southwest employee Dave Patterson (and Dave's partner, Phil Woods) in November of 1986. "We regrouped in San Antonio in March of '87 as a family business under the name of Southgate Enterprises, which was the original parent company of Southwest Vending Sales and our routes," John said. "It was a great up-and-coming city, and we already had an office there." His brother Mike and nephew Ted Schweitzer, who'd been with Southwest's Dallas office, moved to San Antonio and became part of the Southgate team.

It was good timing. Video had a resurgence; redemption and electronic darts began appearing. "I was lucky in that respect," John says. In addition to these products and the classic tavern equipment, Southgate took on more vending lines — snack machines, canned drink venders, etc. "Business has been very good since that point," John said. "We've learned a few lessons and had some luck along the way."

THOUGHTS ON TODAY'S INDUSTRY

Distribution has changed plenty since John first entered the business. "We sell a wider range and variety of products today than we used to 20 years ago," he said. Along with that, the demands for distributor expertise has also grown...and providing that expertise, John believes, is Southgate's strongest competitive edge.

"We provide knowledge of the industry," he declared. "Experience in our personnel. Professionalism. Support for the operator. Displaying and demonstrating equipment is important. Seminars are important. Individually training the operator's staff in terms of things like redemption is important. We continue to train our service people with seminars. Our sales staff have all been to a top sales schools, and we continue to train and upgrade the whole staff. I went to an Automatic Products service school myself a few months ago!"

That ever-growing knowledge and expertise is a key part of the service and support distributors must give their customers, John said. "Distributors have an obligation to back up what they sell with parts and service," he explained. "At Southgate we have the latest technical and service equipment, with all the bells and whistles of most manufacturers' technical departments. We measure our performance by how profitable our customers are. We never do any better than our customers do, so that's the best guage of performance."

As he looks toward the future, John believes the industry must redefine itself in terms of entertainment — not machines or quarters — and put more emphasis on selling the sizzle, not the steak. "We have to remember that we're part of the entertainment business," he said. "Certainly in family entertainment centers, you have to create excitement or people wouldn't be there. You know, a slot machine in a glitzy, glamorous Las Vegas casino will earn hundreds of dollars a day, because the people are excited by that atmosphere. But you can put that same slot machine in Joe's Bar and it won't earn a fraction of that. Whenever we succeed in this business, you generally find we're really selling an atmosphere of entertainment."

Wise words from a quiet man who's been "to the moon and back" in the pay-for-play entertainment industry. ◆



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Pear Apple County Fair calls itself a "family fun park." The 28,000 sq. ft. main building stands 80 feet high (including cupolas) and houses an indoor ferris wheel, restaurant and huge redemption arcade.

ACRES OF FUN



San Antonio's new "pocket park" has mucho redemption; Pear Apple County Fair also boasts indoor ferris wheel

"Are we a family entertainment center or a miniature amusement park?" mused Lars Iverson. "I don't know what we are! I guess we're sort of a hybrid...a 15-acre park with FEC elements and a big emphasis on rides. Our goal is to provide fun in an exciting family atmosphere that is accessible to everyone."

Lars is general manager of Pear Apple County Fair, the new $10 million amusement facility located in San Antonio, Texas. The park opened on July 1, 1993...and it's an outstanding example of the kind of pocket park or top-of-the-line family amusement center which has become explosively successful all over North America in recent years.

Admission is free and guests pay on a per-game basis (from 25 cents to $1) or a per-ride basis ($1-3). With a variety of indoor and outdoor entertainment — including 12,000 sq. ft. of redemption games and prizes — this classy site has a daily capacity of 1,500 people. They drew more than 550,000 guests in their first year of operation. One of their prime attractions is a Zamperla-built indoor ferris wheel that's wheelchair-accessible. Lars Iverson himself helped Zamperla with the chair lift design.

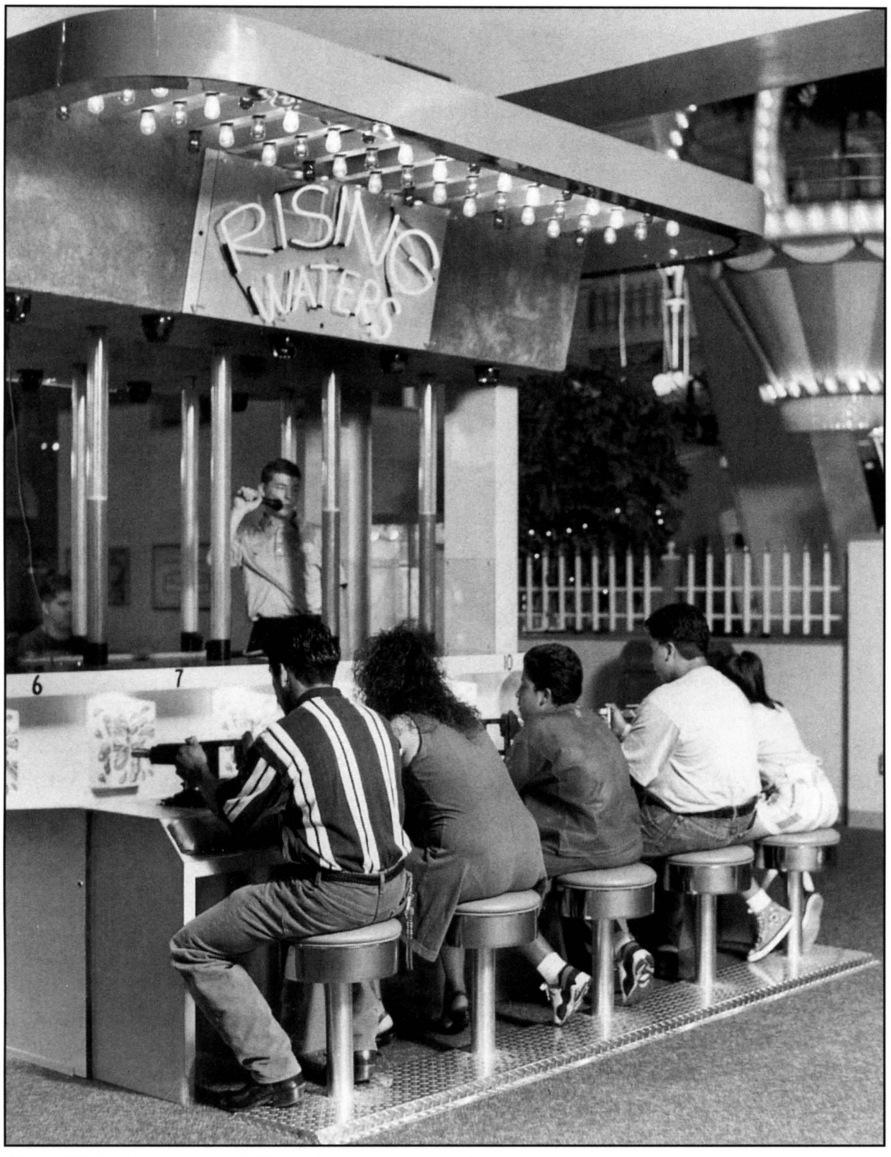
Designing and building a successful FEC is a big job, but Pear Apple did it right. They hired experts like Lars — a good ol' boy from San Antonio who has racked up 25 years in amusements, including stints with Disneyland, Busch Gardens and Magic Mountain. Lars in turn worked with top feasibility consultants, architects, civil and construction engineers, etc., to design and lay out the place. Planning and construction took two years. For a recent expansion, Pear Apple called in respected FEC design consultant J.R. Minnick & Associates. No wonder first-year attendance was way over their original projections!

Pear Apple is owned by the city's United Land Co., Inc., and headed by chairman Bob Sunderland, VP/property manager Lamar Burges and VP/treasurer Doug Jividen. A total pool of 200 employees, including two games managers, keep the place running smoothly. Around 100 work the place at a time during the spring and summer peak season when they run seven days a week. During off-season (fall through mid-spring), about 60 employees at a time handle the crowds.

The park is themed around a turn-of-the-century county fair, with its air of simple, wholesome fun...yet that nostalgic element is combined with the 21st century energy of hi-tech sounds, lights and colors. Besides the redemption arcade and ferris wheel, Pear Apple also offers a limited selection of deluxe video simulators, two mini-golf courses, go karts, bumper cars, a ball crawl, outdoor picnic area, and indoor food complex next to the redemption arcade and some of the rides. There's no upright video, no pinball, no table games, no batting or pitching cages — but there are nine staff-attended midway skill games.

MUCHO REDEMPTION

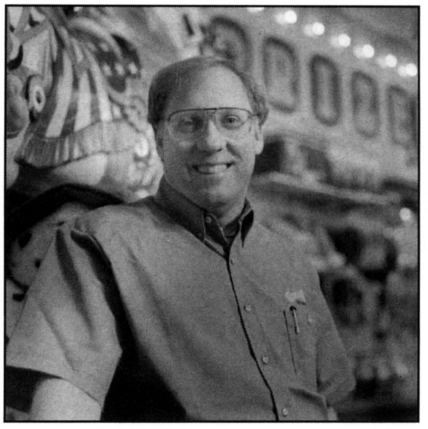
The Texas-sized redemption arcade includes 170 games. Coin pushers are strong and Pear Apple has several. Games with progressive jackpots also do well like Seidel's *Apple Jack* and *Lite-a-Line,* Bob's *Sidewinder* and their classic *Bowler Roller.* Classics, in fact, always perform according to Lars. "The old standbys just keep standing by!" he



Rising Waters is just one of 170 redemption games in the arcade.



Miniature golf (complete with waterfall) and a go-kart track help put those 15 acres to good use. Planners worked around the 100 year old oak trees.



Amusement park veteran Lars Iverson is general manager of Pear Apple County Fair.



David Sunderland is Pear Apple's assistant manager.

chuckled. Pear Apple has 14 *Skee Ball* alleys, some basketballs, and knockdown games in the mix. "They are all very consistent earners," Lars said with satisfaction. "We don't need to change the redemption games much, and we don't."

Merchandising of prizes is what redemption's all about, and Pear Apple has quickly gotten its clientele into the ticket-saving habit. Lars knows that winners come back to play again, and as long as the percentaging and markup are handled properly, you can move plenty of goods at a profit while giving "perceived value" to the customer.

"We encourage folks to save their tickets and exchange them for high value tickets worth 100,000 points," Lars explained. "That makes it easier to carry around and save. We award several TVs and VCRs each season. Exotic, luxury items like radio-controlled cars really move, too. We don't really offer low-end merchandise except for candy. Otherwise we're oriented toward quality merchandise and name brands. Remember, most of our clientele is repeat business from within a 10 mile

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Here's a small part of the redemption prize counter. Pear Apple stocks logo items, name-brand consumer electronics and other quality goods.



Namco's linked, multi-player *Suzuka 8 Hours* is a top attraction. Big simulators are the park's only video pieces.

radius...although we have also been drawing destination traffic from a wider region. But it's all a local market, and if you burn your local customers, you don't have a market!"

Pear Apple buys its prize merchandise from a variety of vendors. In addition to a wide choice of name brand consumer electronics items, they also offer handsome carousel horses and logo-emblazoned items. Stock is constantly changed to keep repeat customers interested. "Whatever's hot, we have it," Lars said. "Anything related to Disney's new movie *The Lion King* is big right now — if you can get it! And if you can, we can't keep it in stock."

BIG EARNINGS FROM VIDEO SIMULATORS

Pear Apple's video games are restricted to large, spectacular pieces like *Ridge Racer,* and eight-player *Suzuka, Mad Dog McCree,* and *Air Combat.* They generate good profits, Lars said...and they don't create a teen hangout problem. "I see more adults playing them than kids," He said. "Many U.S. Air Force personnel live in our area, and they think *Air Combat* is really neat. The motorcycle and driving games attract a lot of adult guys, who think it's a hoot. They're busy all the time." Given the proven popularity and profitability of these attractions, Lars is seriously considering expanding Pear Apple's video simulator area.

Food is sold at indoor counters (mostly the Carousel Cafe) and the menu includes pizza, burgers, hot dogs, and grilled chicken sandwiches. Outdoor snack bars and carts are stocked with drinks, ice cream and cotton candy. Pear Apple has a good-sized birthday party room, of course, with a dedicated staff of three or four people to coordinate bookings, host events, etc. "We don't promote our birthday party service," Lars said. "It just takes care of itself. People call and ask

Users' Reports

"We really liked our first Token Tech, which is why we ordered our second. I'm calling now to order our third."

"The Token Tech eliminates the need to spend hours making up rolls of 20 and 40 Tokens. We are saving enough labor cost to more than pay for it in less than two months."

"The best investment since we bought our fax machine. I can't ever imagine doing business without either one."

"We have good employees . . . The Token Tech removes the temptation for them to become "silent partners" by skimming the till."

"It's great! You should have come out with it 10 years ago."

"After using our Token Tech for Quarters, we are switching over to Tokens. Thanks to the dispenser, we got acquainted with your Token Systems."

"The Token Tech eliminates long lines at our cashier's cage. Our customers like it, too!"

"Our Batting Cage Tokens are valued at $1 each. Anyone with a high-value Token should be using a Token Tech."

"We use a larger size Token for our Carwash. All Tokens are sold through the Token Tech. It's accurate, and much faster, and it keeps our people honest."

"The first two Token Techs are excellent. We are sending our purchase order for six additional units."

"It's working just perfect. We love it!"

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Canadian 25¢	8,000	Venezuela 1 Bolivar	5,000
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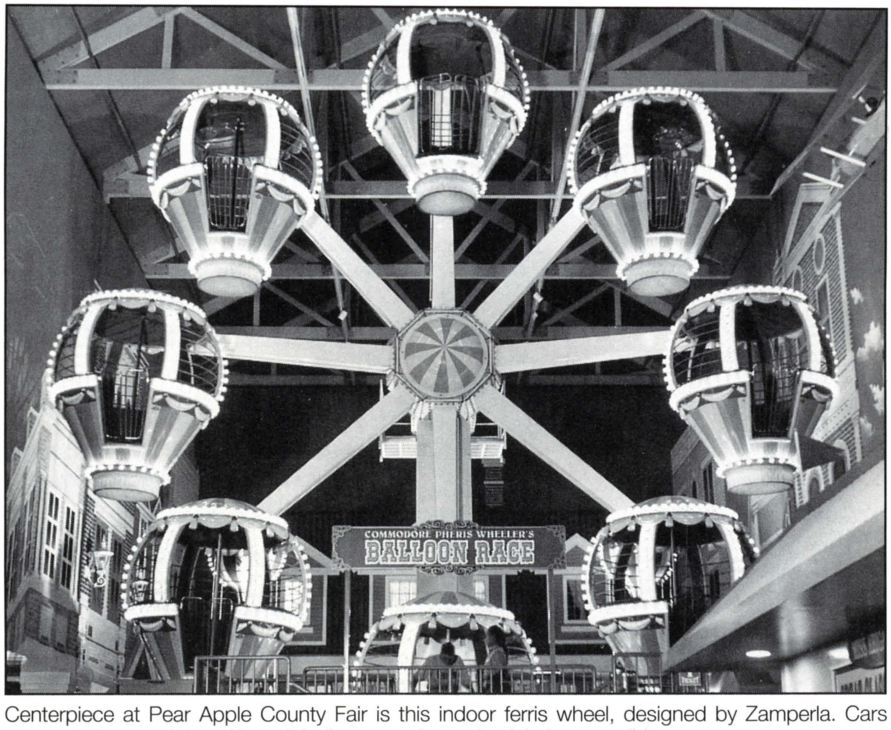
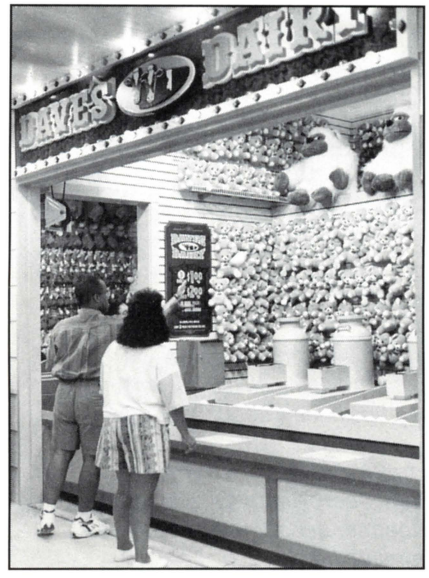


Centerpiece at Pear Apple County Fair is this indoor ferris wheel, designed by Zamperla. Cars resemble the gondolas of hot-air balloons, and are wheelchair-accessible.

about it, and we're booked solid every weekend. We're doing all the birthday parties we can handle this year. Frankly, we could use more space for birthdays."

Pear Apple may not promote birthday party business specifically, but they do advertise and promote themselves in general — quite a bit. They run nicely produced TV spots of 30-second and 10-second length, showing "man on street" comments



Midway type games, like this one themed around old-fashioned milk canister targets, help recreate a 1900s county fair atmosphere.

by happy visitors. Radio spots are also broadcast regularly. Both the TV and radio advertisements feature a jingle produced by an ad agency that does much work for Disney.

Pear Apple County Fair is located at 2820 No. Loop 410, San Antonio, Texas 78238. Phone is 210/521-9500. ◆



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ATARI FIGHTER SHIPS

Primal Rage *is out of the cage with a first class fracas*



Until we're asked to do otherwise, we'll continue to call the company "Atari Games." And until you see and play this veteran factory's brand new *Primal Rage*, you'll be missing one great example of the hot fall product bowing at distributor showrooms *ahead* of the AMOA Expo.

Previewed to their dealers in Palm Springs in June, *Primal Rage* began hitting the market the second week of August housed in Atari's *Showcase 33* cabinet, with traditional dedicated uprights coming along toward month's end. The game's product manager Derryl DePriest said response from distributors, operators, players and media "has been tremendous" at this early state. Now that it's heading out to locations around the country, it won't be long before those national cash box "votes" start coming in.

Primal Rage is a 2-player head-to-head fighter employing fantasy creatures that wreak fury on each other. The fact that these things are so unhuman ought to blunt criticism from anti-violence sectors who are used to seeing human forms getting down and nasty on the screen.

When they coin-up, players choose from among seven different creatures, including a giant ape, a tyrannosaurus rex and some thing called a "cobrasaur" and then attempt to dominate the new "Urth." Combatants use a combination of normal fighting moves, secret moves and graphic "finishing sequences" to eliminate their opponents.

Rage utilizes a proprietary new stop-motion animation technique for realistic, life-like character motion. In addition to these super graphics, the game features the new stereo sound system called Cage (Total Immersion Audio) which punctuates the high-impact game play.

Game producer Dennis Harper and lead animator Jason Leong conceived the idea of a stop-motion dinosaur fighting game over two years ago as a showcase for two ferocious battling tyrannosaurus rexes. As soon as they saw how great the animation looked, they decided to design additional characters, each with an individual "personality" defined by a unique fighting style, a storyline and an individualized set of moves. A load of mind-bending computer work, creative and even puppet-making followed and the results provide a dreamworld of action and art that should attract both players and spectators.

Some key design features differentiate *Primal Rage* from other video fighting games. For example, *Rage* features 4-button controls rather than the standard 5 or 6-button combo; "power" hits are mapped onto both the top and bottom button pairs. This allows for the diversity of moves found in 6-button games on a panel layout that fits rather comfortably under the player's hand.

Along with the new layout comes a new way of executing special moves, allowing for a fluid combination potential. "Advanced players are motivated to learn all the moves to develop the best combinations, providing the driving force for high-level competitive action," DePriest explained. "Players have responded very favorably to this new format," he added.

Primal Rage also features revisions to the traditional 1 and 2-player game designs. Rather than the game ending when all computer-controlled characters are defeated, a 1-player game is open-ended. After being rewarded with a character storyline after winning, single players enter a frantic second stage mode where round times are much shorter and hits do more damage.

For players to master this mode, they must be really good, not only knowing the moves needed to beat a superb computer opponent but they must execute hits and combinations with precise timing. "There's little room for error, which will really test the nerves of veteran players," DePriest stated. (The 2-player game is also novel in format, being organized in a "push-pull" fashion that encourages longer 2-player sessions.)

This must-see, must-play video for operators is now entering the national arena. If you haven"t "tasted" this one yet, put it on your card. It's a natural wherever fighting videos go on your route, and maybe some other locations as well?

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KRAZY BOWL VIDEO KIT

Sammy sez super street bowler's up your alley



American Sammy VP Rick Rochetti (r) tries some body English as he guides the ball toward the strike zone. This model of *Krazy Bowl* uses a joystick; the kit ships with a track ball. State Sales chief Steve Koenigsberg kibitzes at left.



A good looking group of American Sammy dealers visited their Elk Grove facility to peek at and play with the new *Krazy Bowl* street piece. From left: Steve Koenigsberg (State), Frank Gumma, Jr., (AVS), Rick Kirby (NECO), Bob Boals (Betson), Dave Patterson (SunBelt) and Rick Rochetti

For those hankering for a good video kit that promises earnings longevity and is pegged to fill that "hole" in street location routes, American Sammy says they've got it. Called *Krazy Bowl* and similar in many cases (but hardly all) to the old *Capcom Bowling* hit, *Krazy Bowl* began shipping out to distributors end of August and will be one of the strongest price contenders in the fall 1994 product lineup.

Krazy Bowl sets up on vertical monitor cabinets, but is made to be adaptable to cocktail cabinets. It ships with track ball control, but if the operator prefers to use a joystick, the toss of a dip switch makes that happen.

Just like in real bowling, players can either roll alone or in competition (from 1 to 4 can play in turn). When coining-up, players select either regulation bowling or a fascinating one called "Sweeper" which plops a whole array of weird pin configurations to shoot at...many of which you'd never find in real bowling.

The alley itself appears on screen-right, with the scoring "sheet" at lower left and the "cartoon box" at top-right. Some 29 animated scenes are played out in these cartoon comments on your skill (or lack of same)... an idea that was so popular on the Capcom kit years back.

Comments delivered in speech join in with the realistic sounds of bowling pins struck by balls. The graphics are clear, colorful and fun. Buttons direct the speed and curve of the ball on the joystick configuration.

American Sammy hosted a number of its distributors to an open house/game inspection at their plant in Elk Grove Village July 27th where orders were taken and enthusiasm for this conversion kit was expressed. During the meeting, it was clearly noted that *Krazy Bowl* may be that "needed street piece," but since bowling (especially the kind our video industry makes) appeals to so many players, this item should also see its place in the arcades as well.

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FROM VIDEO TO FILM

the Street Fighter *gang hits the big screen in the upcoming Capcom-financed "Street Fighter" movie starring Jean Claude Van Damme*

In an unprecedented move, Capcom Co., Ltd. has added movie making to its list of entertainment business ventures. And why not? It already owns the rights to an action-packed storyline, extensively developed characters, and a hit vidgame theme that will probably spawn as many sequels as any cinematic, machete-wielding maniac.

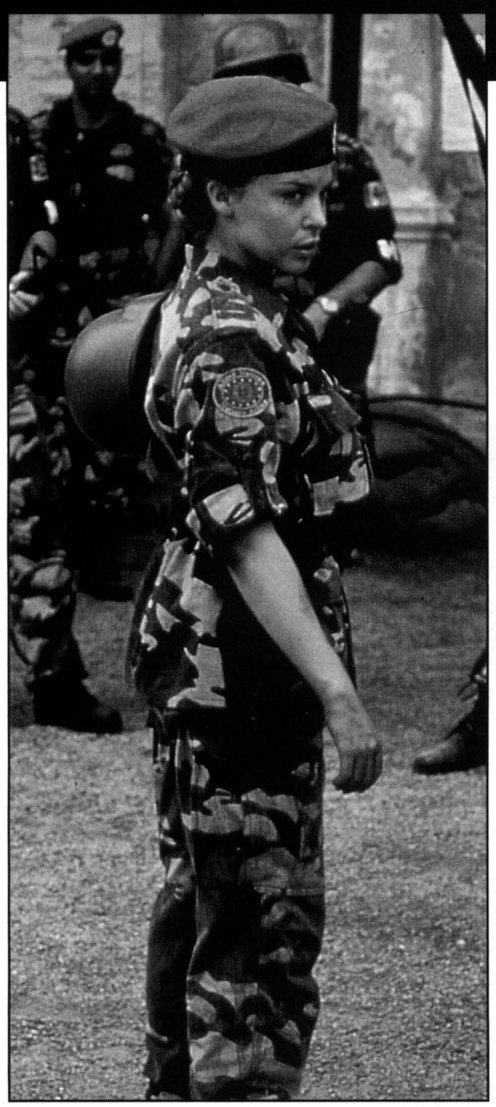
The "Street Fighter" movie, which stars Jean Claude Van Damme, is currently being filmed at locations in Thailand and Australia, and is scheduled for release during this year's busy Christmas season. Capcom's decision to shoulder the entire $45 million production cost makes it the first movie ever to be solely financed by a video game manufacturer.

Based on the hugely successful *Street Fighter* videos, the film utilizes 16 characters from *Super Street Fighter II* and its predecessors. The plots involves the rescue of hostages taken by the evil despot "Bison," played by Raul Julia. Heading the rescue force is marine commander "Guile," played by Van Damme, who leads of team of international fighters. Other cast members include Wes Studi as the menacing "Sagat," Ming Na Wen as "Chun-Li," and Kylie Minogue as "Cammy." There's even a new character, "Captain Saweda," who may be added to the future vidgame series.



Capcom also announced another soon-to-be-released *Street Fighter* sequel. While the game has yet to be titled, it will reportedly contain digitized footage from the movie. Look for the game in 1995, Capcom said.







FUN IN THE SUN

IAAPA will host its yearly convention and trade show for the amusement park and attractions industry among the tropical breezes of Miami Beach

Miami Beach, Fla. has always been a popular destination for international travelers seeking to soak up some rays along the city's miles of sunny beaches. But the recent renovation of the area's art deco structures and the influx of celebrities and assorted beautiful people has made this warm, inviting little outpost on the edge of the Atlantic Ocean one of the world's trendiest spots. Now Miami Beach is again the place to be if you want to see what's new and what's hot in amusement park and FEC attractions.

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions will hold its 76th Annual Convention and Trade Show Nov. 1-5 at the newly expanded and remodeled Miami Beach Convention Center. More than 2,500 booths representing over 800 amusement product manufacturers and suppliers will fill the exhibit halls. There's also an extensive education and workshop program scheduled throughout the event, and other activities designed to make the stay both fun and enlightening.

Last year's show in Los Angeles drew almost 25,000 visitors representing the international amusement park and attractions industry. Organizers are predicting an equally impressive turnout for this year's event, including an estimated 3,500 visitors from over 61 countries. It is the intention of the IAAPA to provide a forum for the world's amusement industry leaders to share ideas, introduce the latest advancements, and preview new attractions, emerging technologies and trends in the leisure time and entertainment market.

"The IAAPA Convention and Trade Show is a unique event," said Geoffrey Thompson, IAAPA second vice president responsible for the trade





GV-2

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exhibition. "For four days, the most exciting new developments and technologies in the amusement industry are showcased. It is essentially the world's largest amusement facility assembled under one roof."

The convention will kick off with the "What's New Theater," an exciting multimedia production set to take place Wednesday, Nov. 2, from 9:30 to 11:00AM at the Jackie Gleason Theater, located adjacent to the Convention Center. The presentation will show you "what's new" at several leading parks, and focus on trends and innovations throughout the world.

The trade show opens its doors immediately following the "What's New Theater." Hundreds of new products will be unveiled, from major ride attractions to virtual reality, and this year's High-Tech theme area is the largest ever. The floor will be open as follows: Wednesday, Nov. 2, 11:00AM-6:00PM; Thursday, Nov. 3, 10:00AM-6:00PM; Friday, Nov. 4, 10:00AM-6:00PM; and Saturday, Nov. 5, 10:00AM-4:00PM. Also, for the first time, IAAPA will provide a free tour guide service for attendees who speak languages other than English to help facilitate their experience.

Besides strolling the exhibit aisles, IAAPA members and attendees can pick up a myriad of ideas through the dynamic workshop program (one-third of which will be translated into German, Japanese, Spanish and Portuguese). Topics discussed include technology, marketing strategies, the status of mandated health care and other legislative issues, miniature golf, waterparks, food, games, safety and much more.

Other highlights include the Thursday Night Social at Penrod's Beach Club on South Beach, Thursday, Nov. 3, from 7:30-11:30PM; the New Member Breakfast, Saturday, Nov. 5, from 7:30-8:30PM; and the Annual Banquet, which will be held at the luxurious Fontainebleau Hilton Hotel on Saturday, Nov. 5, from 6:30-11:30PM. There's also a spouse luncheon program available that includes a yacht cruise down the beautiful intercoastal waterway, shopping, and lunch at the Hard Rock Cafe.

The deadline for advance registration is Sept. 30. The IAAPA has secured limited discount rates on 22 area hotels, but you must register through the Housing Bureau, Rogal America, at 617/965-8000 or (USA toll free) 800/775-0505. A shuttle bus system route will be running by all of the IAAPA convention hotels. If you have any question or would like to acquire a convention registration form, contact IAAPA, 1448 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314 USA; 703/ 836-4800. ◆

IAAPA HOLDS SUMMER MEETING SEPTEMBER. 15-17

Three amusement parks in southeastern Virginia will play host to the IAAPA's 1994 Summer Meeting Sept. 15-17. The tours will be centered around the Omni Richmond Hotel in the heart of Richmond, Va., with buses scheduled to transport you to a multitude of family entertainment experiences.

The event begins with a Welcome Reception and Dinner at the historic Jefferson Hotel Thursday, Sept. 15. Then on Friday morning, buses will take guests to Busch Gardens Williamsburg for a look at one of America's most diverse theme parks. Later that afternoon, a trip to nearby Water Country USA is in store, with workshops and behind the scenes tours of Busch Gardens and Water Country USA available to the group.

On Saturday, the buses depart the Omni Richmond Hotel for the next fun and exciting stop, Paramount's Kings Domain. This 400-acre park offers dazzling live shows, six world-class roller coasters, plus the Hurricane Reef water park and the all-new Wayne's World theme area. Of course, a welcome breakfast, behind-the-scenes tour and lunch are part of the outing, as well as a Farewell Reception hosted by Paramount's Kings Domain to bring the Summer Meeting to a close.

For registration and other information, contact the IAAPA at 703/836-4800.

Where The Fun Is

Nowhere is the trend towards family-oriented entertainment more apparent than in Las Vegas, making it the ideal venue for the upcoming ***Fun Expo.***

As Las Vegas continues to evolve into "the family entertainment capital of the world," the International Family Fun Center & Miniature Golf Show, or Fun Expo '94, will only help to strengthen that image when it visits the Las Vegas Convention Center Oct. 1-4. This will be the fourth year for Fun Expo and organizers are expecting a significant increase in attendance over last year's record-breaking event in Nashville. More than 250 suppliers of products and services for the family fun center industry (including 63 first-time exhibitors) plan to occupy over 600 booths. The show promises something for everyone involved in the exploding FEC marketplace, whether it's the hottest new equipment or the latest in helpful info from one of the many educational seminars.

