

# GEORGIA Amusement JOURNAL

Dedicated to serving the Georgia COAM industry  
 Endorsed by the Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association  
 paul@tashcommunications.com (406) 491-0100

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## Industry offers redemption information

**By Paul Tash**  
*Georgia Amusement Journal*

With the July 1 date ushering in major redemption changes fast-approaching, Georgia's COAM industry is working to get the word

out about the new options. Come July, only gift cards (reloadable and non-reloadable), Lottery products and replays will be allowed for Class B redemption. The Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association

(GAMOA) is partnering with the Horizon Retailers Association (HRA) and the Georgia Lottery Corp. to present an educational seminar April 28 about the coming gift card redemption options at the Cobb Convention Center (formerly

the Cobb Galleria), 2 Galleria Pkwy SE, Atlanta. The itinerary will feature a Lottery presentation by Mike Parham and other staff members.

**See GIFT CARDS, Page 10**

## Amusement Hall of Fame welcomes Westgate

Sam Westgate (center), who has been involved for many years in the Georgia COAM industry representing a variety of companies, was inducted into the Amusement Industry Hall of Fame last month during the Amusement Expo International in Las Vegas. The American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) administers the Amusement Industry Hall of Fame. At left is AAMA President Beth Standlee, and AAMA Executive Vice President Peter Gustafson is on the right.

**Read more about what happened in Vegas, Pages 3 and 6.**



AAMA photo

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## COAM licensing applications open May 4

**By Paul Tash**  
*Georgia Amusement Journal*

The COAM licensing application process opens Monday, May 4, for the 2027 licensing period, which runs July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, on the Georgia Lottery Corp.'s COAM website, www.gacoam.com.

The licensing application process covers the following licenses:

- Master Class A – New and renewal
- Master Class B – Renewal only
- Location Class A – New and renewal

- Location Class B – New and renewal
- Manufacturer – New and renewal
- Distributor – New and renewal

Licensees have the option to extend their license for one or

**See COAM, Page 9**



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The Cheri Rooftop at the Paris resort on the Strip provided a beautiful outdoor venue and attracted a big crowd.

# What happened in Vegas...

## Georgia Amusement & Music Operators host members and industry friends at the Amusement Expo International

Photos by Paul Tash | *Georgia Amusement Journal*



The Georgia Amusement & Music Operators Association (GAMOA) hosted a reception for members and friends of the Georgia COAM industry during the Amusement Expo International event last month in Las Vegas. GAMOA directors Mark Brooks (left) and Alan Joseph (right) enjoyed the festivities with Banilla Gaming's Kevin Morse.



Camille Kearns (left) and John Houseal of InComm Payments (center) visit with Rizwan Poonawalla of Prize Skillz at the GAMOA social.



Others at the event were (left to right) Samantha Blue, Janet Case, GAMOA Director Tim Case and GAMOA Director Ryan O'Donnell.

# Journal Opinion

## Pre-register for AMOA DC fly-in today



By **Lori Schneider**  
AMOA Executive Director



Make plans now to join AMOA's delegation for its DC Fly-In June 8-11. Here's a glimpse of the schedule:

- **Monday, June 8** – Fly-in to Washington, D.C., for a legislative briefing that evening;
  - **Tuesday, June 9** – Full day of meetings on the Hill and a group dinner in the evening;
  - **Wednesday, June 10** – Hill meetings in the morning, AMOA/AAMA Game Room for Congressional members/staff in the afternoon and the annual Congressional ballgame in the evening at Nationals Park;
  - **Thursday, June 11** – Fly home at leisure.
- We hope to see you there! Visit

[www.amoa.com](http://www.amoa.com) and fill out a pre-registration form today!

### AMOA installs new leadership

AMOA installed new leadership at the conclusion of Amusement Expo International and its annual meeting on March 19. The principal officer team includes Tommy Hendley (NC), president; Scott John (MD), first vice president; Jim Tartal (PA), treasurer; and Jeff Prescott (NY), secretary. Each principal officer will serve a one-year term.

Also installed for three-year terms was the 2029 class of vice presidents, which includes Chuck Brooks (GA), Mark Cumming (TX), and Mike

Gelatka (IN).

The director class of 2029 includes Nick Comella (OH), Jared Diltz (IN), Trapper Geater (AR), John Humphrey (NC), Dustin Rogers (MI) and Tammy Snodgrass (NC).

