



# GEORGIA Amusement JOURNAL

Dedicated to serving the Georgia COAM industry  
Endorsed by the Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association  
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## Class B master license up for bid April 10

By Paul Tash  
Georgia Amusement Journal

The Georgia Lottery Corp. will auction off at least one Class B master license Wednesday, April 10, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

A Class B master license allows the holder to supply Class B coin-operated amusement machines (COAMs) to licensed locations in Geor-

gia. About 195 Class B master licenses are currently operating in the state.

An announcement about the auction was made at the COAM Advisory Board meeting in January, and COAM Division Vice President Mike Parham reviewed the auction process for board members.

Pre-qualification is required to participate in

the auction. Pre-qualification packets are available on the COAM website, [www.gacoam.com](http://www.gacoam.com), under the Documents tab in the COAM Communications section with the title "Auction – April 10, 2024 – Class B Master License."

To be considered for qualification as a bidder at the auction, a person or entity must submit a:

See AUCTION Page 3

## GLC develops training video

### More education videos planned

By Paul Tash  
Georgia Amusement Journal

Responding to recent COAM Advisory Board suggestions for more educational resources for licensees, the Georgia Lottery Corp.'s COAM Division recently developed the first of what could be a series of short educational videos.

The initial video, about five-and-a-half minutes long, focuses on the correct way to report gross business receipts, said COAM Division Vice

President Mike Parham at the board's most recent meeting Jan. 16. The video highlights "important points" of the gross receipts tax and details how to maneuver through the COAM website

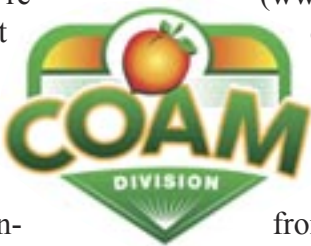
([www.gacoam.com](http://www.gacoam.com)) and drop-down lists and how to input information and submit that information, he said. Parham added he received input

from a variety of industry representatives and regulators for the video's development.

"We're excited (about the video)," said John Heinen, COAM senior vice president. "It's just an example of what we plan to do moving forward based on this board's recommendation to educate our licensees," Heinen said.

Heinen said Parham "did an outstanding job" creating the educational video, which was to be sent out to board members for review before it's released. Parham said the COAM Division also is reviewing the possibility of updating the COAM website to include "a

See BOARD Page 11



Paul Tash photo

COAM LEAD INVESTIGATOR Andrew Pippin shows a EMP jammer after the COAM Advisory Board meeting last month in Atlanta.

## Don't get jammed – update COAM bill acceptors

By Paul Tash  
Georgia Amusement Journal  
COAMs in Georgia with old or cheap bill acceptors are being targeted by individuals using a device called an EMP jammer, a hack that can cost a licensee hundreds of dollars.

"We are seeing players around the state bringing these devices into

locations," Andrew Pippin, the COAM Division's lead investigator, told the COAM Advisory Board last month. "They can manipulate the bill acceptor."

In some locations players "got away with several hundred dollars" using these kinds of jammers, he said. In early January three people

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# Auction

from Page 1

- COAM pre-qualification auction participation form;
- COAM Class B Master License auction deposit letter;
- And a \$100,000 deposit in the form of certified funds or cashier’s check payable to Georgia Lottery Corp. – COAM.

The prequalification form, letter and deposit must be mailed to the GLC headquarters (250 Williams St., Suite 3000, Atlanta GA, 30303) by March 14 at 3 p.m. EST. Any incomplete pre-qualification information or pre-qualification information received late may not be considered.

“They do need to be delivered here at (the GLC) headquarters,” Parham said. “The GLC will notify those who have prequalified and are able to take part in the auction by March 28.”

GLC strongly encourages any prospective bidder to review COAM related laws and rules before bidding at the auction. Any inquiries, questions or comments relating to the auction must be submitted by Feb. 21 at 4 p.m. to [COAMReporting@galottery.org](mailto:COAMReporting@galottery.org) and include “Auction Questions” in the subject line.

“We will respond to those questions by Feb. 28, and we will post those responses to the website,” Parham said.

April’s auction will take place at the GLC headquarters, 250 Williams St., in downtown Atlanta in the auditorium located on the street level of the building. Proceeds go the Georgia’s HOPE Scholarship and Pre-K educational programs.

After a bidder wins the first license, a determination will be made if an additional license or licenses will be auctioned. That determination “will be a game-time decision,” COAM Division Senior Vice President John Heinen said at th Advisory Board meeting, and will be made by Georgia Lottery Corp. President and CEO Gretchen Corbin.

The Class B master license that is available for bid at the auction has no COAMs, locations, or equipment associated with the license. The winning bid will be subject to verification. The winner of the license will have their \$100,000 deposit go toward the purchase price. The other bidders will have their deposits returned.

A winning bid is not transferable to any other bidder or party other than the person or entity and is subject to verification. Approved winners will need to apply for a 2025 master license after May 1.

