

Cover Story: Barron Games expands product line

Special Issue: 18th Annual Family Fun Edition

> Coinman: Gary Brewer reflects on his term as President of AMOA

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THE WESTING IS ON THE WALL













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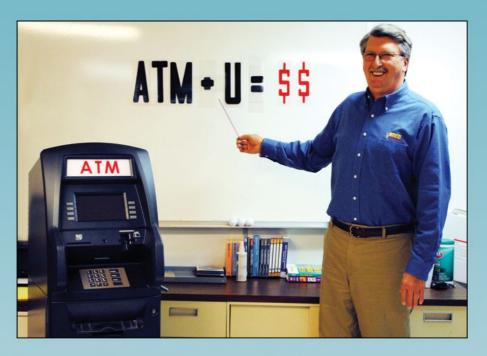
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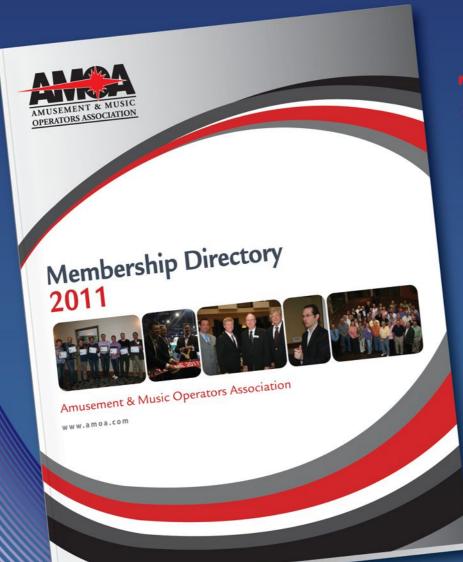








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COMPANY PROFILE





s a leader in the laser tag industry, Creative Works has designed, built, themed, managed, and/or operated over 300 laser tag locations in the last 15 plus years.

The company truly strives to offer the very best solutions and build flexible packages that can fit any need, and it backs it up with its experience and knowledge, which helps single Creative Works out as a one-stop shop.

The company assists customers during five phases of the development of a project: consultation, design, fabrication, installment, and support.

With over 33,000 square feet of production space including design, wood, foam, paint, assembly, and shipping departments, an office, and more, the company has built a solid foundation to be able to turnkey these attrac-

tions to ensure the finished product is safe, effective, memorable and, enjoyable for all.

The company has worked with venues such as amusement parks, bowling centers, casinos, family entertainment centers (FECs), haunted attractions, laser tag arenas, miniature golf courses, museums and science centers, night clubs, restaurants, retail centers, skating centers, tourist attractions, zoos, and more.

There are a handful of themes available including Adventure Quest, Pirate Quest, Jungle Quest, and many more. The company also offers custom themes to suit any location.

The "theme team," as Creative Works employees are known, starts by conversing with clients about concept and detail. They then create a rough 3D sketch of the proposed themed element.

Color is then added to finalize the overall look and feel. The next step in the process is 3D modeling, which is where sculptors create a model, which is then sent to a CNC 3D router for fabrication. The finished products are coated and stored for safety until delivery.

The company also offers installation and field crews to make sure the attraction comes to life in the receiving location. In the support phase, the company takes steps to ensure satisfaction throughout the project. It offers assistance with any needs customers may have before, during, or after a project is completed.

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Barron Games expands product line

Originality and reliability are hallmarks of this on-the-rise company.

arron Games International has built its reputation on a product portfolio headlined by a series of air hockey games with a twist: redemption capabilities. The newest product, available now, is the highly anticipated and unique QuadAir multiplayer air hockey table, which can be played by two, three, or four people at a time for a different playing experience.

Play Meter first profiled the company in November 2009. In the 18 months since then, the company has solidified a strong brand identity,

expanded its product line, exhibited at major trade shows and distributor open houses, and entered the world of customized products as its specialty to suit the specific needs of customers.

Anna Zykina Bacorn, Vice President of Barron Games, shared information on the latest developments at the company and gave a hint of what lies ahead. Greg Bacorn, President, was at the GTI Expo in Taiwan at the time, overseeing Barron's exhibit and connecting with international customers.

By Bonnie Theard

Traveling to all corners of the globe to create market awareness of Barron's products and supporting international clients is part of the company strategy. Barron Games has customers worldwide and focuses on expanding the company's image as they travel to different trade shows and reach out to new markets.