### Upcoming programs

- **AMOA Regional Tech School:** Chicago Area – July; Charlotte, NC – Fall 2026
  - **AMOA On the Road Program:** Chicago – October
  - **AMOA State Council Meeting:** San Diego – January 2027
- Be sure to check out AMOA's new website [www.amoa.com](http://www.amoa.com) for the latest on AMOA and industry programs!

## GEORGIA Amusement JOURNAL

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## COAM calendar

### UPCOMING

**April 20:** Gross retail receipts for January, February and March are due. The gross retail receipts must be submitted electronically through the COAM website at [www.gacoam.com](http://www.gacoam.com). Failure to report on time may result in penalties.

### MEETINGS & MORE

**April 23:** COAM Advisory Board, Lottery headquarters, Atlanta

**April 28:** Redemption seminar, Cobb Convention Center

**May 14:** GAMOA board meeting, Crowne Plaza Atlanta NE, Norcross

**Aug. 18-20:** Southern Amusement & Entertainment Expo, Gas South Convention Center, Duluth

**Write us:** The *Georgia Amusement Journal* welcomes letters to the editor. Letters must include the writer's name and address. The word limit is 300. Mail to: Georgia Amusement Journal, P.O. Box 4307, Butte MT 59702, or email [paul@tashcommunications.com](mailto:paul@tashcommunications.com). The Journal reserves the right not to print letters it finds objectionable.

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# The view from the floor at AEI show

Amusement Expo International in Las Vegas offers chance to connect and learn about industry's latest developments

Photos by Paul Tash  
*Georgia Amusement Journal*



Banilla Games founder Garrett Blackwelder (center) discusses the company's games with an interested individual as Banilla sales executive Trent Safir (right) looks on during the Amusement Expo International (AEI) trade show last month in Las Vegas.



GAMOA Executive Director Christina Kaiser, Nia Lazard from Bad Dog Games, and Paige Gamble with Quixant take time for a photo during a "Rise & Shine Breakfast" at AEI that celebrated the women in the amusement industry.



Gabriel Celli (center) of EasyLinx listens to a question about the company's redemption solutions as Betson Gaming's David Capilouto (left) and Rick Murphy stand by at the AEI trade show. Betson and EasyLinx recently partnered to provide redemption kiosks and software for the Georgia COAM market.



Dylan Waddle (left) and Phil Bowden of M3t took a break for a photo on the AEI trade show floor.



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# COAM

from Page 1

two additional years by submitting a multiple-year license application. To apply:

- First, submit your 2027 license application at [www.gacoam.com](http://www.gacoam.com).
- Then, visit the Documents/Forms section and download the multiple-year license application and follow the instructions on the application form.

Licensees who applied for a multiple-year license last year will receive an email before May 4 that provides instructions:

- to receive their license with updated license year term (all license types).
- to apply for their 2027 machine decals (Master License Holders only).

Licensees only applying for the 2027 license year do not need to submit a multiple-year license application.

The Lottery is not accepting any new Class B master license applications. New Class B master licenses are only available through an auction process for prequalified participants. The Lottery plans to hold a COAM auction for one Class B master license in April 2027. Additional details will be posted on the COAM licensing website as the date approaches.

The COAM Division has begun to email reminders to 2026 licensees to renew for the 2027 year.

### Important dates:

The following are the important dates for licensees to remember:

- **Saturday, May 30:** Deadline to apply for a new location license (Class A and B), a new Class A master license, or a new manufacturer or distributor license for the 2026 licensing period (July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026). This deadline only applies to 2026 COAM licenses.



- **Tuesday, June 30:** Deadline for master licensees to purchase additional Class A and Class B decals, or location licensees to add Class A and Class B machines for the 2026 licensing period (July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026). This deadline only applies to 2026 COAM Licenses.

- **Wednesday, July 1 (IMPORTANT UPDATE):** Date a \$1,000 late fee will be assessed to location Class B licensees, master Class B licensees, manufacturer, and distributor licensees that have not renewed for the 2027 licensing period (July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027). Additionally, a \$100 late fee will be assessed to location Class A licensees and master Class A licensees that have not renewed for the 2027 licensing period. An existing COAM licensee will not be allowed to apply for a new license to avoid payment of a late fee.
- **Monday, September 28:** Last

day to submit a renewal location Class A and Class B license, master Class A and Class B license and manufacturer and distributor license for the 2027 licensing period (July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027). If a holder of a 2026 COAM license fails to renew its license, or its license application is not approved on or before this date, the person or entity will no longer be allowed to operate COAMs.

