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Cover Story:
Fun Company
meets
market
challenges

Bowl Expo:
Passion for
a thriving
sport

VNEA:
30th
Anniversary
International
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To all who took part in our Advertising Fundraiser
for Incredible Technologies' favorite charity.

The monies raised from ads in our July issue will go directly to Salute Inc.

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After experiencing the emotional and financial struggles of military service, Will and Mary Beth Beiersdorfs created Salute Inc. in 2003 to fulfill their dream to raise funds and awareness for returning military personnel and their families. It is based in Illinois but is supported nationwide by various fundraisers. Salute is now a recognized 501(c)(3) non profit organization that provides financial support for our military men and women.

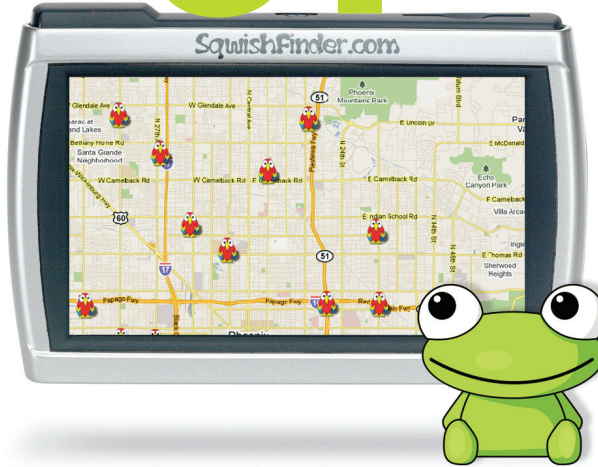
This is a very worthy cause and everyone is invited to donate directly. Please visit their website (www.saluteinc.org) and read about the wonderful help they have provided to veterans and their families.





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On the cover

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North Carolinians who operate the sweepstakes games that were recently banned by a vote of the General Assembly, are following the words of poet Dylan Thomas: “Do not go gentle into that good night.” They are angry about the loss of jobs and locations, in short, their livelihoods.

Legislators were responding to concerns about locations with multiple sweepstakes games, called “game parlors” or “sweepstakes cafes.”

Sweepstakes machines have proven to be popular. Players purchase a phone card or Internet time and can then play games and possibly win cash or prizes.

They voted to ban video sweepstakes machines as an extension of the 2006 ban on video poker machines. The ban would be effective on Dec. 1, 2010, if signed by Gov. Beverly Perdue.

An Associated Press article stated: “Owners of sweepstakes businesses and their employees who lobbied the legislative building in a last ditch effort to block the ban say a prohibition would put several thousand workers on the unemployment line. They asked lawmakers to study the games, leaving them in place until at least next year, or sought support for a measure that would regulate the sweepstakes, which they call a casual form of entertainment.”

Opponents of the sweepstakes games include House Rep. Van Baxton, who was quoted in a report at Kinston.com: “This was seen as a way to circumvent laws banning video poker. Providers were, in essence, trying to go under the guidelines by saying that they were a sweepstakes.”

Also quoted was Byron Coleman, co-owner of the Neuse Internet Cafe, who said: “I don’t think they see the big picture. Here is a state government facing some of its biggest deficits in its history, and some of the highest unemployment rates we have seen in our generation. For them to jump to a decision that hung 6,000 to 10,000 jobs in the balance, and the potential of up to \$1 billion in tax revenue, is sheer fiscal irresponsibility.”

Not all legislators agreed with Braxton. Sen. Julia Boseman sponsored the Video Gaming Entertainment Act that would allow legalized gaming machines that are licensed, regulated, and taxed by the state. She was quoted in StarNews Online: “Some people want to outlaw sweepstakes (parlors). I think they just ought to be regulated. This is a revenue generator for the state. I supported the lottery, and I support regulating these machines.”

Rep. Alma Adams wanted more debate and discussion on possible regulation and legalization of the machines.

William Thevaos, President of the Entertainment Group of North Carolina, said he supports the idea of the state regulating and taxing the games, but that they should be run by private enterprise. He commented on the ban: “We will look at all options available to us, including our legal avenues and the advances of technology, allowing the industry to continue to do business.”

This is not the first time that a state has faced a backlash due to the proliferation of games. Locations devoted exclusively to a large number of these games are bound to raise eyebrows, and raise the specter of the “G” word: gambling. No legislator wants to be on record supporting anything perceived to be associated with gambling, despite a state lottery that is justified since it is tied to education.

