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Expo Part 1:**
Overview,
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On the cover

Suzo Happ cites new items that provide innovative solutions as its main focus. The international company provides products for a wide range of customers around the world. *Play Meter* delves into the history and current growth of the company in this story.

30 Amusement Expo: Part 1

The 2012 Amusement Expo wrapped up in Las Vegas last month with heightened numbers. Check this issue for a show overview and our traditional game list. Look for more coverage next month.

56 In Memory: Steve Kordek

The industry lost a valued member in Steve Kordek, legendary pinball designer. Read about his life and legacy, complete with stories and memories from those who knew him best.

76 AMOA State Meeting

At the recent Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Council of Affiliated States Meeting in Phoenix, operators from around the country shared their experiences on a variety of topics from gaming to promotions.

90 Merchandise at the show

The National Bulk Vendors Association (NBVA) partnered with Amusement Expo at this year's show and had its own pavillion. We have coverage of NBVA members and independent vendors in our extended Merchandise Market section this month.

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Recent times have brought their share of sadness, from the closing of digital jukebox firm Ecast Inc. to the passing of pinball icon Steve Kordek and industry veteran Jerry Reeves, who represented the Wurlitzer Jukebox Co. for 36 years.

The closure of a company is always cause for concern: first, the loss of jobs in these difficult economic times; second, the loss of technical support and service for the products; third, the loss of innovation if talented staff do not stay in the industry; and fourth, the reduction in competition. Competition brings out the best in companies and always seems to spur innovation and advancements.

Thankfully, the other jukebox companies have come to the aid of the operating community with a variety of solutions to keep music flowing to operators' routes. AMI Entertainment Network, NSM Music, and TouchTunes Interactive Networks were at the Amusement Expo ready to answer questions and explain their offerings.

Digital downloading jukeboxes continue to be mainstays in the industry by introducing an ever-increasing number of desirable features that help operators bring value to their locations, solidify business relationships, and appeal to the always-connected tech-savvy consumer. To find out about the latest jukebox innovations, and all the other available equipment, turn to the Amusement Expo Game List in this issue.

I consider myself fortunate to have known two of the industry's septuagenarians: Steve Kordek and Sol Lipkin. They shared similar outlooks on life and dedication to the industry. Both were true gentleman in every sense of the word, always going the extra mile and mentoring younger industry members who looked up to them, and for good reason.

Kordek, "Mr. Pinball," and Lipkin, "The Father of Shuffleboard," were from immigrant families from Eastern Europe: Kordek from Poland and Lipkin from Latvia. Each left his mark on the games they designed and continued to nurture and love for a century. Kordek passed away at age 100 on Feb. 19, 2012; Lipkin passed away at age 104 on Jan. 21, 2010. Both approached their long lives with good humor and a positive attitude.

Michael Gottlieb of Bally Technologies posted about Kordek: "The Gottlieb family is grieving the loss of a dear friend and a wonderful gentleman. I informed my father Alvin and all he could speak of was how much he liked and respected Steve. I worked with Steve for a brief time at Williams and he treated me like family."

What's the secret to a long life? If Kordek and Lipkin are your examples it's simple: Work hard at a job you enjoy and believe in passionately, maintain a positive attitude, respect your fellow man, and don't let age get in the way of enjoying life. Also: If you see an attractive lady, tell her so! ▲



BONNIE THEARD
Editor



True industry legends Sol Lipkin (l) and Steve Kordek at the AMOA Expo 2006.

We want to hear from you about any of the articles in this issue or topics you'd like to see.
E-mail: (editorial@playmeter.net)

A black and white portrait of the four members of The Beatles, arranged in a slightly overlapping, horizontal line. They are all wearing dark turtlenecks and looking directly at the camera with neutral expressions. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on their faces and deep shadows.

THE BEATLES

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INTERACTIVE NETWORKS





CD jukeboxes are viable alternative to digital networks

These are unsettling days in the jukebox business. Joel Friedman and I and the entire Enco family would like to express our concern for all that operators are going through since Ecast announced it would shut down its operation on March 1. Thankfully, there now appears to be a reasonable solution to allow the affected operators to keep their locations up and running.

Now is a good time for operators to consider dusting off their old CD jukeboxes. It's important to remember that CD jukeboxes allow operators to stay in complete control of their locations. Recent events remind us just how precious a commodity independence is in this business. And don't forget, all the music that locations want to hear in their establishments is still readily available on compact disc.

Enco continues to support CD jukeboxes, not only because it's our business but also because we

believe operators are the best at servicing their locations. We share with operators the increasingly old-fashioned values of independence and personal relationships that are the bedrock of good route operations.

We believe this could be a "back to the future" moment. CD is a viable and valuable option during this time of transition. Now more than ever it makes sense to put this equipment back on the street and back to work on YOUR route. Please visit (www.encosystems.net) or call us at 866-CDJUKEBox (866-235-8532). We look forward to discussing how we can help you refurbish an old CD juke. ▲

Chris Bisha, Enco Systems

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- RESOURCES

Off to Expo!

Every day brings new challenges on our routes. It's not easy to find time to search for ideas, solutions or new approaches to the business.

The annual AAMA-AMOA Amusement Expo offers you an unequalled opportunity to re-group, re-focus and re-energize yourself and your business.

By now, most everybody has secured his or her plane ticket, reserved hotel accommodations and has begun to plot strategy for working the show.

But, there just may be a few who still haven't made their plans for next week. In that case, here's 10 reasons you should make the trip to the Amusement Expo in Las Vegas next week. The show runs Wednesday, March 14 through Friday, March 16 at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

Here's 10 reasons why you should be there:

[Read more...](#)

And Then There Were Two

CALENDAR

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At the ribbon cutting, (l-r): Donovan Fremin of AMOA, Andy Shaffer of AMOA, John Margold of AAMA, and Bernie Schwarzli of NBVA.



Alan Chaffe of A.A. Amusement and his wife Aletta admire the 2012 Ford Mustang won by Eddy Kolhass of Yuma, Ariz. Aletta sold the winning ticket.

Energy boost

Bigger, better, and more energetic” would be an apt description of the 2012 Amusement Expo held March 14-16 in Las Vegas, co-sponsored by the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) and the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA).

Growth was seen in every category: exhibitors, booths, and buyers. Total attendance was 2,961; close to 1,000 attendees came to the Industry Gala that followed a Mardi Gras theme. Gala sponsors included Firestone Financial, Incredible Technologies, the Jukebox License Office (JLO), Namco, and the Louisiana Amusement and Music Operators Association (LAMO).

Additional sponsors were AMI Entertainment Network for literature bags and Silver Sponsor TouchTunes Interactive Networks.

Attendees were happy with the show specials, education program that included Amusement Expo sessions and the Foundations Entertainment University (FEU) sessions, and the exhibit floor filled with equipment.

“There is enthusiasm at the show this year; you can feel it.”

For the second year the show was co-located with the National Bulk Vendors Association (NBVA) Expo. As an added bonus, there was a crossover again with the International Pizza Expo whereby badge holders from each show could visit the other exhibit floor.

AMOA badge holders could visit the Pizza Expo on March 15.

Kent Knudson of daVinci’s Restaurants and Champions Fun Center visited both shows. Knudsen said, “This trip was a good place to expand our education for both of our businesses.”

After the abrupt departure of Ecast Inc. from the coin-op landscape on March 1, all eyes were on the jukebox companies, and they did not disappoint. AMI Entertainment Network, NSM Music, and TouchTunes offered solutions for Ecast operators and new features of their own.

The Hesch Scholarship Raffle garnered considerable buzz this year by giving away a host of donated prizes, in particular the Grand Prize: a red 2012 Ford Mustang. Tony Paszkiewicz of the AMOA Hesch Promotion Committee, said, “The Hesch booth has seen a nice amount of traf-



TouchTunes Interactive Networks won the award for Best Exhibit Design, Large Booth.



Apple Industries won the award for Best Exhibit Design, Medium Booth.

fic, and an influx of younger people purchasing tickets for the opportunity to win a Mustang.”

When it came time for the Grand Prize drawing, Eddy Kolhass of Yuma, Ariz., won the car. The winning ticket was sold by Aletta Chaffe, wife of AMOA board member Alan Chaffe of A.A. Amusement in Yuma.

AWARDS

AAMA presented its Manufacturer of the Year Award to ICE, the Distributor of the Year award to Betson Enterprises, and the Supplier of the Year Award to MEI. In addition, AAMA presented a Lifetime Achievement Award to Dave Courington of Valley-Dynamo, and a posthumous Lifetime Achievement Award to Joel Kleiman of Pioneer Sales & Service, which was accepted by Jonathan Kleiman.

AMOA presented three Innovator Awards at its annual Membership Meeting: Arachnid Inc. for its Galaxy 3 Live dart

machine, Coast to Coast Entertainment for its Stage 2 complete route monitoring system, and TouchTunes for its Virtuo jukebox with Karaoke.