"Owners and operators are tired of spending time and money visiting several trade shows and sifting through hundreds of booths unrelated to their businesses," said Fun Expo show manager Bailey Beeken. "Since our first show in Atlanta, our goal was to create an annual buying show where owners and operators could find all the products and services needed to run their facility. I believe we will accomplish that goal this year."



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The list of products to be displayed covers every aspect of running a successful FEC. Visitors will be able to see video and redemption games, sports games, go-karts, bumper boats and water games, soft modular playgrounds, miniature golf equipment, and other types of rides and attractions. There will also be booths displaying food and beverage equipment, redemption merchandise, decor and theming elements, costumes and animated characters, as well as consultanting, architecture and designing services.

Of course there's much more, including more than three dozen new and improved products to be unveiled at Fun Expo '94. "We have 37 companies planning to make product introductions this year," explained Baily Beeken. "More and more, manufacturers are recognizing that FEC owners and operators view Fun Expo as their industry show, and our exhibitors want to make sure their products are ready to be introduced in time for Fun Expo."

High-tech wizardry will again be the highlight of this year's show. Ascension Productions will introduce its Laser Runner Battle Cruiser, a laser tag game played inside an inflatable spaceship, while Laser Star Technology will debut the company's Laser Game. Attendees can also sample the latest in children's virtual reality from InVideo Systems.

Another industry trend is the addition of major rides to indoor family entertainment centers. At Fun Expo '94, Wisdom Amusement Rides will demonstrate its Family Himalaya and Wild Wave, a roller coaster designed specifically for smaller indoor areas. Designs International, Rideworks and other companies will also exhibit major indoor rides.

In the realm of marketing, promotions and theming, companies offering the best in costumes and logos, as well as talking animated characters and robots will be displaying their wares at the show. Food-related products include QNC's greaseless fryer, frozen flavored drinks from Slush Puppie and Veryfine Products, and novelty bulk vendors from Mayoni Enterprises. Other major exhibitors include Ace/Acme, Coastal Amusements, Boing Creative Solutions, Dynamic Technologies, Kiddie Rides USA, Lazer-Tron, Space Sport and Taylor & Associates.

But there's more to Fun Expo than great new products. A total of 40 comprehensive seminars will be offered throughout the course of the four-day event with the intention of providing hands-on ideas that owners and operators can take back to their workplace and apply to specific projects. Attendees can target in on the seminars that best suit their needs, and use them to test their ideas and get instant feedback.

Seminar subjects range from "Choosing and Purchasing Your FEC Location" to "Group Marketing" and "Alternative Financing." Other seminars zero in on "Low-Tech for Little Tykes," "High Tech, "Go-Kart Development," "Year-Round Water Parks" and "Small Amusement Parks." If you're looking for answers on technical problems, graphic design, ADA compliance or food services, there's an informative session designed just for you. And for those looking for tips on redemption, there's "Redemption for Rookies," "Merchandise Management," and "Advanced Redemption." Previous Fun Expo seminars have been a big hit with showgoers by providing a unique educational, problem-solving, idea-generating experience.

"We encourage attendees to come to Fun Expo thinking about areas in their facility that need improvement," said exhibit sales manager Bob Peters. "If they're looking for something new and exciting that will generate traffic, it's more than likely we'll have it."

For more information about Fun Expo '94, contact Baily Beeken or Bob Peters, c/o Bellwether Expositions, Inc., 242 Central Ave., White Plains, NY 10606; 914/993-9200 or fax 914-993-9210.

IFECA PLANS FUNDRAISER

IFECA, the International Family Entertainment Center Assn. (White Plains, N.Y.), is growing fast. Now at 150 members, they expect to double their membership by the end of their official conference and trade show, Fun Expo. To fund market research and educational seminars, IFECA will hold a silent auction at Fun Expo, selling items donated by friends and members to the highest bidder. Items will be displayed throughout the show and written bids accepted. Donations so far include a reconditioned vidgame (from George McAuliffe/Edison Bros.), a basketball signed by superstar Charles Barkley (from Joey Herd, Riverchase Golf N Games), ect. Contact auction chairman Gary Warner at 908/390-9009 or fax IFECA at 914-993-9219.

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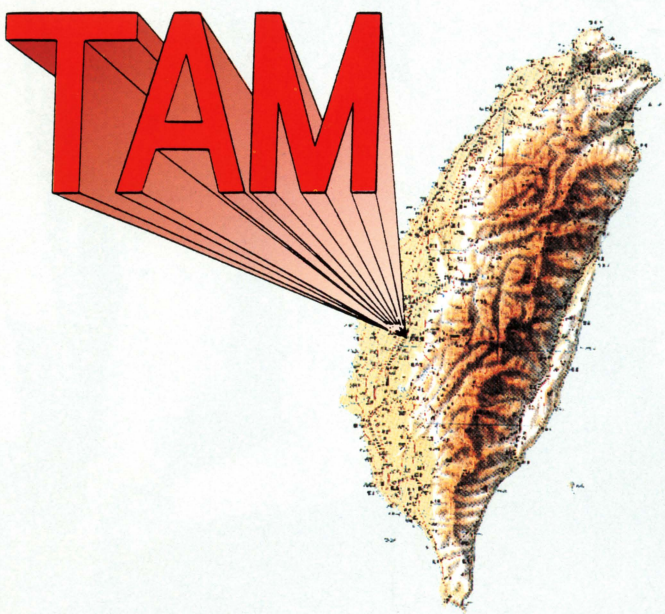

The TAM (Taiwan Amusement Machine) show is held for the purpose of providing traders in the coin-op industry the opportunity to interact with one another. This show offers the direct, latest, and complete information including the accomplishment of R & D, products display, and the trend in the market. And, what is more, manufacturers and distributors from all over the world will get together at this show. TAM has become one of the most prominent representatives in Asia.

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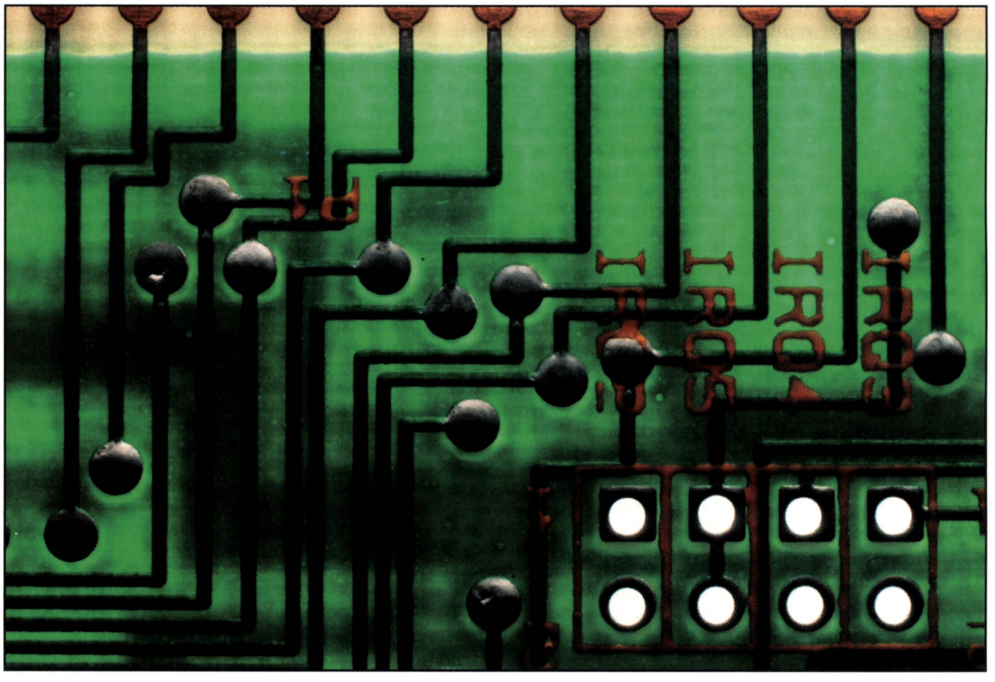
1994 TAM

HI-TECH

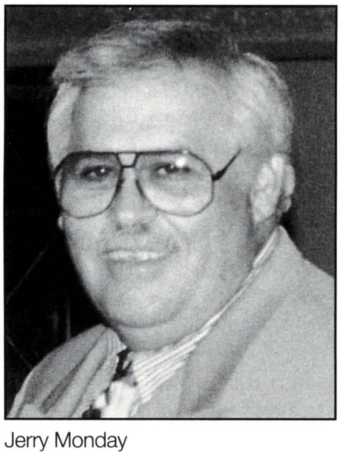
GAME MACHINES IN FEC'S

by Jerry Monday



Industry veteran Jerry Monday delivered the closing address at the Pan Asia FEC Conference, which was held June 6-7 in Hong Kong. Drawing on his decades of trade experience — currently he's president of Century Vending & Distributing — Jerry provided the following "down to earth" overview of hi-tech machines and how they might fit into today's arcades and family fun centers. Here's the text of that speech. — the editor.

Good afternoon. Today I'm here to talk about the role of hi-tech game machines in family entertainment centers. We'll cover advanced video simulators, virtual reality, and the next generation of networked games. But first, let's talk about something much more important. And that is, some general principles that will govern the success or failure of this type of entertainment. The basic questions are obvious: What types of hi-tech entertainment will sell? Who is the market? How much will they spend? What types of sites and venues will succeed?



Jerry Monday

ENTERTAINMENT AS BIG BUSINESS

Now the first thing to realize, is that when you're talking about spending anywhere from ten to fifty thousand dollars on a single-player unit...or up to a million dollars (or more) on a single themed center... then we are talking about Entertainment as Big Business. Personally I work in Los Angeles where they've had nearly 100 years' experience of mass-marketing big-budget entertainment products in Hollywood. And in all that time, they have learned a thing or two about Entertainment as Big Business. And I believe some of those lessons apply to hi-tech machines in family entertainment centers.

The "First Law of Hollywood" can be stated very simply: "Nobody knows anything." That means that no matter how many marketing surveys and demographic studies tell you your product is going to be a success, you can never really be sure until you put it out in front of the pub-



Jerry with Judy Novak, Bob Fay and Bill Glasgow at Asian Amusement Expo

lic. There are no infallible experts.

After all, the experts said "Star Wars" would be a flop. The experts said "New Coke" would be a hit. In my own industry, the experts practically laughed *Pac-Man* out of the business, until it started earning money like nothing we had ever seen before.

So in the world of Entertainment Big Business, nobody knows anything. And that leads directly to the Second Law of Hollywood: "When you're launching a bold and innovative new project, nobody wants to be first — in case it flops. But once it succeeds, then everybody wants to be second." Now, this may sound like cowardice, but it's actually wisdom. To express this thought in more-positive terms, a shrewd entertainment investor will build on the proven successes of the past.

For example, at Sega and Atari, they know if they build a good $10,000 sitdown driving simulator, they'll usually sell between one and two thousand of those units in the domestic U.S. market. So when they go to build a new machine of that type, they know exactly how much they can afford to spend on R&D and components and overhead, to make a return on their investment. Likewise, the FECs who buy those 1,500 or so units know from their past experience roughly how much money a machine like that will earn, how much they can charge to play it, and how long it will last in any given location before they have to move it to the next site.

Now, this one fact alone ought to throw cold water on a lot of people's dreams and plans. If the arcade owners of America figure the domestic U.S market of 250 million people will only support 2,000 units of a $10,000 simulators, how are any of us going to make money with even more expensive machines...short of going into the theme park business? What guarantee do we have that we can succeed by offering far more units than that, just because we throw more money at the price tag?

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The answer is, go back to Rule 1: nobody knows anything. We can build on the successes of the past, but we must not be locked into them. The entertainment buying public is hungry for new experiences — or maybe I should say for *familiar* types of experiences, presented in shiny new packaging. And that's where hi-tech game machines come in. *Hi-tech game machines can and will make a profit, if they provide a more vivid, compelling, exciting version of a familiar experience such as a game or story that the public has proven it likes before.*

Notice I said "a game or story." One of the great truisms of the coin-op business is that new technology is great, but if there's not a fun game to play it will be a nine-day wonder... not a long-term earning success. Would you go see a movie that had two hours of great special effects and no plot? Most of us wouldn't. The same principle applies to hi-tech games. There must be a game or story of the type that the public already likes.

So these are our general principles. Keeping all this in mind, we're now ready to look at specific types of hi-tech games. We'll start with virtual reality.

VIRTUAL REALITY

For the purposes of this talk I'm going to define virtual reality as a computer simulation technology that involves head-mounted displays and motion-tracking devices that key the graphics to the user's head movement. This gives the player the feeling there's no interface between him and the program. The fantasy environment seems virtually real...thus the origin of the term, "virtual reality."

When we talk about VR, the market looks extremely promising but so far, in most cases, the reality is something else. The promise is that the public's fascination with VR doesn't seem to stop. (Although if you stopped the average man on the street, or even a video addict in an arcade and asked him to define VR, he wouldn't have a clue.) The promise of VR is seen in nonstop media hype. It's seen in crowds of people who show up when VR simulators are publicized. And it's seen in the crowds of people who will try VR, when it's offered in a high-traffic location. It's also promising when you consider that over a dozen companies are getting into entertainment VR, either with hardware or software, and the leading company — Virtuality Group from England — is now on their second generation of hardware. Most of the amusement industry believes there is a profitable future for VR.

The reality, so far, is something else. The biggest user of entertainment VR in the United States so far has been Edison Brothers, who own a national arcade chain with hundreds of mall-based stores. They own dozens of Virtuality units, and they freely admit that they have not been able to make money on VR itself.

On the other hand, Edison says VR has gotten them priceless free publicity in local media, drawn plenty of traffic, and acted as a "loss leader" to get people to play other types of games. I don't have figures from Edison, but well-run independent arcades have reported overall location increases of 20 to 30% when a VR system is installed.

Obviously Edison believes that VR has a profit potential because they are still doing it, and in fact they are planning to expand their VR operations with themed "Star Trek" centers built in cooperation with Paramount Pictures and Spectrum Holobyte. Remember what I said about providing content that the public already likes? A licensed property like Star Trek is a perfect example.

Ron Getlan, who runs the Amusement Consultants arcade chain, reports similar results with VR on the operating level. He said he can't make money on today's VR products, but believes he could turn a profit on a $20,000 unit with solid gameplay. He said he can charge up to $1

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per minute, and that seems to be a fairly common experience. But he also said with today's equipment you have to figure in the cost of an attendant at $7 to $9 an hour, and he's waiting and hoping for a machine so user-friendly that no attendant is needed.

Now let's look at VR on the manufacturer level. Here again, the reality is still trying to live up to the promise, and still not quite getting there. The people who have the most experience with computer-based public entertainment, are the video game factories. And of the major factories, only Sega is interested in true immersive VR...and they have had trouble with their hardware, just like all the start-ups and defense industry conversions and everybody else.

Now there are some VR manufacturers out there who claim that they've solved all the technical problems and sales are great. These are not true statements in most cases. The rules for buying VR products are just like everything else. Be skeptical. Visit the factory for a personal demonstration before you buy the product. Don't pay anybody the full price up front. And whenever possible, deal with somebody who has a proven track record and can provide service in the field after the sale.

My company was recently retained as consultant to the Visions of Reality Corp. in Northern California. This company has spent millions of dollars attempting to bring VR to the marketplace. Their concept was to develop land-based entertainment centers in major malls, worldwide. While at VOR, I had the opportunity to look closely at the technology of virtual reality — the headsets, the monitors that go in front of your eyes, the tracking systems, and the devices that tie all of this into gameplay. I believe these systems can be made technically successful for the average user, at an affordable price.

Dr. John Latta, a hi-tech entertainment consultant and publisher of the Fourth Wave newsletter, has compiled an in-depth study of VR systems, their prices, their strengths and their weaknesses. Based on systems on the market as of spring, 1994, Dr. Latta concluded that each VR product showed no real return on investment because costs were so high. The bottom line is, keep waiting and watching for the right product at the right price to come along — because it will. And when it does, remember: you want to be the *second* business to have it!

SIMULATION COCKPITS & CENTERS

The prototype operation of this type was BattleTech Center in Chicago. A themed complex leads players through a miniature Disneyland type experience. First they buy a ticket for $7 to $12 dollars, depending on time of day. Then they go to a "briefing area" that looks like a science fiction movie set. Costumed attendants and video monitors explain the game they're about to play. Next, players move into another movie-type set called the "observation deck." In this room, they can see 16 duplicate screens showing the point of view of everyone who is actually playing the game at that time.

Finally, the players are ushered into the "flight deck," which is the third movie-type set. They climb into large, non-moving cockpits, sit down, slide the canopy shut over their heads, and play an interactive video game by looking at a screen inside their unit. Player controls are joysticks and buttons. All of the players are competing on the same computer-generated environment. They can see and hear

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each other and coordinate their strategy.

After five or ten minutes of gameplay, the players file out past a merchandise counter where they can buy themed hats, toys, t-shirts, games and so forth. The total experience from entry to exit lasts about 30 minutes. And by the way, we should point out that a big part of the experience is the social interaction between the groups of friends who go through it.

BattleTech sold 300,000 tickets in its first 24 months. Tim Disney (Walt Disney's nephew) came into the project and invested over $10 million in this company last year, they've got a sister sites in Walnut Creek, California and San Diego, plus another in Japan. Namco Ltd., one of the world's leading video game manufacturers, has announced plans to open 25 to 50 similar sites called "Magic Edge" in the U.S. market, using flight simulators. In Irvine, Calif., a man named David Kinney as been running a very successful simulation center called "FighterTown" near the El Toro Marine Air Base, where he charges $50 for an 80-minute experience similar to BattleTech, except his simulators units are motion-based and the theme is present-day military aircraft. Kinney plans to franchise FighterTown.

Sim centers cost from $350,000 to $1 million to open, especially if you're planning a dozen or more units and highly themed sets with costumed attendants. The customer base for this type of attraction tends to be much more male than female. The same teenage boys who buy Nintendo and Sega games to play at home, like this type of experience. So do young professionals ages 25-35. But all of these customers tend to be "cult" players — hardcore, repeat fans who like the simulated combat scenario. The traffic and earnings are steady and predictable, but limited.

If themed simulation centers are going to expand into true mass-market entertainment, they must expand their gameplay appeal to all ages and both sexes. They must offer non-violent, less militaristic adventure experiences. Iwerks Entertainment is attempting to do this with its Loch Ness Monster "save the eggs" system, for example. Again, Spectrum Holobyte hopes to cross the age/gender barriers with Star Trek.

As the simulation center market really comes on line, quite a few of these places may enjoy terrific earnings during the first six months, based on novelty alone. After that, we will separate the winners from the losers. In fact, Dr. John Latta of Fourth Wave believes this market could come to resemble the competitive nature of today's theme parks, who bid to outdo each other every season with bigger roller coasters and more spectacular new attractions.

At any rate, it's a good bet that once the public becomes familiar with sim center hardware, the quality of the gameplay will again play the decisive role. Software will have to be updated regularly, just as it is in a movie theater, video arcade or anything else. And it will have to be good, in-depth, challenging, fun software. As they say in the video business, the name of the game is...the game!

NETWORKED GAMES

Finally we come to the "information superhighway" — networked games. Starting early next year, North American businesses will be able to buy a dedicated video game from Williams/Bally-Midway that contains a modem, a credit card swipe slot, a coupon dispenser and a chip on the PCB to make it talk to a central computer.

The central computer will be run by Electronic Data Systems in Texas, owner of the world's largest private digital network. And the administration of the whole network will be done by the National Amusement Network, a new subsidiary of AMOA, the U.S. operators trade association.

This networked game will cost you about $1,000 more than the same game without network capability. It will enable you to run local, regional, national tournaments. And if things work out the way AMOA hopes, you will be able to charge anywhere from $3 to $5 for a tournament entry play...just like they do right now with a national dart tournament.

For example: AMOA might run a three-day tournament on (let's say) *Mortal Kombat III.* At the end of the three days, the central computer would compare all the scores and the best players could win anything from a major cash prize to a free trip to Hawaii...anything that's permitted by local law. If the player doesn't want to enter a tournament, he could select redemption gameplay. AMOA could set up national tie-ins with Coca-Cola or Burger King or Nike sports shoes, so that any player who scores above a certain point level receives a coupon — vended on the spot — for a discount on his next purchase. Or if the game is located inside an arcade, the operator could insert his own coupons, good for a prize at the nearby redemption prize counter. AMOA also believes spot advertising can be sold on networked games.

All of these ideas are not new. What is new, is that now it's going past talk and into reality. Following the Second Law of Hollywood — building on past success — AMOA believes its networked games will simply give them a chance to expand league and tournament promotions from games like darts and pool, where they have already been



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successful, to video. The same is true for redemption: the digital network will bring video into this proven marketing concept.

Some of the wisest operators I know believe they will have at least two AMOA networked games in each of their family entertainment centers, within 18 months. Certainly at a $1,000 per unit cost, the risk of trying this market is very low, and the potential upside is very great.

The more interesting issue is, what comes after that? I guarantee you that some of the largest video game companies in the world like Sega, Namco, and Williams/Bally-Midway are working right now on systems to allow interactive gameplay. That means you can enter an arcade in New York, and I can go to an arcade in California, and we can compete blow-for-blow on a street fighting game, or race our video cars against each other on the same "virtual track." Look to see this type of system introduced to the home and arcade markets by late 1995.

Will remote interactive gameplay guarantee success? No! Remember, Bell couldn't sell the idea of video telephones until they found two dynamite applications: business teleconferences, and grandmothers goo-gooing at their grandkids. And it's still a tough sell! Nobody is interested in technology for its own sake.

AMOA's idea of using the network to offer video tournaments with exciting prizes, based on a contest that features an exciting or popular game, can generate business. Why? Because there's an extra incentive for using the technology and paying more. Competing against somebody in the next city, state or country will quickly become boring all by itself, unless there's some added element to justify the technology.

So we must watch out for three roadblocks on the information superhighway. First roadblock: don't fall in love with technology for its own sake. Second roadblock: beware of proprietary technology. You don't want to invest in a lot of different networks that aren't compatible with each other. Even for the most computer-literate operator, the logistics of administration would be a nightmare.

The third roadblock is the most seductive, and the most dangerous: don't bet on a Trojan Horse. When Nintendo sold several million home video systems, they congratulated themselves for selling a "Trojan Horse." That is, they used harmless little video games to get a personal computer in the door, and now they were in a position to hook that computer into a phone network and sell all kinds of data services: banking, shopping, and airline reservations ...you name it.

Well, it hasn't gotten off the ground for Nintendo and it hasn't gotten off the ground for a lot of the market tests that the Baby Bells and cable TV companies are running in different places around the United States. Where they expect to sell lots of entertainment, like the GTE test in Cerritos, Calif., they find their biggest seller is kids using the on-line encyclopedia to do their homework. Where they hope to sell virtual shopping, people go for movies on demand.

Which proves, once again, the First Law of Hollywood: nobody knows anything. Nobody can figure out what the consumer wants from the information highway, except whatever it is, he wants it cheap. So don't bet on a Trojan Horse. If somebody want to sell you a networked game on the basis that someday it will also make you a fortune as an information services provider, you say: "Fine, but first make sure it makes money as a game." The name of the game is the game.

CONCLUSION

At the start of this talk, I posed four fundamental questions about hi-tech games in family entertainment centers. Now we're ready to answer those questions. What types of hi-tech entertainment will sell? The types that provide proven, popular experiences in a shiny new package. Who is the market? If what you're selling is fancy technology or violent gameplay, the market is young males. If you want a broader market, you have to find a better product. How much will they spend? They'll spend up to $1 a minute for an exciting experience, but that's about it. If you offer players the chance to enjoy a game and also perhaps win some exciting prizes, they'll spend more.

What types of sites and venues will succeed? Family-oriented centers will succeed. Themed locations that offer a steady supply of fresh, compelling software will succeed. Proven video game locations that don't try to replace the public library, the travel agency, and the whole shopping mall, will succeed.

We're entering an exciting new era in family entertainment. There will be some very big successes, and some huge profit opportunities. There will also be lots of companies and products that don't survive the shakeout. The way to succeed in this market is not to get dazzled or sidetracked by technology. Just remember that we're in the entertainment business, and that the same rules which govern other types of entertainment, apply here. If you do that, your bottom line will look more like "Star Wars," and not like New Coke!

Thank you.





MY HEROES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN OPERATORS

Paramount Pictures releases "Flesh and Bone" starring Dennis Quaid as a rural Texas operator

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Hollywood has finally discovered the operator...and he's not only honest and heroic, he's handsome and sexy, too. "Flesh and Bone" is a moody, contemporary love story. The main character, played by actor Dennis Quaid, runs a vast route of old vending machines, worn-out jukeboxes and ancient novelty games. Yes, he's a coin machine operator — and the movie's portrait of this operator is sympathetic, if far from glamorous.

Filming of "Flesh and Bone" took place in the fall and early winter months of 1992. The movie was recently released for sale or rent on video cassette. You can find it at your local video store, courtesy of Paramount Pictures' home video division. Most industry members and friends of the trade will get a big kick out of viewing it — the story's fine, the cast is tops, and the coin-op background adds a very entertaining extra dimension.

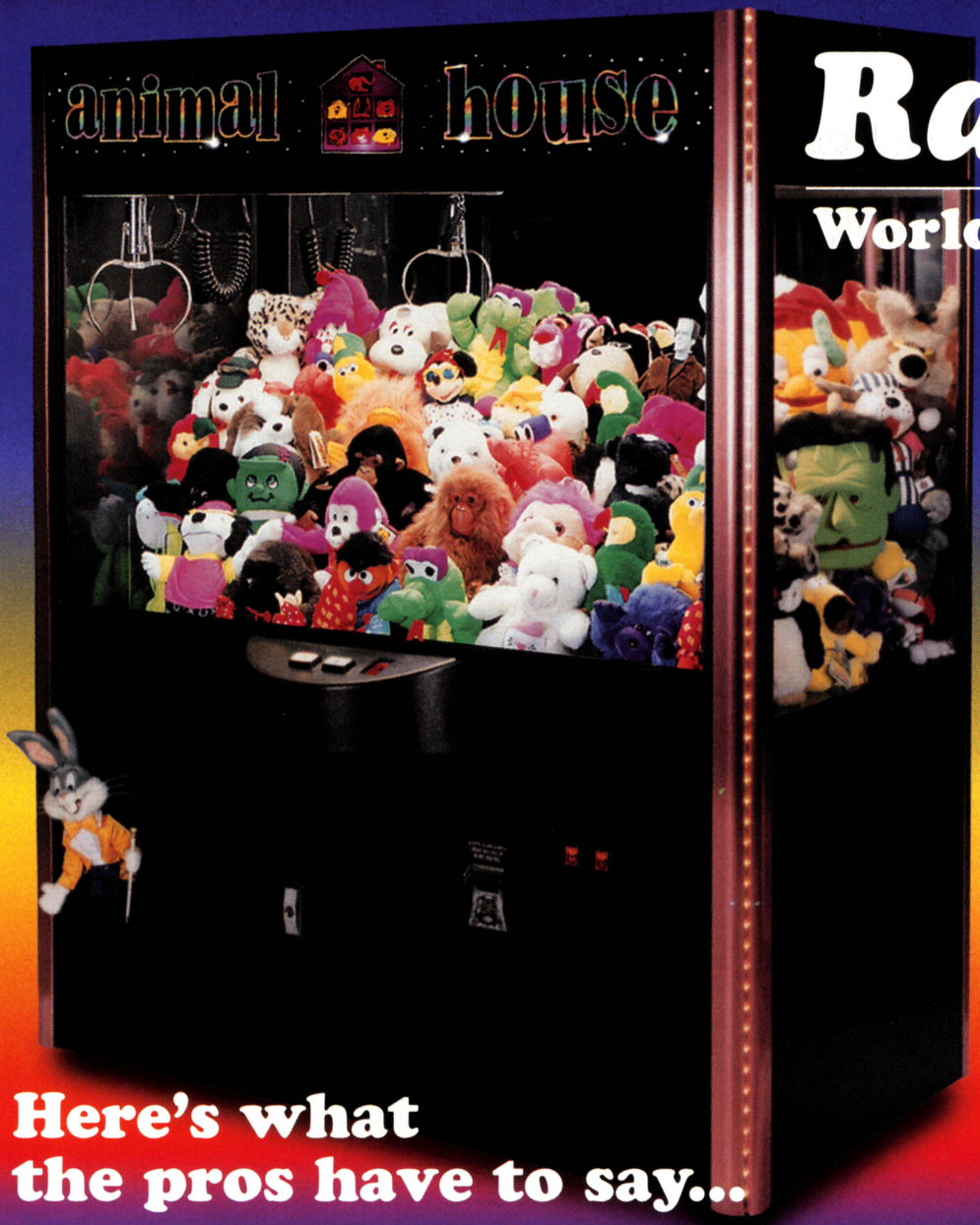
"Flesh and Bone" was written and directed by Steve Kloves (screenwriter for "The Fabulous Baker Boys"). The actor cast as the operator, Dennis Quaid, is a notably charismatic screen personality ("The Right Stuff," "Undercover Blues," "The Big Easy") but this time he's playing a repressed, decidedly uncharismatic role. The cast also includes Meg Ryan, one of America's hottest actresses ("When A Man Loves a Woman," "When Harry Met Sally," "Sleepless In Seattle"). The bad guy is played by Academy Award nominee James Caan ("The Godfather," "Honeymoon in Vegas," "A Bridge Too Far").

Above, Arlis Sweeney (played by Dennis Quaid) services candy and Coke machines, jukeboxes, and ancient novelties at worn-out rural Texas locations in Paramount's movie "Flesh and Bone."

THE STORYLINE: GOOD VS. EVIL

The plot is simple: 30 years ago, a young boy is witness to a brutal robbery-homicide committed by his own father against an innocent farming family in West Texas. Cut to the present day: The boy, Arlis Sweeney (Quaid), has grown up to become a coin-machine operator. He's a loner who keeps moving from one dusty little town to another, maintaining and restocking his machines, keeping his human relationships as superficial as possible. "Arlis Sweeney deals with machines instead of people," Dennis Quaid commented about his role. "It's his way of escaping his past and not having to deal with the horrendous things that happened to him when he was a child. He just wants to blend in and become anonymous."

But fate shakes up Arlis' predictable routine when he meets a lik-



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able stripper named Kay (Meg Ryan). He gets her out of a couple of jams; they become friends. Turns out, Kay is the sole survivor of that massacre 30 years ago...only she was too young to remember her real family, and nobody ever told her the truth about what happened to them. Arlis finds himself falling for Kay, and vice versa. Then life gets really complicated for Arlis when his father Roy Sweeney (James Caan) turns up. Roy, still a ruthless small-time crook, learns who Kay is and decides he'd better finish the job he started 30 years before.



