



# Newsletter

Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas, Kansas, Mexico

November 2017

## New Name and New Director at Jonesboro Arkansas



In recognition of a \$5 million contribution by First National Bank to the Red Wolves Foundation, the fundraising arm of Arkansas State University Athletics, the University Board of Trustees voted on October 19, 2017 to rename the university's multi-purpose facility known as the Convocation Center to "First National Bank Arena."

Also recently announced was the appointment of James W. (Jim) Brown, CFE as the director of the First National Bank Arena. For the past 18 years he has been associated with the Ervin J. Nutter Center at Wright State University, serving since 2010 as executive director of the facility, which is one of the top-ranked university venues in the country. His first day in the new position at A-State was Monday, Oct. 23.

"We will continue to work very hard to bring the highest quality of family entertainment and national touring artists to First National Bank Arena," said Brown. "This building has a well-established reputation in the industry. I look forward to continuing the diversified entertainment and enhancing the quality of life for Northeast Arkansas."

First National Bank's naming rights will extend through the next 12 years, as announced at a press conference Oct. 19. The gift guarantees the naming rights through Dec. 31, 2029.

"First National Bank has always been committed to supporting the communities we serve, and I couldn't think of a better way to do that than partnering with Arkansas State University," said Will Brewer, vice chairman of First National Bank. "The Convocation Center has a long history of providing great experiences to families across the state, and First National Bank has a long history of serving families in this area."

"This is a great opportunity to do something together to serve the people of Northeast Arkansas. Naming the First National Bank Arena provides us with an opportunity to support our local university while also giving us the ability to tell people about our great organization."

First National Bank was founded in 1889 and has 14 locations across Arkansas. With \$1.3 billion in total assets, the bank is among only 5% of financial institutions in the nation to receive a 5-star rating from Bauer Financial for over 27 years running.

"Like the Convocation Center itself, First National Bank has been a major presence in our region for many years and so it is only fitting that our magnificent facility bear the First National name," said Arkansas State University System President Dr. Chuck Welch. "A-State is extremely grateful to the bank for their generosity and significant support. This is certainly a very exciting day for our university and community."

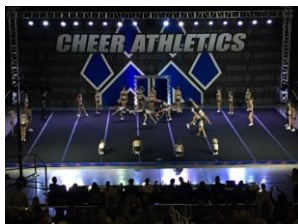
The Arkansas-based bank is the first donor of any kind to have naming rights for the 207,507 square-foot facility that opened in 1987 as the Convocation Center. The arena lists official capacity for athletics events as 10,563 and 11,704 for concerts.

The facility's first event was Arkansas State's spring commencement in May 1987, while the first concert was performed by George Strait on July 31, 1987. Over the past 30 years the venue has hosted the biggest names in entertainment including sold-out performances by Garth Brooks, Taylor Swift, Alan Jackson, Jason Aldean, Reba McEntire, Eric Church and most recently Luke Bryan as part of the building's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on Feb. 18, 2017.

First National Bank Arena will continue to be the largest and most functional facility in all of Northeast Arkansas. For more information call 870-972-3870 or visit online at [FNBArena.com](http://FNBArena.com).

## Cheer Athletics “Blue Debut” and UIL Volleyball State Championships Take Over Curtis Culwell Center

The month of October kicks off cheer season at the Curtis Culwell Center. On October 28<sup>th</sup> the Cheer Athletics “Blue Debut” was the first of eleven competitions set for the fall through winter at the CCC. Over 1,500 competitors showed off their high-flying skills throughout the day.



In November, the road to the UIL Volleyball State Championship culminates at the Curtis Culwell Center. There will be six teams crowned champion November 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> as the two finalists from 1A to 6A will battle it out for the trophies. The CCC is proud to be the home of the championship for the fifth straight year.



## Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center Expansion receives LEED Certification for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design



The Henry B. González Convention Center (HBGCC) has received the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). The HBGCC achieved LEED Silver certification for implementing practical and measurable strategies and solutions aimed at achieving high performance in: innovative design, sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

“From the beginning of this project, our goal has been to ensure that the transformation of the Henry B. González Convention Center was more than just adding square footage,” said Michael Sawaya, Executive Director of Convention and Sports Facilities for the City of San Antonio. “From having the largest ballroom in Texas to achieving LEED Silver Certification, this monumental project has been on the leading edge of innovation in our industry,” Sawaya added.

The \$325 million expansion marks the largest single capital improvement project in the City of San Antonio’s history and increases the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center footprint to 1.65 million square feet. This innovative design-build project was delivered by the City of San Antonio ahead of schedule and within budget.

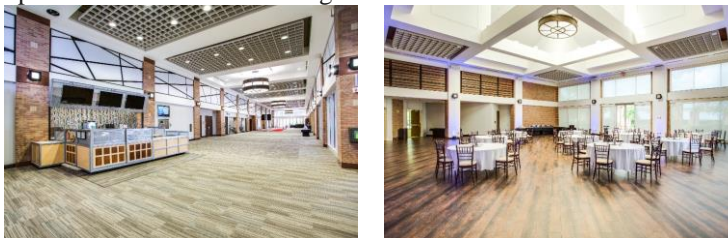
The convention center expansion included more than 800,000 square feet of new construction and more than 78,000 square feet that was renovated within the existing building. The expansion comprises 260,000 square feet of new exhibition space, along with a 54,000 square foot ballroom, making the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center the largest of its kind in Texas.

“The City of San Antonio is proud to be a catalyst for positive change in the way our buildings are constructed and operated,” said Douglas Melnick, Chief Sustainability Officer for the City of San Antonio. “San Antonio is truly moving onward and upward, accelerating change and embracing the implementation of the SA Tomorrow Sustainability Plan.”

“The HBGCC LEED certification demonstrates tremendous green building leadership,” said Mahesh Ramanujam, President and CEO, USGBC. “LEED was created to make the world a better place and revolutionize the built environment by providing everyone with healthy, green and high performing buildings. The HBGCC serves as a prime example of how the work of innovative building projects can use local solutions to make a global impact on the environment.”

## Plano Event Center Honored with *ConventionSouth's* Top New or Renovated Meeting Site Award

Plano Event Center in Plano, Texas is among an elite list of 66 meeting facilities located across the South (including only 9 venues in Texas) to receive the 2018 Top New or Renovated Meeting Site Award from *ConventionSouth* magazine.



“*ConventionSouth* readers are constantly seeking information on the newest and like-new meeting sites in the South in order to offer their attendees the most modern facilities available, and this is why we are honored to bestow Plano Event Center with a Top New or Renovated Meeting Site Award,” said *ConventionSouth* Associate Publisher Marcia Bradford. “After a lengthy review of what Plano Event Center now has to offer meeting planners and attendees, we feel it indeed displays a superior commitment to providing groups with the top-of-the-line amenities and service that they require.”

[Plano Event Center](#) is an 86,400 square foot venue providing flexible function space accommodating as many as 5,000 people. The exhibition hall offers 21,600 square feet of column-free, completely carpeted space, a professional master stage, and high dock and street level move-in access. There are also 14 additional breakout rooms available. Amenities include on-site catering and audio-visual teams, free parking, and free public Wi-Fi. Plano Event Center, located in one of the most vibrant communities in North Texas, is just 30 miles from DFW Airport and Dallas Love Field Airport and is close to a variety of hotel options.

## New Director of Events at The Broadmoor World Arena and Pikes Peak Center for the Performing Arts



David Owens

With over twenty years of experience in event management, David Owens has a career that has become a life’s passion. He says “the idea of bringing ideas, imagination, concepts and visions to reality is the utmost reward”. During the course of his career, he has managed more than 1,500 events with attendance ranging from a dozen for a small corporate meeting to hundreds of thousands for private/public city-wide events. Those events covered a range including corporate meetings and special events; multiple day national conferences; conventions and tradeshow; expositions; heavy production of general sessions and concerts (in and outdoors). The cumulative aggregate economic impact of those events was more than \$250,000,000 derived from operations in several municipalities across the country including his base of Indianapolis.