### Master licensee's role

Master licensees can play an important role in helping their locations through the licensing process by reminding them to:

- pay their taxes and other state financial obligations.
- apply for the correct license (Class B).
- pay attention to licensing deadlines.
- list all the officers and shareholders listed on the license application.
- take time to enter information correctly.

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# Gift cards

from Page 1

on the redemption changes. A question-and-answer session with the Lottery regarding those changes will follow the presentation.

Another Q&A session with GAMOA attorney Les Schneider will follow for general COAM issues.

## EasyLinx founder says

Representatives of several COAM businesses have talked with the Georgia Amusement Journal in the last few months about the coming gift card-focused redemption options.

The latest to do so is Mosart Sebben, founder and CEO of EasyLinx, who outlined several benefits the new redemption

requirements will provide.

“The new regulation creates a clear, auditable trail for every redemption, eliminating gray areas and protecting operators and locations from compliance risks while increasing trust with regulators,” Sebben said.

He also said the new redemption rules will allow operational standardization across all locations.

“Limiting payouts to replay tickets, gift cards, or lottery products simplifies processes, reduces staff errors, and creates a consistent redemption experience across every store and route,” he said.

“Higher revenue visibility” for owners and route operators will be another benefit, he said.

“With all redemptions tracked,” he said, “operators gain real insight into player behavior, machine performance, and payout ratios – unlocking smarter

decisions and new growth strategies.”

In addition, Sebben sees technology as a “growth enabler,” not a cost.

“The regulation accelerates adoption of RMS and validation systems, positioning system vendors as strategic partners that help routes and locations stay compliant, optimize revenue, and scale confidently.”

To his point, EasyLinx and GeWeTe have partnered with Betson to provide kiosks and software to take full advantage of the gift card redemption options.

Following is some general information regarding gift card redemption:

- Gift cards must be kept in secure areas (e.g., behind the counter) to prevent theft or tampering.
- Licensees are responsible for ensuring cards are not

accessible to unauthorized individuals.

- Gift cards must be redeemed for their full value. Licensees cannot charge a fee or withhold part of the value (e.g., giving a \$100 card but only redeeming \$80).
- Any suspicious activity involving gift cards (such as fraud or incorrect balances) should be reported to the Lottery immediately.
- The Georgia Lottery and COAM logos cannot be used on gift cards or player cards without explicit permission from the Lottery.
- Kiosks and similar technology aren’t required to provide gift cards.

The gift card redemption requirements were part of wide-ranging COAM legislation in House Bill 353 that passed in the 2024 General Assembly.



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## Reminder: Keep COAMs connected

To ensure accurate reporting of financial data to the Central Accounting System, the Georgia Lottery Corporation (GLC) says it is imperative the Location License Holders (LLHs) ensure all equipment remains connected to the site controller and powered up at all times.

The GLC maintains a record of those LLHs that are repeat offenders of failing to ensure the continuous connectivity and operation of Class B COAMs.

Failure to comply with these procedures may result in fines up to \$50,000, suspension and/or revocation of the license.

## Decommission COAMs correctly

The proper procedure to decommission coin-operated amusement machines (COAMs) can be found on the COAM Division website, [www.gacoam.com](http://www.gacoam.com). The COAM decommission procedure should be followed when there is:

- A change of master, change of ownership, or cancellation letter received by GLC;
- A COAM game board swapped out with a different game;
- A COAM malfunction.

To proceed with the decommissioning:

1. Call Intralot before disconnecting the COAMs from a location and removing those COAMs. The Master License Holder (MLH) needs to contact the Intralot Hotline at 877-261-6242 to properly decommission COAMs. The COAMs must be connected to the site controller at this time.
2. Intralot will let you know when the COAMs are decommissioned. The Intralot representative will perform steps on the Intralot system that prepares the COAMs for the decommission. Once the steps are complete, Intralot will notify the MLH the machines have been decommissioned.
3. Disconnect decommissioned COAMs from the site controller.