RECENT HISTORY

The industry's first glimpse of Barron's air hockey line came at the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo

COVER STORY

2007 at the Bufrus International booth. Bufrus International is headquartered in Buffalo, N.Y., and is the holding company for Barron Games in the U.S., as well as GAMETRADE GROUP, the largest distributor of amusement games in Russia and Ukraine.

These high quality air hockey tables stood out due to their highgloss finish and bright designs, polycarbonate scratch-free playfield surface, electric blue lights around the puck release, chasing LED lights around the table, and competitive pricing. Additional features include a sturdy aluminum body, dual coin comparators, locking cash box, fun attraction music in "standing mode," and most importantly, the redemption aspect that comes standard with every table.

Anna's father, Andrey Zukin, Owner of Bufrus International and Cofounder of Barron Games International, is an entrepreneur who travels extensively and resides in Moscow. He has been in the gaming and amusement industry since 1997, and is often seen at the annual IAAPA Expo in the Barron Games booth.

Anna and Greg both graduated from the SUNY University at Buffalo, where they met. Shortly after, Barron Games International was formed and brought the new air hockey line to the U.S., along with fresh ideas to the









unfold. Greg and I share a passion for traveling and meeting new people and we are happy working together."

DEDICATION

It's encouraging to see the younger generation enter the amusement industry with bright ideas and different perspectives on entertainment as the world and our industry constantly evolves. The company has come a bility of our games, and we especially want them to be fun for everyone."

Anna continued, "We are a caring company. We pride ourselves on the satisfaction of our clients, being receptive to their requests, and offering outstanding customer/technical support 24/7. We always make follow-up calls and conduct feedback surveys so our customers know they can rely on us."

The Barron Games facility in Buffalo houses administrative offices, a large warehouse, and the parts department.

We are always looking for the next new prod-**CUSTOMIZATION** uct that will capture the attention of players,

amusement industry. It was a natural and inspiring progression.

operators, and distributors worldwide.

Anna said, "I feel like I've always been in the amusement industry, and with the acquired knowledge and hard work throughout the years I am thrilled to see our company's success

long way since 2007. To what does Anna attribute its success?

She replied, "Our company is family operated. We are dedicated to the products and constantly strive to do better in everything we do. We are committed to the originality and relia-

The company is making a name for itself in the area of customization. "We distinguish our company by specializing in the customization of branded air hockey tables and kiddie rides for our clients, which are products of our inhouse design team. Our games can be exclusively customized and designed by our top leading designers with company logos or any other images."

Among recent projects, Barron Games just finished a customized project for the National Hockey League (NHL) team, the Philadelphia Flyers. A new QuadAir was customized and installed in the Wells-Fargo Arena in Philadelphia.

Anna pointed to another project, this one in Oregon for the Evergreen Co., which is developing a park called Wings and Waves. "Company officials loved the look of our four-player Green Football Frenzy table and wanted one customized exclusively for the new park," she said. "We have other global top priority accounts for whom we brand air hockey tables, and we pride ourselves on this accomplishment."

BRANCHING OUT

Barron Games is continually evolving. While the company began specializing in sports games, it has also expanded into kiddie rides such as its Fantasy Coffee Cups ride that is a popular product in stock all year long.

Anna admits, "Our company has stepped into the spotlight with our newest product and gained worldwide recognition with QuadAir, which is testing at Dave & Buster's, Cedar Point, and one of the new Brunswick Zone locations, just to name a few."

Barron products can be found domestically and internationally at a variety of family-style restaurants and family entertainment centers (FECs) like Incredible Pizza, Peter Piper Pizza, Craig's Cruisers, Jungle Rapids, and many more.

Anna said, "We are always looking for the next new product that will capture the attention of players, operators, and distributors worldwide. We plan to introduce new products at IAAPA Expo 2011 in Orlando, Fla., this November and further expand our quality product line."

MARKET EXPOSURE

Barron's ability to handle specialty projects has been well received at international events. This upcoming fall, company representatives will travel to the FEEL Expo in Bogota, Colombia. Barron will exhibit there for the second time. Anna said the company anticipates "an overwhelming response to our games and exciting projects on the horizon in South America."

Greg reported from GTI Expo that quality attendees are "in the buying mode," and that "the purchasing power is strong."

Barron Games has been exhibiting at numerous distributor open house events and spotlight shows domestically this spring, following the Amusement Expo 2011 in March.

