



### VENUES TODAY RECOGNIZES CAROL POLLOCK AND HOYT SHERMAN PLACE

Hoyt Sherman Place along with Executive Director, **Carol Pollock**, were recently named runners up in the 2009 *Hall of Headlines Award* by nationally recognized live entertainment industry publication *Venues Today*.



Carol and her staff were nominated in the *Bookings* category for booking 37 concerts/shows in 2009, triple the number of events in the past three years; growing attendance by 25%, increasing the number of active promoters using the venue from 5 to 13; and enticing a movie shoot for "Janie Jones".

"What an incredible honor for Carol and her staff to receive recognition on a national scale in a venue with 1,200

seats," said Steve Peters, VenuWorks President. "Not only do they book the theatre but they schedule and manage a significant amount of events in the art galleries." Hoyt Sherman Place received the only theater nomination and the only nomination for a venue under 5,000 seats. However, the *Bookings* category was won by Marc Geiger (*WME Entertainment*), Gregg Perloff (*Another Planet Entertainment*) and Brad Parsons. "We are honored to be recognized by our industry peers," said Carol. "The economy continues to be a challenge and we are thankful for the support we receive from Des Moines and the surrounding communities for our events."

**Congratulations to Carol and the Hoyt Sherman team!**



### THE "KINGS" OF CHRISTMAS CAROLS

*Vicksburg Convention Center and Auditorium* Executive Director, **Larry Gawronski**, recently rang in the holidays performing with *The United Voices of Service*. This six member group, consisting of three Vicksburg Rotary Club members and three teens from the Rotary Interact/ United Way Teen Help Club, combined talents to produce a unique performance of Elvis's *Blue Christmas* at *V 105.5 FM's Annual Christmas Caroling Contest*. The group was awarded a \$100 finalist prize...and, yes...the Elvises have left the building!

**Bravo Larry and The United Voices of Service!**



### ALERUS HOLIDAY GALA ADDS POPS CONCERT

In Grand Forks, ND, the Alerus Center celebrated the second year of their holiday gala and open house, introducing a new component to the annual event, a holiday pops concert entitled "Holiday Pops: A Festive Occasion", November 21, 2009.

Alerus Center staff spent many hours reaching out to clients, businesses, vendors and other contacts to raise funds to sponsor the event. Their efforts paid off and over \$30,000 was raised to support the show, plus local media outlets donated more than \$10,000 in free advertising to promote the event. Busi-

nesses making donations to the event were rewarded with tickets to the show and in turn either provided the tickets to their employees and their families, or donated them back to the Alerus Center to be distributed to groups such as non-profit organizations,



libraries, and nursing homes. "The support and generosity of the business community helped to make this year's concert a free event to many members of the community" said Alerus Center Executive Director, Steve Hyman.

The Greater Grand Forks Symphony Orchestra, North Dakota Ballet Company dancers, a combined Church Choir and the Grand Cities Children's Choir, performed to a crowd of nearly 3,000 – the largest audience to date! With local celebrity, Terry Dillum, as Master of Ceremonies, the seeds of a great event were planted.

**Way to go Team Alerus!**

## NEWS AND NOTES



## ARANSAS PASS CIVIC CENTER NAMED BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

The *Aransas Pass Civic Center* in Aransas Pass, TX was named Business of the Month for December 2009 by the Aransas Pass Chamber of Commerce. *The Aransas Pass Civic Center* opened in February 2009 and has booked many different events bringing additional revenues to the City and surrounding areas. The facility has booked almost 200 events in less than a year and continues to be an active business in Aransas Pass. **Congrats to the Aransas Pass Team!**



(Left to right) Back: *Vicki, Albert, Larry, Raul, Rudy, Joanna*. Front: *Jake, Christie, Annette, Rosemary, Mari, Victor*

## LEADERSHIP TOPEKA 2010

**Erin Aldridge**, Marketing Manager at *Topeka Performing Arts Center*, has been named to the Leadership Topeka Class of 2010, a program of the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce since 1984, that identifies outstanding potential leaders from various components of the community. Thirty-six individuals from Topeka and Shawnee County have been selected to participate. Class members will attend a retreat and seven day-long sessions to learn about challenges facing the City of Topeka and Shawnee County and how they, as individuals, can work to influence community issues and problems. The 2010 class was chosen from more than 300 nominees representing a variety of backgrounds and a cross section of the community. (Executive Director **Barbara Wiggins** is a member of the 2007 Class of Leadership Topeka.) **Congratulations Erin!**



## VALUED TPAC VOLUNTEER

**Keith Land** is by far *Topeka Performing Arts Center's* most dedicated volunteer. He works countless hours each year on all TPAC events. "Not a week goes by when we don't see Keith doing something in our building" says Marketing Manager, Erin Aldridge. But not only does he put in hours there, he also works on things in his shop to make TPAC's Gingerbread Homes for the Holidays more successful.