As the old saying goes, “The jury is still out,” and we will have to wait for the next shoe to fall. ▲



BONNIE THEARD
Editor

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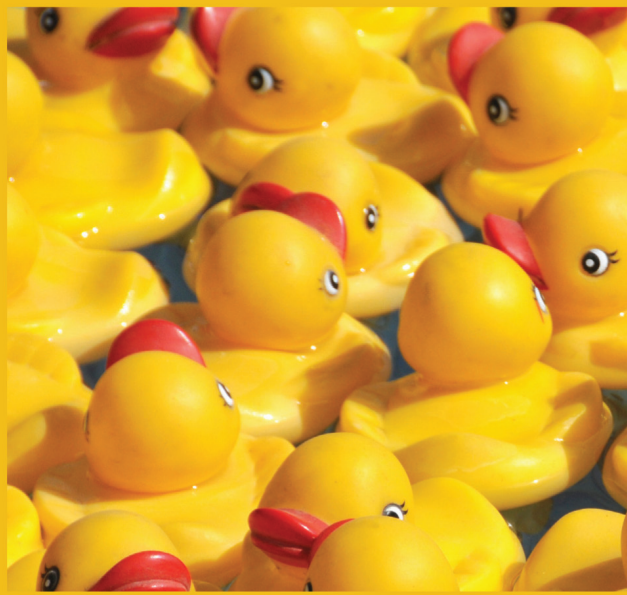
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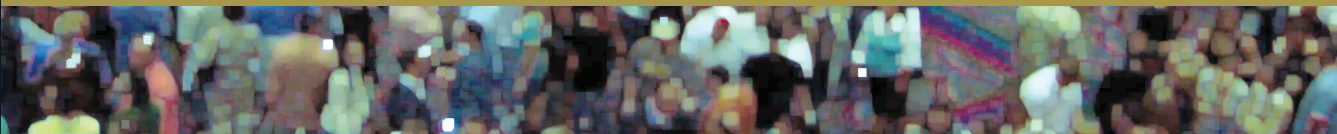
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Bowl Expo caps banner year



From left: Sebastian Mochkovsky and Violeta Peret of Sacoa with Eric Barnes of Thrill It and Jeff Apfel of Pizza Putt.

Bowling industry professionals traveled to the International Bowl Expo, held June 27-July 1 at the Las Vegas Convention Center, to take advantage of the education program, networking, and displays of products and services for the popular sport.

The show, which was sponsored and organized by the Bowling Proprietors Association of America (BPAA), followed the theme, "The Best is Yet to Come."

According to the BPAA, in 2010 bowling celebrated its fourth consecutive year of growth, maintaining its status as the nation's number one participatory sport. Also, January 2010 marked the grand opening of the International Bowling Campus in Arlington, Texas.

Award presentations were part of the program. Recipients were: Victor Lerner Memorial Medal and BPAA Hall of Fame Award to Ted Hoffman Jr., Earl Anthony's Dublin Bowl (Dublin, Calif.); President's Medal, Tom Martino, Majestic Lanes (Hopelawn, N.J.); V.A. Wapensky Award, Roger Dalkin (Greendale, Wis.); and Special Projects Award, Dan Labrecque, Notke's Bowl (Battle Creek, Mich.).

Fifty-six educational seminars and workshops were conducted for two days, followed by two days of trade show exhibits. One session featured party hosting with an emphasis on party host selection and training presented by Beth Standlee of TrainerTainment, and party makeovers with Sheryl Bindelglass of SherylGolf.

As a training company, TrainerTainment decided to do four 15-minute training sessions in their booth as a demonstration, with opportunities to win \$50 gift certificates for available products and enter a drawing for \$500 toward onsite services.

A seminar was conducted by George McAuliffe of Pinnacle Entertainment Advisors by Redemption Plus, George Smith of Family Entertainment Group (FEG), and Kurt Harz of Brunswick



ABOVE: Jennifer (l) and Thomas Coshatt enjoy Snap Shot from LAI Games.



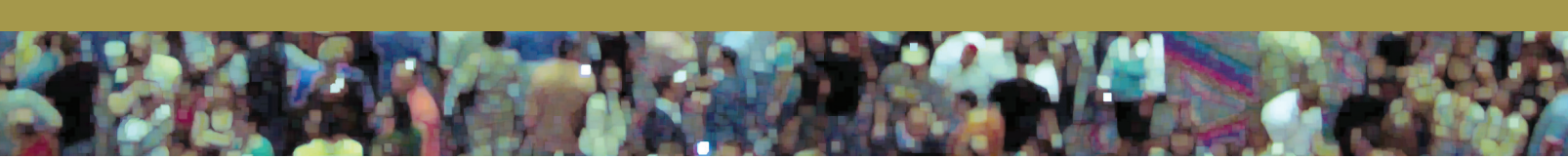
TOP RIGHT: Vanessa Cabrera (l) of AAMA and Kristina Chevalier of Pyramid Technologies.