Real-life husband and wife Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan play the star-crossed lovers. Those unfocused lights to the right of Ms. Ryan are, yes, a jukebox!

Now Arlis faces a terrible choice: will he keep evading evil, looking the other way? Or, will he take responsibility and act to save his new girlfriend...and in doing so, assert his own moral independence at last? On a deeper level, the question is: can Arlis finally break through his emotional remoteness to make a real connection with another human being? You'll just have to rent the movie to find out!

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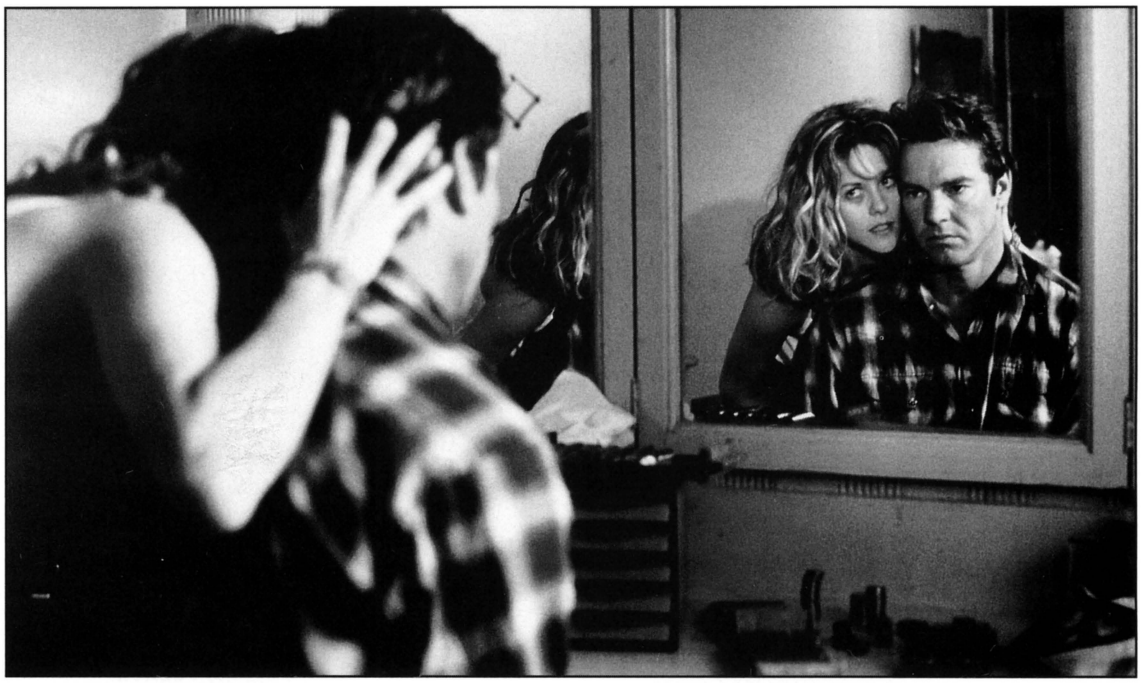

Operator Arlis Sweeney (Dennis Quaid) sits in a motel room, counting dimes from his jukeboxes. You can see rolls of coins and a collection bag on the counter in front of him. Oh, yes, that's actress Meg Ryan looking over his shoulder.

WEST TEXAS LOCATIONS

As it turns out, director Kloves and leading man Quaid are both native-born and bred Texans. Kloves took 18 months to write the script, and he included many realistic details to capture the atmosphere of West Texas on film: the buzz of cicadas; the empty landscapes and flat horizons, with only a few clouds providing a break in the monotony; the occasional windmill or pump jack atop an abandoned oil well; the raw cotton floating on the breeze. All of this has symbolic overtones for the emotional lives of the characters.

"West Texas is an area that's apparently immune to what happens when civilization moves on," Kloves said. "There are stretches that you have to assume look very similar to the way they did hundreds of years ago — hard scrabble and endless plains. It's a hostile environment that is quite bleak in its beauty and desolation." As Paramount explained, Kloves "builds a world in which the distances between people are equally parched and wide open."

Texas locations for "Flesh and Bone" included the city of Gruene, home to one of the state's oldest dance halls; an old bowling alley in Blanco, a little town outside Austin; horse trails in Wimberly; and assorted locations in Pecos, Stanton, Valley Spring, Big Lake and Marfa. "We tried to create a landscape of places that have been abandoned," said production designer Jon Hutman.

The film was was produced by Mark Rosenberg and Paula Weinstein, with Sydney Pollack and G. Mac Brown as executive producers. Philippe Rousesselot did the cinematography (Academy Award winner for "A River Runs Through It"). Publicity stills by Lorey Sebastian, copyright 1993 by Paramount Pictures, all rights reserved. Running time is 127 minutes. For information about ordering a copy of the cassette (VHS or Beta), call Paramount Pictures (motion picture group, home video) at 213/956-5000.

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Dynamo's ON A ROLL

the Striker electronic soccer table updates the classic, hands-on favorite with a new look and modern features

The age-old favorite, table soccer, has been given a '90s makeover. Dynamo Corp. of Richmond Hills, Texas, working with table soccer specialist John Lott, has developed the coin industry's first fully electronic soccer game, the firm announced recently. One of the longtime leaders in the table soccer field, Dynamo decided to develop the upgraded *Striker* table in order to reach a much broader range of players and locations.

"Despite the great return on investment yielded from soccer tables," said executive VP Mark Struhs, "we began to see fewer mainstream opera-

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tors including soccer in their growth plans. What we heard from operators was the need for a more modern version of the game — something that would have "mass appeal" and would give the operator a product that the location owners could get excited about!"

Enter John Lott, two-time table soccer champion and author of "The Complete Book of Foosball." Lott had previously designed Dynamo's successful browntop soccer table, so, according to Struhs, "when he approached us with the *Striker* table, we felt the timing was right. Sports-oriented games are very popular and the idea of adding electronics seemed long overdue."

Dynamo committed the necessary research and development, then put the product through rigorous testing at the location level and in three national tournaments. Although the company reported that early test results were overwhelmingly positive, they wanted to be certain that every aspect of the product was location ready. "As a result," said Struhs, "we have product we are very proud of."

The *Striker* not only looks great, but according to designer and world champion Lott, "it plays great."

"In my experience, soccer tables lend themselves to a particular style of play," Lott explained. "With *Striker,* any amateur or professional, regardless of style, will feel right at home, since all shotmaking and passing techniques, including bank shots, are simple to perform."

Like Dynamo's hockey games, their new soccer game utilizes electronic scoring and ball dispensing, and timed play. The table also dispenses only one ball at a time, which makes for shorter games and less ball theft. "These simple, reliable features do much more than modernize a popular game," Lott said, "they will put more revenue in the cash box."

Mechanically, the table is solid, with computerized and doweled cabinet construction enhanced by realistic European styling. Other innovative features include a transparent soccer goal, a two-color urethane ball, a glare-free playfield and realistic figurines. *Striker's* hi-tech yet inviting look makes it an attractive addition to any new location or a suitable replacement for that old-fashioned worn table.

The *Striker* is also available in a mechanical version with a black marble finish, and in an arcade version, featuring a "player approved" telescoping rod for ultimate safety in youth-oriented locations.

To compliment the *Striker* table, a national tournament schedule featuring local, regional and national events is already underway. The $20,000 East Coast Open will be held in Baltimore, Md. Sept. 16-18.

For more product or event information, contact Dynamo Corp. at 800/527-6054 or stop by their booth at the upcoming AMOA Expo in San Antonio.

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CONVERSATION

WITH ED BLANKENBECKLER

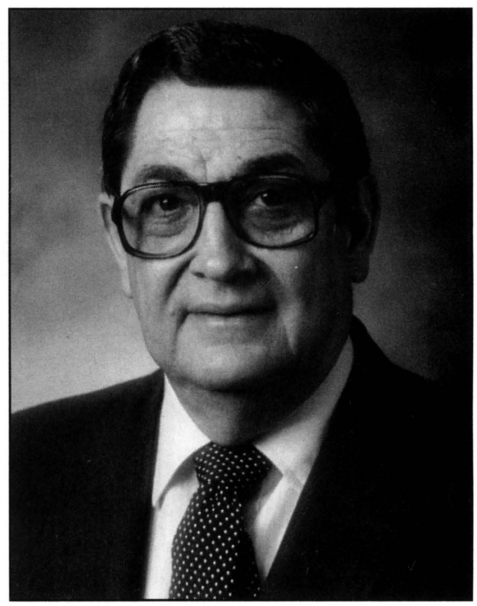
ED (C.D.) BLANKENBECKLER

father of the compact disc jukebox chats about the past, present and future of coin-op music

"The CD jukebox is familiar to the industry and the playing public today. But just ten years ago, it didn't even exist. What did exist then was a very soft market for new jukebox sales...a slump in operator purchases of 45 rpm machines that had gone on so long it pushed American Wurlitzer and the original Seeburg Corp. right out of business.

Ed Blankenbeckler, and his late colleague Jack Gordon, were Seeburg execs when it was undisputed "king" of all jukebox manufacturers and their N. Dayton St. factory in Chicago was a building many trade people approached with reverence. The first 45rpm jukebox was built there, after all, which helped to wrench the operating industry away from 78s rather rapidly...more rapidly then today's CD machines have been replacing the 45s.

Assets of that original Seeburg were summarily sold to Stern Electronics which brought out its unsuccessful ***VMC-1*** phonograph in the fall of 1981...exactly at the same time that Midway debuted the ***Galaga*** mega hit video (which should give readers a fair idea where the operator's dollars were being invested in those days). Meanwhile, Blankenbeckler and Gordon, who'd gone on to other pursuits, still had the jukebox business pulsing through their veins. As "Blank" likes to say even today: "I was vaccinated by a jukebox stylus."



Ed Blankenbeckler, sales & marketing VP at today's Seeburg International, joined the original Seeburg organization in 1950...the year they came out with the first 45rpm jukebox. Today, he's credited for pioneering the CD jukebox.

Stern discontinued manufacturing phonographs in rather short order, preferring to devote its energies to videos and pins. It was the mid-80's and there was no "Seeburg" except in the hearts of oldtimers, and, of course, all over the country in the form of machinery that was still booking money but getting older by the day.

On the retail record side, the general public was plunking its money down on vinyl albums, and the once-buoyant market for 45's had shrunken down to something like 5% of the music industry's total dollar volume. The labels were no longer "in love" with singles, but viewed them sort of as a "necessary evil" to promote album sales and, naturally, to feed the jukebox business which some veterans at the labels still felt to be an important

factor in their overall scheme of things.

Back in the 60's, the original Seeburg (under Jack Gordon's presidency) had tried but failed to produce a jukebox that could pick single tunes off 33rpm albums. It did end up with the "little LP", however...a 45-sized disc that played three tunes and helped get the industry onto 25 cent play.

> **"...approximately 50% of American operators haven't bought their first CD phonograph yet."**

But just like the old Seeburg, little LPs slipped away. Blankenbeckler today recalls that jukebox play at the locations had also died down because the public wanted to hear album tunes, which were either slow in coming on 45s or never available, period. Something had to happen and that "something" finally turned out to be the CD.

Blankenbeckler today is VP of sales and marketing of the three-year-old Seeburg International, Inc....the fourth different corporation to use that brand name in the 44 years he's been personally associated with it. He had joined the old Seeburg in June of 1950 just as the factory wound up the manufacture of its last 78 rpm jukebox called the *M-100A* and was tooling up to make the first 45rpm machine called the *M-100B*.

The "poetry" here is fascinating. Blankenbeckler came in just as the big, old, easily-breakable 78 was replaced by the vinyl 45 single right at the head of the "50's" which were identified by rock "n roll (and didn't rock 'n roll mean those little record singles with the big hole in the middle?). To complete the "poem", Blankenbeckler became the man most responsible for the birth of the CD jukebox, which is exactly where we pick up with our interview.

When did the idea for making a compact disc jukebox first come up, who was involved and how did it finally get into production?

Early in 1983, I realized that this new phenomenon in the record business called "CD" was fast emerging and could be the salvation of our industry. It seems funny now, but back then when I talked with prospective investors and underwriters about the new CD's, they thought I meant certificates of deposit. Now when I talk about bank CD's, they think I mean compact discs. What a turnaround.

Back in 1983, I was well aware that making a CD jukebox would be an expensive enterprise. But I was also aware that the Seeburg name could be acquired from Stern. I started contacting various financial sources...both corpora-



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tions, and individuals like Taito's president Mike Kogan who had successfully represented the original Seeburg Corp. in Japan.

I also talked with several distributors, operators, parts suppliers and some other industry people and became convinced there was more than enough monetary interest to proceed. We ultimately raised about $1 million in "seed money" and bought the thing from Stern in March of 1984.

> **"...there is no "shortage" of 45's. The truth is there is no "demand" for 45's. That is the difference!"**

We commissioned Sony to build a CD playing mechanism to our specs, set up a plant to assemble the rest and while this very first CD jukebox was in development, filled up the space by bringing out the *Prelude* 45rpm jukebox and reestablishing a distribution network at the same time. During these infant months of that particular "new" Seeburg Corp., we also took the stock public and raised an additional $4 million.

What role did Jack Gordon play at the new company?

Jack joined our group as a consultant in January 1985. As you know, he was president of the original Seeburg from 1959 through 1968. His knowledge of the jukebox industry and his vision...he'd been responsible for many "firsts" in the business... helped guide us in developing the first CD machine. We finally introduced it to the world in June of 1986 at a big meeting in suburban Chicago for over 300 people from our industry, as well as stockholders, record label executives and the press. It was quite a debut! We called the machine the *SCD-1 Crusader*...with the striking new cabinet some said reminded them of Darth Vader (smiles) that had that clear, booming CD sound. The CD jukebox era had begun.

Were you pleased or angry that your competitors came out with their own CD jukeboxes so quickly after yours did?

First of all, it took the others about two years to follow. But when they did, I certainly wasn't angry. I'm a music-oriented fellow and I knew that the CD was good for our industry. If it's good for the industry, it's got to be good for me. That's the way I felt when the others came out and besides, it showed that I was right about CD, and that's not so bad, is it?

It's around eight years since Darth Vader...eh, the Crusader ***hit the market. About what percent of all jukeboxes at U.S.***

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locations do you think are CD today?

Ah, the press wants numbers. Well, I've got a pretty good handle on that. I'd say that only about one third of the locations have a CD jukebox, which means two thirds are still playing with 45's. From what I feel, approximately 50% of all American operators haven't bought their first CD phonograph yet. On the other hand, around 30% of them have converted their entire routes over to CD's.

What's your view on the availability of new 45 records today, or perhaps, the lack of same?

Every day, more record shops are getting out of the 45 record business. First of all, the availability from the labels is poor, especially from the major companies. Secondly, requests from their retail customers is non-existent. This move away from the 45 ultimately reduces the income in the 45 jukebox. These vinyl jukeboxes are anywhere from ten to twenty five years old, or older. They've been paid for, depreciated on the books and the operator's only expense is his license, permit and taxes...and a record or two, even if they're old ones. This is exactly where a CD box, even one that's five years old, would increase the cashbox by 300% or more in those locations.

Don't you think our industry's dive into CD hardware gave a green light to the record labels to cut way back on making vinyl singles? Haven't CD jukeboxes per se further aggravated the shortage in 45 vinyl discs?

Our industry was already going through the death rattle before the CD appeared, because the public demand for albums and tapes had reduced the demand for 45's down to around 5% of the total sales picture. The record labels were forced to reduce their output of 45's. Let me put it this way: there is no "shortage" of 45's. The truth is there is no "demand" for 45's. That is the difference!

Do jukebox players prefer CD boxes over 45 boxes, or will they play any machine that happens to be in the location?

"I believe there are more jukeboxes on more locations today than there have been since 1986."

A person who loves his music will play a CD jukebox over and over again far more than he will a 45 jukebox. First, because they can play their favorite music outside the home that they already play at home on their own CD players. You can't do that with a 45 box. Secondly, people love that live

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Ed Blankenbeckler spends most of his working time at his home in Texas, with periodic trips to the Seeburg factory in Chicago, as well as to distributors and trade shows on top. Here he is pictured at the recent AMOT (Texas operator association) convention in Austin with his *Blast* budget CD jukebox. That's Wallace Distributing's Jim Hall (left) and Dock Ringo (right).

sound you get with a CD box...the highs and the lows...the clear vocals that flow out of a CD machine's speakers. It's almost better than listening to it live. Third, people know that a CD jukebox is state of the art...the best you can now get from a phonograph. Yes, people at the locations know the difference between a 45 and a CD jukebox.

"Before we enter the 21st century, I can see one dollar per play."

Years back, the ideal jukebox offered the top single hits from the radio and magazine charts. How's it work out with CD's that are really albums rather than singles?

Back when the 33rpm album and the tapes controlled the record retail business and the artist's name was the dominating factor in the customer's choice on what he bought, there were two, three and sometimes even more tunes on it that hit the hit lists. Unfortunately, the 45 single had lost its glamour, but the jukebox operator was a captive of the 45. When hot singles began to disappear or the operator had to wait several weeks for the single from the album to be released, he lost revenue.

Today with the CD's and compilations, not only are all the categories of top-played tunes on the jukebox, but with the availability of more artists, the base of jukebox players has increased proportionately. Consequently, the cashbox is fuller. More people than ever before are playing the jukebox. A compilation, for example, can have twelve tunes done by twelve different artists. The compilations can be oldies or the new releases that can or have hit the charts. The operator still running with 45 jukeboxes is unaware how much money he's losing every week... money his location is losing right along with him.

Has the CD jukebox opened up any new locations for operators?

Absolutely! And not only has it created new accounts, it's been the tool that brought locations back to the route after they'd given up on jukeboxes. I believe there are more jukeboxes on more locations today than there have been since 1986.

CD's done a solid job getting play up to 3 for a buck. What's your view on raising that pricing higher?

When Seeburg introduced the first CD jukebox to the world back in 1986, I intentionally left the coin mech off and set the system so it would only take one and five dollar bills. Pricing was set at 3 plays for a dollar, 18 for a five. It forced the customer to put paper into it. Now, if that machine had taken coins, the average operator would have taken the path of least resistance and set it on 25 cent play...and the customer would only have spent a quarter to hear the greatest sounding jukebox ever built. Putting it at 3 for a buck, that automatically created a 33% increase in the box for the operator and his location., Now that the 3 for a buck precedent's been set, coin mechs can be added back onto the CD phonograph set at 50 cents per play, 3 for the dollar and 18 for a fiver.

With all the new features and innovations that will appear on future designs, factoring in increase in cost, normal inflation and mandated hospitalization insurance, etc., the only place an operator can hope for relief is at the point of sale, the money slot. Since they're talking about doing away with the penny, the quarter has become "chump change" and the dollar bill's become "fumbling money", the five and ten dollar bill will become more of a factor in our business.

I expect that the U.S.Treasury will give us a dollar coin within the next two years or sooner since we're the last major country that doesn't have one. Before we enter the 21st century, I can see one dollar per play, seven plays for five and 15 for ten dollars. Pool table play has been on the dollar for quite some time.

CD's have also done a whale of a job obsoleting vinyl records. Now, what kind of worries should we have about something coming along like DAT or music-programmable chips to obsolete CD's?



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Everyone in our industry should be aware that we're a by-product or a "satellite" of the record industry. As I've said many times in the past, if the record industry decides to put music onto coke bottles, we'll have to build a mechanism that will play coke bottles.

There is no doubt that with digital technology, we've discovered only the tip of the potential of this electronic art. The capability of programmable chips has been around for several years. I had my own introduction to them around 1985. You can inscribe almost anything into an E-PROM...words, characters, color, music, etc. Depending upon the size of the chip, you can have one tune, ten tunes, 25 tunes of more on a single chip.

But in that, you really open pandora's box. With a chip full of music, how do you control licensing or royalty payments both mechanical and performing? Anyone with an E-PROM burner can duplicate hundreds of copies in just a few minutes. How do you package the product? And what about inventory loss?

My opinion is the record industry is not willing, ready or capable of moving to another art form and face a volume of problems while the CD system is still in the growing stage.

What do you see as the future for coin-op music? We've heard talk, for example, that new technology could one day take the jukebox away from the operator and put it into the hands of the location.

There are still around 190,000 locations sporting an obsolete vinyl jukebox out there. The replacement market is running about 7 1/2% a year, up from around 4% in pre-CD 1985. At this rate of replacement, it will take nine more years for all the vinyl jukeboxes to be replaced with CD hardware, at which time, vinyl records and hardware will have long been gone.

I am not worried about future technology hurting operators. I'm worried that operator apathy in getting with the CD program will be the reason for lost locations. Today's Seeburg has developed an inexpensive CD jukebox for lower income locations to help get more operators into enjoying higher CD income. This price machine wasn't designed to compete aesthetically with the top of the line jukeboxes, but to be functional and affordable.

CD phonographs belong in every operator's portfolio and this machine should coax a whole bunch more into the swim. CD is what today's jukebox is all about and I'm proud to have played some part in seeing that happen.

◆



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PICTURE PERFECT

Strata's clever new video kit, Pairs, *is available in three different versions, each aimed at a different type of player.*



Strata Group Inc., those innovative game makers out of Rolling Hills, Ill., will soon give the industry a peek at their new street-oriented video kit, *Pairs,* which combines irresistible and easy-to-learn gameplay with sensational digitized graphics and incredible sounds.

Players are presented with a screen covered with playing cards. Using a joystick and button, players flip the cards over, searching for a match. If the cards don't match, the cards are turned face down again. If the cards match, the pair disappears, revealing part of a digitized picture. Play continues until all of the cards have been removed and the hidden image is revealed. Buy-ins are encouraged by turning some of the cards face up during the continue timer, which usually leads to a "free" match for the player.

Pairs will be sold exclusively as a kit, and is available in three different versions: an Adult version, a Family version, and a Ticket version. Each version has the same gameplay, but has been customized to appeal to various types of locations.

The Adult version is geared strictly for "mature" audiences. The player's objective is to reveal digitized photos of a scantily-clad female models in various poses. During the game, band-aids and a dimmed color palette hid the full image from view. When all of the cards have been removed, the complete image is revealed in full color. The game has more than 50 enticing photos and eleven levels of play. The photos are arranged in sets of four, with each progressive photo more revealing than the last. After each set is completed, a special ending is presented, and players who complete all of the sets are treated to an extra special bonus sequence.

"Preliminary testing on the Adult version has been extremely positive," said Scott Morrison, project manager for *Pairs,* "with exceptional earnings and a huge number of continued plays."

For more sensitive locations, the Adult version has operator-adjustable "modesty settings" that will keep some parts of the picture covered. This feature can be accessed through software settings or a dipswitch on the PCB.

Pairs is also available in a Family version. The gameplay is the same as the adult version, but doesn't reveal the erotic photos. Instead, emphasis has been placed on the addictive quality of the matching game, with an enhanced scoring system and entirely different sounds.

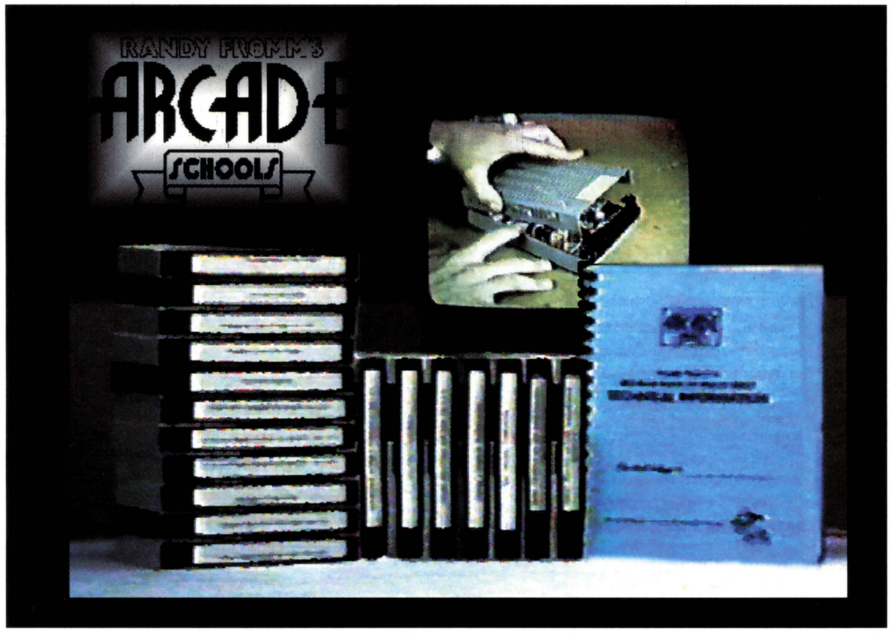
"While developing the Adult version, we found that our female employees really liked the gameplay." said Elaine Ditton, president of Incredible Technologies, the development group that designed *Pairs.* "So we decided to make a version that we could play too."

Game developers also found that kids really enjoy the fun and easy-to-understand game of matching pairs of cards. So naturally, this paved the way for the creation of a fast-paced video redemption game that appeals to children of all ages. The Ticket version shows twelve cards face-down on the playfield, hiding six pairs of colorful cartoon characters. The player has three chances to match all of the pairs in the shortest amount of time possible. The number of misses combined with the time remaining determines how many tickets are dispensed. Adjustable software allows the operator to customize the game for his location, such as number of tickets per match, number of misses per game, timer speed, coins per play, ect.

Strata will display all three versions of *Pairs* at the AMOA Expo in San Antonio this September, along with their exciting one-on-one fighting game, *BloodStorm.* For more information, contact an authorized distributor or call Strata's John Cassiday at 800/262-0323.

AS SEEN ON TV

Randy Fromm's Arcade School offers complete coin-op tech training course on videotape.





When you ask people about technical training for the coin-op amusement industry, one name comes up again and again. Of course, that name is Randy Fromm. Randy, as you may already know, freely shares his technical expertise through his monthly articles here in the pages of *RePlay Magazine* as well as other magazines both in the United States and in Europe, Mexico and South America. He also teaches a five-day "Arcade School" in various cities across the country and around the world. This month, for example, he will be teaching classes in San Juan, Puerto Rico and San Antonio, Texas.

But when asked about what he felt was his greatest accomplishment to date, Randy is quick to respond: "My videotape training program is my pride and joy." said Fromm. "It's a way that has allowed me to teach people that could not otherwise take the time to attend my five-day Arcade School."

These informative, professional quality tapes are made with the same thoughtfulness and attention to detail that Arcade School students have come to know and appreciate. In his typical, high-tech fashion, Randy's cameraman was not even human!

"I used a robotic camera operator to control the camcorder as I taught the class." said Fromm. "It's an amazing device that will automatically follow me with the camera as I move around the classroom. I can also control the camera's zoom lens so I can show things up close on the videotape. Preset locations allow me to move the camera quickly to the white marker-board or demonstration areas so I don't miss one second of continuity."

Here's a quick look at what's available on videotape from Randy Fromm's Arcade School. (There's even a package deal that can save you $100 when you purchase the entire set.):

ALL-YOU-NEED BEGINNING ELECTRONICS FOR OPERATORS AND MECHANICS

Whew! That title's a mouthful but it describes this program perfectly. Let's face it. When it comes to fixing video games and pinball machines, there's lotsa stuff that you just don't need to know! Why try to learn electronics from an engineering standpoint (the way they teach it in college and technical schools), when all you need is enough electronics training to fix things?

This program assumes that you have no previous electronics training and takes you through a simple, *no math* look at electronic components, electronic circuits, schematic diagrams and more! Understanding electronics is easy when you learn the basics of how circuits and components operate. *(Code #AYN - 2 tapes - Approximately 3 hours - $79.95)*

BASIC VIDEOGAME TROUBLESHOOTING

You've just walked into one of your locations and your brand new video game has a blank screen. What could be wrong? Where do you start troubleshooting? Is this a monitor problem? Is the power supply bad? This program shows you how to get to the cause of the problem fast!

What if the screen is covered with meaningless bits of graphics (known as "garbage") or the game freezes in the middle of play? Has the video game's computer board gone berserk? If so, can you fix the board?

Sure you can! Many logic board problems can be fixed easily, without a detailed knowledge of microprocessor systems. This training program shows you how. *(Code #BVT - Approximately 60 Minutes - $49.95)*

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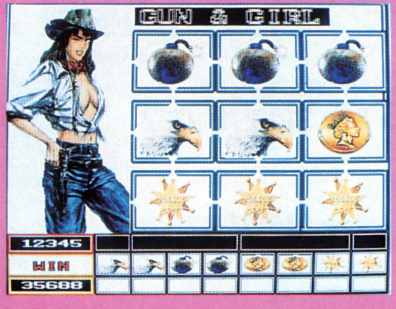

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SE HABLAR ESPAÑOL!! **DEUTSCHE ERKUNDIGUNG ES WILLKOMMEN!!**

failures of all types are the most common problems you will encounter when fixing power supplies, pinball boards and video game monitors.

This program takes a look at all of the different types of semiconductors commonly seen in coin-operated amusements. We'll take a look at the operation of each component, along with testing procedures to determine if the part is good or bad. Replacement components will also be discussed. Never get stuck for a replacement part again! *(Code #DTS - 2 tapes - Approximately 3 hours - $79.95)*

EASY PINBALL PC BOARD REPAIR

This program does *not* show you how to change burned coils or repair flipper units. What you *will* learn is how to fix the four most common problems on the pinball printed circuit board (the CPU board.) These are the solenoid driver circuit, the switch matrix, the lamp matrix and the high voltage power supply for the display unit.

Don't let the big names scare you. These circuits are all easy to understand and even easier to repair! In fact, fixing pinball PC boards is a great way to break into PCB repair of all types. Don't depend on someone else to repair your pinball boards when the problem is in one of these simple circuits. Do it yourself! *(Code #PIN - Approximately 2 hours - $49.95)*

SWITCHING REGULATOR POWER SUPPLIES (PETER CHOU TYPE)

Many operators throw away their power supplies, not realizing how easy they are to repair. Most power supplies can be repaired in less than a half-hour at an average cost of a buck and a half each. This lesson explains the operation of switching power supplies and how to repair them quickly and inexpensively. Parts sources for power supply repair will also be discussed. *(Code #SPS - Approximately 70 minutes - $49.95)*

CONVENTIONAL POWER SUPPLIES

Power supplies are easy to understand and easy to fix. Conventional (linear) power supplies are used in over 99% of all videogame monitors as well as all pinball machines and redemption equipment. This lesson covers linear power supplies and voltage regulators in detail. This lesson is a recommended prerequisite to monitor repair as many monitor problems can be traced to a power supply failure. *(Code #CPS - Approximately 60 minutes - $49.95)*

VIDEOGAME MONITOR REPAIR MADE SIMPLE

The popularity of conversion kits means that today's operator must keep his monitors working forever! This lesson details the operation of monitors in easy-to-understand language.