Anna commented, "Being a relatively new company, it's important for us to attend distributor events to develop relationships with not only the distributors but also with their operator customers. It shows our support for distribution."

She added, "Attendees at open houses have heard of us and seen us at shows, with many great feedback comments. At the open houses we can walk customers through all the exceptional features of our games and spend one-on-one quality time, which is important and appreciated in this industry."

PRODUCT LINE

Standard and new air hockey tables include two and four-player models of



The Barron team at IAAPA 2010.



Andrey Zukin, Owner of Bufrus International and Co-founder of Barron Games, and Yaroslav Sobko, Director of GAMETRADE GROUP.



Anna Bacorn and Giovanny Fietz, International Representative.

COVER STORY

the Football Frenzy Green and Orange and the original Genesis with real ice hockey rink playfield surface, which are perfect for any FEC or even personal home use.

Anna said, "Our tables, especially with the redemption aspect, earn more than traditional tables, which means a higher return on investment (ROI) when compared side by side to other tables. The newest model, the QuadAir multiplayer table, is an ideal addition as a centerpiece in any FEC."

Also from Barron for the little ones: the Jungle Baby air hockey is an adorable table for children ages two to five, and the Mini Magic World Mushroom table is ideal for ages five to 10, which has been a company original and favorite model with redemption feature. Jungle Baby is set on a timer for easy play.

Barron's Walking Animals always turn heads. "Responses are amazing," said Anna. "Everyone is intrigued by these animals; as they have never seen anything like it when presented at different shows." Children can ride with a parent or alone. Barron currently has Walking Animals at larger facilities with ample room, such as trampoline parks, shopping malls, and recreation centers.

CONCLUSION

Barron's customer base is constantly growing. "We are now well established in the industry with strong belief in the success of our company and support of our distributors," said Anna.

She added, "Customers are smart and well informed. They are doing extensive research on products before they purchase anything. With social media and our interactive Web site, they know the details of our games and can view videos of all products. Show attendees that come to our booth are already prepared, they come to the shows to actually play the games and meet with the real people



Anna and Greg Bacorn at the Sega booth with the new Sonic QuadAir.



At the Brady Distributing Open House in October 2010, (I-r): Robert Snelson of Incredible Pizza, Anna Bacorn and Kelly McKee of Barron Games, and technician Rene



(I-r): Anna Bacorn of Barron Games; Jon W. Brady and Randy Cesco of Brady Distributing; and Dave, Owner of Incredible Dave's in Louisville, Ky.



Anna and Greg Bacorn in Fantasy Coffee Cups at IAAPA Expo 2009.



Alex Whittinghill, Warehouse Manager

to make that final purchasing decision and build connections."

Regarding the future, Anna said, "We will continue to expand in terms of new products and developing our company image with possible operating opportunities. We have to stay one

step ahead, remain focused on market needs, and continue to be dedicated to the industry because we enjoy what we do."

For more information on Barron Games, call (716)866-0054, or visit (www.barrongames.com). ▲











ary Brewer of Brewer Amusement Co. in McMinnville, Tenn., recently concluded an 18-month term as President of the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA). Brewer is the third operator from Tennessee to hold that office.

At the AMOA Breakfast and Membership Meeting on March 2, incoming AMOA President Donovan Fremin of

Delta Music in Thibodaux, La., said, "It is an honor to follow someone with such dedication."

That dedication held him in good stead for his extended term in office. At that meeting Brewer acknowledged his staunchest supporter, saying, "I end my term by thanking my wife Donna. She held down the fort at the office. Without a doubt she is my best friend."

Play Meter caught up with Brewer to find out about the highlights and major events that took place during his tenure.

PM: Your term of service as President of AMOA came at an important moment in the association's history, with the combining of the AMOA International Expo in the fall and the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) Amusement Showcase International (ASI) in the spring into one big spring show, the Amusement Expo. What stands out in your mind about this accomplishment?

GB: The single coin-op show required unity and focus, not only with our sister association, AAMA, but within our own membership and leadership. It wasn't just moving a trade show from the fall to the spring. It was creating a brand new event. It was adjusting our annual cycle and flow of elections, cash flow, leadership meetings, bylaws, etc.

The unified show needed to get done. I inherited the project during my term and fortunately, both the inaugural show in 2010 and the follow-up expo this year came together well.

me about the whole single show experience is how well and how fast everyone adapted to the new event. The exhibitors embraced it, the attendees accepted it, and the industry came together. Our show management firm, W.T. Glasgow, deserves much credit for

Probably what stands out most to

executing the plan so well.