MIDDLE: Matt Lemoine (l) and Dave Bejbl of Rhode Island Novelty with their jumbo tennis balls.



RIGHT: From left: Bill Merrick, Jacopo Quaglia, and Stephanie Darby of QubicaAMF.



Bowling & Billiards. The session focused on redemption management systems for today's bowling centers.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

In addition, Sarah Palin, former governor of Alaska and Republican vice presidential candidate, gave the keynote address, highlighting the impact of bowling as the nation's number one participatory sport and a thriving industry.

Palin spoke to the important role played by bowling proprietors as business owners and community leaders, as well as the vital presence of bowling centers as social hubs in communities across the nation.

Palin said, "Bowling has an honored place in our culture and is interwoven with our sense of community in our country. Go to any town or city and you will find bowling; it is truly a slice of Americana. Bowling has been able to evolve, innovate, and capitalize on changes in culture to keep alive and flourish. Through the entrepreneurial spirit of its proprietors, bowling has seen a new resurgence and has never been more popular."

Following her speech, Palin joined Steve Johnson, Executive Director of the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America (BPAA), and a number of pioneering female bowling executives and athletes in delivering a historic announcement of a new, revitalized Bowling's U.S. Women's Open on June 30, 2011. The U.S. Women's Open will be held at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas; details are being finalized for the nationally televised event.

Palin posed for photos with attendees; the proceeds from the per-photo fee were donated to the Special Olympics.

COIN-OP PRESENCE

With 14 companies displaying nearly 30 amusement products, the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) game room booth proved to be one of the most popular spots at the expo. The booth was designed to showcase what amusement

games can bring to bowling centers.

The game room booth featured AAMA, Andamiro, Arachnid, Bay Tek Games, Benchmark Games, Firestone Financial Corp., Kalkomat, LAI Games, Namco America, Pipeline Games, Sega, Stern Pinball, Sureshot Redemption, and Valley-Dynamo.

Kristina Chevalier of Pyramid Technologies said the AAMA Coin-Op Pavilion was "the busiest booth of the show." Twenty-one additional coin-op exhibitors were also pleased with the interest in their products.

It was no surprise that the pavilion drew attendees. Like most businesses with an entertainment component, bowling centers are now looking for new ways to generate profits. By including coin-op entertainment and redemption areas, owners and managers are adding to the success stories of bowling centers across the country.

SHOW VALUE

How important is the International Bowl Expo? Exhibitors were quick to respond:

"We start in January to prepare for this show, it's always a hit for us," said Jacopo Quaglia of Qubica/AMF.

"Bowling is still the number one attraction for the FEC industry," replied Frank Seninsky of Alpha-Omega. "This is one of the most phenomenal shows left."



From left: Nicola Danegger, Timothy Dahl, and Tracie Dahl of Brunswick Zone with Warren Morgan of Arachnid.



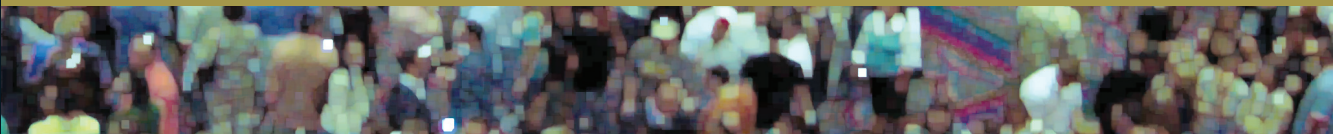
Spencer Norton of Firestone Financial was happy to discuss financial options with attendees.



Paul Nocek (l) of Lucky Lanes with Rich Long of Benchmark in front of Tickets to Prizes.



From left: Mike Lynch, Meg Bonnichen, Rorie Keller, and Sondra Doyle of Sureshot Redemption.



Frank Seninsky (l) of Alpha Omega and Joe Schumacker of Sparez, Past President of the BPAA.



Joe Nazzaro (l) and Joseph Nazzaro of Rebecca's with their booth display.



Shelley Fernandez-Katz and David Katz of BMI Merchandise.