This year he brought in his two larger than life Nutcracker soldiers to welcome attendees to the event. There are rumors that he's making a life-size Gingerbread dog house to add to the decorations for 2010. **Thank you Keith!**



## SHE SAID YES!!!!

**Scott Smith**, Director of Operations at *The Swiftel Center* in Brookings, SD, proposed to **Kathy Laun** on December 14<sup>th</sup>. They are planning to wed, June, 2010. They officially met at an event when Kathy was working for Vee Corporation. Unfortunately, they had to delay their first date when Scott was called to return a favor to his buddies at *The Alerus Center* during a *Boston* concert. He invited her to join him but since it would be an overnight trip, she elected not to come, assuring Scott they would reschedule their date, which they did a week later. Many dates after, they realized they had met long before. Kathy mentioned she did not like cowboys, not knowing Scott was one. When he asked her why, She told him a story about an argument she witnessed between a cowboy and a friend of hers. After collecting a few more details, Scott discovered, he was the cowboy from her story. "Had she known, she may never have gone out with me" Scott jokes. Jumping ahead to the proposal, Scott had purchased a ring in November and called Kathy's father to ask permission. He planned a surprise proposal over a romantic diner at home. For the first time ever, Kathy was running late and Scott grew more nervous with each passing minute. An hour later she finally pulled in the driveway. "I was waiting on my knee with the ring at the door when she walked in," Scott recalls, "Her first reaction was being scared and then, when she realized what was happening, she could not talk. She said yes and my waiting served me right for all of the late nights at work I left her waiting." **Congratulations and Best Wishes Scott and Kathy!**





## NEW FACES

### NEW CHEF IN AP

**Rodolpho "Rudy" Vasquez, Jr.** has been hired as the new Chef at the *Aransas Pass Civic Center's* catering service, *Silverleaf Cuisine*. Rudy has a tremendous history in the food service industry. He greatly contributed in opening *The Railroad Seafood Station* in Cibolo, TX and *Corpus Christi*, TX, where he developed menus, trained staff, and set up the kitchens for both restaurants. His skills include carving station training, garnishing techniques, and a variety of specialty cuisines including, Cajun, Mexican, Italian and more. Rudy will oversee all aspects of *Silverleaf Cuisine*, serving parties of 15 to 500 guests. Rudy was born in Taft, TX and raised in Sinton, TX where he currently resides. He is a graduate of Sinton ISD. He enjoys playing video games, working on cars and spending time with his family. Rudy looks forward to working with the Aransas Pass community to make their events as successful and enjoyable as possible. His experience has taught him that the meaning of customer service is *"the customer always comes first"*. Rudy comes with the highest recommendations from his customers, friends, and previous employers. He has a tremendous work ethic, a vivacious attitude and a wonderful sense of humor. **Welcome aboard Rudy!**



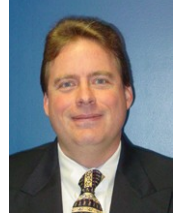
### NEW IN HURST

**Charlton W. Northington** was named the Executive Director for the *Hurst Conference Center* in Hurst, TX. Construction of the 51,000 square foot facility is scheduled to be completed in September 2010. Charlton has been in facility management and entertainment industries since 1992. He comes to Hurst from the Reno-Sparks Convention Center, where he was general manager. He is originally from Lubbock, Texas, and received bachelors and masters degrees from Texas Tech. *"It was very important for us to find an executive director who was experienced and knowledgeable in the conference and meetings industry,"* Venu-Works President Steve Peters said. *"In Charlton, we believe we have found that person. He came to us well recommended from his previous posts with a reputation as a person that gets things done. That is very important in developing a new facility of this magnitude."* The facility is an upscale conference center containing a 14,000 foot ballroom, with divisible areas, six meeting rooms, a full-service kitchen, and 400 covered parking spaces with an attached parking deck. Charlton will begin January 4, 2010. *"This is a great opportunity to work for an outstanding organization."* Charlton said. *"I am excited to get to work and make this the facility the city has envisioned."* **Welcome aboard Charlton!**



### NEW IN BEMIDJI

**Robert (Bob) LeBarron** has been named Executive Director for the *Bemidji Regional Events Center (BREC)*, located in Bemidji, Minnesota. The BREC, currently under construction, broke ground in April 2009, and is scheduled to be completed in Fall 2010. It includes a convention center and arena. The arena will host Bemidji State's NCAA Division I men's and women's hockey teams. *"We had numerous outstanding candidates to choose from and Robert's experience stood out,"* said Venu-Works President Steve Peters. LeBarron is well versed with ice operations. He was general manager of the William D. Mullins Center & Ice Rink at the University of Massachusetts and the Whittemore Center Arena at the University of New Hampshire. His most recent position was associate director of the San Jose State University Event Center. *"I'm thrilled to be joining the Venu-Works team and eager to get started in Bemidji,"* said Bob. *"The BREC is an impressive project and I'm looking forward to opening a wonderful facility for the City of Bemidji and the North Country in October 2010."* Bob is a graduate of St. Thomas (Fla.) University. He is a Certified Facilities Executive and graduate of IAAM Public Facilities Management School at Oglebay. **Welcome aboard Bob!**