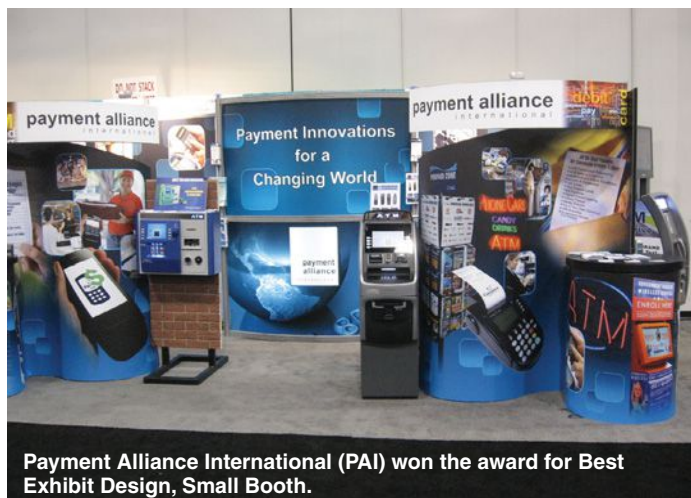
Play Meter presented its Operator of the Year Award for 2011 to third-generation operator Dale Lazar of H. Lazar & Son Inc. in Pittsburgh, Pa., as well as its Operators’ Choice awards for best equipment (voted by operators who respond to *Play Meter*’s annual State of the Industry Survey). A feature on Lazar will appear in the May issue.

The American Amusement Machine

Charitable Foundation (AAMCF) drew more than 50 golfers for its 13th Annual Charity Golf Tournament at the Paiute Golf Resort.

Attendees had an opportunity to vote for Best of Show, an honor that went to TouchTunes for its Virtuo with Karaoke and PhotoBooth features.

Also, Firestone Financial Corp. presented its Platinum Club awards to manufacturers, distributors, and operators; and FEU presented its first-time FEC awards in six categories. Look for more details on all the awards next month.



Payment Alliance International (PAI) won the award for Best Exhibit Design, Small Booth.

EXHIBITOR COMMENTS

Exhibitors were uniformly satisfied with the show. Mike Maas, President and CEO of AMI Entertainment Network, echoed the sentiments of others when he said, “There is enthusiasm at the show this year; you can feel it.”

Dawn Noyes of Play Time Toys said, “We’ve had good traffic and great



Bob Wiles (l) of Arachnid and Marc Haim (c) of Gold Coast International welcomed Marcio Bonila to the show. Bonila, retired from Arachnid, visited with customers and friends in the industry.



At the Gala, (l-r): Mona LaCombe of LAMOA, Rita and Dale Fremin of Delta Music, and AMOA President Donovan Fremin and Amanda Fremin.

feedback. We have so many new items to show, and we've seen a lot of interest."

Sebastian Mochkovsky of Sacoa Play Card System said, "We were really busy; we saw a lot of new faces. It looks like old projects are picking up again. People are expanding their businesses."

He added, "They are realizing a single attraction is not as viable long term and they have to move to a family entertainment center (FEC) concept, expand their offerings, and use the newest technology in debit card systems. Our online booking module helps with FEC online sales."

Marc-Antoine Pinard of Adrenaline Amusements said, "It was an amazing first day. In talking with exhibitors the mood was good. I think having the Pizza Expo alongside of our show is a positive thing. Pizza businesses are starting to open up more space for coin-op products."

Rob Whitehouse of Payment Alliance International (PAI) commented, "A lot of people at the show are our current customers. We spend time with them and show them what they need to be on the lookout for with their ATMs, such as new rules

affecting the ATM industry. Seventy-five percent of the people who came by are currently customers; the other 25 percent are new with ATMs, or they are with a competitor and want to see what else is out there."

"We've seen a nice balance of new customers and current customers."

"We had an amazing first day and a marvelous second day," said Sheila Dellacona of Hoffman Mint. "We saw existing customers and people new to the industry."

Laura Sandowsky of Suzo-Happ said, "We've seen a nice balance of new customers and current customers. Many are interested in LED lighting products. We're also showing our new Celebration Topper that shoots out confetti; it's a festive attention getter."

Bev Babich of Game Exchange of Colorado, which has been appointed

a distribution partner for U-Select-It, said, "We've had a really good show and hope we pick up the new customers we spoke with at the show. We'll definitely be back next year."

Peter Stolarczyk of IGPM/Kalkomat, who introduced the concept of tournaments and leagues on boxers, said, "Promotions are the key. If operators help their locations they will help themselves."

Mark Cumming of ATM Merchant Services said, "This is our first year at this show; we've been able to get our name out in this market. We've met a lot of people and hope in the next few weeks to turn that initial contact into relationships."

Dates for the 2013 Amusement Expo are Wed., March 20 through Fri., March 22 at the Las Vegas Convention Center (LVCC), Hall N1. Dates for the Pizza Expo are Tue., March 19 through Thu., March 21 at the LVCC, Halls 2-4.

Look for Part 2 of the Amusement Expo coverage next month, to include photos, more awards, special events, seminars, and game reviews. Also in May: coverage of the International Pizza Expo and the Nightclub & Bar Show. ▲



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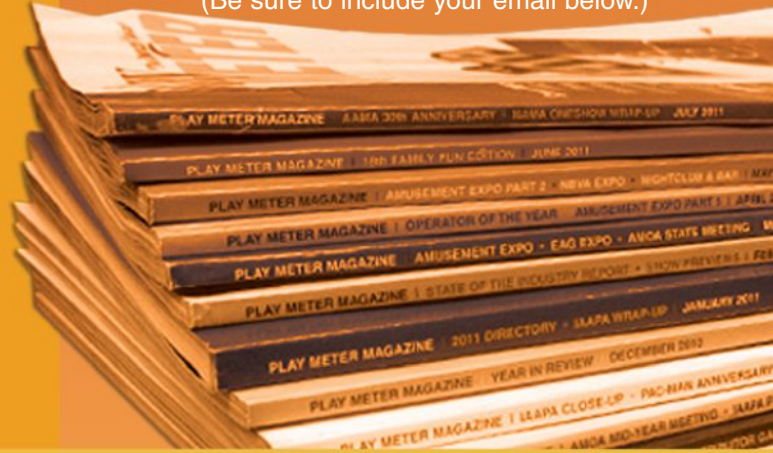


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reaches every corner of the globe

Over the years Suzo-Happ Group has continually expanded its product line in order to better serve its customers as well as reach new markets domestically and globally. New items that provide innovative solutions are a company focus.

The company is well grounded with knowledgeable staff around the world. A review of company history and its record growth tells the full story.

HISTORY

Frank Happ got his start as a vending route driver. He held several other

positions within the industry including one at parts company Wico. While at Wico, Happ was looking to expand coin-handling products made by the U.K.-based company Coin Controls.

During the discussion, Coin Controls had different plans and offered to hire Happ to expand into North America with Happ as their leader. At Coin Controls, Happ sold coin doors and coin handling equipment and expanded the product line to include joysticks, pushbuttons, and game controls. When Coin Controls was looking for a buyer for its non-coin handling division (joy-



Jim Brendel



Frank Happ

sticks, pushbuttons, and game controls) in the U.S., its first choice was Happ.

In 1986, Happ and his wife Sue made the decision to start the business from the garage of their family home. Their goal was simple: provide parts to a growing industry while always keeping the customer's needs in mind.

Little did Happ know that this amusement parts company he named Happ Controls would set off a chain of events that would take his company from a small, family-owned business to a global premier provider of machine components, service, and solutions, called Suzo-Happ.

In 1955, in the Netherlands, the Suverein family was embarking on a similar journey when they began the importation of jukeboxes from the U.S. The successful jukebox sales sparked the demand for spare parts, which launched the Suverein family into the amusement spare parts business with a company known as Suzo International. Continued growth allowed Suzo International to open many locations throughout Europe and the U.K.

After 18 years of successful growth, Happ decided to sell Happ Controls to Pfungsten Partners in June 2004. Pfungsten, a local private equity company in Deerfield, Ill., made Happ an investor within the new company. Today Happ is semi-retired; he attends many trade shows and is on the Board of Directors of the Suzo-Happ Group.

UNEQUIVOCAL GROWTH

As a part of a strategy to become a global provider, Happ Controls and Suzo International merged in December 2004 to become the world's largest amusement and gaming components supplier, known today as Suzo-Happ Group.

From that day forward it has seen unequivocal growth by acquisition or merger of nine companies in five years. These include Advanced Electronic Systems (AESI), Starpoint, Maz-zco, ProSource, and Chinatex.



Mount Prospect, Ill., building.



Mount Prospect warehouse.

“The unique team approach offers customers years of industry knowledge and assists in providing the best products and service.”

Jim Brendel, President and CEO of Suzo-Happ Group, leads a team of over 500 employees that span the globe. His strong commitment to customer satisfaction has been the catalyst in taking the company to new levels.

Brendel has worked in both the gaming and amusement industries since 1988. He started out in the industry working for the U.S. division of Coin Controls where he initially served as

Controller and later General Manager. In 2005, Brendel joined Suzo-Happ Group after the company he founded, Advanced Electronic Systems (AESI), merged with Suzo-Happ Group.

Brendel runs the business with two key objectives in mind: customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction. Employee involvement is the backbone of Suzo-Happ Group. At any given time, up to 25 employee-run



Mount Prospect office area.



Mount Prospect production department.

teams are in place, working on strategic company goals worldwide. This gives empowerment to the employees to make decisions for the company and play a daily, active role in the direction of the company.