Jon W. Brady (l) of Brady Distributing and Marty Man Smith of Intermatic/Cotton Candy Vending representing FEC/NRG.



From left: Jon W. Brady and Larry Cooke of Brady Distributing with Vince Moreno of Sega by Pigs Might Fly.



From left: Jason Kort, Jason Patterson, Justin Michaels, and Doug Stokes of Redemption Plus.

“This show is an avenue for meeting new people interested in the redemption system,” said Rich Long of Benchmark Games.

Sondra Doyle of Sureshot Redemption spoke about the popularity of redemption at bowling centers. Doyle said, “One of the entertainment income seminars had about 120 attendees. When asked how many had redemption in their centers, approximately half the audience raised their hands. The other half was there because they were adding redemption to their game rooms.”

Holly Meidl of Bay Tek Games said, “Bowling centers are a good market.”

Debora Cherry of Intercard, agreed: “The bowling industry is a strong market, with new business opportunities with bowling centers expanding into family entertainment centers (FECs).”

Gary Smith of Brunswick Virtual Bowling said, “The quality of attendees at this show and the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) is always good.”

Santiago Barbero of Coin Tech com-

mented, “This is my first time at the Bowl Expo. I can see that advances in FECs, bowling centers, and video games have made this show a natural fit for Coin Tech software.”

“The AAMA Coin-Op Pavilion was the busiest booth of the show.”

Mehdi Eghbal of Namco offered: “This has been a great show before, and had a good floor on the first day. I must say that AAMA does a good job of putting together this pavilion.”

Bryan Emory of PokerTek, said, “This is our third time exhibiting at the Bowl Expo. It is definitely a good market for HeadsUp. Traffic was a bit slower this year, but leads were up.”

Vince Moreno of Sega said, “This is my first year here. It’s an opportunity to create new exposure for Sega games, and I’ve picked up new leads.”

Bridget Hare of Ideal Software said, “We always come back to the Bowl Expo to pick up potential customers.” David Thanairongroj, also of Ideal Software, added, “This is an expanding area for Ideal Software products.”

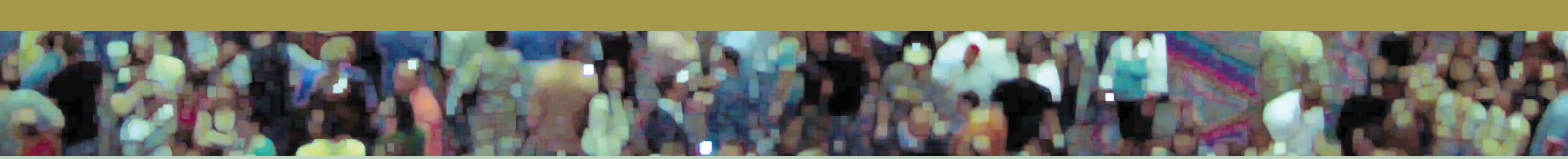
“I was at the Billiard Congress of America (BCA) Expo last year and heard about this show, so I came to check it out,” said Gary Stern of Stern Pinball. “I definitely picked up new leads.”

Evie Theisen of Theisen Vending commented, “The second day of the show was very good for us, and we have met a lot of new customers.”

Sebastian Mochkovsky of Sacoa, said, “Bowling centers are expanding and need more options for their operation. Our card systems are it.”

Beth Standlee of TrainerTainment put it simply: “I wouldn’t miss this show.”

Joe Schumacher of Sparez, said, “Over the past 50 years, bowling has had more great success than any other entertainment industry. It has evolved over the last decade to bring everyone together. Communication



Jerry Merola (l) of Amusement Entertainment Management and Mark Marchido of Bowling Corp.



Andres Dias De La Garza (l) and Santiago Barbero of Coin Tech prepare for the next round of customers.



Mark Hutchison (l) and Dori Maxwell of Fun Express enjoy a good second day at Bowl Expo.



From left, Tracy Sarris of Inova with Phil Showlers and Devin Hall of Embed.



Bridgett Hare (l) and David Thanairongroj of Ideal Software.



Debora Cherry (l) and Paul Schulte of Intercard wrap up the day.



Satinder Bhutani of Andamiro talks with a crowd interested in Winners Cube.



Tom Siemieniec (l) and Mehdi Eghbal of Namco in front of Barber Cut Lite.



James Ko of Pipeline Games talks with attendees in the AAMA Pavilion.