Each monitor circuit is discussed individually, along with a look at the schematic diagrams for typical monitors. Common monitor failures are discussed, along with the symptoms that will help pinpoint the cause of the problem. Of course, monitor safety will also be discussed in this les-

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son. *(Code #MON - 3 tapes - Approximately 5 hours - $109.95)*

VIDEOGAME CONVERSIONS MADE SIMPLE

Video game conversions are a snap when you know how. Topics include: installing Formica sides, working with plexiglass, wiring coin doors, monitors and power supplies and manufacturing new control panels. *(Code #CON - Approximately 80 minutes - $49.95)*

USING A DIGITAL MULTIMETER

The DMM is the single most important piece of test equipment you can use on your route. This lesson shows you how to use the meter to make the tests and measurements necessary for fixing coin-operated equipment like video games and pinball machines. Premiered in 1982, this program is just as valid today and continues to be one of Randy Fromm's Arcade School's most popular training programs. *(Code #DMM - Approximately 30 minutes - $39.95)*

USING AN OSCILLOSCOPE

Although simple repairs can often be accomplished with a digital multimeter, an oscilloscope is essential for troubleshooting complex analog and digital circuits. This program covers the entire range of oscilloscope controls and operations. *(Code #OSC - Approximately 60 minutes - $49.95)*

SERVICING BILL ACCEPTORS

Bill acceptors are proven revenue builders. This lesson covers complete disassembly and repair of Mars VFM4, JCM and Ardac. *(Code #SBA - Approximately 2 hours - $49.95)*

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL ELECTRONICS

Takes the mystery out of integrated circuits. If you've ever wanted to learn more about digital electronics and logic boards, here's an easy way to begin. This lesson begins with a look at the basic building blocks of digital circuits and progresses through a range of different integrated circuits. *(Code #DIG - Approximately 3 hours - 2 tapes - $79.95)*

MICROPROCESSOR SYSTEMS AND MICROPROCESSOR TROUBLESHOOTING

Alex McCay, former chief design engineer for Leland Corp., presents this practical look at microprocessor systems and microprocessor troubleshooting. Alex has come up through the ranks and knows how to locate microprocessor problems in a hurry. This program presents a common sense look at microprocessor troubleshooting without using any test equipment other than an oscilloscope. *(Code #MPU - Approximately 3 hours - 2 tapes - $79.95)*

SERVICING VIDEO LOTTERY PRINTERS VOL. 1, NCR

This program covers the complete repair and rebuilding of the NCR printer that's used in cash registers and video lottery terminals nationwide. The resident expert is Mark Reichert of Montana Gaming Repair, who services a very large route and repairs these printers just about every day. *(Code #NCR - $49.95)*

SERVICING VIDEO LOTTERY PRINTERS VOL. 2, TDC

This program covers the Two Day Corp. printer that's used in video lottery terminals in Montana. Again, Mark Reichert brings his years of service experience to focus on this particular unit. *(Code #TDC - $49.95)*

SERVICING XY MONITORS

Every now and then, someone resurrects an XY game and needs some help with the monitor. This program covers the operation and repair of both color and monochrome XY monitors. (Does not include the "Vectorbeam" monitor made by the now defunct Cinematronics Corp.) Code #XYM - Approximately 1 hour - $39.95

Some programs are also available in Spanish. These include basic electronics, understanding diodes and transistors, repairing power supplies (Peter Chou type) and pinball. For further details or to obtain a free information package about the Arcade School, contact Randy Fromm's Arcade School, 1944 Falmouth Dr., El Cajon, CA 92020-2827; 619/593-6131, fax 619-593-6132 or internet randy fromm@delphi.com.

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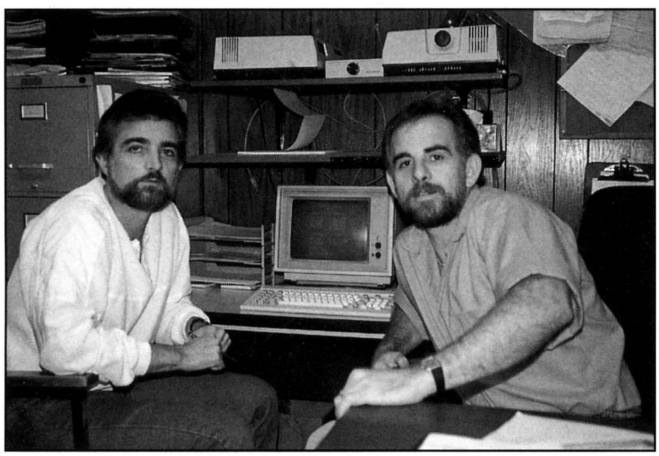
DAVE AND HARRY PECK

INTERVIEW



Harry (left) and Dave Peck

A CONVERSATION ABOUT REDEMPTION

Betson Pacific's John Ridgway interviews Dave and Harry Peck of Family Amusement Corp., one of L.A.'s biggest operators of arcades and street locations

The following interview appeared in the August 1994 issue of Betson Pacific's monthly publication, *The Betson Bullet,* and was reprinted with the permission of Betson Pacific and Family Amusement Corp.

Dave and Harry Peck, long respected in the coin-op industry, privileged me with an in-depth interview concerning their new venture into the redemption business. Owning one of the largest arcades in the Los Angeles area, their comments are both insightful and relative to anyone considering this profitable niche in the coin-op world.

Q: When was redemption installed in your arcade?

A: Four weeks ago.

Q: What factors contributed to your decision to add redemption to your product mix?

A: People were not coming in to play the amusements we had to offer; we wanted to see if redemption would entice them to play.

Q: What has redemption done for your arcade to date?

A: Redemption has brought in a different type of person. We're finding that our video games have dropped to half of what they used to earn; redemption is now earning 50% of the arcade gross and the rest comes from the video and pinball games.

Q: What are you're top two or three redemption games to date?

A: Planet Earth's *Flingshot* is number one, Bromley's *Wheel 'Em In* second, and Lazer-Tron's *Spin to Win* is third.

Q: So rolldown games are doing well in your arcade?

A: Yes. We're catering more to the adult. We're finding that valuing the prizes correctly is very important to this group of people. Our average payout is currently 30%. Our cash flow has increased, some of which is attributed to redemption, but now is our slow time. Who knows how far off we would be without redemption games.

Q: Do you offer a large selection of high ticket items or mainly "low budget" items in your prize counter?

A: In the beginning we found that the small kids liked the inexpensive prizes, but now people are saving up their tickets for for the higher value items. They cash in their tickets at the end of the day for a credit card type of system that tracks their winnings.

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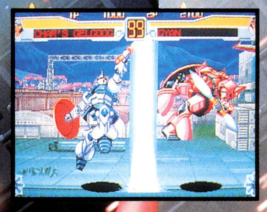







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DAVE AND HARRY PECK INTERVIEW

Q: So you installed a credit card system that keeps track of their tickets?

A: Yes we did. Anything over 500 tickets can be cashed in for a little credit card. This is much easier for our customers than having them walk around with pounds of paper.

Q: What is your amusement to redemption income ratio?

A: Fifty/fifty. (20 red. games vs. 120 other games — J.R.)

Q: How big is your arcade and how much space did you commit to your redemption counter?

A: Our arcade is 4000 sq. ft.; the redemption counter is about 15 ft.

Q: What kind of comments have you been hearing from your customers since the installation?

A: They all seem to like it. They are always asking for new prizes; we ask regulars to help us decide what to offer. We offer camcorders, cellular phones, TV's, portable electronics, ect. They like the high end stuff; name brand is better than non-name brand; they are willing to pay more for, say, a Sony carousel CD player or an RCA TV; they want name recognition.

Q: If you started over, would you do anything different?

A: We're always changing things; it's a constant learning experience. Every week we have to readjust the payouts on the equipment; some pay out too much, some too little.

Q: What advice would you give other operators who are thinking about getting into redemption equipment?

A: Education is an important part of any redemption program. We feel we are running a very successful program, but it's labor intensive. It takes a lot more effort to operate redemption; instead of just operating games, you're marketing a product. Betson really went to bat for us from the beginning — they realized that the sale didn't just begin with the product, but started with the educational process. Anyone can just buy the equipment, but had we done it without the education, we would have been doomed to failure.

Harry closes the interview by stating that they are looking at expanding into some of their larger accounts but that this requires a tremendous amount of cooperation between the locations and the operator. Harry also expressed disappointment over the high cost of redemption equipment (this is because redemption equipment is made is small quantities, but R&D costs remain the same; as runs go up, the prices should drop. However, it should be noted that the depreciation of this equipment is very slow and rarely does it become obsolete as long as you offer good prizes — J.R.).

◆

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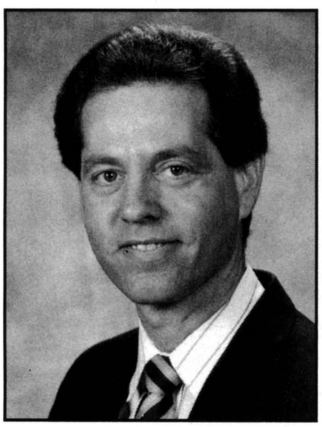
FRANK TALK

BY FRANK SENINSKY



10 DO'S (AND 10 DON'TS) FOR COIN-OP TODAY

Hillary Clinton phoned me the other day. "Frank," she said, "we've decided health care and national defense aren't really the most important issues facing America. What the country really needs, is better coin machine operators. Please, come up with a list of 10 things operators can do, to make them more successful. Bill is counting on you."

Since I'm a patriotic guy, I immediately faxed the following list to the White House. In fact, I sent them two lists — a list of 10 ways to make sure operators succeed, and a list of 10 ways to make sure operators fail. (I have a feeling the second list is on its way to the Senate right now.) No doubt, the President will use this material as the basis for his next State of the Union address. Meantime, here's a sneak preview for loyal readers of this column.

TOP 10 WAYS FOR OPERATORS TO GUARANTEE SUCCESS

1. Above all, remember you have a moral obligation to your customer to do the best job possible. When selling product to someone, you're supposed to save the customer as much as possible. When you're operating equipment for (or with) someone, you're supposed to maximize long-term profitability for both of you (this may mean making less money in the short term).

2. Don't forget service, no matter how bad your monthly grosses are, or how high overhead gets. Service is "who we are."

3. Always respond with action when a client reports a problem. There's always something that can be done. Emulate the Japanese, who never say "no." At the most extreme, they say: "We can do it, but it would be very very very difficult."

4. Make sure you get out of bed every morning! In other words, maintain a positive attitude. You should look forward to coming to work, look forward to solving your problems. Realize that all this business is, is problems — machines out of order, break-ins, location demands, whatever.

5. Know a little bit about everything. That includes technical issues, local politics, taxes, financing, the law, marketing, business efficiency, management, communication, etc.

6. But realize "what you don't know"! Surround yourself with people who are smarter than you are...then ask a million questions. Bankers, lawyers, accountants, tax attorneys, experts of all kinds are the greatest resources you can have. But don't take their word for everything. Make them explain it to you. They have to make sense.

7. Network (with people). If you want to keep your business, keep up your contacts with your local, state and national associations. Get tied in with local businesses in other industries. Do favors for everyone — so you don't have to be bashful about asking for favors when you need them!

8. Show all your employees that you work harder than they do. Never ask employees to do anything you wouldn't do yourself. It gives them a good example, boosts morale, and keeps you informed. Treat your employees well, just as you want them to treat your customers well. Remember, front-line staff who deal with customers are very, very important.

9. Daydream. For at least an hour a day, you ought to step back and look at the big picture. Are you chasing your tail, running a rat race just for cashflow that isn't really getting you anywhere long-term?

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Frank Seninsky with then-candidate Bill Clinton. Who could have known Bill's wife Hillary would come to depend so much on Frank's sage advice?

Have a specific goal to accomplish every single day.

10. Plan. Translate your daydreams into goals, and turn your goals into step-by-step action plans to get results. Then, put them into effect.

11. Be flexible. This was supposed to be a list of 10 items, but don't get locked into a plan no matter what. After launching on a course of action, check your progress every now and then. Are you getting the results you want? Look forward to changing course when things don't work out.

TOP 10 WAYS TO ENSURE FAILURE

1. Be greedy. (Overcharging the player or the location could make money in the short term, but it drives away business in the long term. Stay in locations that are losing money; they're absolutely guaranteed to pay you back, and more, in the future.)

2. Delay all action. Avoid making decisions. Don't return phone calls. This makes sure you anger your old customers and lose out on new business.

3. Ignore any new business possibilities. Don't pay attention to what's going on around you. Don't read the trade magazines. Laugh at new ideas like redemption, networking, family entertainment centers, kiddie rides, photo booths. Count on everything remaining just like it is this minute.

4. Copy the big boys — especially their mistakes. Remember, they're glamorous and have lots of money, so they must be perfect, right? If a big chain of FEC's or kiddie places has a

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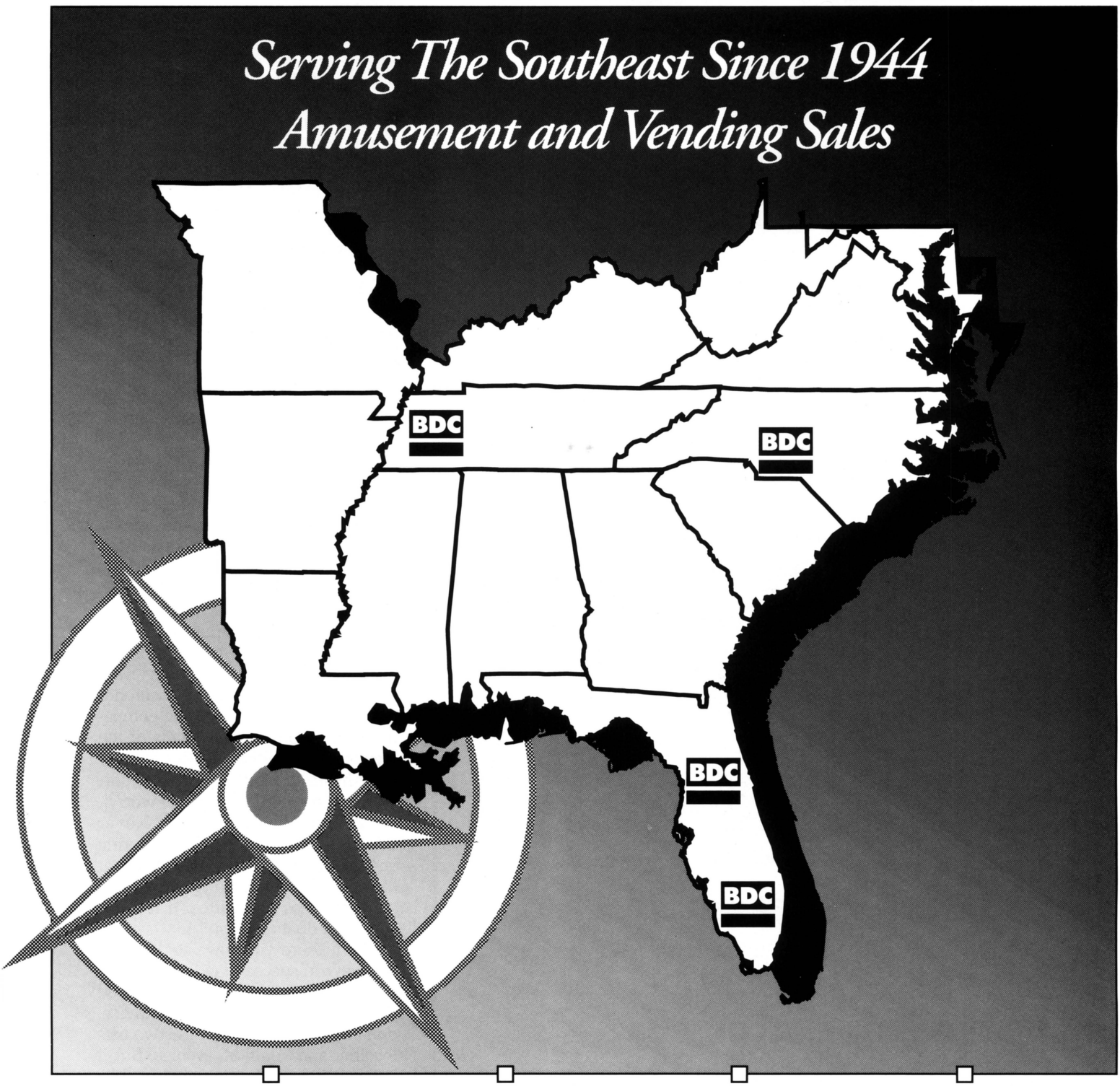

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bad design, use it anyway. Never study the competition and come up with improvements on their ideas... it's too much work.

5. Hire anyone who is anti-social, hates kids, hates games, and hates to work — especially overtime. They will create a really great atmosphere.

6. Measure everything except what is important. Generate lots of statistics on silly categories like "the number of days your game was down waiting for a parts order, as compared to the number of days you spend at trade shows talking with game and parts suppliers." Don't keep track of sales, overhead, productivity, expenses vs. revnue on individual machines, or long-term ROI.

7. Take your customers for granted. They need you. They can't possibly replace you. Ignore them. Never, ever communicate. If they have complaints or suggestions, don't listen to them. What do they know? And feel free to argue with them. Make lots of promises to your customers that you can't possibly keep.

8. Ignore your competition. If they're performing poorly and opening opportunities for you, ignore it. If you're losing accounts to the competition, ignore it. If the competition comes up with creative new ideas, ignore them. If the competition is running into obstacles, don't worry — that could never happen to you.

9. Automatically buy whatever is recommended. Never test a new machine. Don't bother to research a market or the manufacturing company. Don't worry about details of the business deal, either. Getting in over your head, expanding too fast, borrowing too much? Hey, it's no worry.

10. Above all, don't think. Never think about tomorrow, about having enough money to pay your taxes at the end of the year. Don't analyze the consequences of an idea. If it looks good, just do it on impulse.

Well, there you have it: 10 sure-fire ways to succeed, and 10 sure-fire ways to fail. If you somehow succeed despite following any of this advice, don't blame me. Blend these two lists together and you'll be average. But if you can reduce the number of habits from the "failure" list and increase your habits from the "success" list, you're bound to improve your business and become a more professional operator. This is what our country needs most! Right, Hillary? ◆

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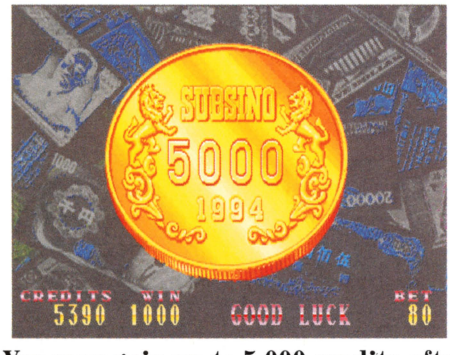

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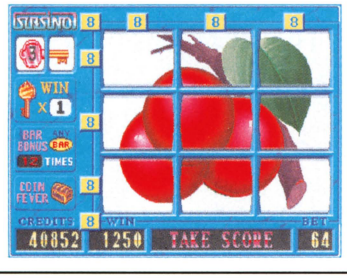





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BIG CROWD AT LONE STAR SHOW!

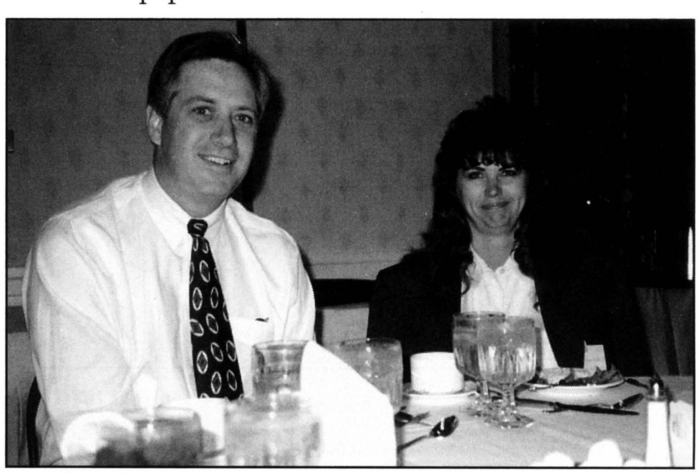
AMOT (the Amusement & Music Operators of Texas) scored a big industry kiss the weekend of July 28-30 with a convention and trade show that pulled in around 150 folks.

Besides some 26 exhibit booths (a sell-out that was backed by a waiting list of more wannabees), AMOT held nearly as many seminars as that "other Texas show" will the end of this month (the AMOA Expo in San Antonio).

Scheduled speakers included TD Rowe's Joe Foster on how to value equipment on the route, Ralph Hasson (University of Texas) on the art of negotiating, State Senator Ike Harris on what Texas operators may want out of the 1995 Legislative session and Mike Essmyer (lawyer) on the fascinating subject "how to prevent sexual harassment in the office".

Doc Ringo (Wallace Distributing, Mineral Wells) was kind of master of ceremonies over the convention and show with assistance from AMOT officers, board members and his wife Betty. The event took place at the Doubletree Hotel in Austin. Nice going, folks!

At top: Betty & Doc Ringo sort of took the point at the AMOT convention, and did a fine job of things. Here they show off the *Old Sol* redemption poker video. **Below:** Honored speaker was Craig Johnson (with wife Jana), past-president of AMOA and chief of their National Amusement Network (the subject of his banquet address).



TEXAS TROOPS TROT OUT MUCHO MACHINES & MEETINGS AT AUSTIN SHOW

KIDDIE RIDES

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU BUY

by Stu Heller



The following article was written by Stuart J. Heller, president of Kiddie Rides USA. He has been involved in the kiddie ride business since 1980 in various capacities. In 1991, he purchased Kiddie Rides USA and, through his guidance, made it one of the largest importers of coin-op rides in the US. Since the opening of its manufacturing facilities in Davenport, Iowa and Denver, Colo., Kiddie Rides USA has also become a major exporter of children's rides. As a participant in the spectacular growth of the kiddie ride industry, Stuart is one of the most knowledgeable sources in the field.



Stu Heller

The big secret is finally out! Kiddie rides pay for themselves in a very short time, and continue to pay for themselves over and over again for a period of eight years (the average life of a ride). Unlike video games and pinballs, a new player is born every minute of every day who will look at the same old kiddie ride as a new discovery.

The evolution of the kiddie ride business has been very interesting. At first, kiddie rides were put on location by operators who had vending routes (and no videos). In the late '70s/early '80s, the advent of the theme restaurants created a whole new interest in kiddie rides in order to attract the younger child. Even the theme restaurants in the early days had more videos than rides because the operators of the restaurants felt that the ROI was greater in videos, but

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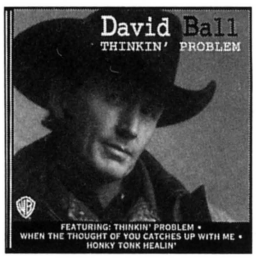

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experience has proven them wrong. The kiddie rides are still operating and the videos are not only down in numbers but profits are lower.

When many of the themed restaurants closed, a glut of used kiddie rides hit the market. Some of the units had so many plays on them that they were no longer viable. Many companies were formed to refurbish old rides and continue to do so today. Although rides are designed to last for many years they do not differ much from automobiles. High mileage indicates high use and maintenance problems.

In the early '90s, themed rides were introduced in England. Some were successful and others fell flat, but new interest in kiddie rides was established. Since that time other themed rides were introduced in Europe and the United States.

When we look at kiddie rides as long-term income producers, generic models seem to do the best in a good location. A good ride will pay for itself in 90 days. Mechanical rides produce good income, but if you want spectacular income, hydraulic is the way to go. The greatest amount of improved technology has occurred with the hydraulic rides. They are a far cry from the early models, which tended to have maintenance problems that caused operators to shy away.

Today, the increase in kiddie rides is due in part to the interest in attracting families to shopping malls and individual stores, and also to the final realization that kiddie rides make money. Most good rides are now operated at 50 cents. In fact, in the eastern part of the US, all rides (good and bad) are operating at 50 cents. This trend will force the

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operators to use better product to ensure their locations.

Many municipalities are also setting safety standard for all coin operated equipment. Los Angeles, Houston and many other cities across the nation require UL approval or an expensive on-site inspection to assure the equipment is safe. As a buyer, you must be sure that the product you buy can be used in the location that you intend. Do not be fooled by safety claims. Check to see if the certification is accepted in your area. In the US, two marks are universally accepted: UL and ARL. Other foreign marks are not universally accepted.

There are more rides available today than ever before. While the buyer has a large selection to choose from, he must be sure the company maintains a replacement parts inventory so that if parts are needed, they are readily available. There are many US manufacturers that use off-the-shelf parts that can be purchased locally rather than having to pay for shipment. As far as quality, design and durability, the consumer has many choices, from good European product to state-of-the-art American equipment.

No matter which you choose, it is important to know the company you are dealing with. Before you begin, consider these questions:

- Is the company a manufacturer or distributor?
- Will they stand behind the product?
- Can you talk to their service department without having to call a foreign country?
- Do they have a technical service or parts department?
- What kinds of warranty do they have?
- Does the manufacturer have product liability insurance in the US?
- If you are dealing with a distributor of foreign product, does he carry insurance?
- Will the company stand behind you?

There are a lot of questions to ask and if you are contemplating the entrance into the kiddie ride business, be sure to ask them. Do not be confused by double talk. Any legitimate distributor or manufacturer is happy to address all the issues.

When it comes to placement and/or selection of kiddie rides, decisions can be very important. For example, not all rides are suitable for outdoor placement, or space requirement may limit the style and design of a kiddie ride. In a small location or a store that deals with very small children, a space-saver (small ride) may have to be used. Your distributor may or may not have the product you need, so shop around. The more research that you do will pay off in the long run.

A lot of news has been coming out about kiddie rides. Be assured there are many good manufacturers from both Europe and the US. Look for variety as it will enhance your business.

With both local and national authorities addressing the issue of violence of video games, kiddie rides have been moved to the forefront of the coin-op industry. Kiddie rides are totally non-offensive, and in fact, can enhance the image of the store where the rides are located.

The kiddie ride business has come a long way in the past twenty years. Some of the original manufacturers have moved on to other segments of the coin-op business; had they known then what is known today, they would be selling or, better yet, operating kiddie rides throughout the US.

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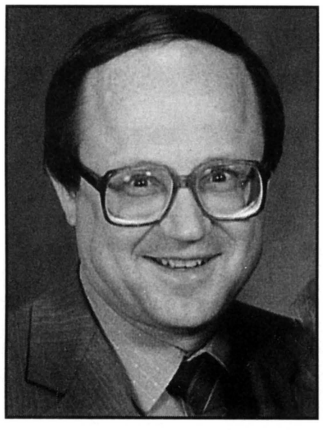
ON TARGET

BY TODD ERICKSON



KEEPING YOUR PLAYFIELD NEW

The playfield on your pinball machine is the most critical area; it's all the player ever sees. A worn, dirty playfield will cause earnings to drop, and a worn game is also worth a lot less money when you sell it. In fact, titles such as *High Speed* and *8-Ball* , when sold to the home market, can double in value if they are in mint condition.

As mentioned in past articles, a damaged steel ball can take much of the shine off the playfield. This is especially true at the flippers and other areas where the ball rolls a lot. You can also see a lot of wear in the plastic ramps. Merely waxing these areas will not take care of the problem. It's like trying to restore a car's badly scratched and weathered finish by applying wax — it won't work because you need a smooth surface to begin with.

Many operators believe that an abrasive compound shouldn't be used on the playfields. I have been using them for over 25 years on playfields with no problem. There are a wide range of abrasives available for this kind of work. They range from heavy duty rubbing compound to glazes. Our playfields also have a clear coat over them for protection.

If you have never used any of these products, first try them on an old car or truck using a soft rag. The compounds are more abrasive and cut into the finish when using a damp rag, and polish or shine the surface when using a dry one. Rubbing compounds need to be gone over with a glaze and wax when you are done. I feel you should use a white rag when using these products. The reason? If you go through the clear top coat you'll hit color, and need to stop.

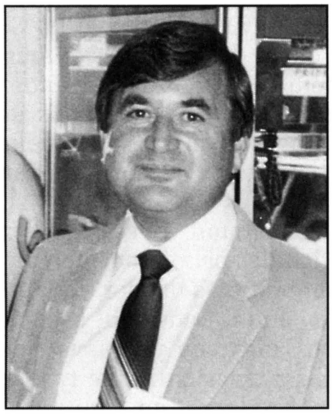
I recommend using a fine rubbing compound first if the playfield is rough, then a glaze like Mirror Glaze #6. Try this with an older game first — you can get the playfield to look like new! You may find that the Williams/Bally-Midway Diamond Plate is a real hard, durable finish that takes a lot of rubbing to get the shine back. You might also want to experiment under the front cover of the playfield.

Be ready to replace the steel balls when you do this if they are not shining like a mirror. I once had an operator tell me that he has been in the field over 15 years and has never replaced a ball in his life. I took a used ball he said was good and started sanding his truck. He got the point. You will also find that the playfield will stay significantly cleaner with a new ball. Hot new games may require a ball change every year, even with lexan ball guides next to your flippers.

A mint *High Speed* can be easily resold for $1,000; that's almost half the cost of the machine when it was new. This translates into a direct game cost (not including operating costs) of about $2 per week, assuming you sold the machine after ten years. Reselling your pins is part of making money with these machines, and it's just another tool for the operator to bring in more income.

BIG TICKET

BY ART WARNER



CAN YOU HAVE TOO MUCH REDEMPTION?

CCI PRESIDENT ART WARNER IS A 22-YEAR VETERAN OF REDEMPTION MANUFACTURING AND OPERATING.

Today, family entertainment centers are popping up in areas all across the country. With the advent of the family fun center — and it's well-lit, modern and clear decor — our image as an industry has improved, with locations percieved as wholesome fun places for a family to attend. No longer do we contend with a place that has been made a local hangout by bad kids. The media, particularly TV shows, often includes a segment portraying this "hangout image," but this will all soon change. I believe that this changing image, to a large degree, is due to the introduction of redemption equipment in arcades. Even the word "arcade" is being replaced with the term "fun center."

During this period of waning video popularity, only five or six of the various models available are top earners. The simulators and expensive sit-down units are over and above this count, and all the other videos are fillers, providing games for the overflow during busy times. Not to be forgotten are the standards — *Pacman, Ms. Pacman, Galaxian, etc.* — which seem to keep earning forever.