Company sales in North America are driven by a team comprised of a staff of 44, whose coverage spans from the U.S. West Coast to the East, Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Canada.

The outside sales force, combined with inside sales, establishes Suzo-Happ Group as the most experienced sales staff within the coin-op components industry. This unique team approach offers customers years of

Steering wheel assemblies are just one of Suzo-Happ's more than 50,000 products.

industry knowledge and assists in providing the best products and service.

GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

Suzo-Happ Group's global footprint is unmatched in the industry, represented by 12 locations worldwide including in the U.S.: Illinois, Nevada, Minnesota, and New Jersey, as well as the Netherlands, U.K., Germany, Poland, Spain, China, Hong Kong, and Puerto Rico.

In the U.S. Suzo-Happ Group moved into its new Mount Prospect, Ill., facility in June 2010. This 80,000-square-foot facility processes over 650 shipments per day and manufactures over 12,000 SKUs in over 200 product groups.

Illinois provides a central location so most customers east of the Rocky Mountains receive their shipments within one to three days. The Mount Prospect location houses the company's office personnel such as inside sales, customer service, manufacturing, marketing, engineering purchasing, accounting, and information technology departments.

The Las Vegas, Nev., facility has 30,000 square feet of office and warehouse space and serves customers west of the Rocky Mountains. This facility also has inside sales, customer service, marketing, and engineering personnel in addition to a full service department. The Minnesota office has a parts counter, warehousing, and offices to serve



operators in the upper Midwest.

The Illinois, Nevada, and New Jersey facilities have full service departments that are factory authorized for MEI, Kortek, Makvision, Ceronix, and Future-Logic. In addition, they repair and service such items as LCDs, bill validators, printers, coin counters, game boards, and TouchTunes products.

PRODUCT LINE

Few companies offer as broad an array of products including many hard-to-find items. Suzo-Happ Group now manufactures or distributes over 50,000 different items.

Among the amusement products are LCD monitors, bill validators, pushbuttons, trackballs, coin doors, coin hoppers, billiard supplies, ticket dispensers, printers, touch screens, lighting, power supplies, driving controls, joysticks, guns, spare parts, darts and foosball supplies, audio and juke-box equipment, redemption supplies, security products, electrical supplies, cleaning and maintenance products, material handling, coin handling equipment, and tools.

Vending products include bill validators, temperature controls, T-handles, water filters, lighting, hand trucks, pushbuttons, and spare parts.

Gaming products include topper boxes, coin hoppers, pushbuttons, power supplies, ticket printers, bill validators, handle mechanisms, reel mechanisms, LCD monitors, and spare components.

Industrial products include custom products, joystick controls, pushbuttons, snow plow controls, kiosk equipment, heavy equipment controls, audio amplifiers, and fitness equipment components.

ACQUISITIONS

Various acquisitions around the world have created a global engineering team within Suzo-Happ Group. With over 25 experienced engineering staff world-wide, Suzo-Happ Group works hard to integrate product development teams globally.

Cross functional teams utilize engineers with varying disciplines to work on projects around the clock. These global engineering resources have resulted in 58 patents and a superior product development pipeline, enabling Suzo-Happ Group to bring state-of-the-art products to a global market faster.



Suzo-Happ building in China.



Assembly at the China facility.

“Customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction are key objectives.”

Experienced in-house industrial, mechanical, electronic, and tooling engineers provide full research and development design and advise on product functionality and material and component selection.

Modern modeling technology ensures the mechanical design process to be effective and accurate. These engineering teams work closely with customers utilizing industry leading CAD software to provide custom engineered solutions around the world.

Suzo-Happ Group is continuously focused on making improvements to the production processes, tools, and systems leading to increased employee output satisfaction. Over the past five years the company has implemented

Lean manufacturing techniques.

Using the concept of single piece flow on all production lines, Suzo-Happ Group is able to keep the production lines running accurately, allowing for a higher volume of output in less time. Customer schedules and market conditions are closely monitored in advance to properly stock shelves with fast moving product and reduce the need for expedited orders.

The manufacturing staff is cross trained on all products to provide more flexibility to keep up with customers' ever changing product needs. Systems are implemented to monitor and report all the manufacturing processes and efficiencies of the production lines. This aligns the staff



At the Minnesota office parts counter: Drew Wett (l) and Tom Gooley.

requirements and daily output with the demands on the manufacturing department. These changes have increased efficiency while reducing costs, allowing Suzo-Happ Group to remain competitive.

POWERFUL WEB SITE

Suzo-Happ Group's dynamic Web site provides secure online shopping for its customers. Ordering online is simple with up to the minute stock information from all available warehouses and current pricing information. Customers login to their online accounts, allowing them to view order history, track information, and save shopping carts for later checkout.

Technicians and customers also use the Web site as a resource for industry product and service information. The Web site offers in-depth product support; answering frequently asked questions about spare parts, bill validators, monitors, and much more. Within the Web site customers can find the latest innovative products and upcoming national tradeshows.

The Suzo-Happ Group Web site is constantly evolving, striving to make the shopping experience better for their customers. In the near future there will be improvements in the checkout process, the search tool, and order notifications. This will make it easier and faster for the customer to



Las Vegas, Nev., building.

find what they need, order it, and get it delivered.

And Suzo-Happ Group is now social! Through the use of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn, customers are able to stay connected with Suzo-Happ Group now more than ever. The company posts updates on the latest product specials, photos from trade shows, and video demonstrations. Customers can also sign up to receive timely e-mail updates including discounted products, upcoming trade shows, and special announcements.

WORLD MARKET

Global capability and scale give Suzo-Happ Group an international presence in a growing marketplace. Almost 500 employees in 12 locations serve over 80 countries around the world.

Each location is responsible for supporting its own markets for its own customers. This allows Suzo-Happ Group to react quickly to international, national, and regional developments as

well as supply its customers with a comprehensive range of over 50,000 different products.

In China, Suzo-Happ Group has owned its own 135,000-square-foot factory called Chinatex since 2007. This factory has been utilized to produce the items, which were sold by other Suzo-Happ Group sales teams across the U.S., the U.K., and Europe.

In 2012, Suzo-Happ Group is expanding this operation to include a local China sales team to better serve the growing market of amusement and gaming customers located in the Pacific Rim who are building or operating machines within that region.

Suzo-Happ Group is also expanding the factory to have the ability to build any type of products, not limited to the Suzo-Happ product line, for both the local and global markets that its customers operate within. Each facility provides critical local support with a global reach, ensuring that all products and services are close to the customer. Suzo-Happ Group is able to reach every corner of the globe.

An advanced distribution network supports Suzo-Happ Group in exporting to 80 different countries to cover the ever-expanding world market. This provides for a faster response time by broadening product lines and streamlining worldwide distribution capabilities. The result is a value-added solution for its customer base.

Research and development and breath of product make Suzo-Happ Group an industry leader. Its worldwide distribution network enables it to have a global reach while at the same time having a grounded, local presence. Suzo-Happ Group's commitment to customer satisfaction gives the company the ability to service customers like the small, family-owned business Happ started 25 years ago but supported by a network of global products and services.

For more information, call (888)289-4277; Web (www.suzohapp.com). ▲



Lively twin boys: Sabrina Mokuahi of Incredible Technologies added to her family on Nov. 28, 2011, when her twin sons were born. At left is Kaleohano, whose name means “voice of authority;” at right is Ka'milon, whose name means “seeker of knowledge.” Big sister Kaimana is adjusting to the new additions. Her name means “power of the ocean.”

Sweet baby girl: Chris Bisha of Enco Systems and his wife Monica welcomed their first child, Lucille “Lucy” Elizabeth Bisha, on Oct. 2, 2011. She weighed 8 lbs. 2 oz. and measured 21 inches long. Lucy is proving to be a delight to not only her parents but also to her grandparents and other relatives as well.



Happy Birthday: Leland Peterson, grandson of Carol Lea LeBell of *Play Meter*, celebrated his sixth birthday on Feb. 14 at Swaders Sports Park in Prince George, Va. Leland is pictured with proud mom, Anne Jeannette, and with his friends. Carol Lea and her husband Buddy traveled to Virginia to join in the fun. Swaders Sports Park is featured in this issue as FEC of the Month. ▲



Steve Kordek:

Legendary pinball designer

Not many people qualify for the moniker “living legend.” Pinball icon Steve Kordek was such a man. Kordek, who recently turned 100, passed away on Feb. 19 in Park Ridge, Ill. He was honored by his peers at a luncheon and celebration of his life and career on Jan. 20 at the Lone Tree Manor in Niles, Ill.

Kordek’s coin-op career spanned 63 years. After he retired in November 2000 at age 88, he still mentored young designers and attended industry events such as the Pinball Expo. He was the driving force behind the Century Club, a group of coin-op veterans who meet at major trade shows. He served as president of the club for 18 years.

Kordek is survived by four children: Fr. Frank Kordek OFM, Kathy Kordek Petrash, Richard Kordek,



and Donna Kordek Logazino; six grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; and siblings Joseph and Stanley Kordek and Florence Wozny.