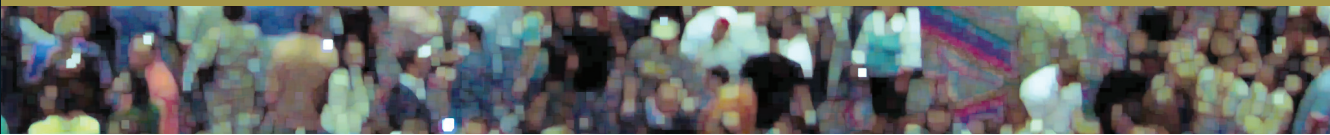
Holly Meidl (l) and Anna Heck of Bay Tek by their equipment.



Steve Johnson (r), Executive Director of The BPAA, greets keynote speaker, Sarah Palin.



Anna Zykina-Barron (l) and Gregory Barron of Barron Games with their Genesis air hockey table.



Pam Weatherford, Senior Trainer for TrainerTainment, conducts a 15-minute seminar on the show floor.



Evie Theisen of Theisen Vending writes an order for a new customer.



Link Pendley (l) of Valley-Dynamo with Play Meter Publisher Carol Lally by Fire Storm.

has been incredible at this show.”

S&B Candy & Toy Co. exhibited for the first time and found the crowd friendly and ready to make decisions on the spot.

Embed exhibited for the fifth year. Officials said they keep coming back due to the quality of the attendees, adding, “There is a transition taking place in the industry, and Embed products are needed.”

Redemption Plus reported good traffic at this show, noting that bowling centers are a growth market.

COIN-OP PRODUCTS

Following is a brief listing of coin-op games and prize merchandise at the Bowl Expo:

Andamiro: Dragon Punch and Winners Cube.

Arachnid: Knock Off shuffleboard and Galaxy II electronic darts.

Barron Games: Genesis air hockey table.

Bay Tek Games: Road Trip, Jam Session, and Big Bass Wheel Pro games.

Benchmark Games: Tickets to Prizes, Slam A Winner, and Red Hot!

BMI Merchandise: Rubber Band Bracelets on plush items, Movie Madness Packs that include items from all the current hottest movies, and Tickets to Prizes hanging program with tear a way corner for prize payout adjustments.

Brunswick Virtual Bowling: Recent installations on Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) ships and upscale locations.

Kalkomat: Spider and Boxer.



From left: Ron Blue, Gayle Fitzgerald, and Marty Luepker of S&B Candy and Toy Co.

LAI Games: Snap Shot and Stacker Mini.

Namco: Razing Storm and Barber Cut Lite.

Pipeline Games: The Grip Tester (testing) and Mr. Vacuum (shipping in September).

PokerTek: HeadsUp.

QubicaAMF: Highway 66, mini “scaled down” bowling available in a single lane version, and with online advertising for the monitor display. Units are on the MSC Splendida cruise ship.

Rebecca’s: high-end redemption new products such as battery operated amplifier, guitars, and cowboy hats.

Redemption Plus: Super Space Balloons.

Rhode Island Novelty: Silly Band bracelets, Knobby Balls, jumbo size items, and Tickets to Prizes kits.

S&B Candy & Toy Co.: Crazy Bands, Halo licensed products, and Critter Collections.

Sega: Rambo, Hummer, Racing Classic, Pigs Might Fly, Cuckoo, and Monkey Paradise.

Stern Pinball: Big Buck Hunter Pro and Iron Man.

Toy Network: Rubber Band Bracelets, Tattoos, Harley merchandise, and Whoopee Cushions.

Valley-Dynamo: Fire Storm air hockey table. ▲

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The main office of Fun Company.



Assembly of Namco's Barber Cut Lite games.



A line of Sega's Rambo games.



Fun Company's proprietary product, the Slimline.

Fun Company sets quality standards

For almost two decades, Fun Company has served the coin-op industry well, producing its own proprietary products and game cabinets for video and redemption games, and then entering the field of contract manufacturing.

The company has grown from a modest four employees, including the two owners, to the current employee base of 78. Most of the growth has come in the last two years. According to Don Teske, General Manager, "That says a lot considering the economy."

Much of that recent success can be

attributed to changes that took place two years ago when Jamie Woodward, President, and Rebecca Palamaruk Root, Vice President, purchased the company.

Woodward explained, "When we took over, we had a different idea of where the company should be. We upgraded the staff, and now have the correct people in the correct positions. We wanted to take the company to a new level, and we have surpassed that

level. In our first year we basically doubled in sales, setting a new record for the company. We are on track to beat that record."

Woodward attributes the growth to "new customers, new business, and the new focus of the company." He added, "We had a five-year plan, and so far we are blowing that plan out of the water. If we can continue to do that for the next three years, we will far surpass our goals."