Brewer Amusement Co.

PM: What are your expectations for the next Amusement Expo in

GB: My expectations for next year's show are high. The first show, put together in a compressed sixmonth time frame, was good. We listened and learned a lot, and made this year's show better. I hope and anticipate the Amusement Expo will continue to evolve, experiment, and be embraced beyond our core exhibitors and attendees.

I'm also optimistic about next year's show because I see signs of an improved business climate and that can only help create momentum and excitement about the Amusement Expo 2012.

PM: You traveled extensively to meetings and conferences. What were some of the highlights?

> GB: The Mid-Year Board Meeting in Nashville stands out in my mind as a highlight. It was the first fall gathering of our leadership without being attached to our trade show, and it was located in a place near my home, so Donna and I were proud to host our colleagues and friends and introduce many of them to the area.

> As is always the case at the Mid-Year, we had some great meetings and great fun together. For us, it was a memorable few days. The final night at the Country Music Hall of Fame was special, highlighted by a \$7,500 donation by Coin-Op Cares and our leadership to the Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee. You will recall that the area was devastated by floods in the spring of 2010 and this contribution was greatly appreciated and needed.

> We also had outstanding meetings at our Council of Affiliated States session in San Antonio in 2010 and Tampa this year, and had the largest, three-

class gathering as part of our continuing education program at the University of Notre Dame last fall.

PM: What are the biggest issues facing state associations?

GB: The biggest issues facing state associations are, in my opinion: organization, involvement, and communications. If a state group is organized, has involved members, and is keeping everyone united through active com-













Gary and Donna Brewer present a \$7,500 check to the Second Harvest Food Bank during the Mid-Year Board Meeting 2010. Accepting is Renee Thompson.



At the AMOA Council of States Meeting 2011, (I-r): Gary Brewer; Rick LaFleur of I.F. LaFleur & Son; Mary Lavine of Bullseye Games; Jack Kelleher, Executive Vice President of AMOA; and Lori Schneider, Deputy Director of AMOA.

munications on the issues, it will be successful.

Unfortunately, we continue to see examples of where adverse legislation has been introduced and/or approved with little, if any, industry input or opposition. From my experience, state issues can move quickly and strong state associations are proactive in identifying and responding to these challenges.

PM: How did you assess business conditions during your presidency and currently?

GB: Industry business conditions were, and in many areas, remain challenging. Operators I visited with during my travels were adjusting to their market conditions. That meant, and means, often doing more with less, exploring new types of business opportunities and equipment, and watching every penny. Operators are survivors. They are entrepreneurs and independent. As such, they/we work through the challenges and are always optimistic that better days lie ahead.

PM: Do you have any words of encouragement for state associations or states trying to form an association?

GB: Yes, I strongly encourage those in states without an organization to get one started. It takes desire and commitment—not huge numbers of members—to be effective. For many years, AMOA has offered tools to help

get associations started and organized. In my experience, neighboring states are often willing to assist.

There are a number of state associations that are run by just a few volunteers on a shoestring budget and they deserve a lot of credit for the work they do on behalf of the operators in their states. What they're doing is important and I encourage them to continue their efforts.

At the same time, I urge those who continue to stay on the sidelines to get involved. Take a turn and do your part. It's not easy, but it's rewarding in the people you meet and the information you learn about the business.

PM: Being President takes you way from your company frequently. How did you manage?

GB: I'm fortunate to work in a family business, which allowed me to travel for extended periods of time away from the office. They knew the importance of this opportunity to serve the AMOA and welcomed the chance to assist me by caring for our office and clients in order to afford me the time needed. I am so proud of each of my family members and their devoted work during my presidency.

PM: You were in the unique position of having 18 months in office. Were you able to reach your goals?

GB: I don't think any President of AMOA leaves the position at the end

of his or her term with every item crossed off the "to do" list. One thing I quickly learned is how an issue or project that wasn't on the radar suddenly pops up and consumes a lot of time and attention.

Whether it was the National Bulk Vendors Association (NBVA) co-location or the issue of ATM fees or a new program like the partnership initiative with Circone & Associates, things appear and evolve. And unlike most of us who are owners in our own businesses, there are few unilateral decisions made in trade groups like AMOA. The work is done through committees, where ideas are hatched, consensuses are built, and options are weighed before voting.