Newspapers across the country, including *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal*, recognized his contribution to pinball. Kordek, son of Polish immigrants and the oldest of 10, developed more than 100 pinball games. Some of his famous creations included Triple Action (1948), which used a new two flipper format still used today. The first pinball with flippers was Humpty Dumpty, which had six flippers.

Other games and innovations included Vagabond (1962), the first to use a drop target; Beat the Clock (1963), the first multiball game; and bestsellers Space Mission and Grand Prix (both 1976).

In an interview in *The Chicago Tribune* in 2009, Kordek said, “I had more fun in this business than anyone could believe.”





Steve (r) with fellow designers Wayne Neyens (l) and Joe Kaminkow at Pinball Expo 2008.

From left: Steve Epstein, Steve Kordek, Mike Rudowicz, and Jack Kelleher at the AMOA Expo 2006 when Kordek retired as President of the Century Club.

At ASI 2006, (l-r): *Play Meter* columnist Zach Sharpe with designers Steve Ritchie (c) and Steve Kordek.



Kordek was honored by the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) with a Lifetime Achievement Award, presented at the spring Amusement Showcase International (ASI) in 2001. He was not able to attend that show due to a troublesome sciatic nerve problem, but he recovered and was soon back in action. He said at the time: "I wasn't looking for the glory. My reward was being able to work in the coin machine industry for so many years. I had one hell of a time!"

Kordek's move into the amusement industry reads like a movie script. He worked in Idaho with the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Depression. While visiting back home in Chicago, he ducked into a building to escape a rainstorm. A woman behind the desk of the business asked if he was looking for a job, and soon he was working for Genco Pinball Co. Kordek was able to use training in electrical circuitry he

gained after high school. Once Genco realized he could troubleshoot problems right on the assembly line, he was moved to engineering and worked on games such as Wizard and Silver Flash.

When Genco closed, Kordek and three other engineers were looking for new jobs. Kordek was offered a job at Bally but told Bill O'Donnell he wouldn't accept unless his three co-workers were also hired. O'Donnell agreed. Kordek later took a post at Williams, where he spent most of his career.

Steve Epstein, who worked closely with Kordek in the Century Club and succeeded him as President, said, "Steve was like a father figure to me; he was a mentor. He truly touched people's lives; mine in particular. He helped me understand pinball and appreciate it more. Seeing his love for the game and his energy became my love and my energy. It was a wonderful relationship over the years. We tested games at The Broadway Arcade so there was always a lot of dialogue with Steve."

Fellow AAMA Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Malcolm Steinberg, Chairman of the LAI Group, recalled, "I first met Steve in 1970 at the Williams headquarters in Chicago. I was there for a meeting with Sam Stern (Gary Stern's father) to try and get distribution rights for Williams' games in Australia.

"Steve was the designer of a single player pinball game called Doodlebug, which turned out to be the first Williams pinball that we distributed in Australia. At that time, Steve had been designing pinball games for more than 30 years. In the 1970s and 1980s, Williams was competing with Bally, Gottlieb, and Chicago Coin for what then was a much larger international pinball market than it is today."

Steinberg continued, "Even after his retirement Steve remained active in the industry and was responsible for forming the Century Club for old-timers in the industry like me. We met at least once a year at industry trade shows in the U.S. Steve was responsible for many innovations in the pinball industry. These included twin flippers at the bottom of the playfield, drop targets in 1962, and multi-ball in 1963. Steve will be remembered as one of the great icons of our industry, and may he rest in peace knowing the great contribution he has made."

Facebook was full of postings about Kordek. Designer Larry DeMar of Leading Edge Design posted: "If not for the need of some shelter from the rain, pinball might never have had its wizard. Steve was the grand old man of pinball. He revolutionized the game in 1948 when he introduced a pair

Paying tribute to a true original

Steve Kordek is gone, although he remains in our hearts, but he will never be forgotten due to a body of work that is truly incredible. For those of us fortunate enough to have worked with Steve, we saw first hand the passion and unwavering commitment that he brought to work each and every day.

To think that he did so unconditionally, for over 60 years, is truly mind-boggling. But then Steve never ceased to amaze and inspire, and not just because of the sheer longevity of his career but by the quality of that career and the faith, love, and charity that defined him.

Steve was always accessible and touched so many lives in so many different ways that we can only celebrate his time on earth rather than mourn his passing. Larry DeMar helped put together a special 100th birthday celebration for Steve. Although I was out of town when it took place, one of the extra things that Larry coordinated was a memory book that captured the outpouring of love and affection we all had for Steve.

I would like to share what I wrote for that memory book.

A CENTURY OF PROGRESS

Back in 1974 I ventured into the world of pinball, beginning research for what was originally only going to be a feature for *Gentlemen's Quarterly Magazine*. What followed, however, managed to somewhat influence the course of pinball history and, more personally, dramatically alter the course of my life.

It wasn't just the games themselves that I was completely captivated by, it was meeting the people behind the scenes that grabbed and held me. During my three-year journey of attempting to piece together the history of pinball, I found myself discovering a generation of incredibly gifted and talented individuals who I attempted to pay homage to. Their consummate zeal and excitement for their craft was apparent and uplifting. These weren't just games, each were unique life forces offering singular personalities imbued by the passion of their creators.

Despite a slight difference in age, it was the youthful enthusiasm and energy of those I was meeting that drew me in closer to their world and provided the additional incentive to give them a voice and a face to the outside world. They were worth adulation and acknowledgement for bringing so much joy to so many for so many years.

The inherent creativity and imagination that brought to life every dazzling world under glass was almost inexplicable. How did they weave the magic time after time? I wanted to hear their stories and memorialize them.

Steve Kordek was one of those "wizards" who I had the honor and privilege to get to know. And to say that he had a profound impact on me, as well as millions of pinball players and enthusiasts around the world, would be an understatement.

Steve not only endured but also thrived over a remarkable period of decades that embraced not just fundamental design changes but truly revolutionary technological advancements. And his numerous achievements were accomplished seamlessly from one era to the next. It is a true testament to his skills and the legacy he shares with all of us.

Even more, he was unconditionally generous in sharing his wisdom and insights with subsequent generations of designers. Always ready with an observation and a suggestion for consideration to take good to great and great to timeless. No one could have asked for a better mentor or tutor in appreciating what could be achieved on a bare piece of wood. Steve was always there and still remains a legendary force.

Steve represents all the best that is pinball. He is light, sound, and action, the smooth rolling of silver into objects that either disappear or are transformed, the unexpected nuance of angle and geometric precision. He is genius in the guise of someone who could just as easily be part of the family, with that gentle smile and reassuring words of advice.

It was Steve who helped me realize a dream when he stepped in to help with the development of Barracora. And for that I will be forever indebted. But he has meant much more to me, and my life, over the past 38 years and I celebrate his centennial with unvarnished affection and love.

And maybe what needs to be said came from Steve's own lips, his final words: "Everything's going very well." We should all be that fortunate to have even just a portion of what Steve Kordek's time on earth provided. ▲

of flippers at the bottom of the machine."

Jim Schelberg, Editor of *Pingame Journal*, posted on his Web site: "In the 22 years I knew him, Steve was always available at various pinball events to pose for my camera with a young lady or two or three. His excitement for life came through in each photo I took."

Play Meter's Critics Corner Too! columnists Josh and Zach Sharpe said, "If you read our column every month, it's no secret that pinball has become an integral part of our lives. Being Roger Sharpe's sons, we've had the privilege over the last 25+ years of getting to meet many of pinball's greatest heroes.

"As we've gotten older, we've had the chance to develop our own relationships with many pinball greats that only knew us as 'Roger's boys' for so many years. While we didn't have a chance to develop as personal of a relationship with Steve, we got to watch how our pinball legends interacted with someone who was clearly one of their pinball legends.

"Whether it was the halls of Pinball Expo, or most recently at Steve's 100th birthday celebration, we've seen the awesomeness of Steve's legacy and how it has passed down to so many of the people we admire today, including our father. Steve was fortunate to be around long enough to see that legacy pass with his own eyes. He will be missed." ▲

Photos courtesy of Jim Schelberg of Pingame Journal.

SAY WHAT?



10

second
interview
with...

John Margold began his industry career in a warehouse role. He soon moved to parts and then to equipment sales. He currently serves as Chairman of the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) and as Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing at AMI Entertainment Network. He enjoys golf, drinking wine, reading, and listening to music.

My first job was:

working in the warehouse of a Boston-area coin-op distributor. I still hate eight-foot pool tables and cold food machines.

My favorite type of music is:

just about everything but drum and bugle corps. I love the blues, rock, zydeco, opera, real jazz (especially bebop), but I don't like John Philip Sousa.

I wish I had the nerve to:

Nothing here...If I think of it and want to do it, I do! And that has gotten me in trouble.

One thing I can't live without is:

music.

The last book I read was:

"The Gloves: A Boxing Chronicle" by Robert Anasi.

One word that describes my personality is:

eclectic.

The best advice I ever got was:

Tell the truth. That way you don't need a good memory (advice from my dad).

My favorite TV show is:

Game of Thrones.

If I could have dinner with a famous person that person would be:

Branch Rickey.

My most cherished inanimate possession is:

my iPod.