Teske said, "We have been very fortunate and are thankful for the loyalty

By Bonnie Theard



Management and office staff of Fun Company, (l-r): Bob Burbach, Don Teske, Teri Palamaruk, Becky Palamaruk Root, Jamie Woodward, Sara Nelson, Bill Milton, Steve “Ziggy” Ziegler, Mike Vinz, Dan Lewicki, and Mick Bork. (Missing from the photo: John Turner, Ryan Harings, Eric Brzezinski, Roger Burbach, and Adam Root.)

of our customers over the years. We know that without them we wouldn't be here. We work hard to please them and never forget where we came from.”

Fun Company has steadily expanded its operation based in Necedah, Wis. The first building, in New Lisbon Wis., was 6,000 square feet including office space. The company has outgrown its current 39,000-square-foot building, and is leasing an additional 44,000 square feet at a nearby business center.

Woodward and Teske agree that the industry is changing, and although some segments are shrinking, overall

it's getting stronger. Teske said, “Operators know they need more games and cannot rely on perhaps two major titles to carry them through. Manufacturers are stepping up to provide more games for the marketplace.”

NEW AGE CABINETRY

Arcade game cabinets have a different look from 1991 when the company was founded. Teske said the biggest change is in “eye appeal.” According to Teske, “No longer are plain, black boxy cabinets going to make the grade. Like everything today, the public wants flash and glitter. We have always remained ahead of the game through

forward thinking and listening to what operators want.

“The CRT (tube-style monitor) days are gone. We were the first to incorporate LCD displays into our standard product line when we introduced the SlimLine cabinets at an Amusement Showcase International (ASI) in Chicago, and followed that up with the complete “SlimLine” with the 26-inch and 32-inch kit-ready cabinets. We added CCFL (Cold Cathode Fluorescent Light) lights and LED lights along the way.”

At Fun Company, quality comes first, matched by an understanding of the marketplace, and the need to offer



Engineering team, (l-r): Ryan Harings, Johnny Turner, and Eric Brzezinski.



Rebecca Palmaruk Root, Vice President

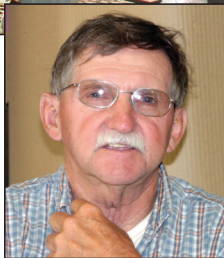


Mick Bork, Purchasing/ Shipping/Receiving

Employees at the South Plant.



Bill Milton,
Production Manager



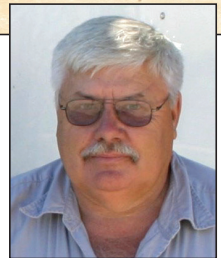
Bob Braund, Maintenance Supervisor



Everett Burdick,
Driver



Wayne Olson,
Driver



Danny Peterson,
Driver

competitively priced products.

Teske said, “Our distributors tell us that once the end user sees the design and the quality that goes into each cabinet in our line, the cabinets literally sell themselves.”

EARLY HISTORY

Teske spoke about the early years: “We started by building cabinets for 8-line games and poker games and branched out by introducing a 25-inch kit-ready cabinet at an Amusement and Music Operators (AMOA) Expo, which gave us good exposure. Our shop supervisor designed a way to mount the monitor in the cabinet either horizontally or vertically, and the concept was a success.”

He continued, “We learned that most of the manufacturers did not

build their own cabinets, and we began thinking on a bigger scale. We contacted the major players about contract manufacturing, and hit some obstacles, mainly because we were newcomers.

“However, we persisted, and eventually an opportunity opened up for us to contract manufacture complete games for Sammy USA. Our first order was for 1,000 Wing Shooting games. When a Sammy USA representative came to inspect the first release of games we had 436 completed. He was impressed, stating that was not what they had been used to in the past. We’ve been building for them (now Sega Amusements USA) ever since. “

Fun Company has amassed a long list of contract manufacturing clients over the years, including Global VR,

Konami, Namco, Tsunami, Mazzco, and others. The company has diversified into pool cue racks, countertop pedestals, coin pushers, and other products, which Teske said have all come from distributor and operator requests.

Fun Company is unique in the variety of products and services it offers today. For example, the company was instrumental in developing the Ultra-system, an accounting system that helps operators keep track of what’s going on at locations from the convenience of their computers. The Ultra-system can be installed in one machine or many machines.