Now what? You have the 30 videos, air hockey, dart games, and 15 redemption games. Revenue from the 15 redemption pieces represent 65% if the total gross income of your facility. You feel that adding additional video doesn't

provide the return you expect. Yet, you have 1,500 sq. ft. of nonproductive space. The miniature golf course, soft play areas and party rooms all add to your draw, so yes, you add more redemption equipment.

But before you do, analyze your player population. Do you provide entertainment for toddlers? For adults? Do you often have players waiting to play particular games? This process of elimination is the best way to determine what redemption games you need to utilize the floor space now available. Space is money!

Adult games usually should be in a separate area of the facility. Because parents want to monitor their children's' whereabouts, I suggest a glass-partitioned area that holds down the noise and separates the activity of the more active games. (For example, a line-up of Siedel-type rolldowns — *Pokerino, 21, Bingorino,* ect. — geared to adult play.) Perhaps as many as eight to 10 units placed in this area will encourage the older women to sit and play for hours. Notice I used the word "sit" — I am suggesting the use of stools or cushioned-backed stools make it easy for them to relax and play at their leisure. Card themed games, Lotto-type games and wheel games all belong in this area. What you are creating is a mini-casino for your adult players.

Toddlers on the other hand, don't have a lot of manual dexterity. So usually mom, dad or big sister must help them play. Short *Skee-Balls, Bozo Buckets* and *Jungle Tumble* are some of the examples of the type of games three-to-four-year-olds can play.

Just look around your fun center, and notice the people not playing. Watch and observe this for a couple of weeks, and a trend will become apparent. This trend will assist you in making a decision in the type of additional redemption equipment needed to increase your income, meaning more coin slots for more players.

Today many games are available with optional progressive jackpots. This allows the operator to link anywhere from two to 10 games to a bonus jackpot that increases with each coin inserted. Granted, this attractive signage attracts attention and creates a crowd when the jackpot is won, but I believe the operator should approach two, three or more additional units on an "as needed" basis. Let the single unit prove itself. If people are waiting to play and the earnings warrant considering a second unit, add it. Then if the second unit earns almost as much as the first unit and remains consistent, add the third unit and progressive feature.

In situations where everyone is busy playing, and there are no lines at any of the games, and some games stand consistently idle, another type of problem is being indicated. It can lead you to think you have too much redemption, but this may not be the case!

We will discuss the possible causes of this situation in a future article. ◆

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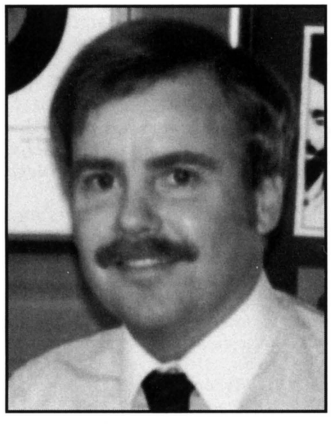
LEGAL QUESTIONS

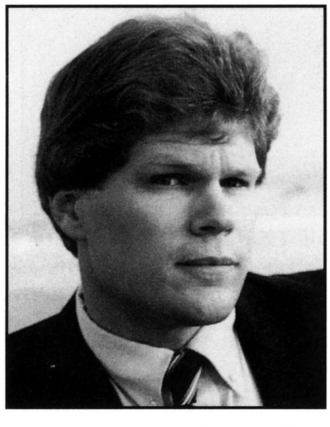
BY LAURENCE MERRITT & DAVID HAGEN



HOW TO KEEP A VALUABLE EMPLOYEE

Do you have an employee or two that are a key to the success of your business? Perhaps it is an office manager who runs things while you are away or a technician who seems to have a knack for fixing those problem machines. This article will discuss ways an operator can work at retaining these key employees.

Perhaps the single most important way to keep an employee is to pay them what they are worth. This does not mean "giving away the farm." Rather, it means staying in tune with what the market pays and compensating that employee with *at least that level.* It seems as though nothing causes an employee to be susceptible to being stolen by a competitor than when they feel *undercompensated* for their work.



ATTORNEYS LARRY MERRITT (AT TOP) AND DAVID HAGEN

The second most common way employees become susceptible to being stolen by competitors is when they feel *unappreciated.* Management experts tell us that a working environment should be created where employees feel appreciated and that they are a part of a "team." Those employees who feel that their efforts are vital to the success of the business, and are appreciated for that, are usually less likely to leave.

A legal way to discourage a competitor from raiding your employees is to put a non-competitive clause in their written employee contract. We devoted an entire column to this in November of 1989. (Just another reason to save your old issues of *RePlay.)* Essentially, the clause provides that in the event the employee leaves, he or she will not work for a competitor in this industry for a specific period of time. Further, the employee agrees not to contact any of your current customers or accounts. This makes it more difficult for an employee to be stolen and use the information that they developed while in your employ against you! Of course, the use of this clause presumes that you have a written employee contract with each of your employees. If you do not have a quick, easy contract with each of employees, you should have.

Another way to retain a valued employee is to give them a contract that has a longer term. Essentially, most states have laws which provide that unless an agreement states otherwise, employees are hired "at will." This essentially means that when either the employer or employee decides that the working relationship is over, they can terminate it "at will." A written employment agreement with a longer term will prevent this. This is why major league sports teams inter into multi-year contracts with their players who are free agents.

But an employee cannot be kept under a single contract for the rest of their life. Courts are very hesitant to enforce these contracts, as they believe that the terms are unfair and constitute a form of "slavery." Therefore, most states have created a limit on the length on these contracts. (For example, in California there is not a hard and fast rule.) However, a number of court cases have held that any employment agreement for a period exceeding seven years will be susceptible to being declared invalid.

If an employee decides to leave, an injunction can be sought from the court preventing them from working for someone else during the term of the contract. The court will usually not force them to continue to work for you in that, once again, the courts have construed this to be a form of "slavery." However, if the employee cannot work for anyone else, they are usually very inclined to complete their contract with you.

You should understand that if you enter into a contract with an employee

for a specified period of time, standards should be placed in the agreement so that it can be broken "for cause." "Cause" usually consists of non-performance, poor work attendance, ect. Further, an agreement with terms such as this will commit your business to pay that employee for the term of the contract. The fact that the business cannot afford them any longer will not be an excuse to avoid the contract. Accordingly, this clause should only be used in rare situations and should only be considered with very valuable or "hot shot" employees.

Several consultations with a good employment lawyer will pay dividends in your relationships with your employees. A simple form contract can be developed to be used with the majority of your employees. When you want to put together a contract for a very valuable employee, having your employment attorney review it before it is signed can save you thousands in the long run.

Laurence Merritt has been helping operators with their legal problems for almost 20 years, taking many matters to trial and obtaining large judgments. However, he feels his greatest accomplishments are the times when he has been able to obtain successful results without going to trial. Mr. Merritt is on the panel of arbitrators for the Los Angeles Superior Court and has served as a Judge Pro Tem in the Santa Monica Municipal Court. He has also taught several paralegal courses at Waterson College.

David Hagen has represented operators for a number of years. He has taught paralegal courses at Waterson College, as well as been an instructor in the MBA program at California Lutheran University. Laurence Merritt and David Hagen have worked together for many years and both welcome comments and suggestions. You can reach them at: Merritt & Hagen, Attorneys at Law, 6400 Canoga Ave. #311, Woodland Hills, CA 91367; phone: (818)992-1940; fax: 818-992-3309.

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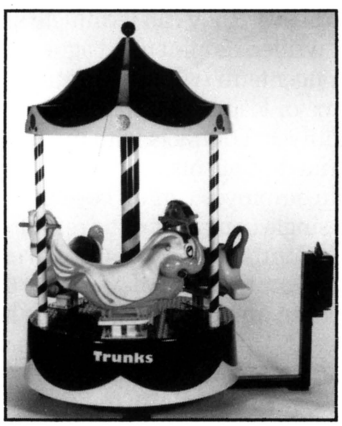

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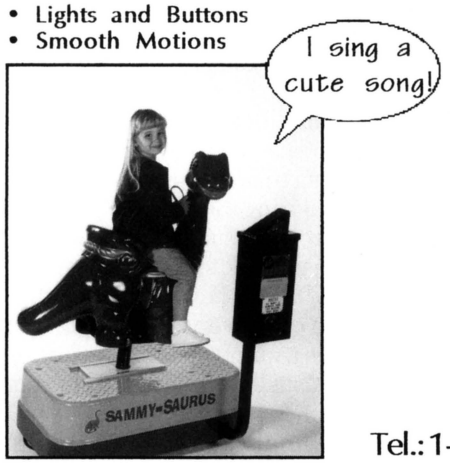



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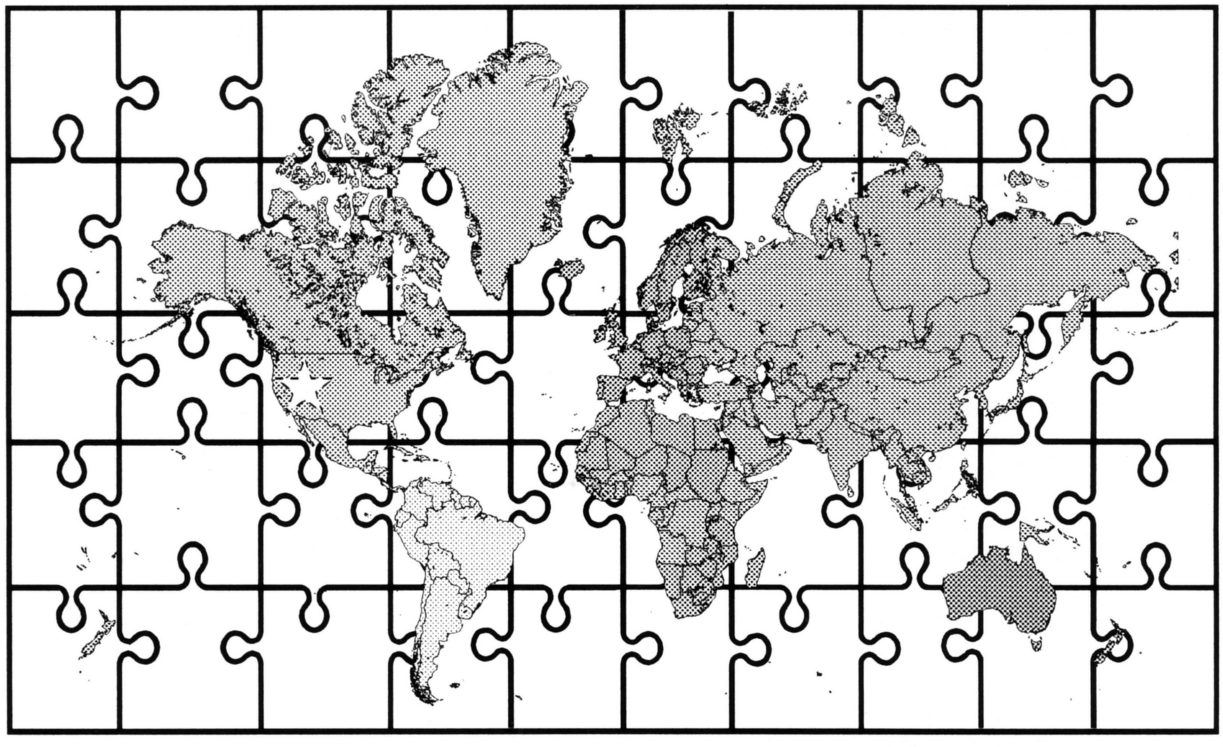

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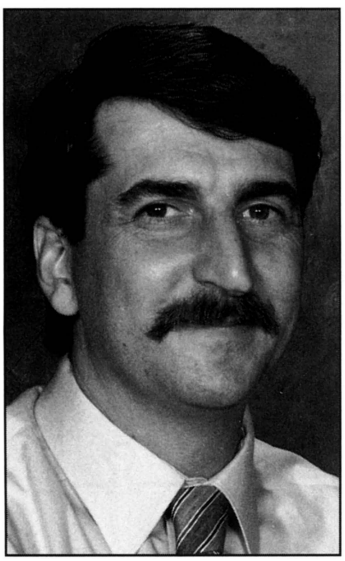
TECHNICAL TIPS

BY RANDY FROMM



COIN-OPERATED ENTERTAINMENT TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATION

In their efforts to benefit operators, the AMOA runs a lot of "behind the scenes" stuff that most people don't hear anything about. Ideas are often bounced back and forth between individuals and committees before formal discussion. Although I am not an AMOA member (as I am just a technician and not an operator myself), I like to consider myself a "friend of the family." As such, I welcome any chance to help out the AMOA wherever I can. This opinion piece comes at the request of AMOA board member Doug Minter (Tip Top Amusements, Reno, Nev.), who is charged with presenting some ideas for a "Technician Testing and Certification" program to be administered by the AMOA.

I have never been fond of written, academic testing of any sort. Tests make me nervous. Tests have always made me nervous; to the point of choking-up beyond any hope of regaining my normal thought processes until the "times-up" has been called. As a result, I feel that I have always tested far below my capabilities. However, I imagine that for most people, written testing does give a good, relative indicator of how much has been learned. And whether you pass by an inch or a mile, you can still get a license to drive, dive, fly or operate a ham radio transmitter.

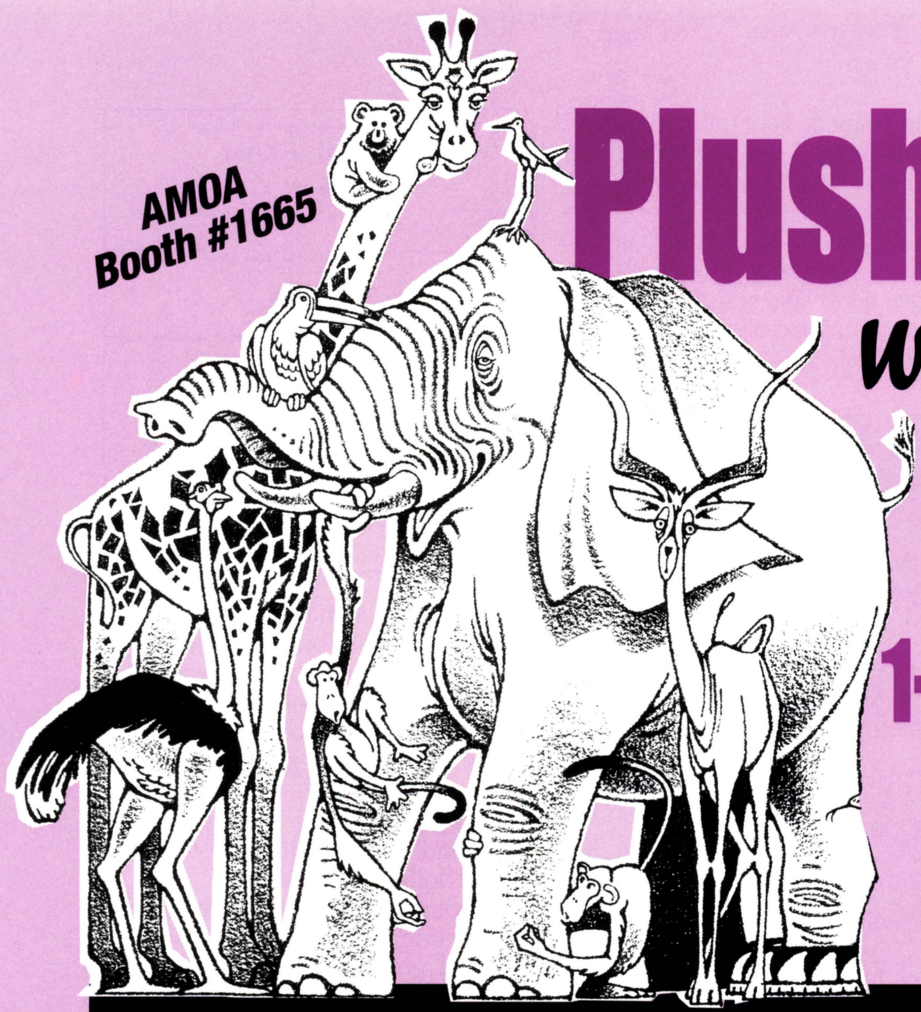
But a practical test is something else entirely. A good, practical test should exactly simulate a diagnosis and repair situation that will likely be encountered on the job. The technician's ability to quickly determine the cause of the problem (bad component, open circuit, etc.) and repair it properly can be readily assessed by having a qualified technician administer the test.

I suggest a two-fold approach to technician testing and certification. The first is some sort of written test. The test I have used for my Arcade School covers a range of electronic knowledge, from basic electronics and reading schematics to component-level monitor repair. Naturally, such a test for AMOA certification would be different. It would have to reflect the candidate's ability and experience in such diverse elements as: video games, pinball machines, bill changers and bill acceptors, ticket vendors, redemption pieces, kiddie rides and jukeboxes. I would think that such tests would have to be formulated with the cooperation of the manufacturers' and/or distributors' technicians.

This type of testing can really examine the candidate's ability to read schematic diagrams. Schematics can be marked with voltages at certain test points. Supplied with the symptoms and the voltages, a qualified tech should be able to pinpoint the problem. In fact, with the schematic marked to indicate the voltages, a good tech should be able to predict the symptom in many cases.

The practical test should use only "real world" failures. I suggested that the practical test be administered by the distributor's technicians. The distributor's tech can install a bad part in something and see how the candidate goes about locating and repairing the problem. I think the distributors will like the idea and support it. After all, anything that gets customers to come to the store is good business.

Naturally, these tests must be exactly the same nationwide. I envision test such as replacing a working monitor's horizontal output transistor with a shorted one and replacing the fuse with a blown one. These are common parts that are often replaced. We pick a common moni-



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.85¢	61.20	122.40
.90¢ (5"-11")	64.80	129.60
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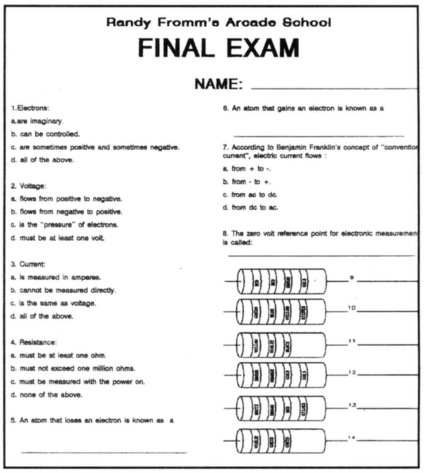
tor, such as the one made by Wells-Gardner, that any distributor is all but guaranteed to have on hand already. The candidate is timed as he/she troubleshoots and (hopefully) repairs the monitor and is graded by the objective quantity of time. The subjective grading of how "good" the repair is (solder joints, component mounting, etc.) may or may not have a part in this testing. I tend to lean away from this as it can become a point of contention and possible ill will between the candidate and the distributor's tech. Naturally, this is not the objective here. This is supposed to be a fun, learning experience for everyone involved.


Randy Fromm's Arcade School

FINAL EXAM

NAME: _____

1.Electrons:
a.are imaginary.
b. can be controlled.
c. are sometimes positive and sometimes negative.
d. all of the above.

2. Voltage:
a. flows from positive to negative.
b. flows from negative to positive.
c. is the "pressure" of electrons.
d. must be at least one volt.

3. Current:
a. is measured in amperes.
b. cannot be measured directly.
c. is the same as voltage.
d. all of the above.

4. Resistance:
a. must be at least one ohm.
b. must not exceed one million ohms.
c. must be measured with the power on.
d. none of the above.

5. An atom that loses an electron is known as a _____

6. An atom that gains an electron is known as a _____

7. According to Benjamin Franklin's concept of "conventional current", electric current flows :
a. from + to -.
b. from - to +.
c. from ac to dc.
d. from dc to ac.

8. The zero volt reference point for electronic measurements is called: _____

9

10

11

12

13

14

TOP HITS OF JAPAN

from Game Machine Magazine, September 1, 1994

TOP 25 VIDEO COCKTAILS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Virtua Fighter (Sega)
2	Vampire (Capcom)
3	Super St. Fighter II Turbo (Capcom)
4	Crazy Cross (Konami)
5	Ichidant-R (Sega)
6	Mazinger Z (Banpresto)
7	Aero Fighters 2 (Video System/SNK)
8	Aggs, of Dark Kombat (ADK/SNK)
9	Fantastic Journey (Konami)
10	Great Sluggers (Namco)
11	Puyo Puyo (Compile/Sega)
12	Speed Shogi (Seta)
13	Raiden II (Seibu)
14	Mahjong Pro. "Kiwame" (Athena)
15	Super Real Mahjong P. IV (Seta)
16	Quiz "Show by Show by" (Taito)
17	Blood Warrior (Kaneko)
18	Alien vs Predadator (Capcom)
19	Netto Gekito Quiz-to (Namco)
20	Super Side Kicks 2 (SNK)
21	Shanghai III (Sun)
22	New Atomic Punk (Irem)
23	Shanghai II (Sun)
24	Golfing Greats 2 (Konami)
25	Great Sluggers (Namco)

TOP 15 UPRIGHTS & COCKPITS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Ridge Racer [deluxe] (Namco)
2	Daytona USA [twin] (Sega)
3	Wing War [Twin] (Sega)
4	Daytona USA [deluxe] (Sega)
5	Virtua Fighter (Sega)
6	Star Wars (Sega)
7	Jurassic Park (Sega)
8	Final Lap R [standard] (Namco)
9	Out Runners (Sega)
10	Speed King-King of Quiz (Jaleco)
11	Speed Champ-King of Quiz (Jaleco)
12	Virtua Racing [twin] (Sega)
13	Cyber Sled (Namco)
14	Lethal Enforcers (Konami)
15	Under Fire (Taito)

TOP 5 FLIPPERS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Royal Rumble (Data East)
2	Tales from the Crypt (Data East)
3	Popeye Saves The Earth (Midway)
4	Street Fighter II (Premier)
5	Lethal Weapon 3 (Data East)

Of course, someone must produce not only the test, but a study guide as well. You'd be pissed off if you went to the Department of Motor Vehicles to take a written driving exam and there was no study guide available to help you learn the answers. The study guide can be provided when the candidate submits a "testing fee" of (X) dollars to the AMOA.

Along with the study guide, the candidate gets a list of authorized AMOA proctors. A serial numbered test is mailed in a sealed envelope to the proctor of his choice who unseals it in the presence of the candidate, administers the test, reseals it in front of the candidate and returns it, ungraded or inspected, to the AMOA testing guru, where it is graded and the candidate notified of the results. The results of the practical exams (the time required to complete a fixed set of common repairs) are also returned for grading.

The AMOA should produce a set of embroidered patches that techs can proudly display on their service uniforms. (I like to see all service personnel in uniform both in the shop and on location.) There should be a central or otherwise dominant patch for the basic qualification, with "bars" (fabric or pins) that can be added for additional qualifications, such as "jukebox" or "bill changers," etc. The manufacturers can have their own bars produced that are awarded at the end of their service schools. I'm sure technicians would be proud to display their achievements to their peers and to our coin-op customers as well.

Say, readers. What do you think of this idea? Got any suggestions? Comments? Call me at 619/593-6131, fax 619-593-6132, internet Randy Fromm @delphi.com or just yell out the window at me. ◆

ON THE ROAD

BY BOB RONDEAU



Once in a while, looking back can be fun, interesting and educational. Last night I cleaned out another box filled with a bunch of newsletters that I used to send out every month from my old Green Bay distributorship. We would mail out large envelopes stuffed with huge calendars for the coming month; on it, were specials for the month and individual days. We had fun doing it, and, hopefully, our customers enjoyed it as well. The time was the early '80s, when we prided ourselves on having more deals than Carters had liver pills.

THE TIME HAS PASSED

As a distributor, we tried to make it fun and entertaining for operators to come in and buy from us. After all, fun was what our industry sold. We wanted our customers to feel like their customers — the ones using his equipment for entertainment.

Looking back, I rediscovered some of deals we used to make: A free grab bag of parts for just coming in. A free breakfast for coming in before 11AM. A $50 parts credit for any new or used piece of equipment bought. Buy a pool table, and get a set of cushions and a baker's dozen of cues. Five hundred dart tips free for any dart game bought.

We put 50 used pins, videos, phonos, etc., all shopped and ready to go, on display at the regular used price on the first day; then, we would discount the price by one percent everyday thereafter until all the pieces were sold. We had a two percent discount on cash purchases, and gave away Wild Cat Cleaner with a parts purchase of $25 or more. We bought a bunch of old backglasses from Bally and Gottlieb, and gave them away with any machine bought new or used. We even gave away t-shirts and 5 lb. boxes of chocolates on holidays. We also had a rental program and, of course, we had a hell of a lot of healthy competition.

The prices then were also from way out of the past. Compared to today, it's like night and day: new pool tables, $950; pinballs, $1195; dart games, $895; and videos from $795 to $1195. However, some operators don't seem to realize that that time has passed. Twenty years from now, our industry will remember the prices of today with envy while these same operators are putting out equipment with no contracts, on quarter play, at a 50/50 split, and complaining about the rising cost of equipment.

Today it is a whole new ball game. The equipment you buy today may cost you more than what you paid for the truck you're using to haul it in, but if you look around, you'll see that everything — gas, haircuts, kids, beer, cars, food, etc. — is much higher. Your customers know this, your location knows this, yet there are still operators who operate like it was yesterday.

Why is it so difficult for some operators to do the same things that other businesses do instead of bitching about the price of equipment, competition from Indian casinos, etc? In one of my old newsletters and calendars from 1982, I reprinted one of Ed Adlum's old columns. I really felt it was not going to sell any more equipment for me, but it had to be said: I and the rest of the industry needed "successful operators" for all of us to stay in business.

Eddie may not always be right, but he was this time. Unfortunately, the problem with many operators is that they're still blaming everything on the competition, the manufacturers, anything but just plain old bad business sense. We sell the best and cheapest entertainment in the world. If we doubled the price we charge right now, we would still be the best and cheapest in the world. (It feel so good to say what needs to be said.) Isn't it time we stop dreaming, hoping and complaining, and charge a fair price for the service we offer. No one gave up beer because it went from a nickel to a buck and a half.

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NEW PRODUCTS

SUPER BANK-IT II from Lazer-Tron



Lazer-Tron announced that it reclaimed full rights to *Super Bank-It*, a redemption game developed by Lazer-Tron and previously marketed by Capcom. Lazer-Tron is also releasing a new version of the game called *Super Bank-It II*. It's available now.

Like its predecessors, *Super Bank-It II* is a unique ball-shooter/coin pusher that awards tickets for points earned. The new game features three ways for players to win points: Each basket made will award points; all coins that are pushed to the edge add up to winning tickets; and a special bonus jackpot is awarded to the player who lights up the seventh basket after all of the other six baskets have been made.

Lazer-Tron has assumed all of the customer service contracts associated with *Bank-It* and *Super Bank-It*, and has developed a kit that will allow these games to be converted into *Super Bank-It II*.

For more information, contact an authorized distributor or call Lazer-Tron at 510/460-0873.

DART STAR SPECTRUM from Medalist



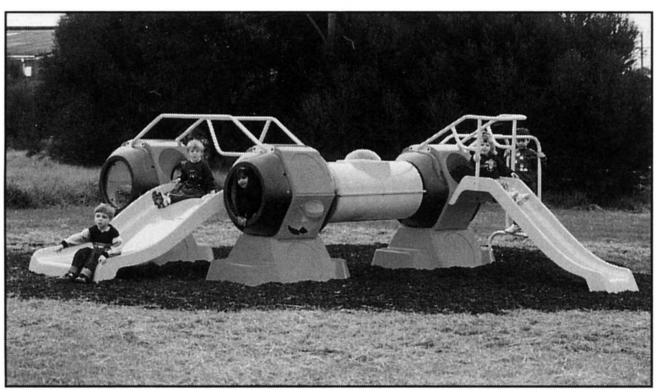
From its high-density polyethylene cabinet (four-year warranty) to the 14-inch, 256-color VGA monitor, the *Dart Star Spectrum* from Medalist covers an entire "spectrum" of operator and player needs.

Spectrum offers a game library of 28 games. They range from 01, Cricket, practice, and sports and leisure games, to the newest in software technology with *Spectrum's* "Robo-Rival" self-play mode. The machine also provides on-screen animation in conjunction with voice (bilingual option) and digital sound effects in all game modes.

Operators will appreciate the unit's easy-access, front-opening service door and its extensive range of operator programmability, which includes variable pricing (games and options), bookkeeping, game popularity, printed reports, etc.

For a more complete list of *Spectrum's* features and unique capabilities, contact Medalist Marketing Corp., 206 Frontage Rd., Pacific, WA 98047; 800/532-4837.

New kiddie play system from FunTechnic



FunTechnic, Inc. introduces an all-new play system that gives smaller kids (up to 6 years old) a stimulating play/activity area. The *Kidz* play systems come in five different models and three different colors, and are designed to cater to a wide variety of both indoor and outdoor locations.

The modular design utilizes platform technology, and has add-on capability to meet expanding needs. The system also offers easy installation — avoiding the need for skilled installers and/or extensive site preparation. Carnival colors (with optional environmental or pastel ranges) compliment any location.

For more information the different system combinations (pictured is the Jupiter Pak), contact Courtney King at 313/483-0572 or call FunTechnic, Inc. at 305/592-5932.

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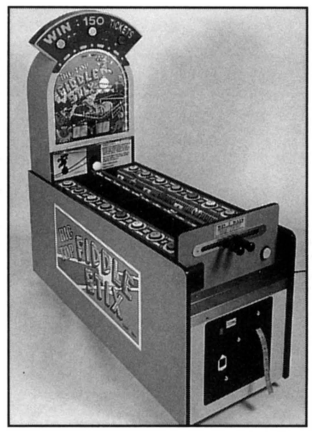
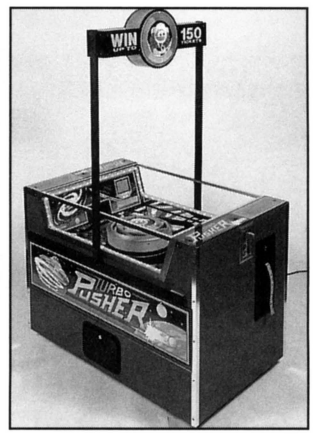


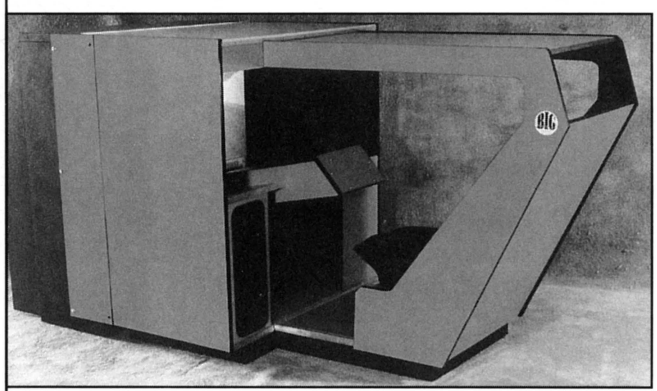


Quick Silver Development Co. has updated their *Fiddle Stix* and *Turbo Pusher* redemption games.