In 2001 he established Pinnacle Planning Services and had client lists including Church of God in Christ AIM Conference, African Methodist Episcopal National, Radio One of Indiana and Emmis Broadcasting. He successfully managed events from Los Angeles, CA to Baltimore, MD.

After being called back to Indiana Convention Center & Lucas Oil Stadium in December of 2011, he continued his career as a Senior Event Coordinator. His event resume varied from not-for-profit fundraisers to major conferences/trade shows to Big Ten Football Championship Weekend events to the 2015 Final Four and 2012 Super Bowl XLVI.

In September of 2017, a great opportunity was accepted and David relocated to Colorado Springs to further his career as Director of Event Services for the renowned Broadmoor World Arena / Pikes Peak Performance Center for the Performing Arts. He is looking to continue the venues reputation of excellence and service to the Colorado Springs community.

## Dickies Arena and The Beck Group Host Appreciation BBQ for Construction Team

Multipurpose Arena Fort Worth (MAFW) and The Beck Group, the general contractor for Dickies Arena, hosted an appreciation lunch for all 800 members of the construction team on Friday, Oct. 27.



Global President for Dickies Philip Williamson spoke to the workers and thanked them for their efforts to keep the project on time and shared his excitement for what the arena will mean for everyone in Fort Worth. Dickies delivered free shirts, hats and other gear for every worker on site as a way of thanking them.

MAFW is the not-for-profit operating entity for Dickies Arena, a 14,000 seat multipurpose venue, scheduled to open in November 2019.

## SMG and Destination El Paso Seeking Assistant General Manager and Director of Operations

SMG, the leader in privately managed public assembly facilities has an immediate opening for the following positions at Destination El Paso featuring nationally recognized venues including: El Paso Convention Center, Abraham Chavez Theatre, Plaza Theatre Performing Arts Centre, McKelligon Canyon and Pavilion, and Cohen Stadium.

El Paso has been recognized as a Top Performing City (Governing and Living Cities, 2017), Best Large Cities for Families (Apartment List, Jan 2017), America's Top 20 Best Value Cities (Trivago, 2016), 4<sup>th</sup> Best Place to Live if you Love the Outdoors (US News, July 2016) and #2 Safest City in America (SafeWise, Aug 2017)

### ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

#### *Position Summary:*

Responsible for supporting management, promotion and operation of the facilities, including purchasing, booking, marketing, finance, human resources, food and beverage, box office, advertising, security, production, maintenance, parking and related operations by performing the following duties personally or through subordinates. Helps to facilitate optimum efficiency, maximize profits and provide exceptional customer service by performing the following duties individually or through subordinate supervisors.

#### *Education and Experience:*

Bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university and a minimum of five (5) years' industry experience; at least three (3) of those years in a management function of an arena, theatre, convention center or stadium; or an equivalent combination of education and experience is preferred.

### DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

#### *Position Summary:*

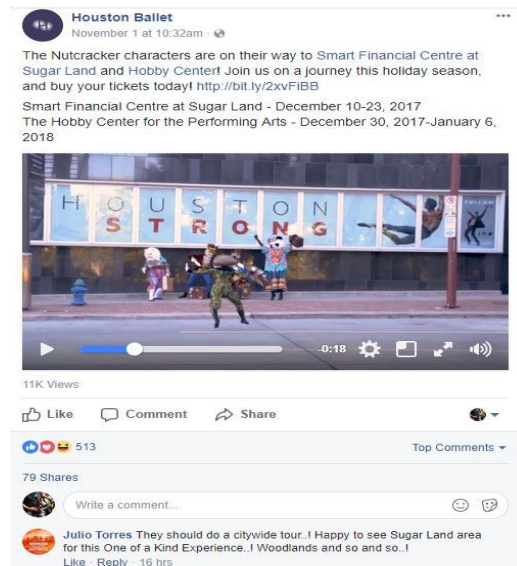
Responsible for scheduling and supervising personnel and subcontractors, implement daily activities for successful execution of events, and oversee maintenance of the facilities by performing a variety of duties personally, or through subordinate supervisors.