With that said, I'm proud of what AMOA accomplished during my term as President. Our membership stayed solid, our events exceeded expectations, we moved our headquarters to new facilities, we continued to be proactive on legislative issues, we provided assistance for victims of the Tennessee floods and horrible Haiti earthquake, and always focused on ways we could help members and improve the organization.

So, we did accomplish a lot. And we could have done more, but like all of my predecessors, I just ran out of time. Even at 18 months, it goes very, very quickly.

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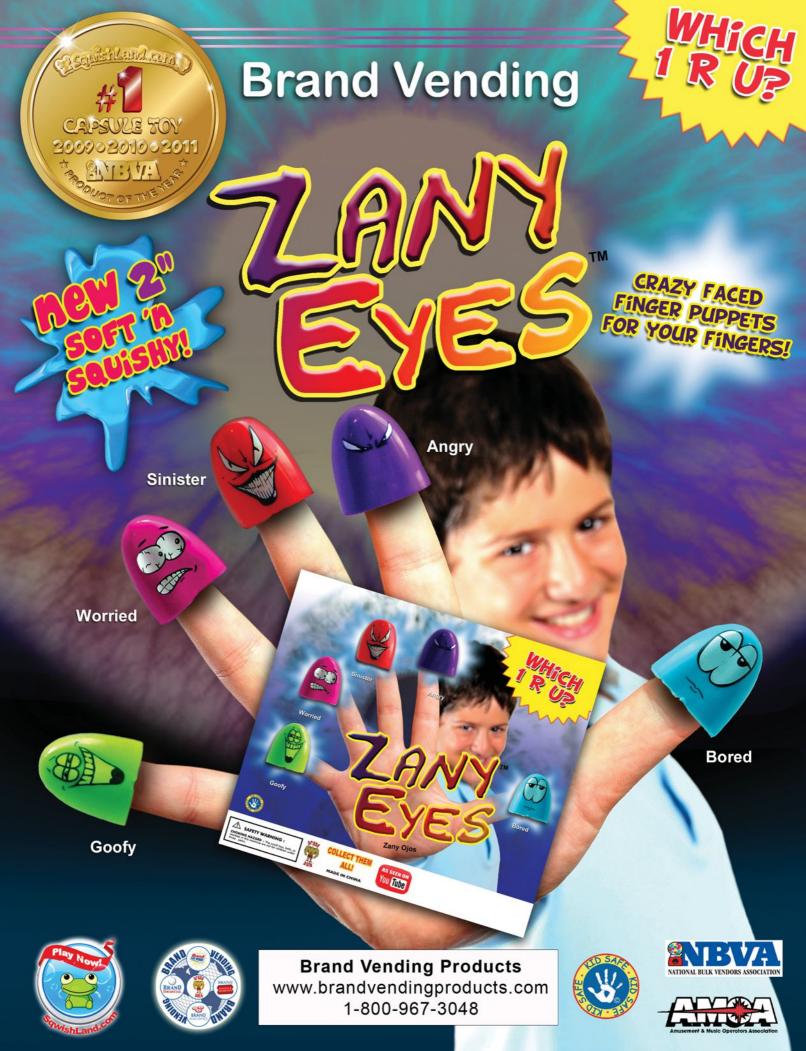








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June 21-24

Asian Amusement Expo (AAE)

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web: www.IAAPA.org/AsianAttractionsExpo

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August 15-19

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November 14-18 PM

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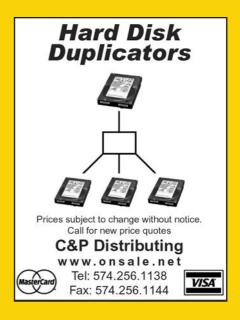
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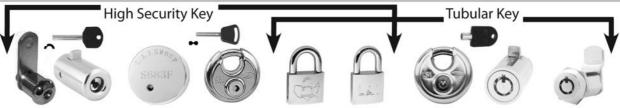
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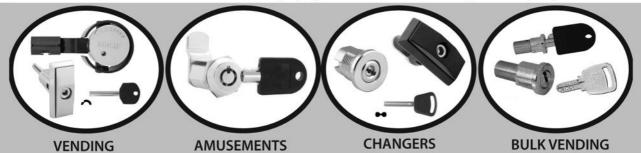
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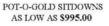


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1/6 pg. horizontal	4-5/8" x 2-1/4"	110
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