Quick Silver's *Fiddle Stix* now includes a new add-on marquee along with a multiplier feature designed to enhance gameplay and maximize earning power. *Turbo Pusher*, the company's clever coin game with a unique rotating pusher, now includes a flashing marquee, updated music and a multiplier feature.

For more information, contact your local distributor or contact Quick Silver's sales office at 408/737-7491.

New game cabinet from Big Electronics



On the heels of their recently released 50" upright video game cabinet, Big Electronics introduces their second product, the 50" JAMMA compatible sit-down video game cabinet.

The cabinet features a stereo 50-inch Hitachi projector TV with two remotes and full on-screen picture and sound adjustments. A full JAMMA wiring harness with extra long leads for the driving controls, and gold plated and heavily shielded audio and video cables are included, as well as an RGB to NTSC converter board. A top-quality 15 amp power supply is also standard.

Like the upright version, the monitor is covered by a full tempered plate glass cover, and the electronics are fully accessible through a hinged door. An additional trap door is provided next to the driver's seat for games that have a gear shift. The bucket seat is automotive quality.

The unit separates into manageable pieces, moves easily on a pool table dolly and rolls through a standard doorway. The cabinet is constructed of Formica on 3/4" plywood, and is solid, durable and easy to clean.

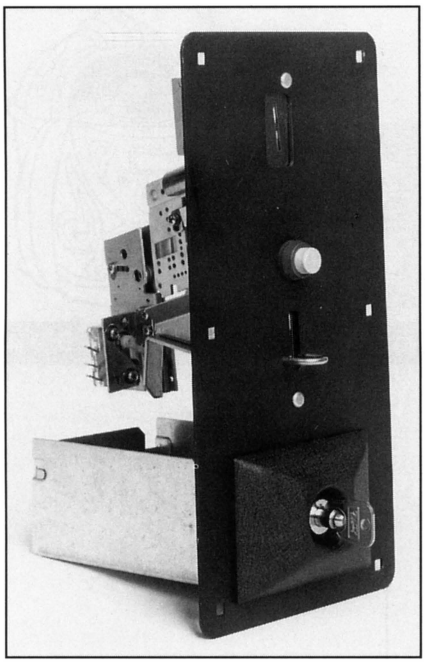
For more information, contact Big Electronics, Inc., 8222 Jamestown Dr. Suite 122, Austin, TX; 512/719-4361.

New HMD from Liquid Image

The Liquid Image design team has successfully modified their award-winning MRG2 Head Mounted Display to be compatible with the Virtuality entertainment system, making it a durable, low-cost replacement for the W. Industries Visette.

This new modified version, designated the MRG2V, is available with custom paint and graphics, which allows owners to have their company name and logos put right on the HMD.

For more information, contact Liquid Image Corp., 659 Century St., Winnipeg, MB R3H 0L9, Canada.



New from Monarch

Monarch has developed an inexpensive steel panel that incorporates a simple, durable drop-coin mechanism, and secure coin box.

This heavy-gauge powder coated panel is manufactured for original equipment manufacturers, for upgrading older equipment, and for those converting equipment that was not originally intended for coin operation.

The coin boxes offer several different grades of lock. The mechanism accepts a single coin or token, which once accepted, passes a microswitch to make an electrical closure. Bent or bogus coins are released and returned to the customer. Electrical solid-state timers are available to work in conjunction with other systems.

For more information, contact Monarch Tool & Mfg. Co., Inc. at 800/462-9460.

COUGAR ZD-6 from Valley

Valley's new *Cougar ZD-6* appears dramatically different from the company's previous "flagship" model. The new design departs from Valley's typical dark-colored laminates and fluted side corners to a light "Summit Ash" laminate and a new side corner with a dimensional Cougar medallion. Along with a redesigned bright aluminum trim, the *ZD-6* has substantially different look from the original Cougar, one that has been well-received by operators who've viewed it, according to Valley.

The table underneath the new styling, while retaining all the desirable features Valley customers have come to expect, has also undergone some improvements. Additional chalk-drop holes have been added to the ball-return chute, with yet more die-stamped in the chute, which can be easily cut out by operators if desired. The ball trap has also reinforced with additional metal braces and spot welds for even greater durability.

The major pieces that have been standard on Valley table for some time are still there: the one-piece polythylene ball collector chute, the "replaceable" coin chute housing that's designed to break away for determined vandals, double reinforced structural fiberglass legs, and the triple plated die-cast metal corners.

The new *Cougar ZD-6* is available in 85", 88", 93" and 101" lengths.

For more information and literature on the full line of Valley pool tables, contact your authorized distributor or Valley Recreational Products, Inc., 333 Morton St., P.O. Box 656, Bay City, MI 48707; 517/892-4536 or 800/248-2837.

ICM 1000 CASINO CHANGER from Tekbilt

Tekbilt's top-line change machine, the *ICM 1000 Casino Changer*, recently received approval from the State of New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement.

The *ICM 1000 Casino Changer* is a high speed, high capacity machine with state-the-art on-board intelligence. It accepts all US denominations from $1 to $100, and dispenses all US coins and casino tokens through dual Asahi Seiko hoppers.

The unit features internal accounting capabilities that monitor bill transactions, door openings and errors or malfunctions. When the New Jersey DGE approved the *ICM 1000*, they cited its "operational proficiency and appropriate security measures.

For more information, contact Tekbilt's national distributor, TDN Money Systems, at 800/322-1316, or Tekbilt Inc. at 800/ 666-7776.

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VITAL TITLES



TOP-SELLING 45s & CDs AT KEY ONE-STOPS AS OF AUGUST 23, 1994

POP

1. ***SHINE,*** *Collective Soul, Atlantic 87237*
2. ***THINK TWICE,*** *Celine Dion, 550 Music 77545*
3. ***LOVE IS STRONG,*** *Rolling Stones, Virgin 38446*
4. ***WILD NIGHT,*** *John Mellencamp w/ Me'Shell Ndegeocello, Mercury 858738*
5. ***YOU LET YOUR HEART GO TOO FAST,*** *Spin Doctors, Epic 77600*
6. ***YOU,*** *Bonnie Raitt, Capitol 58195*
7. ***THE WAY SHE LOVES ME,*** *Richard Marx, Capitol 58167*
8. ***I'LL STAND BY YOU,*** *Pretenders, Warner Bros. 18160*
9. ***DON'T TURN AROUND,*** *Ace of Base, Arista 12691*
10. ***TAKE IT BACK,*** *Pink Floyd, Columbia 77493*

POP PICK HITS

LETITGO

Prince - Warner Bros. 18074

C/W

1. ***WHAT THE COWGIRLS DO,*** *Vince Gill, MCA 54879*
2. ***THIRD ROCK FROM THE SUN,*** *Joe Diffe, Epic 77577*
3. ***ELVIS & ANDY,*** *Confederate Railroad, Atlantic 87229*
4. ***XXX'S AND OOO'S,*** *Trisha Yearwood, MCA 54898*
5. ***THE MAN IN LOVE WITH YOU,*** *George Strait, MCA 54854*
6. ***SHE THINKS HIS NAME IS JOHN,*** *Reba McEntire, MCA 54899*
7. ***SUMMERTIME BLUES,*** *Alan Jackson, Arista 12697*
8. ***I TRY TO THINK ABOUT ELVIS,*** *Patty Loveless, Epic 77609*
9. ***TEN FEET TALL AND BULLETPROOF,*** *Travis Tritt, Warner Bros. 18180*
10. ***TAKE THESE CHAINS FROM MY HEART,*** *Lee Roy Parnell, Arista 12695*

COUNTRY PICK HITS

WATERMELON CRAWL

Tracy Byrd - MCA 54889

R&B

★ 1. ***ALWAYS IN MY HEART,*** *Tevin Campbell*
★ 2. ***ANYTHING,*** *SWV, RCA 62834*
★ 3. ***THE RIGHT KINDA LOVER,*** *Patti LaBelle, MCA 54673*
★ 4. ***WHEN CAN I SEE YOU,*** *Babyface, Epic 77550*
5. ***I ONLY HAVE EYES FOR YOU,*** *Funky Poets, Epic 77517*
6. ***I SWEAR,*** *All-4-One, Atlantic 87243*
7. ***CAN'T GET ENOUGH,*** *El Debarge, Reprise 18155*
★ 8. ***YOU MEAN THE WORLD TO ME,*** *Toni Braxton, Arista 24054*
9. ***BIGGEST PART OF ME,*** *Take 6, Reprise 18122*
★ 10. ***ANYTIME YOU NEED A FRIEND,*** *Mariah Carey, Columbia 77528*

R & B PICK HITS

WHERE IS MY LOVE?

El Debarge & Babyface - Reprise 18140

CDs

1. ***VOODOO LOUNGE,*** *Rolling Stones, Virgin 39782*
2. ***DIVISION BELL,*** *Pink Floyd, Columbia 64200*
3. ***AUGUST & EVERYTHING AFTER,*** *Counting Crows, Geffen 24528*
4. ***WHO I AM,*** *Alan Jackson, Arista 18759*
5. ***PURPLE,*** *Stone Temple Pilots, Atlantic 82607*
6. ***THE SIGN,*** *Ace of Base, Arista 18740*
7. ***READ MY MIND,*** *Reba McEntire, MCA 10973*
8. ***FOUR CHORDS AND...,*** *Huey Lewis & The News, Elektra 61633*
9. ***NOT A MOMENT TO SOON,*** *Tim McGraw, Curb 77659*
10. ***LION KING,*** *Soundtrack, Walt Disney 60858*

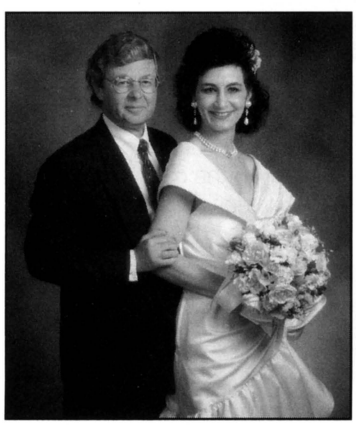
★ = *significant crossover activity*

GRAPEVINE

NORTHEAST

TOM LAVERNE, the NYS Senator who successfully championed many causes on behalf of route operators in the Empire State, died of cancer at Rochester Hospital Aug 8. Just over 30 years ago in Albany, when state association president Millie McCarthy was seeing all her efforts to legalize 6-pocket pool table operations in taverns wither away as the state Legislature approached adjournment, her chance meeting with the then-freshman senator made coinbiz history. He took Millie's bill in both hands and personally ran all the way through to Gov. Nelson Rockefeller's desk. As Millie recalls: "Rockefeller signed it into law because he didn't dare take on a hot headed Sicilian like Tom." In his years working with McCarthy and others, Sen. Laverne was also responsible for killing off many nasty machine tax requests and almost single-handedly defeated a heavy move for casino gambling. "We owe him so much," Millie wrote in a letter to tell us of his death. (Poignantly, she lost another friend that very week with the passing of Al Miniaci; please see separate story up front.)

MINIACI MEMORIAL — Anyone wishing to make a gesture in Al Miniaci's memory is requested to send a cash contribution to the St. Anthony's Foundation for Education, 820 N.E. 3rd St., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301.

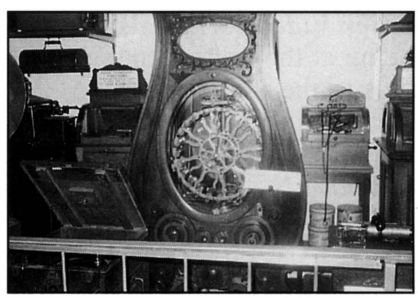


MODERN BRIDE — Philly operator Sharon Harris (Stan Harris & Co.) recently tied the knot with attorney Ron Segal. The wedding was on Sunday, May 22 at the Rittenhouse Hotel in Philadelphia. Industry guests included Mort Ansky of U.S. Games, Pennsylvania operators Arnie Aronovitz (Apple Vending) and Fred Wood (Mid-State Amusements) and their wives. Also, there was New York operator Bob Herman. Sharon has been a veteran of coin-op for virtually her entire life and was a past AMOA director; husband Ron practices law in the Philadelphia area. Best wishes to this lucky couple!

PACKING 'EM IN — A record crowd attend the Pennsylvania Amusement and Music Machine Assn.'s Annual Convention and Trade Show July 22-23 at the Seven Springs resort. More than 350 people, representing 88 operating companies, 29 manufacturers and 7 distributors, among others, took part in the gathering. Much of the attention was focused on next year's prospects for legalized video lottery in the state, making Saturday's VL seminar with state Rep. Fred Trello and state Sen. Bill Stewart one of the show's highlights. Both gave optimistic assessments for video lottery's chances in early 1995, and agreed that a partnership between vendors, taverns and the state was best way to go.

SOUTHEAST

STEVE HENDERSON and his staff at Operators Distributing, Inc. proudly note that the dealership is marking its tenth year in business. These specialists in street operator accounts have been at the same place on Old Thomasville Road practically since the beginning, only the town was originally High Point and got itself a name change to Archdale. Steve himself was recently completed a two-week road trip with Bob Hamilton, calling on some operators in the Carolinas and the Tidewater section of Virginia. He often visits the locations when he's with his customers to get a hands-on about what's doing well and what's needed. When you see Steve and his bride of 32 years Mary at the Expo, wish them a happy 10th!



TIME TO TRADE UP? — Before CDs, there were 45's, 78's and even cylinders on jukeboxes. That baroque-looking thing in the photo was Tom Edison's own cylinder-playing jukebox, which he put together back in 1925. On display at the Thomas Edison Museum in Ft. Meyers, Fla., the machine handled 24 cylinders in a ferris wheel type mech that rotated. Guess if we owned one, we wouldn't trade it up either.

BRADY'S BUILDING — The Charlotte, N.C. headquarters of Brady Distributing is about to get bigger and prettier. Jon Brady, Jr. says they're going to add on a lotta space to warehouse. After this, they'll redo the offices, set up a smart new showroom and refurb the shop. The whole improvement could be complete in time for a post-ACME open house next spring. Brady Dist. marks its 50th anny on Dec. 7, but since the building improvements will still be going on, they'll probably combine that hallmark with the open house. At least that's the thought at this stage....Meantime, down in Memphis, Ron Harris and Vicki Blackburn relocated their

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The Ultimate in Video Entertainment



Real horses running in actual races, *recreated by Laser Video*, bring all the excitement of being at the track. Random Double Odds adds to the fun in Single or Double Monitor Models. *NO OTHER HORSE RACE GAME CAN COMPARE!* TIME TESTED...PROVEN RELIABILITY.

FOR EXPORT!

Largest selection of BALLY, IGT, SIGMA, UNIVERSAL, SLOTS, POKERS, KENO. BLITZ, MEGA-DOUBLE, BANK ROBBERY, PCB'S...BONANZA POKERS

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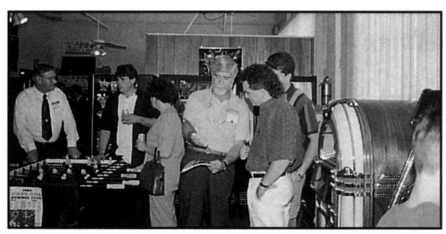
Brady office in July to digs at 1584 Two Place. Same phones as before, but call 'em up anyway or send a plant.

KIDS IN CASINOS — As many in the industry predicted, anti-casino forces in Louisiana and Mississippi have rallied around the issue of children being allowed within a gambling environment. The latest examples were pointed out to us by New Orleans distributor Louis Boasberg, who sent us a few editorial clippings from area newspapers. The articles focused on the recent opening of a "children's activity center" inside the Grand Casino in Gulfport, Miss., and reported that other gambling establishments may follow through with similar centers. A pair of editorials found the concept reprehensible, while another article reported that even casino and riverboat owners had mixed opinions on the idea.

LOUIS BOASBERG, founder of New Orleans Novelty, also sent his condolences upon hearing of the July 11 passing of Atari Games president Hide Nakajima. He writes: "Due to the usual complaints and infirmities of old age, this writer was out of touch with the coin machine world for a short period and only recently learned of the death of Hide Nakajima, head man at Atari. I can only say one thing about Mr. Nakajima, he was a Gentleman. And if you know of a higher compliment you can pay any man than saying, 'he was a real Gentleman,' be my guest. Hide will be missed in the industry, that is for sure."

MIDWEST

GREATER AMERICAN DIST. of Omaha, Neb. hosted their annual Open House May 29. Many of the region's operators were on hand to check the latest equipment to hit the marketplace. Manufacturer reps included Jaleco's Nancy Hart, Data East's Joe Blackwell and Premier's John Buros. The action above shows (l to r): Steve Wolf (Greater American) chatting with Scott & Yolanda Spanel (Top Tune Amusement); and Glenn Streeter (Antique Apparatus) with Brent Winshausen and Chris Hittner (Automatic Vending). A buffet lunch and refreshments were served, and many in the crowd said they were already looking forward to next year's festivities.





TWIN CHECKS — During its mid-winter board meeting, the Valley National 8-Ball Association voted to donate $1,000 to the "Willie Mosconi Memorial Scholarship Fund." This was closely followed by a matching contribution of $1,000 by Valley Recreation Products. The two checks were turned over to the Billiard Congress of America, in a joint presentation June 2, at the VNEA tournament in Las Vegas. Pictured are (l to r): Gary Beson and Jerry Breisath, both on the BCA board of directors; Chuck Milhem, Valley president; and

Gene Urso, VNEA president. Presently, 15 Mosconi Scholarships are awarded to the winners of regional pool tournaments sponsored by the Assn. of College Unions Int. The ACUI uses the fund to encourage college students to enjoy pool and obtain an education.

PLANNING AHEAD — Jerry Marcus & Ed Pellegrini have set their Chicago and Grand Rapids open house dates to show a lot of Expo equipment to local Atlas Distributing customers. Mark down Thurs., Oct 6 for the Windy City and Oct. 13 for LeRoux-ville. We didn't know Grojian's dates at presstime, bit he usually throws a slammer down in Cincy.

OCMA ELECTS NEW BOARD — The Ohio Coin Machine Association elected a new board of directors for 1994-95 at their July 14 board meeting. The newly elected officers are Michael A. Zappa (Lorain Music, Crestline), president; Rodney Stebelton (Stebelton Music, Lancaster), 1st vice president; John Rizek (Big City Vending, Columbus), 2nd vice president; Nancy Baxter (Pioneer Service, Cincinnati), secretary; and Larry A. Van Brackel (A. Van Brackel & Sons, Defiance), treasurer. Congratulations to these outstanding individuals.

VIDEO GIVEAWAY — Strata and a leading vidgame magazine, *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, are holding a contest to promote both Strata's *BloodStorm* fighting game and the launch of *EMG2*, a new monthly from *EMG*. The contest, which can be found in the pages of the *EMG2*'s premier issue, gives players a chance to win a new dedicated *BloodStorm* game, but it also asks them to name the location where they play the game. The location named the most will be awarded a free *BloodStorm* kit direct from Strata.

GRAND OPENING — Miner Mike's Adventure Zone in Osage Beach, Mo. opened its doors for the first time this June. The 25,000 sq. ft. western-themed FEC features mine shafts, rocks and a covered wagon train ride, along with a 500-foot roller coaster, ferris wheel, three-level softplay area, outdoor 54-hole mini golf, webfall, food service and party rooms. New Jersey's Alpha-Omega Amusements provided extensive support, supplying Miner Mike's with over 100 coin-op pieces. Alpha-Omega prexy Frank Seninsky helped design logos and choose games, prepared a floor layout, and even sent a crew out to Missouri to set up the games.

AND THE WINNER IS — Apex Amusement of Melrose Park, Ill. was the randomly drawn winner in Valley's *Image Series* Contest, which was part of the new pool table line's introduction. Contest entry forms were sent to operators, who responded through their distributors. Apex Amusement owner Mike Lupo, who sent his form through Worldwide Distributing, chose the Traditional model as his prize. Designed to enhance the decor of "upscale" locations, the tables also come in Country and Contemporary models.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH — Rumor has it that an Wisconsin operator's coalition headed by past AMOA president Wally Bohrer has met with the attorney general of Wisconsin at least a half dozen times on the issue of legalized gaming in the state. Wally claims the state is using selective enforcement — it seems that some D.A.'s are enforcing the law and others are not, and will not — and has told the attorney general that his coalition will sue unless they get some relief.

FOR THE RECORD — Vicky Sieben of M.H. Associates,

LATINO Jukebox Top 30
FOR MONTH ENDING JULY 1994

COMPILED FOR COMPACT DISC JUKEBOX OPERATORS

	THIS CHART	LAST CHART	TITLE	ARTIST
REGIONAL MEXICAN	1	1	LOS DOS PLEBES (No. 1)	LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE
	2	--	EL INDOMABLE	LALO MORA
	3	9	LASTIMA QUE SEAS AJENA	VICENTE FERNANDEZ
	4	10	INALCANZABLE	LOS BUKIS
	5	5	LOS MACHOS TAMBIEN LLORAN	BANDA MACHOS
	6	8	TU ULTIMA CANCION	LOS TEMERARIOS
	7	3	PURA SANGRE	BRONCO
	8	6	TODO MI VIDA	ANTONIO AGUILAR, HIJO
	9	--	RECORDANDO A LOS PANCHOS	VICENTE FERNANDEZ
	10	--	JUNTOS CANTAN AL MARIACHI	C. SANCHEZ & G. BELTRAN
TROPICAL / SALSA	1	--	EXITOS DE LA DINAMITA (No. 1)	SONORA DINAMITA
	2	--	ES UN ESCANDALO	SONORA DINAMITA
	3	9	MI TIERRA	GLORIA ESTEFAN
	4	--	CARA DE NINO	JERRY RIVERA
	5	--	MI MEDIA MITAD	REY RUIZ
	6	--	EL ESPECTACULAR 12 EXITOS	OSCAR D'LEON
	7	--	SONORA TROPICANA '93	SONORA TROPICANA '93
	8	--	SALSA MAGIC (2CD'S)	VARIOUS ARTISTS
	9	--	THE BEST	SERGIO VARGAS
	10	--	SOUTH BEACH	WILLY CHIRINO
POP	1	2	TE CONQUISTARE (No. 1)	LOS FUGITIVOS
	2	3	AMOR PROHIBIDO	SELENA
	3	1	VIDA	LA MAFIA
	4	--	VANIDOSA	LOS FUGITIVOS
	5	9	GRACIAS POR ESPERAR	JUAN GABRIEL
	6	10	17 SUPER EXITOS	SELENA
	7	4	THE BEST	ANA GABRIEL
	8	--	SUPER EXITOS	LIBERACION
	9	--	VERANO DEL AMOR	INDUSTRIA DEL AMOR
	10	10	LUNA	ANA GABRIEL

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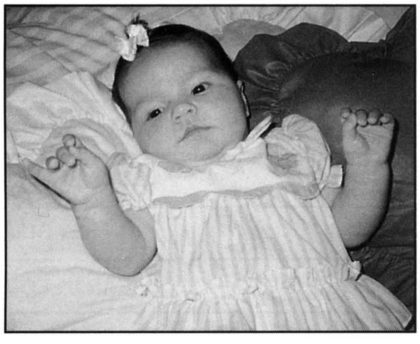
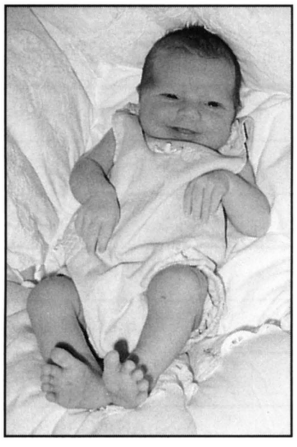
Ltd. sent us a fax to dispel a belief in the industry that a relationship exists between M.H. Associates and Amusement Games Distributors, which probably stemmed from the fact that both companies are located in Fargo, N.D. "There is no relationship between the two companies," she stated. "Doug Hardina, head of sales at AGD, worked in sales at M.H. Associates, Ltd. for eight years, but resigned his position at MHA on Feb. 22, 1994, and has no association between the two companies or in their ownership. I hope this clears up any misconceptions, and eliminates any further confusion."

NAME CHANGE — In World, Inc., the Minneapolis-based makers of VR systems designed for a wide range of applications, has changed its name to Virtual Express, Ltd. as of August 8. According to CEO Jim Minor, the name Virtual Express reflects the company's business focus, and sends "a clear message that our software technology allows us rapid product development and therefor rapid access to the emerging virtual reality markets."

SOUTHWEST



MEET MISTY — Ed (Seeburg) Blankenbeckler's the proud grandpa of a pretty little lady named Misty. She was born to Mark and Liz Blankenbeckler three months back, and old Blank says he's got a couple hundred wallet-sized snapshots to pass out at the San Antonio show.



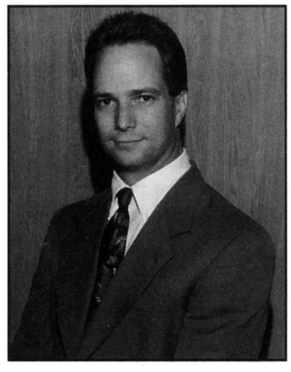
ALL SMILES — Attorney David Hagen, who co-authors the monthly Legal Questions column in RePlay, and wife Gina recently became proud parents. Sherri Hagen was born June 20 and weighed 8 lbs., 7 oz. Mom and baby are said to be doing just fine.

OPEN HOUSE SEASON — Just as day follows night, as soon as the Expo closes in San Antonio, the distributor open house tour gets underway for manufacturer reps. C.A. Robinson's Ira Bettelman has a choice idea for this year's whirlwind. Every rep should put $5 into a pool for every show he or she attends, plus an additional $5 for every night spent out on the road. At season's end, the accumulated funds will be divided between the first two dealers who cancel their open houses next year and the manufacturer rep who gains the most weight. Ira's post-AMOA openers, by the way, will take place Oct. 5 at the San Francisco office and Oct. 7 down in L.A.

ON ANOTHER NOTE, part of the money raised when Leah Bettelman was honored at the ACME show went to help disadvantaged youngsters pay tuition at UCLA. She recently got a letter from selected student Dennis Marcucci that speaks for itself (and shows the kind of worthwhile things this industry sometimes does). Wrote Dennis to Leah: "I would like to thank you for giving me this scholarship. It means a great deal to me. With this award and my government aid, I can now attend UCLA without borrowing money. My family is tight for money and could not afford to send me to college. I thank you again and I hope we could keep in touch." By the way, Dennis comes from Marrieta, Calif., near San Bernadino.

NO LONGER WITH US — Ronald N. Owen (Ronnie to his friends), owner and operator of R&L Ventures, Inc., DBA A-1 Amusements in Harker Heights, Texas, passed away July 23. The cause of death was heart failure due to cancer. Memorials may be made to the Trinity Baptist Church in Harker Heights or the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, 1515 Holcombe Blvd., Houston, TX 77030.

IGT INTERNATIONAL has acquired Wyatt & Associates, Inc. of Pleasanton, Calif. With this purchase, IGT has picked up the Casino Management Series software product line, an alternative to IGT's SMART System, which is aimed at the needs of medium-sized casinos. IGT believes the new CMS system has a definite niche in the international marketplace.



LAZER-TRON CORP. has appointed Gregory A. Hyser to the newly created position of Customer Service supervisor. In this capacity, he will supervise a growing staff of client service representatives and provide technical support to distributors, arcades, family entertainment centers and end-users. Greg recently served as senior technician in Customer Service at Jaleco, Inc. Before that, he was a game technician at the Enchanted Castle FEC in Illinois. Matt Kelly, vice president of Lazer-Tron praised Greg's technical expertise and trouble-shooting ability. "Last year, Lazer-Tron was voted tops in customer service by several operator polls," Matt said. "With Greg's skills and enthusiasm, we will continue to provide unsurpassed technical and product support to our customers."

ARCADE OF THE FUTURE — Namco brought the press to an exclusive preview of their brand-new Magic Edge arcade in Mt. View, Calif. Aug. 25. Saying it's got the ambiance of the Hard Rock Cafe, the special effects of Universal Studios, and the glitz of Planet Hollywood, Namco claims the concept is "going to rock the entertainment world." We hope to have a full story and photos in our next issue.

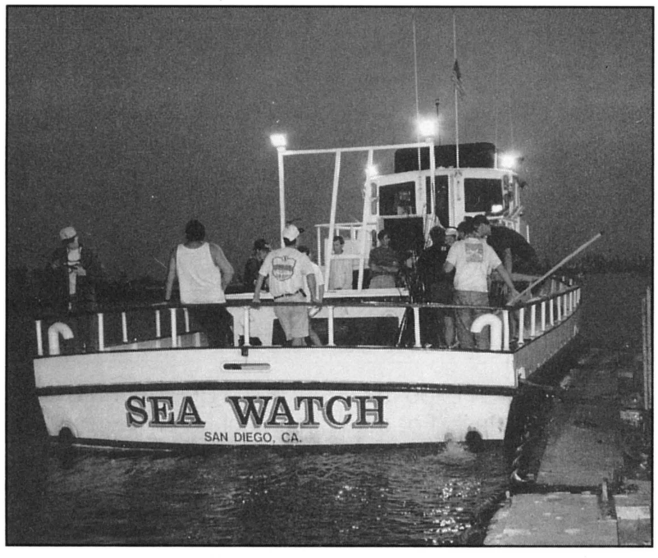
SAM FRANKLIN, an eight-year SoCal operating vet (and sometimes manufacturer) best known for *Cool Pool* and Catalina Games, is back in coin-op as president of Reseda, Calif.-based Sera-World. Sam's company will be buying used PCBs for resale. "I'm thankful to be back in the industry," he said. "I have so many friends in coin-op." Just prior to his latest venture, Sam spent his time playing jazz bass in New Mexico and riding Harleys. Sera-World can be reached

at 800/900-3099 or you can fax Sam a "Welcome Back" card at 818/758-1683.



SOCCER TIE-IN — Pasadena, Calif.'s world-famous Rose Bowl hosted a number of World Cup Soccer matches, including the exciting finale between Italy and Brazil. In attendance throughout the event were thousands of fans, scores of sponsors and a pair of Merit *Scorpion Stinger '94* dart games. The machines were set up in the Budweiser Sponsor Tent, where a steady stream of corporate types and their guests sought out a little diversion from the tournament by enjoying an impromptu game of darts. (Sure beats watching a bunch of skinny guys in shorts kick a ball around in 100 degree heat.)

DOUG MINTER, owner/operator of Tip Top Amusement (Carson City) treated a couple dozen of his business buddies to a day's fishing on the Sea Watch out of San Diego, Aug.