### INDUSTRY NEWS

For the third consecutive year, **Larry Gawronski**, Executive Director at the *Vicksburg Convention Center and Auditorium*, has been listed by *ConventionSouth Magazine* as one of the *Meeting*

*Professionals to Watch in 2010*. Larry was one of 43 featured Meeting Professionals in the Southeast to be recognized. *The Vicksburg Convention Center and Auditorium* were also recog-



nized with a *ConventionSouth Reader's Choice Award* for excellence, creativity and professionalism for the sixth consecutive year. **Congratulations to Larry and the Vicksburg team!**



## EMPLOYEE STORIES

**Cantonese**

Sun nien fai lok

**Dutch**

Gelukkig nieuwjaar

**French**

Bonne Annee

**German**

Gutes Neues Jahr

**Hawaiian**

Hauoli Makahiki Hou

**Hebrew**

Shanah tovah

**Indonesian**

Elamat Tahun Baru

**Italian**

Buon Capo d'Anno

**Norwegian**

Godt Nyttar

**Portuguese**

Feliz ano novo

**Romanian**

La Multi Ani

**Russian**

S Novym Godom

**Spanish**

Feliz Ano novo

**Sudanese**

Wilujeng Tahun Baru

**Swedish**

Gott Nytt Ar

**Turkish**

Yeni Yiliniz Kutlu Olsun

**Welsh**

Blwyddyn Newydd Dda

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## MEET THE CONARDS

**Doug and Sondra Conard**, a retired couple from Spencer, IA, have worked for the *Clay County Regional Events Center* since the building opened in 2003. They are responsible for scheduling part-time staff, which is a tremendous help to the administrative office!

When asked about their work at the Events Center, Sondra said, "It's my favorite job!" She has worked many positions including ticket taker, ticket seller, usher, dock supervisor, and catering for various events. She recalled all the shows she was a part of and said the *Pat Boone* concert was a favorite, but the *Oak Ridge Boys* were a highlight as well. Sondra enjoys the variety of events she is able to be a part of, adding that the Events Center is a great facility for Spencer due to its ability to have so many



types of events. When asked about his experiences, Doug only had positive comments. His favorite events have been the Circus and *Winnie the Pooh* because he loves seeing the children. Doug and Sondra both enjoy the thrill of the crowd, not just for the rush, but because it gives them the opportunity to be reacquainted with familiar faces. Doug and Sandra feel "lucky to get to work here." It is such an honor for them to work in a

friendly, fun environment. They also recognize the huge impact that having an event center in their community has made by contributing to the local economy. They are proud to support the event center and the CCREC crew is proud to have them aboard!

**Thank you Doug and Sondra!**



## BPAC MVP

**Elizabeth Wardle-Kimmel** wears many hats at the *Burnsville Performing Arts Center*, including box office



ticket seller, stage crew, janitorial crew, subbing in at the front desk when needed, and house manager. She just received a B.A. in theater and dance from Alma College in Michigan. It is so wonderful for BPAC to have an employee that has increased value to the team by being able to support nearly every activity in the building.

**Thank you Elizabeth!**



## CONTEST

*VenuWorks* is always looking for new ideas to create home grown events and event share opportunities.

In order to raise awareness we are holding a contest to see who can come up with the best home grown event idea. **Winning prize \$100.**

Contest submissions should include an event idea, a rough expense summary, equipment needs, proposed staffing numbers, proposed admission price, and event promotion ideas.

Please send in submissions to [lpeters@venuworks.com](mailto:lpeters@venuworks.com). This contest is open to all full time and part time employees and volunteers. Submissions deadline February 26, 2010. Winner to be announced in March issue of the *VenuWorkers* newsletter.

HAPPY  
NEW YEAR!

Happy New Year! 2009 was a busy year. We opened two new facilities in Burnsville, MN and Aransas Pass, TX and gained three more venues in Bemidji, MN; Chanhassen, MN, and Hurst, TX. Thank you all for contributing to the growing success of VenuWorks, and best wishes for 2010!

Sincerely,  
Steve Peters,  
VenuWorks President

**Pause for Thought:**

**What would you like to know from our VenuWorks family?**

Send in your questions or answer the question below:

**"How do you balance the demanding nature of our industry with your family life?"**

*Erin Powell*  
Vicksburg, MS

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Subject line:  
Pause for Thought