ENTER THE FUNGLO

Requests also led to the latest cabinet, the FunGlo, which is a pedestal



Employees at the North Plant.

design with fluorescent Plexiglas and ground effect lighting, available in three colors: green, red, and blue. The cabinet is kit-ready for almost any JAMMA game, or it can be completed with a game of the operator's choice. FunGlo delivers game play in a more attractive, better earning modern package.

The FunGlo works well with all Incredible Technologies (IT) games, and it can be dual kitted and have any two IT games in one machine cabinet. Everything from old fighting games to Sega Bass Fishing Challenge and more. The polycarbonate control panel of the FunGlo, which has a non-glare finish and superior graphics, offers added protection for components.

Teske said the FunGlo "is still evolving," adding, "It's been a very popular unit. Operators have placed quite a variety of old and new games in the cabinet, from Virtual Tennis to Soul Caliber."

Attendees at the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) Distributor Gala on July 29 played new games from Namco, Sega, and others that feature cabinetry from Fun Company.

QUALITY CONTROL

"We take pride in our quality, always have and always will," said

Teske. "Fun Company is not an ISO (International Organization for Standardization) company, but our SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) manual is taken directly from ISO guidelines. Whether it is a contract game or one of our proprietary products, we follow the same procedures for testing."

He continued, "We have checkpoints along the way, and our staff initializes their work. We are fortunate to have a team of employees that takes pride in what they build. From the router operators to the shipping department, they treat the products as if they were buying them. Our people take ownership of what they do, and it shows."

Woodward commented, "We basically do whatever it takes to get a job done. That's the reason we are extremely busy."

TRADE EVENTS

Fun Company is a strong supporter of the Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators (WAMO), and attended the annual WAMO Conference and Trade Show in June.

Teske said the WAMO Conference is "truly a family event" that features an agenda of meetings mixed with recreation such as fishing, golf, and a

Milwaukee Brewers baseball game.

"Operators at the conference treat us like one of the family," said Teske. "We listen to them, and I always ask, 'How can Fun Company be better, or do a better job?'"

He added, "WAMO is fortunate to have a great Executive Director in Maxine O'Brien, and a hard working and knowledgeable lobbyist in Tony Dreisen. The entire board works diligently to keep our association strong and represent our industry. I can't say enough good things about them."

The company exhibits and attends many other trade events during the year. It is not only an avenue for meeting customers, but also an opportunity to get feedback.

Are any new products on the horizon? With a wink and a smile, Teske replied, "We have some ideas and requests that we are toying with, but you will have to wait and see on that one."

In conclusion, Teske said, "Fun Company remains true to its mission of being the industry's leading contract manufacturing company, and producing a large range of cabinets and other coin-op products to the highest standards." For more information, call (800)808-5554; Web (www.funco.com). ▲



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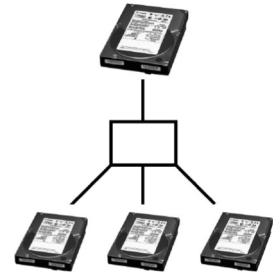


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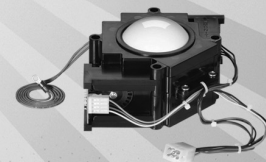
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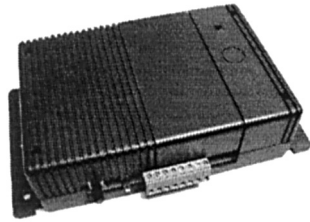
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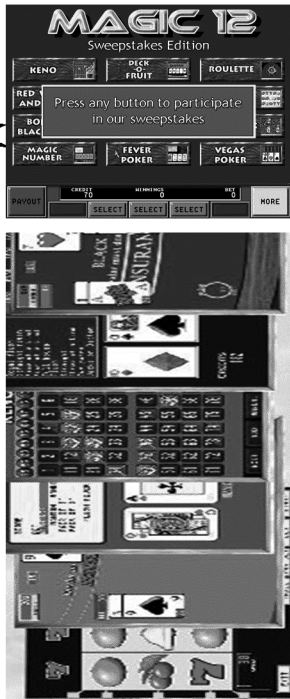