13. Leaving early, the crowd hit the fishing grounds in time to land some 276 fish (including the single mackerel that Mountain/ Phoenix's Don Waters caught all day). The largest fish taken was a barracuda. Most of the group (posing on the aft deck below) come from the Godfather's Pizza chain, which Tip Top serves with machines. Besides Don Waters, boss Elden Kingston and his son Kent, and Vegas manager Dave Palmer also made the trip.

GET WET — The World Waterpark Association will hold their annual tradeshow Oct. 5-7 at the new MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Organizers plan to bring together waterpark owners, designers, operators, consultants and international buyers for three days of seminars, receptions and parties, and, of course, a wide range of products and services. For more information, contact the WWA at 913/ 599-0300.

NORTHWEST

PACIFIC VEND DISTRIBUTORS will hold their post-AMOA open house Friday, Oct. 14 at their showroom on 8250 Fraser St., Vancouver, B.C. PVD's Carl Feder says lunch and refreshments will be served during this all-day event. If you plan to be there, give 'em a call at 800/663-5953.

INTERNATIONAL



MEXISHOW — Over 90 companies made it to EXIME '94, the annual coin-op trade show in Mexico City held July 20-21. Among those attending were Rowe International, which reported that their new *LaserStar Diamate* and *MMI CD* jukeboxes garnered a tremendous response from Mexican ops. Jukebox schools conducted by Rowe/ AMi were also a hit among operators, drawing in crowds of more than 100. Rowe's executive VP Joel Friedman is shown here flanked by R.H. Belham Co.'s Marc Haim and Alex Perner. (R.H. Belham is Rowe's jukebox distributor in Colombia, S.A.) Friedman himself conducted a seminar where he discussed the four P's of operating jukeboxes: programming, presentation, price and promotion.

OZ SHOW — The Amusement Machine Operators Association of Queensland (Australia) have put together another world-class convention and trade show scheduled to take place Nov. 2-5 at the Royal Pine Resort on Queensland's Gold Coast. This internationally renowned resort area is lined with some of the finest hotels and beaches found anywhere, making it the ideal holiday venue. Australian operators will have a chance to meet and exchange ideas not only with each other, but also with visitors from overseas. The trade opens on Nov. 3 and the very popular annual golf & tennis tournament is set for Nov. 5. For additional information, call the AMOAQ at 61-7-841-1021 or fax 61-7-841-1332.

PRIZE BOOTH — This summer, Rock-Ola Mfg. dropped in on Australia's second-largest city, Melbourne, where they set up a booth at the Melbourne Trade Show. When local operators were asked to vote for their favorite booth and jukebox, their number-one choices were the Rock-Ola stand and the company's *Legend* juke. Kudos for winning them over down under!

TAM '94, the Taiwan Amusement Machine International Exhibition, will fill the halls of the Tai Chung World Trade Centre in Taichung, Taiwan Oct 14-18. Hosted by the China Hi-Tech Amusement Machine Association, the show attempts to act as an international bridge for the industry, linking companies the world over with this rapidly emerging marketplace. For more information, contact Taiwan Slot Machine at 886-2-760-7407 ex. 10 or fax 886-2-762-3873. ◆

DATEBOOK

— 1994 —

SEPTEMBER 1994						
SU	M	T	W	TH	F	SA
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SEPTEMBER

20-22: Theme Parks & Attractions Conference and Expo, Pan Pacific Hotel, Singapore. For informantion, contact Sharon O. Ferrer at 65-222-3264.

21-23: Japan Amusement Machine Manufacturers' Association trade show, Makuhari Messe, Chiba, Tokyo, Japan. For information, contact JAMMA at 81-3-3593-2563.

22-24: AMOA Expo '94, San Antonio Convention Center, San Antonio, Tex. For more information, contact the AMOA at 800/937-2662.

26-27: World Gaming Congress & Expo, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. For details, contact the show headquarter at 212/594-4120.

27-29: Leisure Industry Week, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, England. Contact Independent Exhibits for more information at 44-932-564455.

OCTOBER

1-4: Internation Family Fun Center & Miniature Golf Show (Fun Expo '94), Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. For more information, contact the Fun Expo at 914/993-9200.

5-7: World Waterpark Association trade show, MGM Grand, Las Vegas, Nev. Call Patty Miller at 913/599-0300 for information.

6-8: Amusexpo '94 (France), Espace-Champerret, Paris. For information, contact Sepfi-Technoexpo Blenheim at 33-1-4742-9256.

14-18: Taiwan Amusement Machine Expo '94, Taichung World Trade Center, Taichung City, Republic of China. For information, send a fax to *Taiwan Slot Magazine* overseas dept. at 886-2-762-3873.

13-15: North Carolina Amusement Machine Assn. convention and trade show, Executive Marriot, Charlotte, N.C. For details, call Howard Cole at 800/824-1476.

13-16: ENADA 1994 (Italy) show, Rome Fair, Rome. For information, contact SAPAR-AGIS at 39-6-440-3686.

NOVEMBER

2-5: International Assn. of Amusement Parks & Attractions (IAAPA) 76th Annual Convention and Trade Show, Miami Beach, Fla. For more information, contact IAAPA at 703/836-4800.

2-5: Amusement Machine Operators Assn. of Queensland (Australia) International Convention '94, Royal Pine Resort on Queensland's Gold Coast. For more information, call the AMOAQ at 61-7-841-1021.

2-5: VAN Expo (Netherlands), Delta-hal, Rai Centre, Amsterdam. For information, contact Anton Zondag at 31-41-033-944.

3-5: NAMA National Convention and Trade Show, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Ga. For further information, contact the NAMA Convention Dept. at 312/346-0370.

10-13: Pinball Expo, Ramada Hotel O'Hare, Rosemont, Ill. For information, contact Robert Berk at 800/323-3547.

DECEMBER

7-10: FORAIN Expo '94 (France), Le Bourget Parc des Expositions, Paris. For details, contact Forain Expo at 33-1-47429256.

1995

JAN. 19-21: Leisurexpo '95, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. For more information, contact Al Barry at 305/448-7976.

JAN. 25-27: ATEI show, Earls Court 1, London, UK. For information, contact Peter Rushbridge at 44-71-713-0302.

JAN. 25-28: IMA (Germany) show, The Fairgrounds, Frankfurt. For details, contact Blenheim Heckmann GmbH at 49-211-901-9134.

MARCH 23-24: ACME '95, Reno Convention Center, Reno, Nev. For more information, contact William T. Glasgow, Inc. at 708/333-9292.

SEPTEMBER 21-23: AMOA Expo '95, New Orleans Convention Center, New Orleans, La. For information contact the AMOA at 800/937-2662.

THE BLUE PAGES

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A COMPENDIUM OF USED EQUIPMENT ADS & OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST TO THE COIN INDUSTRY

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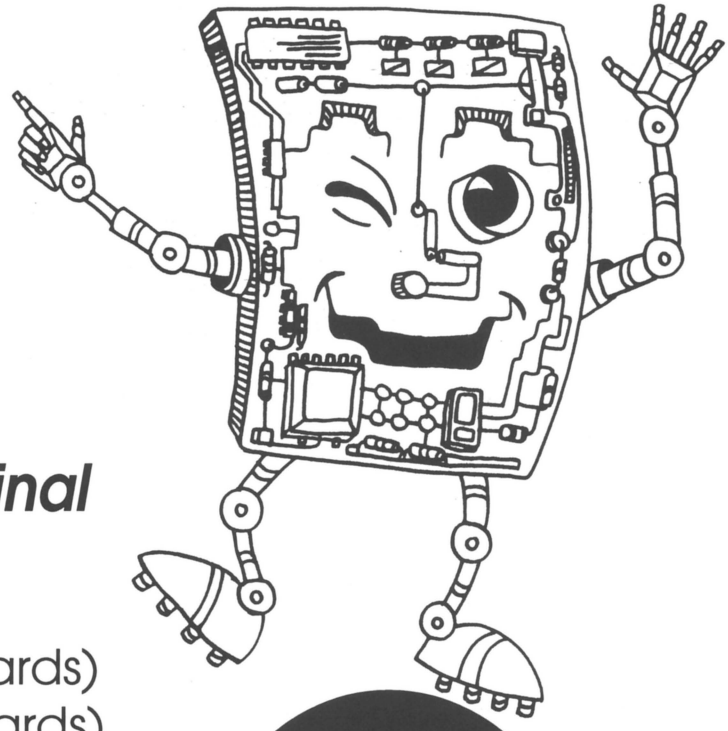

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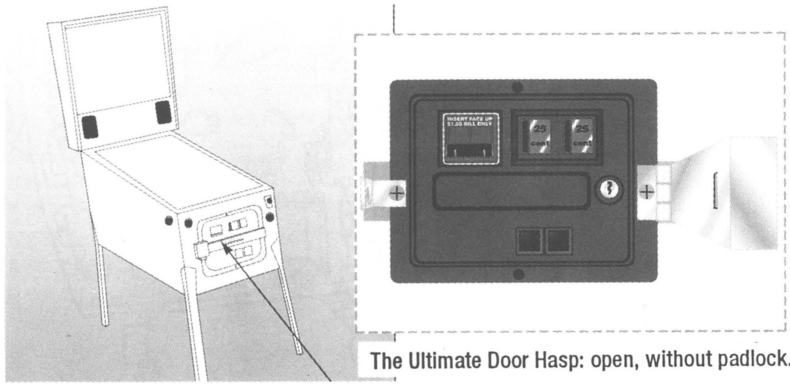

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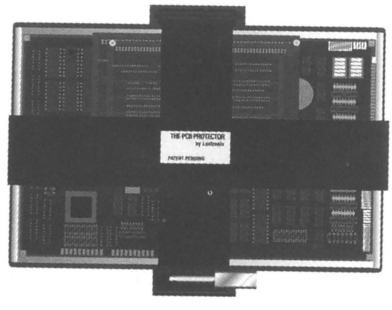

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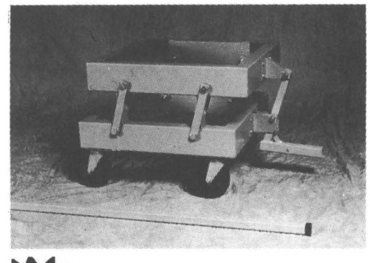

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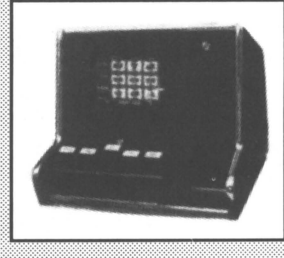

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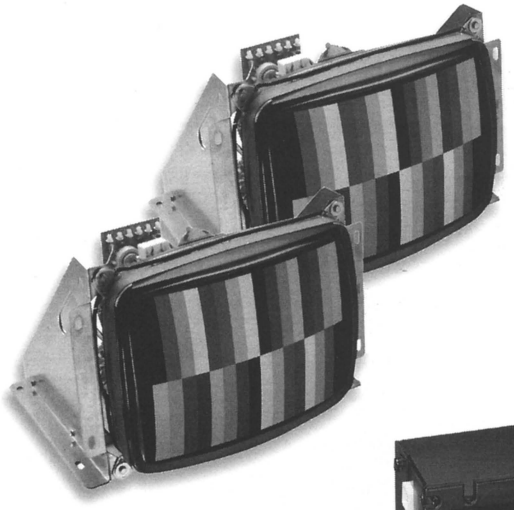

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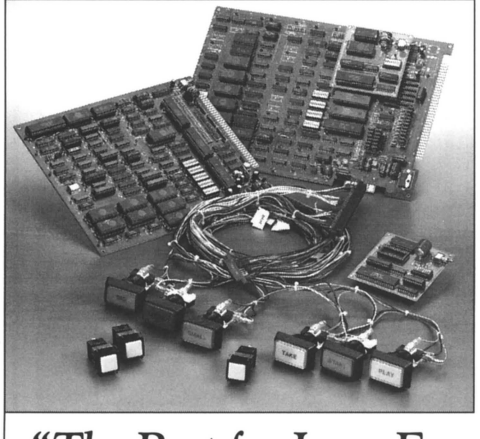

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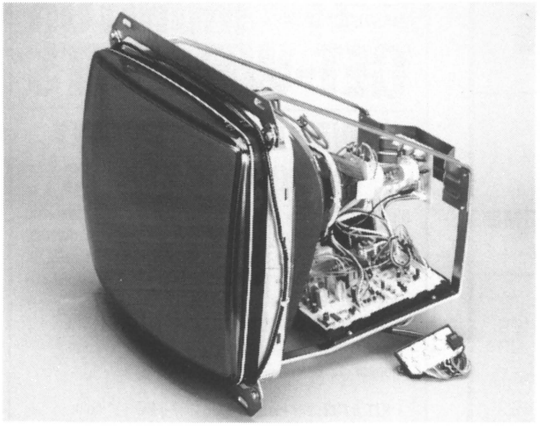

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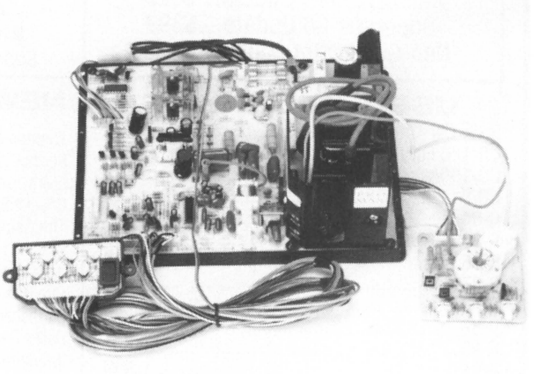

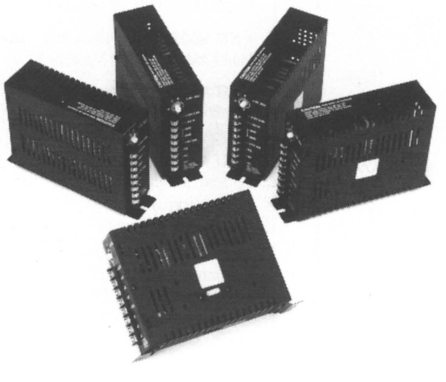

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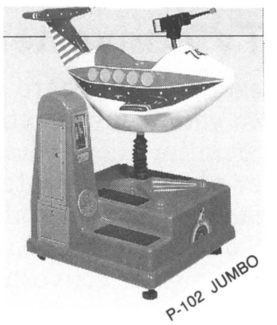

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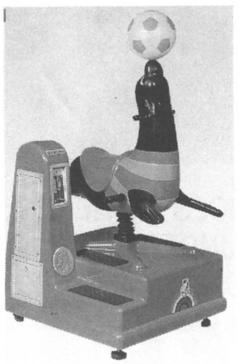

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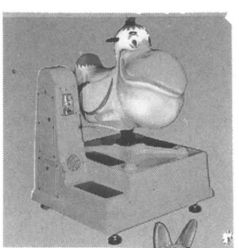

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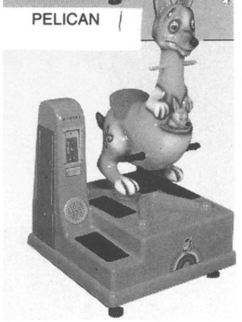

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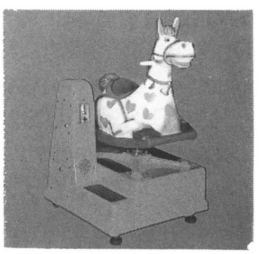

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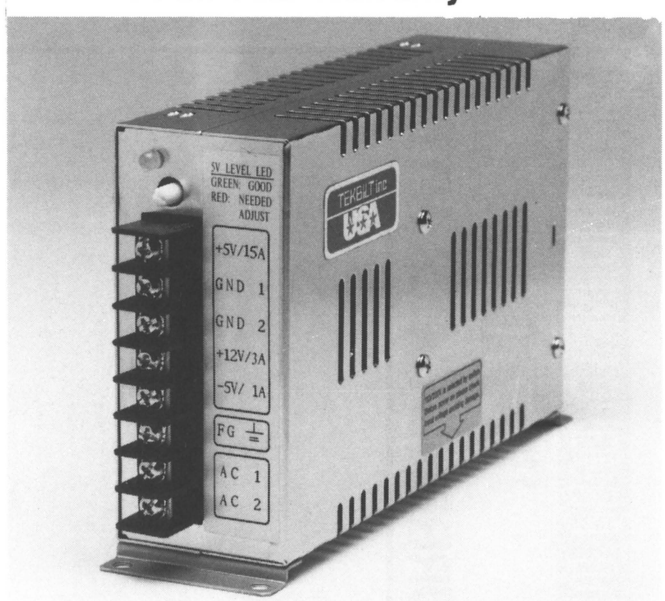

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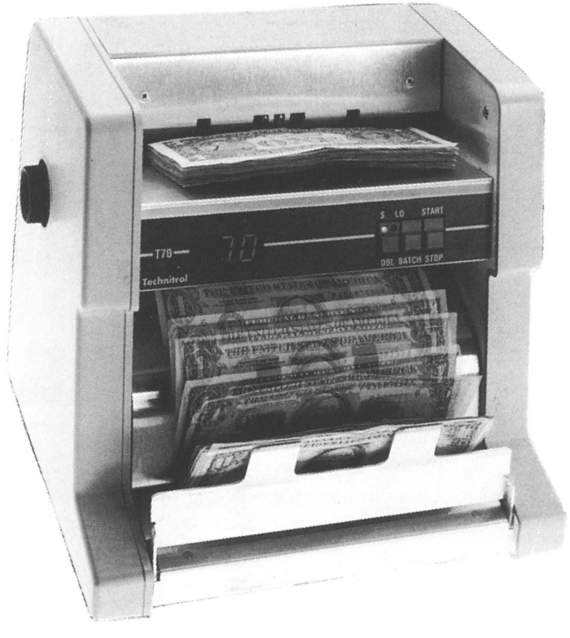

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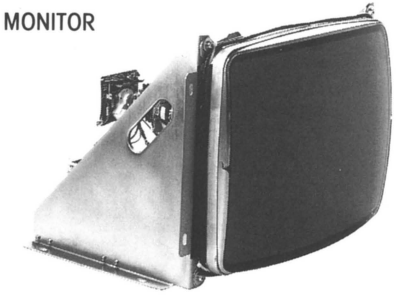
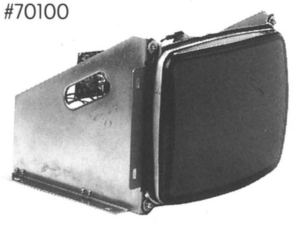
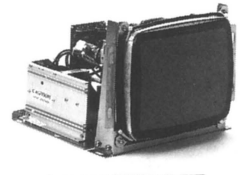


13"HORIZONTAL
#70100





9" HORIZONTAL
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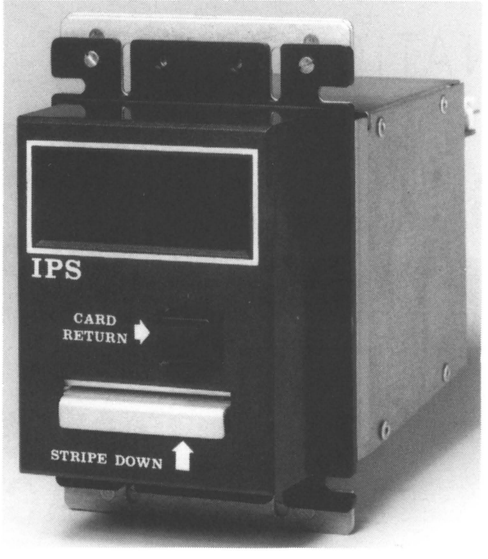
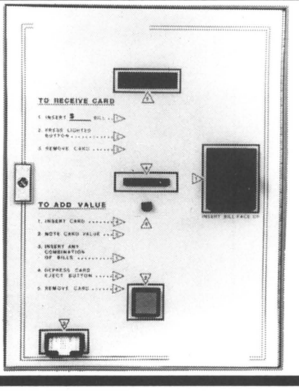


Card Acceptor

Automated Teller



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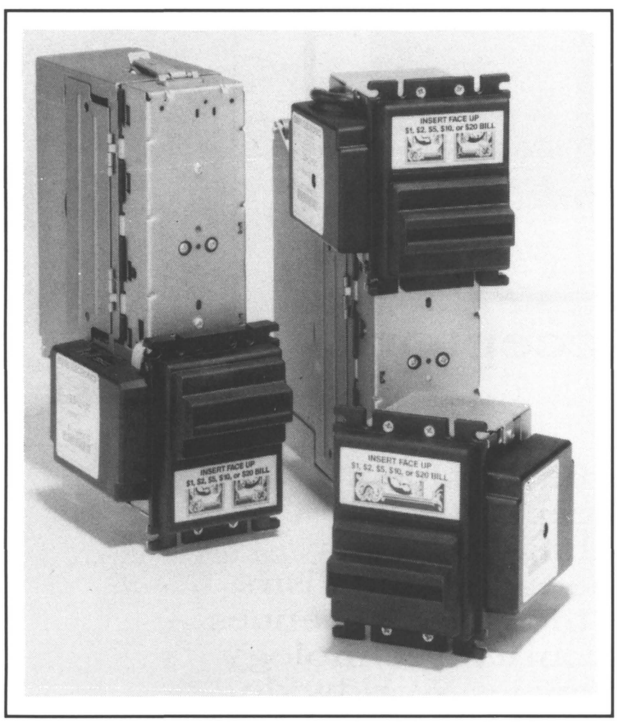

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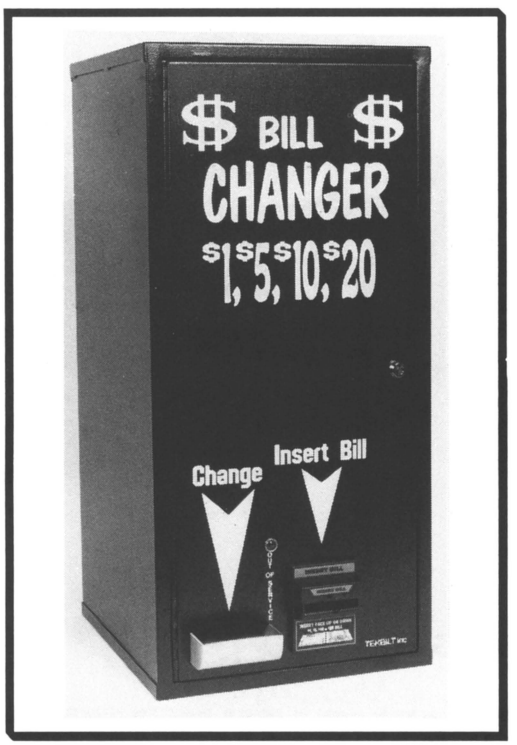
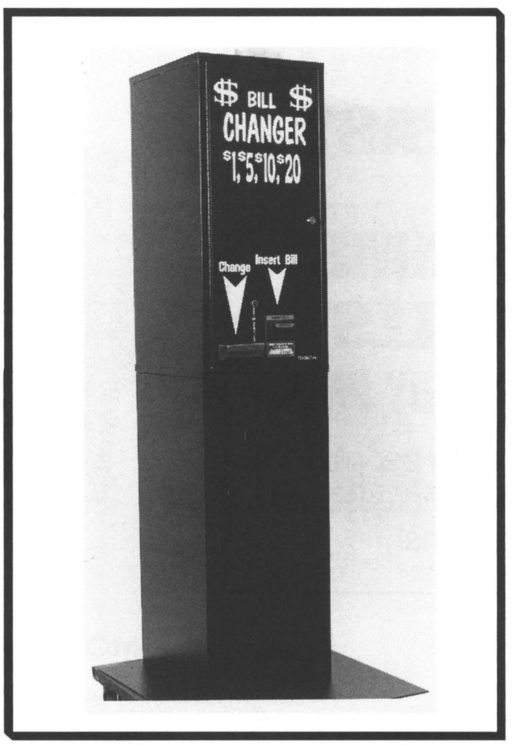


Model TB2000



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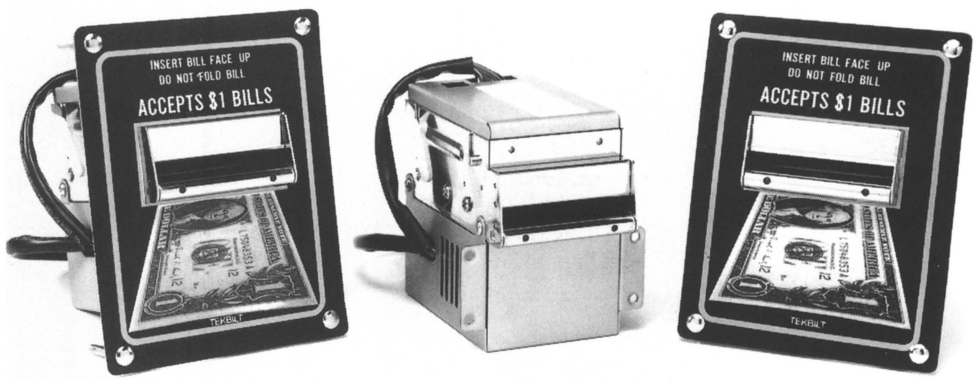

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Absolute Auction

Giant 2 Day Auction

Saturday, September 10, 1994 – 10:00 a.m. (EASTERN)
Sunday, September 11, 1994 – 12:00 a.m. (EASTERN)

United States Marshal's Service Seizure • 1020+ Seized Video Gambling Machines
• Louisville State Fair & Exposition Center (East Hall "A")
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

These machines were seized from the Southern district of Indiana (U.S. Marshal Frank Anderson) and are to be sold in the Western district of Kentucky (U.S. Marshal Charles W. Logsdon)

DIRECTIONS: Interstate 65 to Fair/Expo Exit. State Hwy. Signs will lead you to the State Fair Grounds. Easiest access to East Hall "A" is through Gate 1 & closest parking is Brown or Sky Blue Lot. Feel free to call our offices at 615-371-9955 for a free diagram of the parking facilities & location of East Hall "A".

If you own a gameroom, business, enjoy video games, or looking for a unique gift or conversation piece, make plans to attend this Absolute Auction!

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

VIEWING 8:00 A.M. DAY OF SALE ONLY

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

A partial listing of over 1020 video gambling machines includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Turbo Poker
- Cherry Master Video
- Lucky 8 Line
- Kasino Kate
- Jacks Or Better
- Super Poker
- High Speed Bonus
- Cherry Jubilee
- Hi-Lo
- Mother Lode
- Top Draw
- Counter & Table Top Type Video Machines
- Trailblazer Video
- El Dorado
- Greyhound Poker
- Riviera Poker Machine
- Pengo Machine
- Deluxe 8 Video

The majority of these machines have $1 thru $20 bill acceptors.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Suggested Lodging is Executive Inn, 830 Phillips Ln., Louisville, KY – Toll Free 1-800-626-2708, or 1-800-626-2706. Executive Inn is located just across the street from the State Fair Grounds.

ALL ITEMS WILL SELL TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER! • All items MUST be removed days of sale

TERMS: Cash on days of sale. Checks will be accepted ONLY if accompanied by a current dated bank letter addressed to the Frank Collier Auction & Realty Company. This bank letter must be signed by a Bank Officer and if dollar amount is limited, then this amount must be stated in the letter. All items must be removed days of sale. Announcements day of sale take precedence over all other advertising. All items sell as is, where is. No warranties. Inspect to your own satisfaction. 10% buyers premium in effect.