A sporting good time

Swaders Sports Park in Prince George, Va., is the Tri-cities destination for fun. This family entertainment center (FEC), spanning three acres, truly has something for everyone. With indoor and outdoor attractions, a state-of-the-art corporate conference center, and party packages to fit any need, Swaders is a one-stop shop for entertainment.

The outdoor portion of the facility opened in 2006 when the Swader brothers saw a need for an FEC in their area. In 2009, the indoor facility was opened, which allowed for several new attractions.

Outdoor activities include a driving range, a mini golf course, go-karts, and batting cages. Indoor attractions include an arcade, laser tag, KidZone modular play area, and Hwy. 66 Qubica AMF indoor bowling.

JoAnna Korkos, Corporate and Group Sales Manager, said, "Our most popular attraction is definitely the go-karts during the summertime. The arcade is huge."

Ken Swader, Owner, said, "Big Bass Wheel from Bay Tek is by far the most popular game we have. It made \$68,000 last year. Typhoon from Triotech is another good one. It did \$56,000 last year."

He added, "The merchandisers that vend high end prizes are great. The Barber Cut Lite from Namco is our best performing merchandiser. NASCAR Showdown from Bay Tek has done well. Road Trip from Bay Tek is good. Our Apple photo booth always does well, we've had it for three and a half years now."

Swaders' definition of a well performing machine is one that earns an average of \$200 per week. Around 70 percent of the games in his arcade do that or better.

The laser tag arena is another bright spot in Swaders. Lasertron designed and built the 5,500-square-foot, two level arena and provided 36 vests.



Facility:
Swaders Sports Park

Location:
Prince George, Va.

Attractions:
Laser Tag, batting cages, driving range, bowling, arcade, go-karts, and KidZone.

A growing aspect of the business is the corporate conference center. The venue features everything a business might need to give a presentation, including satellite TV, a large projector, wifi, a dvd player, and 50 high backed executive chairs. Businesses can have a highly equipped meeting venue and a team-building opportunity all in one.

KidZone, a modular play area from Soft Play, features an obstacle course, slides, a trampoline room and much more. Due to the open format, parents can maintain visual contact with their child the entire time, giving them peace of mind.

The facility offers four birthday party packages, each with different options. All parties, however, are supplied with food, drinks, cake, candles, ice cream, invitations, a prize wheel spin, photo souvenir for the birthday child, a free round of mini-golf for use on a future visit for each guest, and a dedicated party host(ess) throughout room time. Additional attractions are available to each package for a

reduced price. Swaders averages roughly 1,300 parties per year!

Swaders' owners definitely believe in using social media to their advantage. Swader said, "We like to think that we're aware and engaged in most opportunities for social media. We have over 5,200 fans on Facebook and we post most specials there first. About a month ago we started a photo caption contest on Facebook and we've been getting 30 or 35 responses per week. We award a free attraction to whoever has the best fill-in-the-blank response. We think it's a great way to allow for information and interchange between our customer base and ourselves."

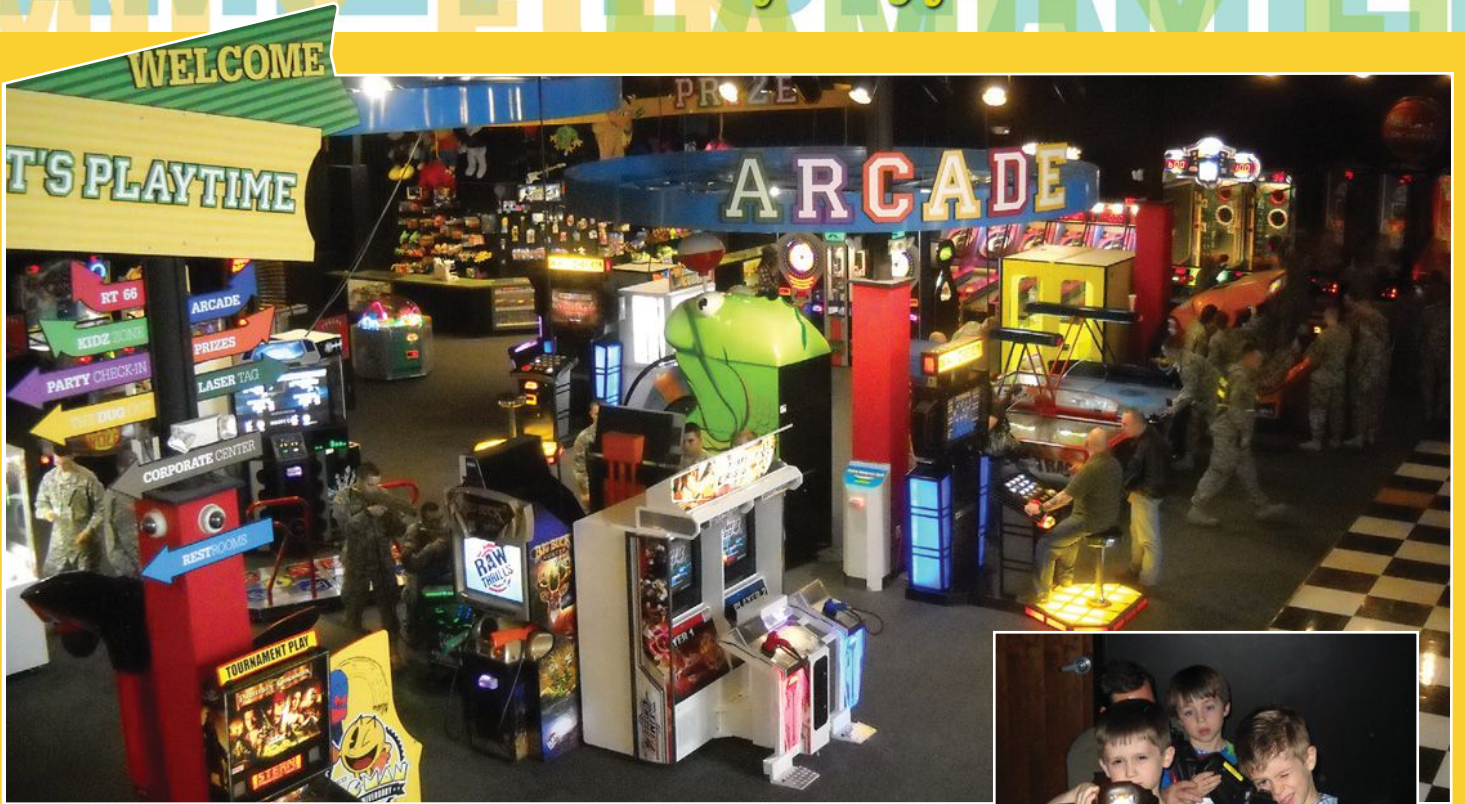
Swaders hasn't stopped with Facebook, however. The facility also hosts "Tweeting Tuesday," where guests who follow Swaders on Twitter can receive a free attraction or game card when they mention the "code word" Swaders tweeted that day. Swader said the FEC has gone from less than 100 followers to nearly 1,200.

Swader explained, "Everyone's texting, tweeting, and on Facebook. If we don't embrace that and stay active every single day, we'll lose out."

The facility has also offered a coupon on Groupon once and tried the same thing in Living Social in January. Groupon has since contacted them to do another listing. Swader reports that those promotions have been very successful.

Swaders recently started a family game night where on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m., patrons can receive two hours of unlimited laser tag and arcade games (excluding merchandisers). The two hours begin from the time the guest's card is swiped, as long as they arrive before 7 p.m.

For more information, call (804)733-3700; Web (www.swaders.com). ▲



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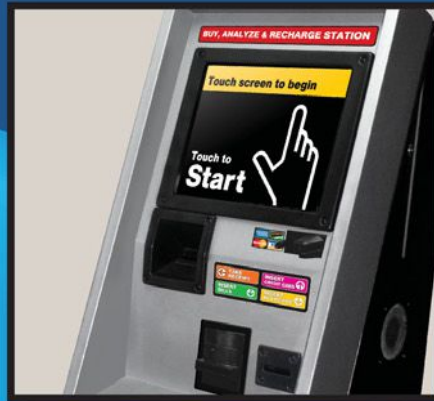


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Raul Vasquez, Manager of City Park, Colombia.



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Josh and Zach Sharpe

The two cornered critics cover two games with big potential: one with addictive game play and the other with a hot license.

Ice-cold “winning” games

While we'll have a more in-depth review of Stern Pinball's latest rock-n-roll-themed pinball machine AC/DC in an upcoming issue, we had to reiterate the success on the promotional front.

What has now become a tradition for every release that comes out of Stern's stable, the International Flipper Pinball Association (IFPA) has helped the coordination of launch parties all over the world.

For this release there were 10 “official” parties with many more unofficial parties. So for those about to rock, Stern and the IFPA salute you in keeping the pinball beat active and rocking.

This month we'll take a look at Play Mechanix/ICE's Ice Age: Ice Breaker and Andamiro's Winners' Ringer.

ICE AGE: ICE BREAKER/ PLAY MECHANIX/ICE

This isn't the first time ICE has partnered with Play Mechanix on a licensed game. The duo has teamed up in the past to produce the mega



“There's no denying that at this moment, (Ice Age) is arguably the strongest animated license out there.”

hit Deal or No Deal. This time around, the two companies take their licensing to the big screen with their latest redemption game, Ice Age: Ice Breaker.