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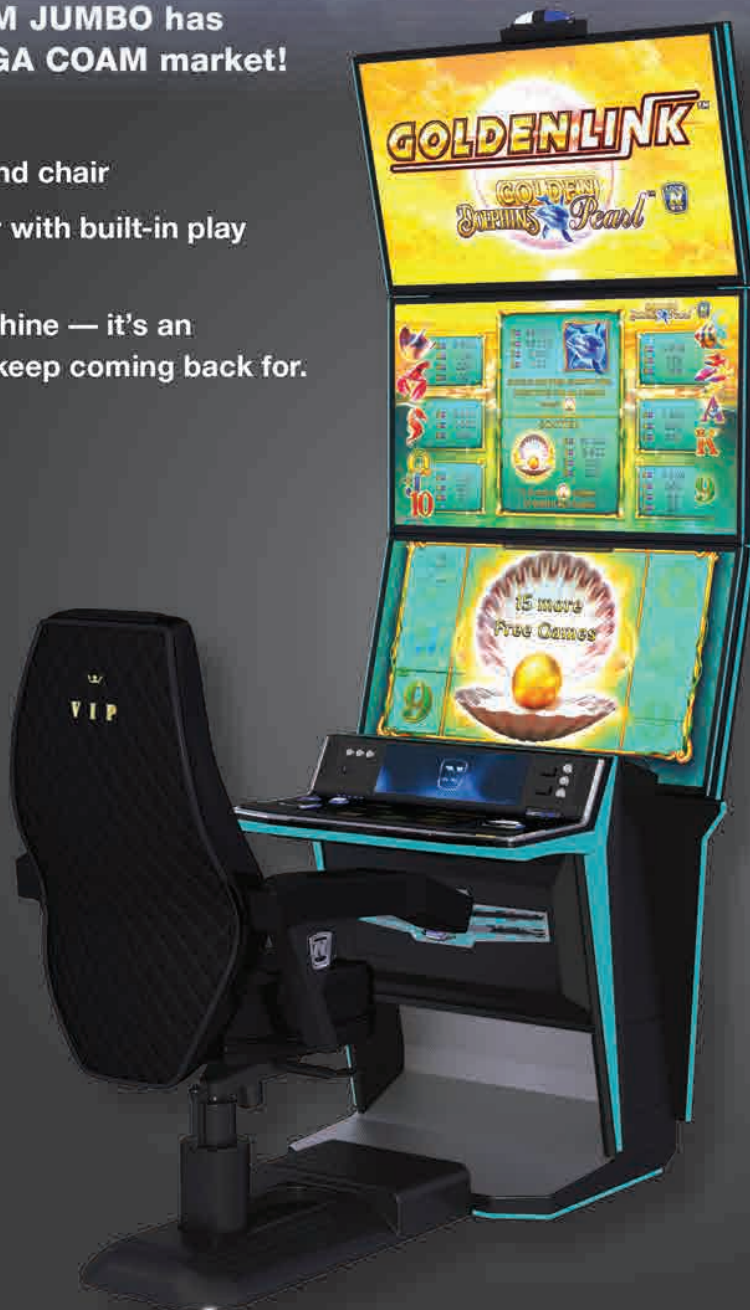
**Thursday May 14th**  
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Invites and full details coming later this month!  
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# July 1<sup>st</sup> is Right Around the Corner

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# Lockdogs locks down Canadian contract for key-changeable locks



By Paul Tash  
Georgia Amusement Journal

Lockdogs, a distributor of award-winning key-changeable locks for the gaming industry, has been awarded a contract with Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis (AGLC) in Canada.

Lockdogs will supply AGLC with high security locks, including keys and peripherals to support and maintain the security of gaming machines and kiosks within all licensed casinos in Alberta, according to an industry press release.

AGLC will receive Lockdogs' key-changeable locks that eliminate the need for ongoing maintenance, counting of dimples, or core changes.

"Lockdogs is both humbled and honored to have been awarded this contract from AGLC," said Lockdogs founder and owner Jeff Connor. "It was a very competitive field, but Lockdogs' important points of differentiation really set us apart and help ensure our clients long-term success and profitability"

"As the fastest growing company in the highly regulated EGM specific lock industry," Connor said Lockdogs brings "operational efficiencies" to the industry that have not been available previously.

"AGLC will receive from Lockdogs the most advanced locks available that are truly the last locks they will ever need," Connor said.

Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis (AGLC) will receive Lockdogs' key-changeable locks that eliminate the need for ongoing maintenance, counting of dimples, or core changes.