#### *Education and Experience:*

Bachelor's degree required, Engineering degree preferred. Minimum of 5 – 8 years related experience in the public assembly industry in a supervisory position.

For complete job descriptions or to apply, visit: <http://www.elpasolive.com/contact/jobs> or contact Emilio Velez, Human Resources Manager , [evelez@destinationelpaso.com](mailto:evelez@destinationelpaso.com), 915-534-0628.

## Smart Financial Centre Partners with Houston Ballet Following Hurricane Harvey



The aftermath of Hurricane Harvey has continued to have ripple effects in the Houston area. Houston's lauded Theater District suffered massive damage to several venues, causing several of the resident arts organizations to look for new homes in order to salvage their seasons. Meetings between Smart Financial Centre and the Houston Ballet were organized to discuss moving the Holiday tradition of The Nutcracker to Smart Financial Centre. Artistic Director Stanton Welch and Managing Director of Houston Ballet loved the new Smart Financial Centre space and a deal was made to present sixteen performances from December 10-23.

Smart Financial Centre offers the Houston Ballet new opportunities to generate new revenue streams through the sale of suites and special VIP opportunities. "Having the prestigious Houston Ballet perform in our venue is a great opportunity for the community of Sugar Land and Fort Bend County. The devastation of Hurricane Harvey has brought people together in so many ways. When it became clear that Houston Ballet was in serious need to save The Nutcracker, it became a priority for us to clear the dates and present a partnership that worked for both sides. We are excited for opening night and welcoming the Houston Ballet patrons to Smart Financial Centre!" said Gary Becker, President of ACE SL, LLC (Smart Financial Centre).

Houston Ballet has introduced a clever marketing campaign about taking The Nutcracker on the road and educating the public of the new home. Several photo shoots involving Nutcracker characters have taken place at the Centre which have run on social media and other platforms. Smart Financial Centre also allocated a substantial amount of media advertising to assist Houston Ballet in marketing the show. To date, sales have been brisk and Clara will once again help defeat the Mouse King and the Holiday season will be a joyous one for ballet fans!

## FRANK ERWIN CENTER CELEBRATES 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY THIS MONTH



The Frank Erwin Center in Austin, Texas opened its doors for the very first time on Nov. 29, 1977 for a Texas Longhorns Men's Basketball game versus the Oklahoma Sooners. Since its inaugural event nearly 40 years ago, the Frank Erwin Center has attained a rich and diverse history ranging from breakthrough musical performances and sporting events to visits from world leaders and former presidents.

Celebratory activities for this huge achievement include a sold-out performance by country music legend, George Strait, on June 3, 2018. A special edition ice cream flavor, Frank's Chunky Drumsicle, will also be available the entire month of November at local ice cream royalty, Amy's Ice Creams. Additionally, the University's student newspaper, The Daily Texan, will release a commemorative issue on Nov. 17 that will highlight our distinct history on the UT campus. The Texas Longhorns Men's and Women's Basketball teams will also help us ring in 40 years at two of their basketball games on Nov. 29 and 30.



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**Thank you to our newsletter contributors this month!**

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Andrew Huang – Smart Financial Centre  
Mark Jarrell – Plano Event Center  
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Brad Pietz – Arkansas State University, First National Bank Arena  
Emilio Velez – Destination El Paso, El Paso Live  
Kevin Welch – Curtis Culwell Center  
Wanda Williams – City of San Antonio Convention & Sports Facilities

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