Analysis: In this redemption game, players must hit one of five acorns in front of them using a mallet. This causes a visual break in the ice on the flat 42-inch horizontal monitor. The break shoots its way towards a toggling bonus structure of tickets. By avoiding the drifting characters and timing which acorn to strike, players can ultimately win Scrat's bonus.

Pros: Play Mechanix and ICE really hit the theme out of the park with this game. With a fourth movie coming up this summer, the release could not be timed more perfectly.

In addition, the game comes with fantastic graphics, visuals, and accompanying sounds that fit the theme perfectly. The cabinet design is also very sharp and the additional 23-inch monitors complement the horizontal action and promote the upcoming film with trailers and other clips for people walking by. The game accommodates two players at the same time, leading to increased earnings.

Cons: I'd say our biggest gripe with Ice Breaker is with the rules. With so

much stuff going on visually and with the sounds, it took a moment to figure out we were trying to get to Scrat's bonus.

Maybe we can chalk this up to old age, but with all of the other main characters going across the screen, we originally thought it was worthwhile trying to collect/hit them with the rapid hitting frenzy approach similar to



a bop-em-style game. The fact that the game requires a simple hit-once-and-wait approach caught us a little off guard.

Overall: It's very fitting that a company called ICE would secure the rights to one of the most recognizable animated licenses in the world in "Ice Age."

While the game play itself isn't anything revolutionary, we have to give credit to the absolutely stunning job done with the cabinet design. The level of detail put into the ice marquee along the side with the acorn "pads" is incredible and the game is simply beautiful.

We're sure the people behind the Ice Age brand are beyond thrilled with the finished product, plus who doesn't love a chance to promote the upcoming film during the attract mode? While Ice Age might not be as timeless of a theme 10 years from now (only time will tell), there's no denying that at this moment, it is arguably the strongest animated license out there and this game will most certainly earn well throughout 2012 in family entertainment centers (FECs) by simply resting on the laurels of its theme/license.

Overall Rating: ★★★ 3/4

WINNERS' RINGER/ ANDAMIRO

While we are more accustomed to seeing Andamiro's quirky physical redemption games like Dolphin Show or Over the Top, we were excited to try its latest video redemption game, Winners' Ringer.

Analysis: Similar to other prize/merchandise redemption games, Winners' Ringer follows in the footsteps of other stacking-style games, where the goal is to successfully work your way up to two major prize categories; in this case, the minor or the major prizes.

Instead of trying to time and stack boxes, players must simply press the main button to release rings from the swinging arm on the screen. In the



"It isn't until after your first play that you realize how addicting (Winners' Ringer) truly is."

middle is a pole where players can successfully drop and stack up the rings.

However, to make the game challenging, the speed of the swinging arm increases after each successful drop while the rings get smaller and smaller. The minor prize can be won after successfully stacking seven rings. However, for players with nerves of steel that want all the glory, there is the option to take the risk and go for the major prize, which is won after dropping three more rings (10 in total).

Pros: At first glance, Winners' Ringer looks like your standard prize/redemption game. The graphics of the game are cute, the music is very accommodating, and the distinction between minor and major prizes is well displayed.

However, it isn't until after your first play that you realize how addicting this

game truly is. Maybe it's because we've become accustomed to the stacking feature on other similar games, but the unique twist on the stacking genre with rings and the fluidity of the visuals on screen made it a dynamic experience this time around.

When we failed at dropping the ring successfully, the onus felt as if it was entirely on us. It is different from other stacking games where you feel as if you dropped correctly, but the percentages inside the game tell a different story.

Cons: While imitation can be seen as the sincerest form of flattery, in the coin-op industry it can also have the complete opposite effect: lack of coin drop. Why try a game that plays extremely similar to a game I've already gotten used to and have a better chance of winning?

This is a very valid question. Without completely reinventing the wheel, is there enough of a draw to pull in first time players?

Overall: We found ourselves thoroughly enjoying the challenge of Andamiro's latest. We're always a big fan of hand-eye coordination games in general, and won't be surprised to see Winners' Ringer become a successful game.

While we did enjoy this game a lot, our biggest concern is definitely if it can pass the eye candy test. In the end, it did win us over. We just hope that players in the wild will give it the same chance to win them over as well.

Overall Rating: ★★★ 3/4

With a father like Roger Sharpe, the original "Cornered Critic," it is probably no surprise that sons Josh and Zach share a true passion for the coin-op industry. Former pinball champions, both are recognized as being two of the finest players in the world. But their interest and skills have grown far beyond the silver ball to embrace video games and attractions of all types.



Gaming panel, (l-r): Moderator Vince Gumma of Illinois, Donovan Fremin of Louisiana, Sam Westgate of Illinois, and Tim Carson of Montana.



From left; Nick Stratus of Alabama, David Corey of Ohio, and Gaines Butler of Georgia.

STATE MEETING

Operator panels give sage advice

No one knows better than a coin machine operator what works in the field and what doesn't work. At the recent Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Council of Affiliated States Meeting in Phoenix, operators from around the country shared their experiences on a number of topics: gaming, leagues, healthy state associations, and state tournaments and promotions.

Vince Gumma of American Vending Sales (AVS) in Illinois moderated the session on gaming; Mary Lavine of Bullseye Games in Wisconsin moderated the other three sessions. Following are summaries of the sessions, which provided invaluable information.

GAMING

Panelists included Tim Carson of Amusement Services in Montana, Donovan Fremin of Delta Music in Louisiana, and Sam Westgate of J&J Ventures in Illinois.

Carson is from the state with the longest-running, regulated video gaming program (since 1987) that partners operators with the state. Carson said,

"A number of times the state has looked to change the tax rate, which we consider the Holy Grail. Our program allows 20 games per location. There are about 16,000 gaming terminals in the state. When you get gaming, it is going to change your life."

He said the smoking ban that was enacted in October 2009 resulted in a 15 percent drop in net revenue from the machines, which are located in liquor-licensed establishments. Now that line games have been added, Carson said, "We're seeing our revenue come back."

Carson counseled: "Don't lose sight of your core amusement business. Continue running leagues and providing entertainment."

Fremin said that Louisiana's program is mature, having rolled out in 1992, and that about 14,000 machines are online in the state. He said the steady growth in revenue peaked in 1999. The state smoking ban that applies to restaurants resulted in a severe revenue decline in games located in restaurants.

When asked how the gaming business affects revenue from music,

games, and ATMs, Fremin said, "I've always been a strong proponent of maintaining your amusement route." He added, "If you get the video poker account in a location you have to update the other equipment."

He added, "We probably would not have tried ATMs without gaming. ATMs have provided a huge relief to our company's services monetary-wise and personnel-wise."

Westgate said the Video Gaming Act that passed in 2009 has not been implemented yet due to a challenge in 2010, member changes in the Illinois Gaming Board, and the time it took to settle upon a central computer system provider.

"We expect a rollout in the third quarter of this year," said Westgate. "The licensing process has been proceeding, with more approvals each week."

Westgate also said, "There are two kinds of operators: those going forward with gaming and those not going forward. Some operators are selling their routes, and there have been opportunities to consolidate and pick up other routes."



From left: Donovan Molitor of Wisconsin, Jeff George of Wyoming, and Bruce Dentice of Wisconsin.

Bonnie Theard of *Play Meter* and Larry Elbert of Iowa.

He added that operators are being extra careful about the legality of all their equipment. “Even a misdemeanor disqualifies you from getting a gaming license.”

All panelists emphasized the importance of having a lobbyist, or a team of lobbyists representing the interests of the state association. Fremin said, “Lobbyists are able to call legislators and get direct answers.” The panelists were in agreement that while funding lobbying efforts is costly, it is well worth the investment.

Also: If you are trying to pass any kind of legislation, fragmentation within an association will make it harder to accomplish. The larger and more cohesive your group, the more power you will be able to build.

LEAGUES

Panelists included Larry Elbert of Camden Amusement in Iowa, Chip O’Hara of Midwest Coin Concepts in Minnesota, and Kris Gilmore of Troy Vending in Arizona.

Elbert said, “If you find a distinct way to bring value to your locations, it provides you with a great asset and an unwritten contract that keeps your customers happy. Promotions and leagues keep people in your establishments.”

He added, “We are trying to get players to bring their friends and

wives. We’ve been successful with a Saturday couples league. We’ve taken leagues from 14 weeks up to 21 weeks to get people to stay engaged longer.”

O’Hara said, “Leagues have been the backbone of our business. We use enthusiastic players to breed new players. We do fun promotions such as the ‘Earn League Bucks.’ Players can use those bucks to get prizes in the final tournament. We also work with our beer and soft drink sponsors. We’re trying to step up our promotions in any way we can.”

Moderator Lavine said, “Anyone can buy new equipment and service that equipment. But if you can put people in the bar and put cars in the parking lot, you have a bond with the location that does not go away. Every piece of equipment we operate is promotable. It takes time and dedication, and it has to be done.”

She continued, “Leagues get people into locations to play the games and the jukebox; it’s what drives our business. The goal is to recruit new people for your leagues. Bar owners and bar staff are your number one resource. We start every season with a kick-off party and contact players through direct mail and social media.”