COIN OPERATED AMUSEMENT MACHINE LOCATION SWEEP AND MASTER PUSH CALENDAR

COAM JAN-JUNE 2026 COAM

ACCOUNTING WEEK START	ACCOUNTING WEEK END	LOCATION SWEEP DATE	MASTER PUSH DATE
28-Dec-25	03-Jan-26	07-Jan-26	13-Jan-26
04-Jan-26	10-Jan-26	14-Jan-26	21-Jan-26*
11-Jan-26	17-Jan-26	21-Jan-26	27-Jan-26
18-Jan-26	24-Jan-26	28-Jan-26	03-Feb-26
25-Jan-26	31-Jan-26	04-Feb-26	10-Feb-26
01-Feb-26	07-Feb-26	11-Feb-26	18-Feb-26*
08-Feb-26	14-Feb-26	18-Feb-26	24-Feb-26
15-Feb-26	21-Feb-26	25-Feb-26	03-Mar-26
22-Feb-26	28-Feb-26	04-Mar-26	10-Mar-26
01-Mar-26	07-Mar-26	07-Mar-26	17-Mar-26
08-Mar-26	14-Mar-26	18-Mar-26	24-Mar-26
15-Mar-26	21-Mar-26	25-Mar-26	31-Mar-26
22-Mar-26	28-Mar-26	01-Apr-26	07-Apr-26
29-Mar-26	04-Apr-26	08-Apr-26	14-Apr-26
05-Apr-26	11-Apr-26	15-Apr-26	21-Apr-26
12-Apr-26	18-Apr-26	22-Apr-26	28-Apr-26
19-Apr-26	25-Apr-26	29-Apr-26	05-May-26
26-Apr-26	02-May-26	06-May-26	12-May-26
03-May-26	09-May-26	13-May-26	19-May-26
10-May-26	16-May-26	20-May-26	27-May-26*
17-May-26	23-May-26	27-May-26	02-Jun-26
24-May-26	30-May-26	03-Jun-26	09-Jun-26
31-May-26	06-Jun-26	10-Jun-26	16-Jun-26
07-Jun-26	13-Jun-26	17-Jun-26	24-Jun-26*
14-Jun-26	20-Jun-26	24-Jun-26	30-Jun-26
21-Jun-26	27-Jun-26	01-Jul-26	08-Jul-26*

\*Indicates sweep or push date has been changed to accommodate holiday  
Note: Holidays on a Thursday and Friday may delay the availability of the Location Period Accounting Report on the following Monday

# JULY 1<sup>ST</sup> IS COMING. WILL YOUR LOCATION BE READY?

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# Parker's Kitchen earns top workplace honors

Georgia Amusement Journal  
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Parker's Kitchen has been identified as one of the best places to work in the country.

The Savannah-based chain, which is currently celebrating its 50th anniversary, was honored as a USA TODAY 2026 Top Workplace. This marks the second time the convenience store and fuel operator has earned national acclaim for its positive workplace culture, following inclusion on the USA TODAY Top Workplaces list in 2024. The company participates bi-annually in this awards program.

Through employee surveys conducted by workplace culture and talent management company Energage, USA TODAY's Top Workplaces award program recognizes high-performing people-first cultures. The USA TODAY Top Workplaces awards program is regarded as the most credible and authentic global recognition program.

## Leadership reaction

"We're incredibly honored to be named a USA TODAY Top Workplace for the second time



and are thrilled to celebrate this prestigious honor during our milestone 50th anniversary," said Parker's Kitchen Founder and Executive Chairman Greg Parker. "Our hard-working team members are truly the key to our success over the past five decades. Every day, they help us provide fast, fresh, friendly service to our customers and share our commitment to giving back to the communities we serve in transformative ways."

## About Parker's Kitchen

Parker's Kitchen employs nearly 1,700 team members throughout South Carolina and Georgia and completes approximately 1.1 million transactions weekly. The award-winning convenience store

company is focused on developing talent and making a long-term investment in team members, according to Parker's.

Employees are offered highly competitive pay, leadership promotion opportunities and exceptional benefits, including personal time off starting on day one, 401(k) with company match, childcare assistance, gym reimbursement and company-paid maternity/paternity/adoption leave.

"These are companies that are successful because they put their people at the center of all that they do," said Dr. Greg Barnett, chief innovation officer at Energage. "By prioritizing the employee experience, they are known to outproduce, out-innovate and out-deliver the competition."

"We're incredibly honored to be named a USA TODAY Top Workplace for the second time and are thrilled to celebrate this prestigious honor during our milestone 50th anniversary."

— Greg Parker, Parker's Kitchen Founder and Executive Chairman

Known for its commitment to charitable giving, the company has donated more than \$30 million to a wide range of charitable causes over the past eight years, supporting education, reducing hunger, expanding access to healthcare and helping local veterans.

Founded in Midway, Ga., in 1976, Parker's Kitchen has been recognized as one of the "Best Places to Work in South Carolina" by SC Biz News. Included on the Inc. 5000 list of the fastest growing companies in America eight times, Parker's Kitchen is currently expanding into new markets, including Jacksonville, Fla., and Columbia, S.C., and plans to open 17 new stores in 2026.

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