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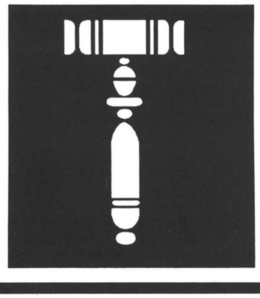

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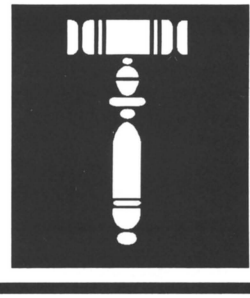

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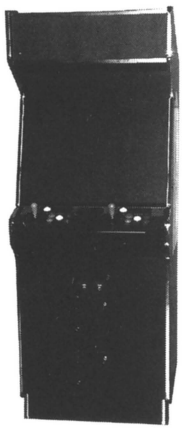

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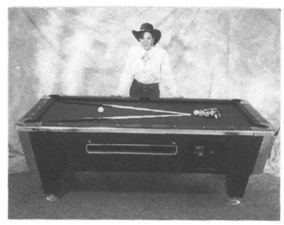

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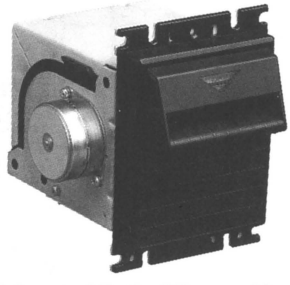

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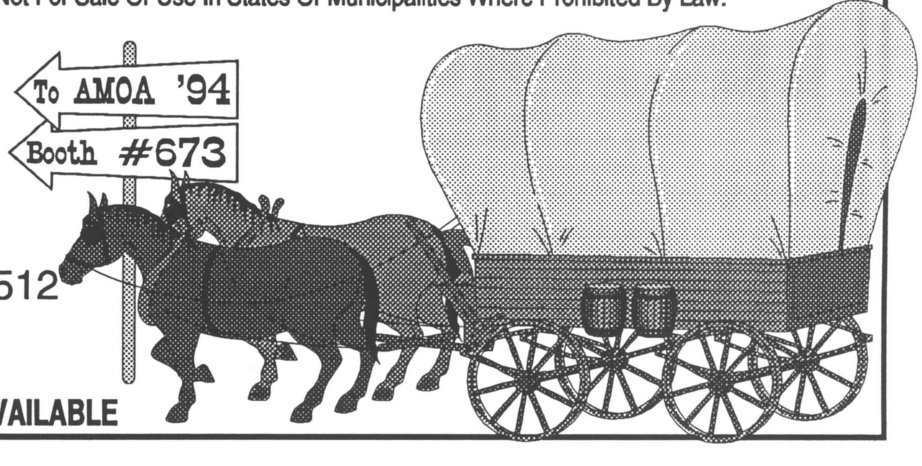

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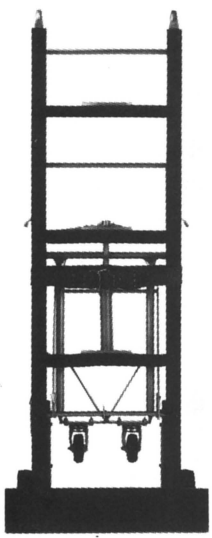

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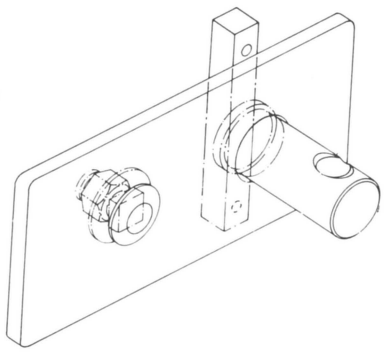

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– 1993-94 Schedule of Events –

1994

September	**17** **Columbus, OH** Rhodes Building, Ohio State Fairgrounds 17th Street & Clair Avenue Cellular: 614-271-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	**22 thru 24** **AMOA Expo '94** **San Antonio, TX** **• Not An Auction •** **Visit Us At Booth #1104**		
October	**1** **Indianapolis, IN** Our Land Pavilion Indiana State Fairgrounds Cellular: 317-432-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	**2 thru 4** **FUN Expo '94** **Las Vegas, NV** **• Not An Auction •** **Visit Us At Booth #190**	**15** **Dallas, TX** Big Town Mall, I-30 and U.S. 80, Take Big Town Blvd. Exit off I-30 Cellular: 214-384-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	**22** **Tampa, FL** Florida State Fairgrounds, Special Events Building Highway 301 off I-4. Cellular: 813-623-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866
November	**5** **Indianapolis, IN** Our Land Pavilion Indiana State Fairgrounds Cellular: 317-432-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	Collector's Auctions **12** **Chicago, IL** **Ramada Inn - O'Hare** 6600 N. Manhiem Road, Rosemont, IL *4th Annual Pinhead Collector's Auction in association with Pinball Expo '94.* Attendance info. Contact: Rob Berk at 1-800-323-3547 A 10% Buyers Premium will be applied. Collector's Auctions		**October 29** **Columbus, OH** Rhodes Building, Ohio State Fairgrounds 17th Street & Clair Avenue Cellular: 614-271-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866
December	**10** **Indianapolis, IN** Our Land Pavilion Indiana State Fairgrounds Cellular: 317-432-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866			

Auction Information

- All auctions begin at 10am local time.
- To consign games for sale: bring to the Auction site on the Friday before the auction between 9 am and 9 pm.
- Removal of all equipment by Saturday, midnight.
- Inspection: Saturday 9 - 10 am
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February	4 **Houston, TX** Ft. Bend County Fairgrounds, Bldg. 'C' Hwy 36 9/10 mile south of Hwy 59 (Rosenberg) Cellular: 713-824-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	25 **Tampa, FL** Florida State Fairgrounds, Special Events Building Highway 301 off I-4. Cellular: 813-623-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	
March	4 **Columbus, OH** Rhodes Building, Ohio State Fairgrounds 17th Street & Clair Avenue Cellular: 614-271-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	11 **Indianapolis, IN** Our Land Pavilion Indiana State Fairgrounds Cellular: 317-432-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	23 thru 25 **ACME Trade Show** **Reno, Nevada** • Not An Auction • Visit Us At Our Booth
April	1 **Columbus, OH** Rhodes Building, Ohio State Fairgrounds 17th Street & Clair Avenue Cellular: 614-271-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	8 **Tampa, FL** Florida State Fairgrounds, Special Events Building Highway 301 off I-4. Cellular: 813-623-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	29 **Indianapolis, IN** Our Land Pavilion Indiana State Fairgrounds Cellular: 317-432-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866
May	13 **Columbus, OH** Rhodes Building, Ohio State Fairgrounds 17th Street & Clair Avenue Cellular: 614-271-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866		
June	3 **Indianapolis, IN** Our Land Pavilion Indiana State Fairgrounds Cellular: 317-432-7626 Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866		

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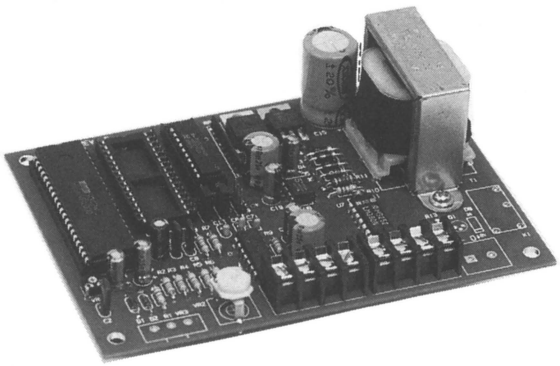

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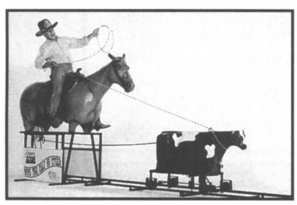

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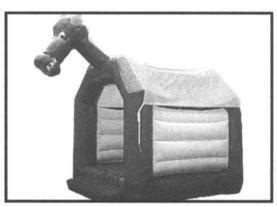

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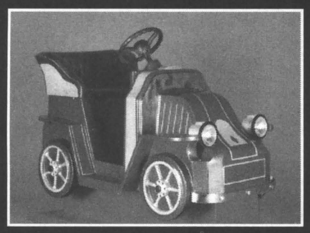
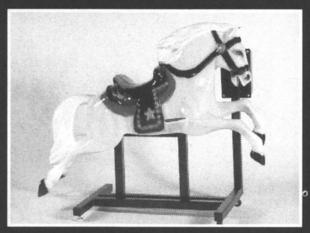



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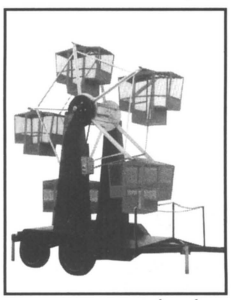

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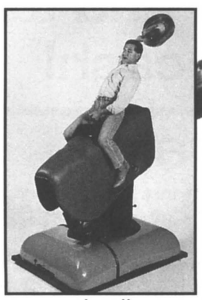

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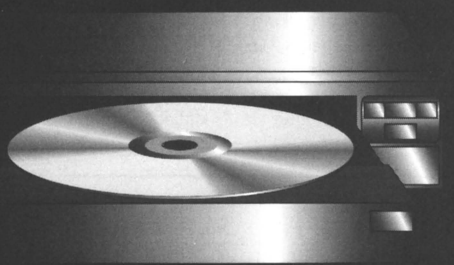

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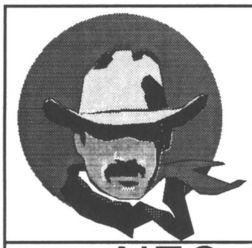

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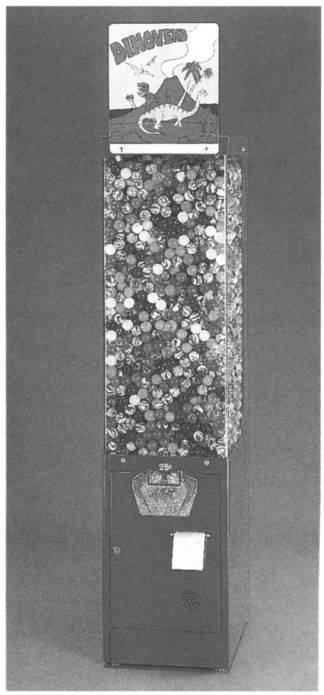

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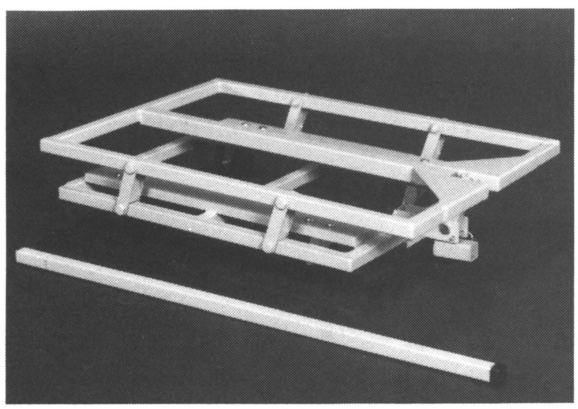

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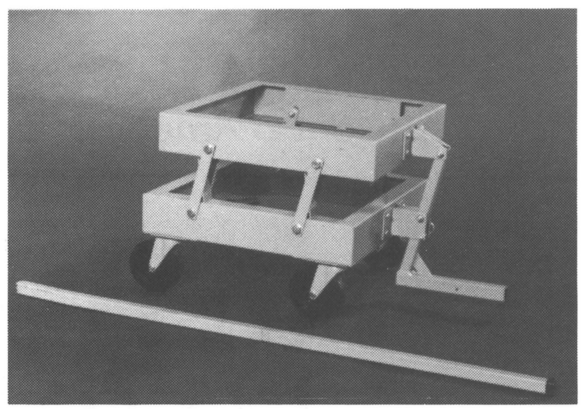

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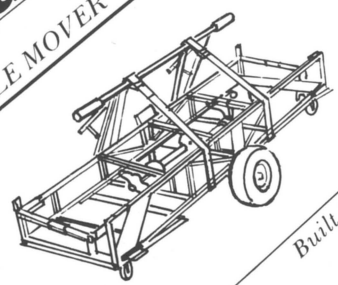

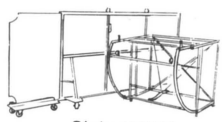

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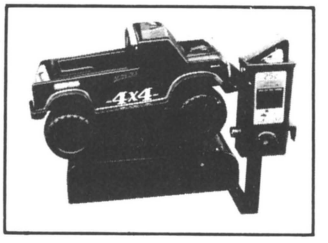

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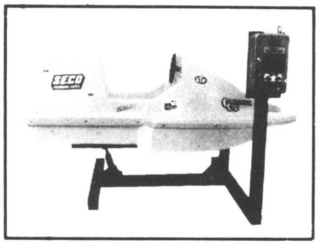

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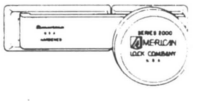

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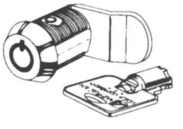

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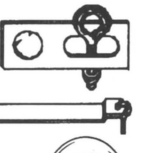

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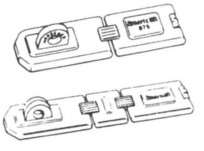

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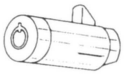

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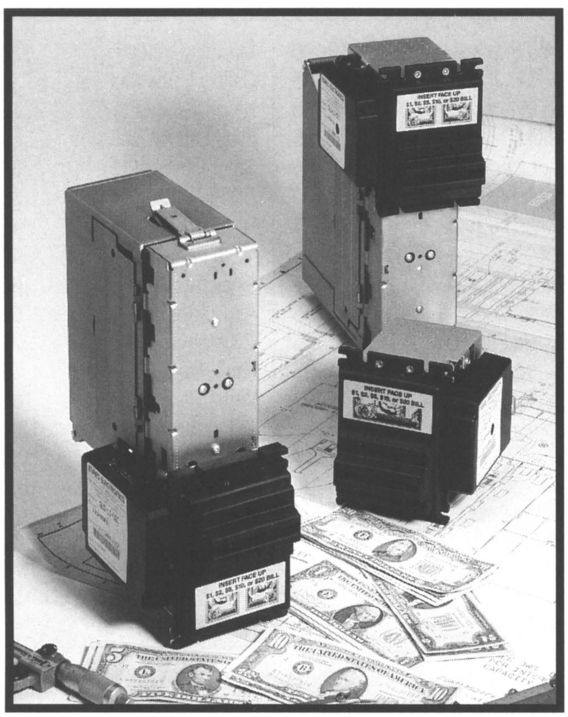

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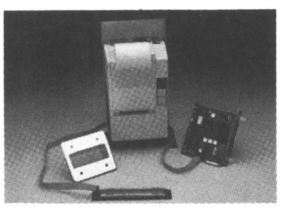

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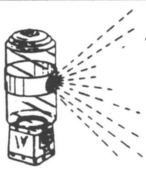

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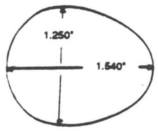

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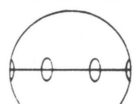

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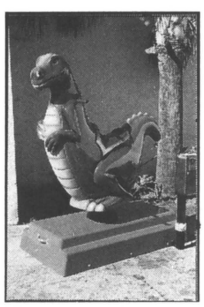

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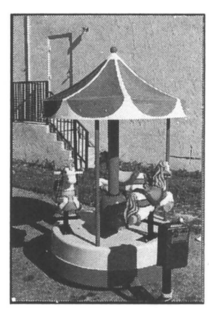

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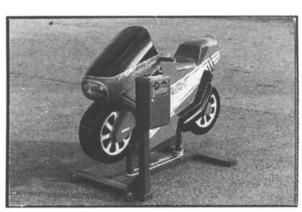

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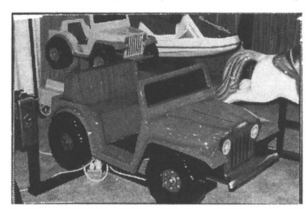

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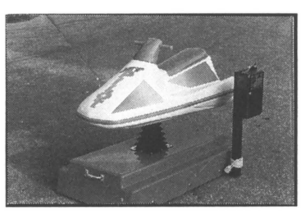

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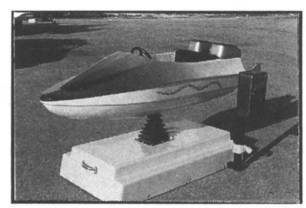

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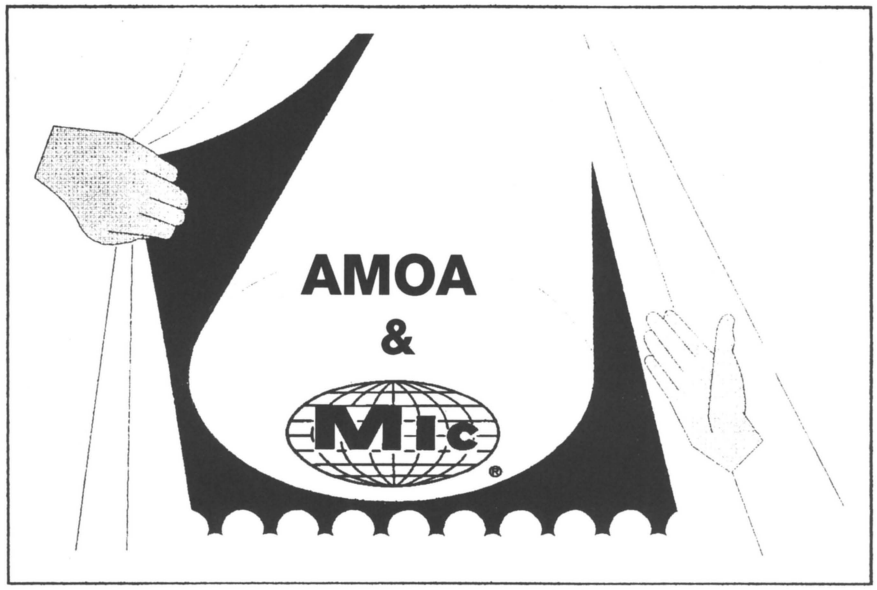

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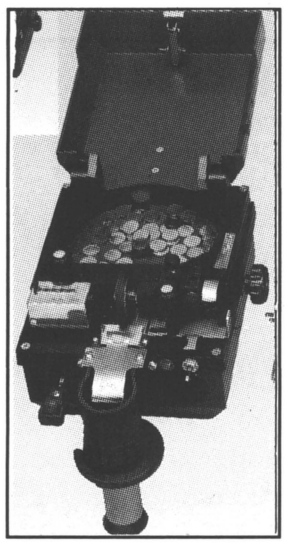

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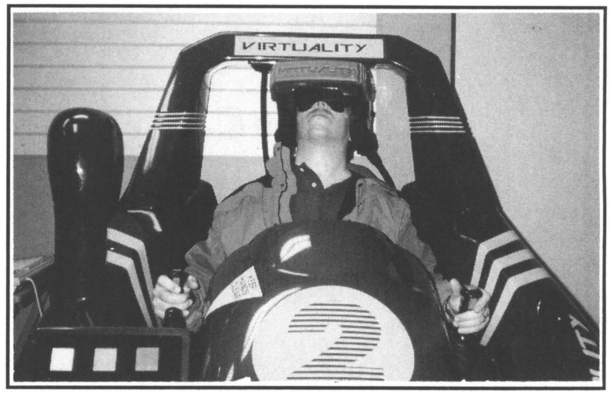

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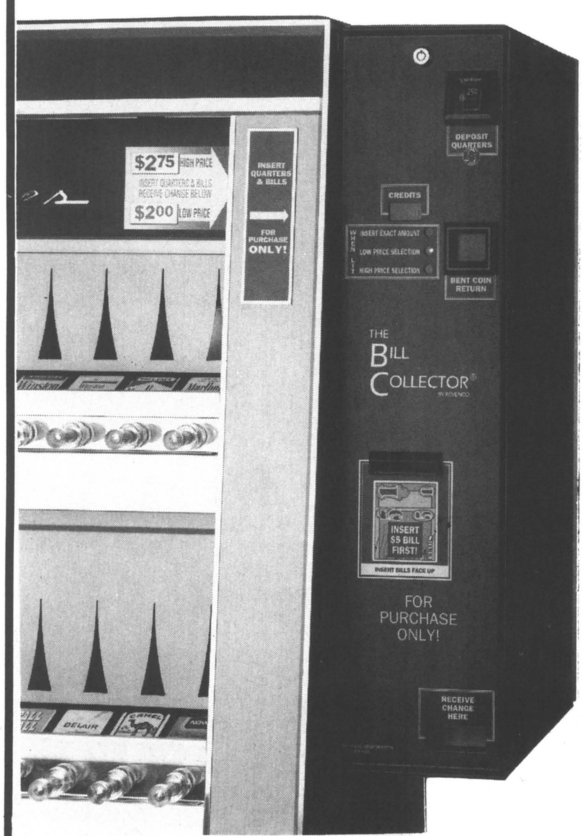

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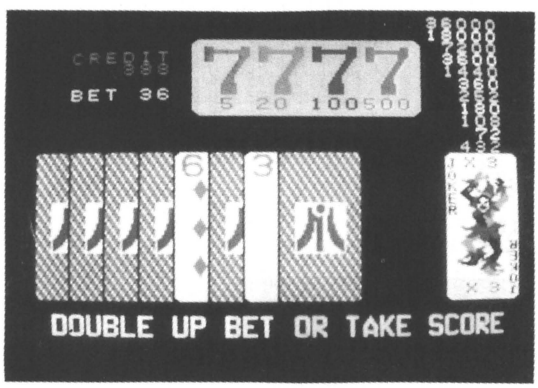

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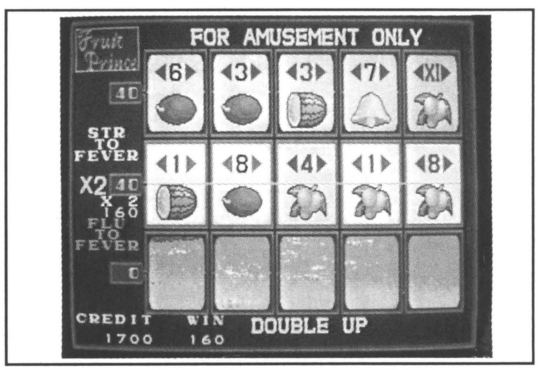

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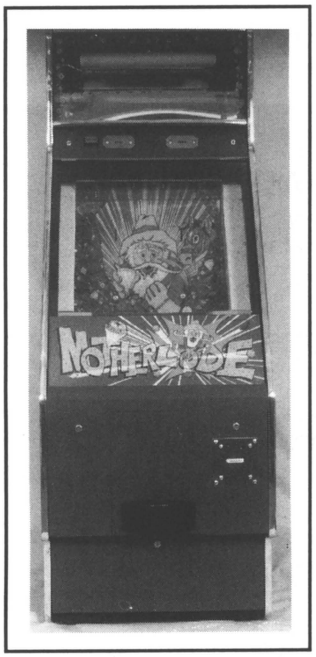

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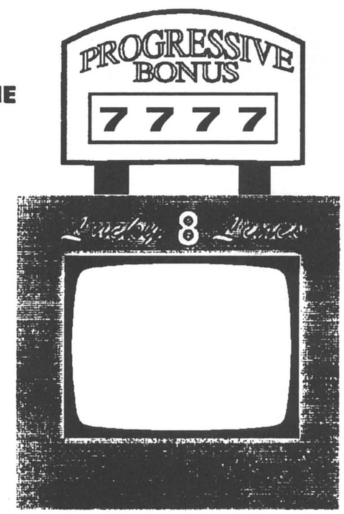

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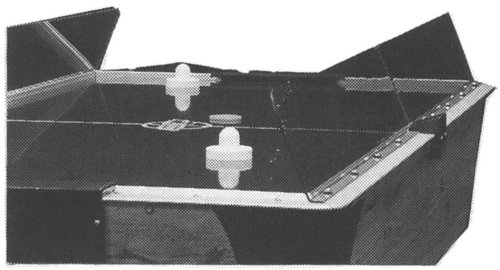

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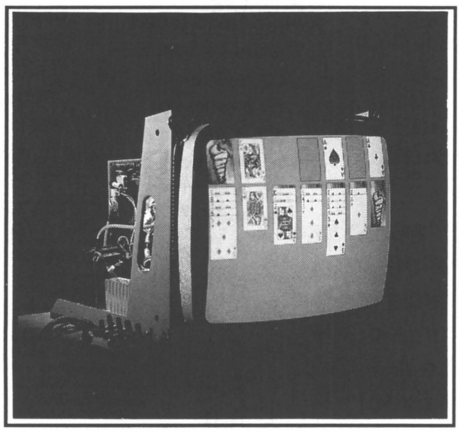

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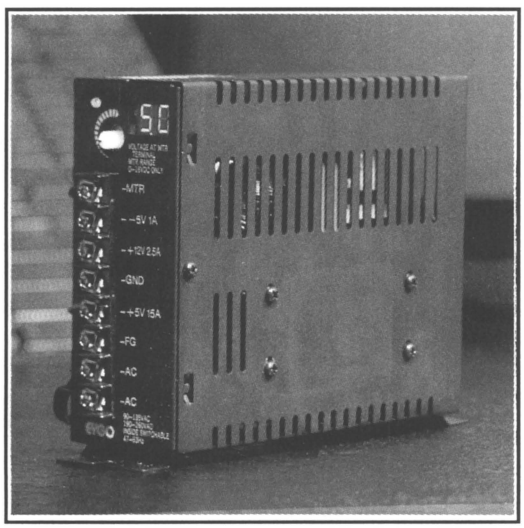

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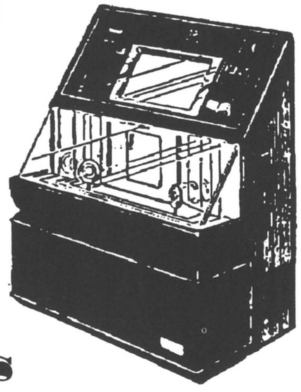

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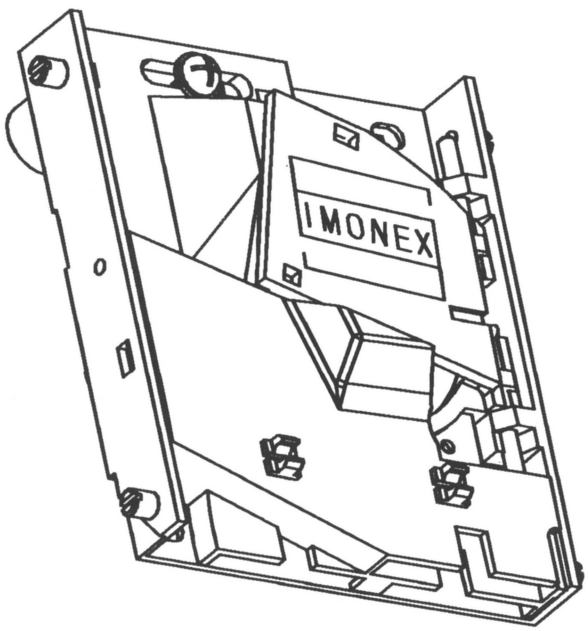

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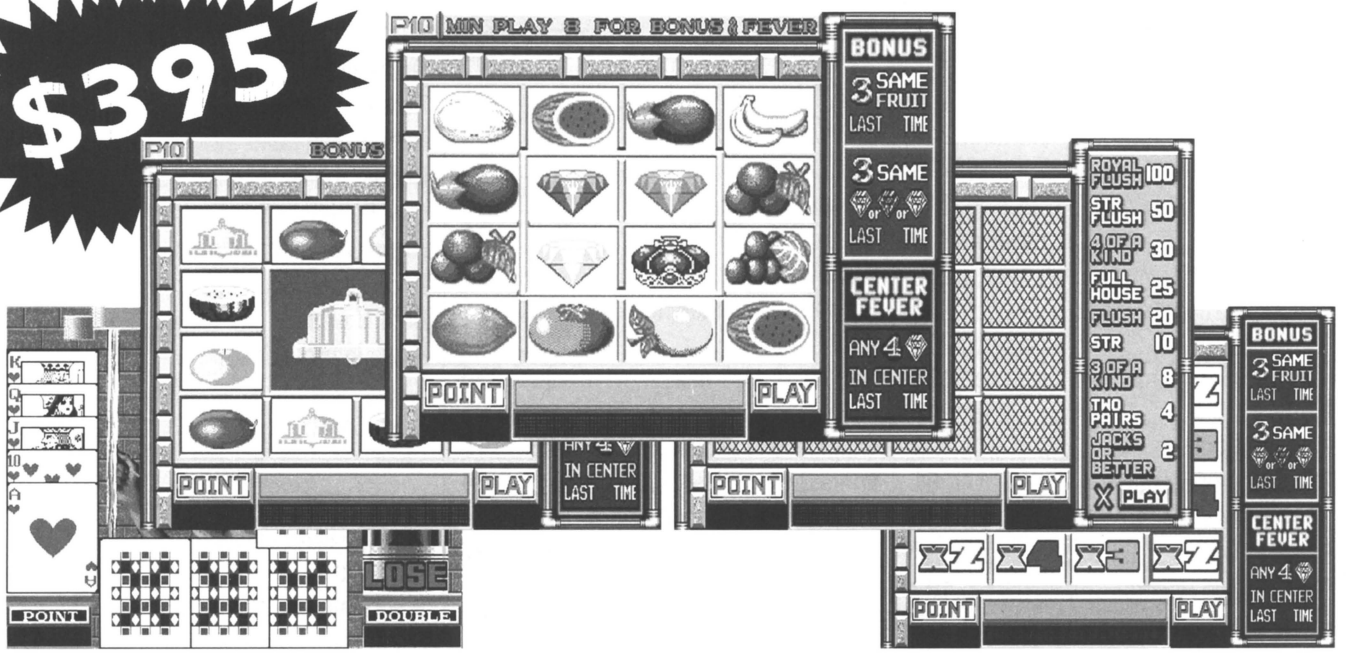

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INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

A.L.D., Inc. ..... Pg. 133
AMOA 241
Acces Entertainment 151
Ace/Acme 25
Advanced Games & Engineering 205
Allcoin Equipment 194
American International 130
American Laser Games 99
American Sammy 97
American Vending Sales 169
Amusements Plus ..... "Toss-in-flyer"
Arachnid 107
Arjay Export 242
ARMS International. 198
Asahi Seiko 197
Atari ..... cover #4, 49
Atlas Distributing. 210
BTR International 209
Banpresto 213
Baton Lock & Hardware 134
BAy-Tek 218
Belam 129
Benchmark Entertainment 81
Betson Enterprises 159
Betson Pacific 87
Bob's Space Racers 103
Brady Distributing 219
Brechner & Co. 22
Bromley, Inc. 91-92
Canadian Coin Machine 202
Capcom USA 9, 65
Carousel International 230
Central Distributing 8
Century Vending 125
Chugai Boyeki/Kaneko 47
Cleveland Coin 185
Coastal Amusements 89
Coin Concepts 119
Coin ConneXion 67
Colorado Game Exchange 220
Commercial Music Co. 137
Continental Pinball 150
D&R Industries 225
Data East, Inc. 19-20, 30, 79
DataEye 149
Deltronic Labs 124
Don Records 239
Doyle International 166
Dunis Distributing 203
Eagle Lift 116
Electronic Arts ..... Pg. 7
Fabtek 51
Falgas USA 110
Fillmore 96
H.A. Franz & Co. 206
Fun Industries 150
Fun Merchants 139
Fuuki Co., Ltd. 228
GaMCO 13
Gametime 230
T.W.Gilchrist Vending 206
Global Billiards 111
Grayhound Electronics 105
Great American Billiards 186
Great Lakes Dart Dist. 200
Greater Southern Dist. 140
HMS Monaco 56
Hamilton Manufacturing 175
Happ Controls 153
Hoffman & Hoffman 238
I.C.E. 23
Imagination Leisure 12
Impressment Plus 134
International Games System 216-217
J-S Sales 137
JCM 121
James Industries 63
Just Kiddie Rides 127
Kentucky Coin 195
Kiddie Rides U.S.A. 21
Laramie Interests 115
LazerTron 17, 167, 214
Lieberman Music 96
Henry W.T. Mali 186
Master Sales 108
Mazzco ..... "Toss-in-flyer"
Merit 147
Micro Manufacturing 163
Mission Crane Service 55
Moloney Manufacturing 123
Mondial Distributing 50
Mountain Coin 231
Music-Vend Dist. 203
NSM-America 15
Namco 57-58, 61
National Ticket Co. 3
New England Coin-Op 224
Nova 84-85
Operators Distributing 194
Pacific-Vend Dist. 130
Peach State Dist. ..... Pg. 202
Pioneer Sales & Service 218
Planet Earth Entertainment 187
Play-by-Play 178-179
Playfair Shuffleboard Co. 28
Plush Appeal 233
Plush-4-Play 95
Premier Technology ..... cover #2
Prizes! 52
Purple Star 155
Quicksilver 27
Rainbow Crane 193
Reno Game Sales 191
Repeat the Beat 224
C.A. Robinson & Co. 75
Robin Sun Entertainment 225
Rock-Ola/Antique Apparatus 73
Roth Novelty 124
Rowe International 11, 135, 143
SNK 33, 35
Scan Coin 188
Sega 4-5, 29, 131
Sejoo Corp. 201
Shaffer Distributing 181
Sharp Image Electronics 45
Sharp Image Gaming 43
Skee-Ball 113
Skilo-Bingo 28
Smart Industries 37-40
Southgate Amusement 50
Star Track 140
State Sales & Service 220
Step-N-Roll Dolly 42
Subsino 221
Success Plush 171
SunBelt Amusement 71
Taito 101
Taiwan Slot Magazine 182
Tamperproof Screw Co. 116
Tornado Table Soccer 117
US Games 24
Valley Recreation 16
Van Brook of Lexington 78, 165
Video Doctors 60
Wedges/Ledges 145
Wico ..... "Toss-in-flyer"
Williams Electronics ..... cover #3
Roger Williams MInt 211
World Wide Dist. 90

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