Lavine mentioned that no one wants to be on the street after 11 p.m. when police shifts change, which means

leagues may have to start earlier.

Gilmore said, “We’ve run dart leagues for 20 years and pool leagues for 15 years. Even with the economy going down, our leagues have grown. We do more in-house leagues so players don’t have to travel. We have loyal bar owners who give us player referrals. You need involvement from bar owners and their staff. Bar owners say ‘bring me a team’ but they have to work on it from within the bar.”

All were in agreement that state tournaments drive membership to the state associations. Also: There is a great deal of help available from the AMOA-National Dart Association (NDA) and the Valley National Eight-Ball Association (VNEA) for anyone interested in starting dart and pool leagues.

STATE ASSOCIATIONS

Panelists included Larry Bershtein of Capitol Amusement in Maryland, Jerry Johnston of Amusement Unlimited in Oregon, David George of Bell Music Co. in Ohio, and perspective from the trade press.

Bershtein said, “People will come out of the woodwork when there is a crisis. That happened in Maryland when we faced a proposed tax hike. We were able to get legislation worded in such a way as to not have unintended consequences to the industry in the state.”

Jukebox License Office

Katie Wilkinson, Executive Director of the Jukebox License Office (JLO), said, "I'm here to listen to people who are smart enough to ban together for things that work and things that don't work. They recognize that there is strength in numbers. Why do it alone when you can work together?"

She added, "The atmosphere I feel in here is generosity and it spills over to love. It's one of the best meetings I've ever attended."

"I represent the Performing Rights Societies (PROs: ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC)," said Wilkinson. "I license 45 rpm and CD jukeboxes. Please tell us about someone who is not paying his fair share. This information is turned over to the PROs."

In conclusion, she said, "This industry would not be as successful as it is were it not for AMOA and all of you joining together. That's what makes it work. Sharing information is a big advantage." ▲



"Don't lose sight of your core amusement business. Continue running leagues and providing entertainment."

He added, "If you don't have a lobbyist watching what's going on in the legislature all the time, something can slip by that will be detrimental to our industry."

Bershtein mentioned a successful event sponsored by his state association: an annual legislative reception that features games on free play. "It's memorable because it's different," he said. "It is costly to host, but what is that amount compared to what a tax hike could impose?"

Johnston said, "There is always something that needs your attention; there are always issues. As a group, pick an issue and go after it. Often these issues won't be solved in one legislative session; it will take several sessions. But you have to be there every session to establish your presence."

He added, "We are constantly learning from other states, such as those with successful dart and pool tournaments."

George spoke about the benefits of membership in your state association: "We were able to obtain a fleet rate from a fuel company to save money on gas for our members. Check on group rates for workmen's compensation insurance. We are constantly trying to find ways to add value to membership."

He added, "Lobbyists are important because they hear about proposals

first. You need to have someone you can trust looking out for you on a monthly basis, someone who has friends everywhere." George recommended supporting one legislator you could count on to know you and your industry."

All agreed that it is important to spend the time to check out lobbyists to find one who is a good fit for you. If you can't hire a lobbyist full-time, try to get someone part-time, or be your own lobbyist. Keep in mind that you may need a specialist for a certain bill.

STATE TOURNAMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

Panelists included David Corey of the Ohio Coin Machine Association (OCMA), Bruce Dentice of the Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators Inc. (WAMO), Kim Paugh of the AMOA-National Dart Association (NDA), and Dave Courington of the Valley National Eight-Ball Association (VNEA).

Corey said dart and pool charter holder meetings are held at the OCMA membership meeting, where league coordinators provide input. "We diversified the state dart tournament, which has increased participation."

He added, "We've been told we run the largest pool table event in one

weekend in the country. We rent pool tables from a private company. It takes the strain off having to sell the tables afterward. For darts, we get 100 dartboards from Arachnid and rely on operators to supply the rest."

Dentice said that distributors supply the tables for the Wisconsin state dart and pool tournaments. "We try to achieve a balance of operators buying 50 percent of those tables," he said. "This helps manufacturers, supports distribution, and helps operators upgrade their routes every year so their best locations get new tables."

To qualify to send teams to the WAMO state events, operators have to belong to the association, buy a charter, and work an eight-hour shift to help out. WAMO negotiated control of the beer sales in the contract with the civic center where the tournaments are held. "We keep it a reasonable price and a value for the players," he said.

Paugh said, "The NDA has two programs to help support state tournaments. TIP provides financial support by offering a rebate and affords player recognition on a national level. We also offer the STAR program. If you don't have a state event, the NDA will help you get off to a strong start and assist for two years, and then you can be part of the TIP program."

Courington offered: "If you take into consideration the consolidation in our industry, the number of sanctioned pool and dart players is stable. State associations that hold state tournaments are where the tournament participation continues to grow."

He continued, "The VNEA began when operators wanted a way to have play on operator-owned equipment. That's the only rule you cannot change. It's the same for the NDA. We have a rebate program as well, and help new states for the first two years. We want to help you grow and nurture leagues at home." ▲



From left: Dale Fremin of Delta Coin, David Caraway of AMA, Lisa Cantrell of Mid River Truck Stop, Mike Toups of Gaming Solutions, and Jay Hembrick of AMA.



David Caraway explains the machine's features to attendees.

Tech 2 certification for IGT's E20

Operators and technicians from across Louisiana gathered at the headquarters of AMA Distributors and Lucky Coin Machine in Metairie, La., for an introduction to and technical workshop for International Game Technology's (IGT)'s new machine. The E20, which houses poker games like Michael Angelo and Secret of the Forest, is for the Louisiana Gaming program that has been in operation since 1992. Technicians need Tech 2 certification for the new equipment.

Attendees commented on the new games, caught up with industry peers, and gained valuable insight on owning and operating the new equipment.

Val Haydel, Senior Outside Sales Representative of AMA Distributors, commented, "We've had a great turnout of over 100 people. This has been the first show for this equipment."

David Caraway, General Manager of AMA Distributors, said "We've had a busy day. I love teaching people and working with people."

LSM Gaming of Shreveport had two

operators in attendance to be certified. The company operates games in around 70 locations across the state.

"The games have a lot of nice features. They appear to be more tech friendly. The display is interactive and we think customers will enjoy it. We're looking forward to putting these games on our route. We hope they generate some revenue," said Shane Roth, LSM Gaming employee. Roth has been with the company 17 years. Also in attendance was Chris Netherton, who has been with LSM Gaming for 11 years.

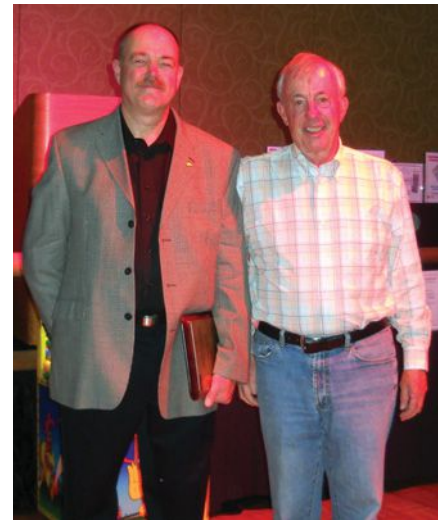
Lisa Cantrell of Mid River Truck Stop said, "I'm looking forward to getting the new machine."

Michelle Dupre of Black Gold Casino commented, "I think it's something customers are going to really like. The setup is better. The location of the printer is more accessible. The display is eye-catching."

For more information, call (866) 486-8043; Web (www.amadistributors.com). ▲



Recipients of President Schwarzli's recognition awards.



Bernie Schwarzli accepts the Jane Mason Achievement Award from Tom Theisen.

NBVA Member Dinner and Awards

The National Bulk Vendors Association (NBVA) hosted a Country-themed Member Dinner and Awards presentation March 15, at the Las Vegas Hotel ballroom.

Steve Schnecher of Capital Vending opened the awards presentation by introducing outgoing President Bernie Schwarzli. Schwarzli recognized key people who had helped him tremendously during his three-year term as president. Schwarzli also took this opportunity to give his President's Award to Dax Logue of the Product Safety and Compliance Committee for his help during the past three years.

Schwarzli went on to recognize others who provided help and support during his term: Lori Logue of Brand Vending Products, NBVA Vice President, who was helpful in keeping him on track; Steve Schnecher, NBVA Secretary, who "listened to him talk and talk and even read his notes to keep him sane;" and Andy Belsky, NBVA Treasurer, who kept the books and managed the budget. He ended his speech by encouraging everyone to attend the morning meeting to elect officers for the upcoming year.

Schnecher then handed out "Best" awards. The award for Best Tattoos went to Allstar for Angry Birds. Best Candy went to Oak Leaf for Gumball Filled Nerds. Best 2-inch product went to A&A Global for NFL Table Top Football. Best Machine went to Beaver Machine Corp. for the RB16. Allstar won Best Sticker for Angry Birds. Best Crane Mix went to A&A Global for its String Doll Mix. Best 1-inch

product was taken by Brand Vending Products for Sqwishland. The Most Innovative Operator Award went to Allan Pollock of Aftica Vend.