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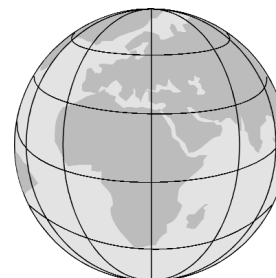
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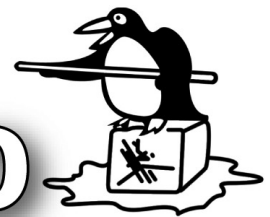
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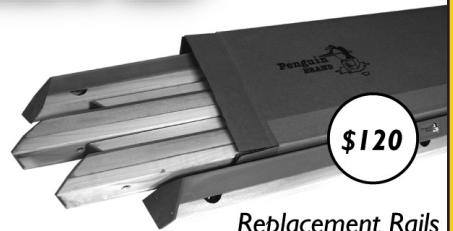
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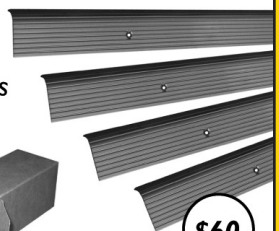
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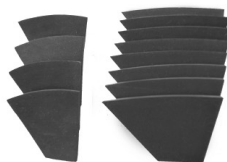


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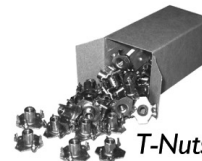
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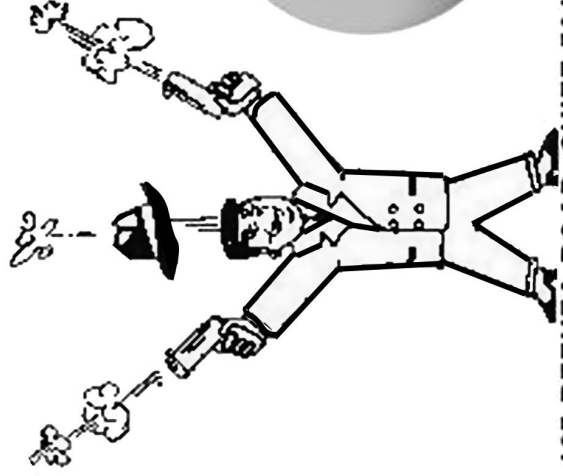


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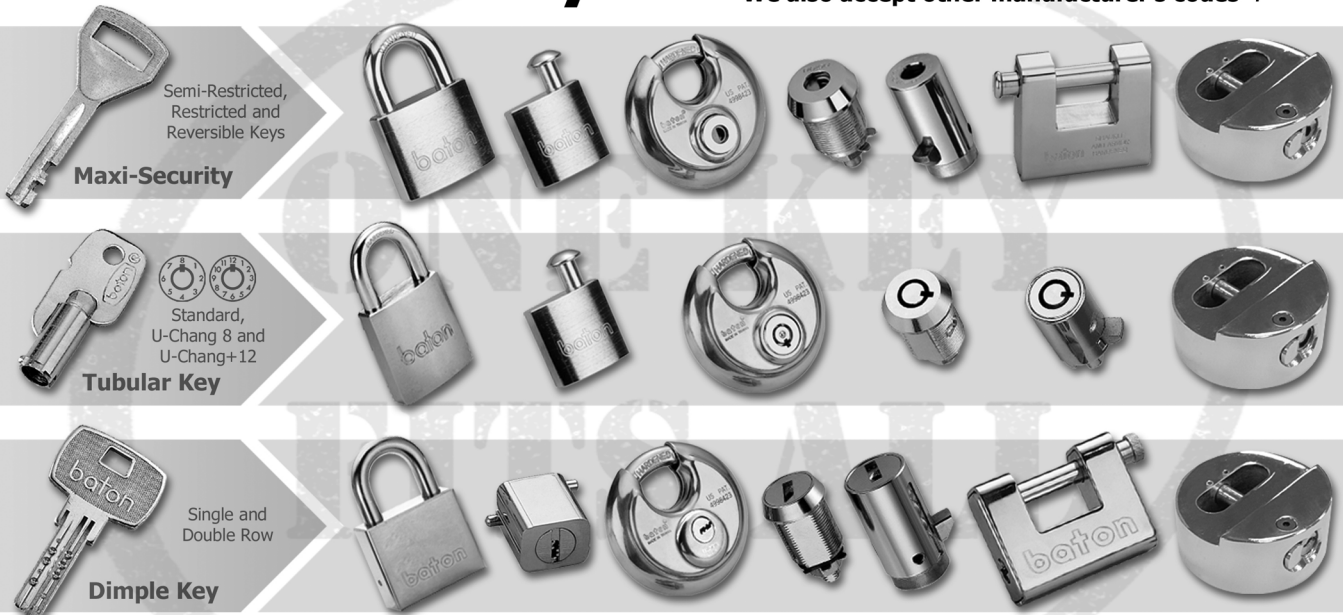
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