Tom Theisen of Theisen Vending presented the Jane Mason Achievement Award to Bernie Schwarzli. The recipient of this award is someone who has worked above and beyond to support the ideals and goals of the association while remaining open to changes that would benefit everyone.

According to Theisen, Schwarzli met all of these characteristics and more. He kept the association on track, served three consecutive years, set up good relationships with the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA), the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA), and the Pizza Expo, plus more.

Schwarzli accepted the award by thanking attendees and said, "The award was unexpected but I am so delighted to have such an icon present it to me. Thank you everyone."

Carol Lally of *Play Meter* magazine attended the dinner to present the *Play Meter* Operator's Choice Award for the Best Bulk Machine to Diane Olsen of Northwestern Corp. for the 60s and 80s super series.

The NBVA Scholarship Committee was able to raise \$7,050 this year and gave out seven awards. The banquet closed with a raffle drawing using Parsal's All American Chicken Machine to dispense the winning numbers.

For more information, call (888)628-2872; Web (www.nbva.info). ▲



Carol Lally of *Play Meter* presents the Operators' Choice Best Bulk Vending Machine award to Diane Olsen of Northwestern Corp.



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Westin Chicago Northwest
tel: (815)416-0741
e-mail: rmitchell@icmoa.org
web: www.icmoa.org

April 13-21

Team Dart 2012

Las Vegas, Nev.
Bally's Las Vegas
tel: (317)367-1299
fax: (317)387-0999
web: www.ndadarts.com

April 17-19

DEAL

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tel: +971-4-343`645
e-mail: jacob@iec.ae
web: www.themeparksdubai.com

April 25-27

NAMA OneShow

Las Vegas, Nev.
Venetian/Sands Resort
tel: (312)346-0370
fax: (312)704-4140
web: www.namaoneshow.org

May 5-6

National Restaurant Show

Chicago, Ill.
McCormick Place
tel: (312)853-2525
web: www.restaurant.org

May 10-12

GTI Asia Taipei Expo

Taipei, Taiwan
Taipei World Trade Center
tel: 886-2-2760-7407, ext. 207
e-mail: gametime@taiwanslot.com.tw
web: www.gtiexpo.com.tw/

May 14-16

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tel: 61-7-3807-3508
e-mail: info@aalara.com.au
web: www.aalara.com.au

May 24-28

BullShooter Finals

Rosemont, Ill.
Hyatt Regency O'Hare
tel: (800)435-8319
e-mail: lorid@bullshooter.com
web: www.bullshooter.com

May 24-June 2

VNEA International Championships

Las Vegas, Nev.
Bally's Las Vegas
tel: (800)544-1346
e-mail: info@vnea.com
web: www.vnea.com

June 5-7

E3

Los Angeles, Calif.
Los Angeles Convention Center
tel: (508)424-4864
e-mail: chart@idgworldexpo.com
web: www.e3expo.com

June 5-8

Asian Attractions Expo

Hong Kong SAR, China
Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre
tel: (703)836-4800
e-mail: a-lee@iaapa.org
web: www.iaapa.org/asianattractionsexpo

June 8-9

9th IFPA World Pinball Championship

Bainbridge Island, Wash.
tel: (847)601-1609
e-mail: ifpabinball@gmail.com
web: www.ifpabinball.com

June 14-17

VNEA Jr. Championships

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The Pershing Center
tel: (800)544-1346
e-mail: info@vnea.com
web: www.vnea.com

June 17

OCMA Annual Meeting

Columbus, Ohio
tel: (614)784-9772
e-mail: ocma@the-ocma.org
web: www.the-ocma.org

June 19-20

WAMO Conference & Show

Brookfield, Wis.
Sheraton Hotel
tel: (800)827-8011
e-mail: wamomax@aol.com
web: www.wamo.net

June 24-29

International Bowl Expo

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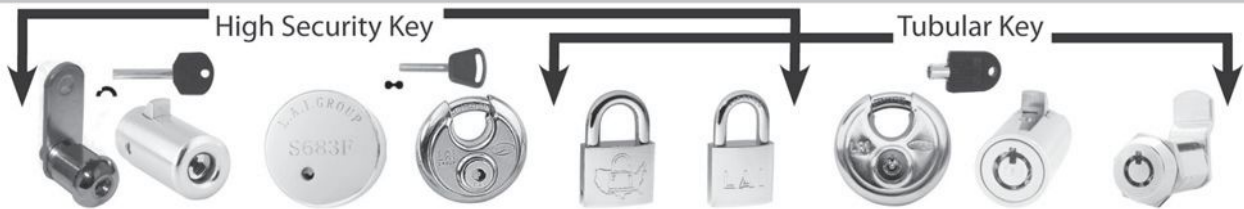


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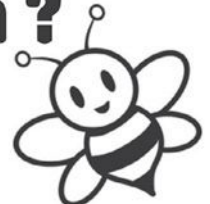
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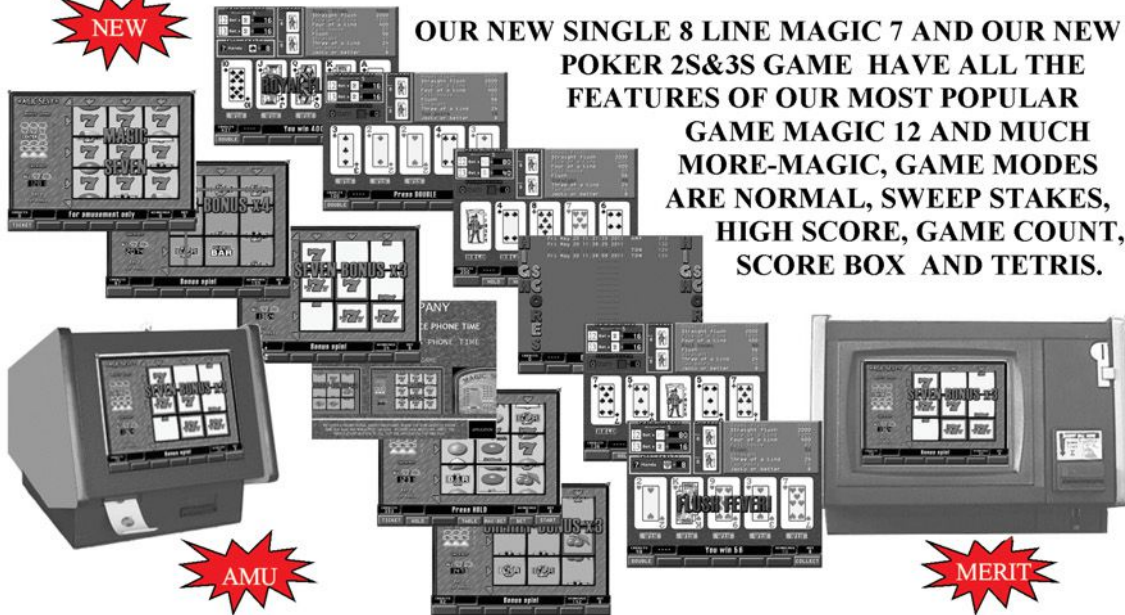
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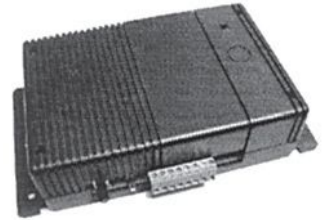
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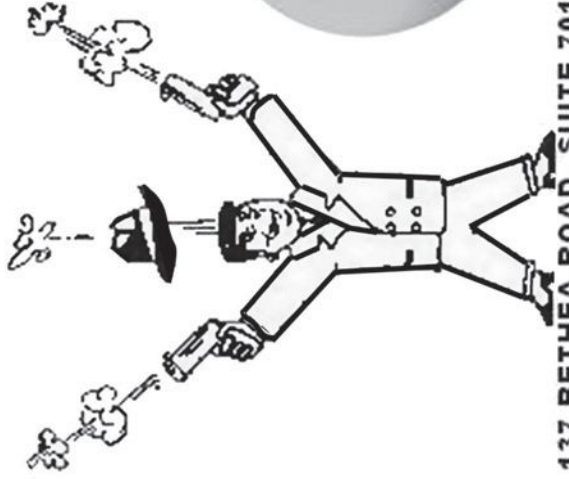
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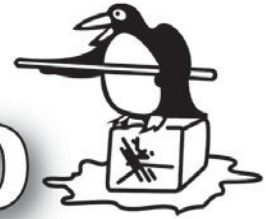


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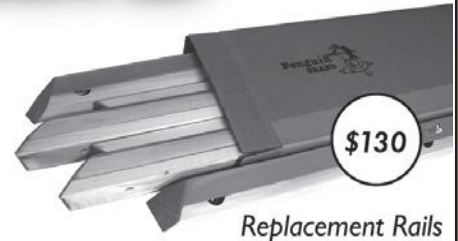
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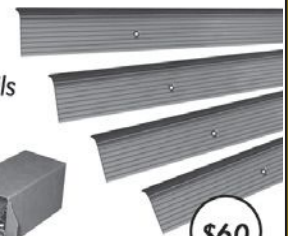
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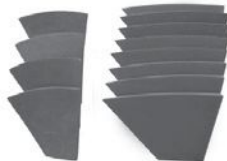


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