Legislation in 2015 required

## LICENSE AUCTION SCHEDULE

The following dates are established for informational and planning purposes. GLC reserves the ability to change any dates:

Description	Date
Prospective Bidder Questions Due	Wednesday, February 21, 2024 by 4:00 p.m.
GLC Responses to Questions	Wednesday, February 28, 2024
Pre-Qualification Auction Participation Form(s) and Deposit Letter Due	Thursday, March 14, 2024 by 3:00 p.m.
GLC Notifies Pre-Qualified Bidders	Tuesday, March 28, 2024
<b>AUCTION</b>	Wednesday, April 10, 2024 Qualified Bidder check-in from 9:00 a.m. to 10 a.m. Auction begins at 10:30 a.m.
Bid Payment Due Via Wire Transfer	Tuesday, April 16, 2024
Class B Master License Online Application Submission	Application for 2025 Class B Master license may be submitted beginning Wednesday, May 1, 2024
Effective Date of 2025 License(s)	July 1, 2024 thru June 30, 2025 (renewal required)

the GLC to conduct periodic auctions, at least once every three years, for the Class B master licenses. The April auction will be the fourth – the first was held in May 2017, the second in May

2018, and the third in April 2021. The winning bid in the 2018 auction was \$900,000, while two bidders paid about \$3 million each for a license in 2021.

See the accompanying table

for important dates in the license auction process. GLC reserves the ability to change any dates. Visit [www.gacoam.com](http://www.gacoam.com) for more information about Georgia’s growing COAM industry.

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# Journal Opinion

## Banking issues remain a top focus

**By Lori Schneider  
AMOA Executive VP**

AMOA will be back in Washington, D.C., March 5-6 to meet with lawmakers as we continue to address banking issues and support payment choice.

As a reminder, AMOA continues to see an increase in bank-account closures around the country, primarily from big banks, similar to what happened back in the beginning days of account closures.

Please alert me – Lori Schneider, AMOA executive vice president – at [lori@amoa.com](mailto:lori@amoa.com) should you run into issues with access to banking. Most recent examples are extremely beneficial to provide House Financial Service and Senate Banking leaders.



Lori Schneider

AMOA continues to see an increase in bank account closures around the country, primarily from big banks.



- AI 101: A Beginner's Primer for the Amusement Industry
- Payment Options for Your Street Locations
- ATM Update 2024: What You Need to Know
- LIVE! Game Room Design
- Marketing Trends for FECs
- Advance Arcade Operations: Games, Card Systems, and Redemption
- And so much more!

AMOA members who have renewed their membership for 2024 can register for two free badges to the AEI trade show and register for the AMOA Member After-Party taking place at Aria's Jewel nightclub on Wednesday evening, March 20, from 9 p.m. to midnight.

Be sure to renew your 2024 membership today! Not a member? Join AMOA and receive all the annual benefits PLUS your two free AEI trade show badges.

### AEI fun and education

Make plans now to attend the Amusement Expo International (AEI) in Las Vegas next month. Attendees will have many opportunities for hands-on experience with the latest entertainment technology – including virtual reality – and have an opportunity to dive into the latest information to build your business with informative educational sessions. This, combined with the networking benefits of meeting with industry

leaders shaping the future of our industry, makes AEI a wise investment for growing your business.

AEI features:

- Two days of valuable education sessions (March 18-19)
- Two days of innovation and fun on our tradeshow floor (March 20- 21)
- Networking opportunities every day! Organized networking events and informal opportu-

nities give you a chance to trade pro-tips with experts just like you from around the world.

- A keynote address by Herm Edwards, former NFL coach and TV analyst.

Here's just a sampling of this year's informative education topics:

- People Management: Keys to Creating a Highly Effective Team
- Power of Connecting Games

### 2024 upcoming dates

**Amusement Expo International** – March 18-21, Westgate Las Vegas and Las Vegas Convention Center.

**AMOA On Campus** – May 4-6, University of Notre Dame.

Visit [www.amoa.com](http://www.amoa.com) to learn more about the many other AMOA member programs and services.

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## COAM calendar

### — REPORTING DATES —

**Feb. 20:** Each monthly report should be submitted by Location License Holders in electronic format via the [www.gacoam.com](http://www.gacoam.com) website as required by the GLC by the 20th of each following month.

### — MEETINGS/OTHER —

**Feb. 22:** GAMOA meeting, Crowne Plaza, Norcross

**March 18-21:** Amusement Expo, Las Vegas Convention Center

**April 10:** Auction for Class B Master COAM license, Lottery headquarters, Atlanta

**April 16:** COAM Advisory Board, Lottery headquarters, Atlanta

### 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 you can email us at [paul@tashcommunications.com](mailto:paul@tashcommunications.com). The Journal reserves the right not to print letters it finds objectionable.

# Journal Opinion

## Ten tips to ensure a successful Show



Sharon Shuford

The Show provides an opportunity for c-store suppliers to showcase their products and services and for retailers to discover what's new.

### By Sharon Shuford GACS Membership

This year the Southern Convenience Store and Petroleum Show returns to Macon, GA, for its 22nd year with the theme The Power of Partnership – reflecting the strength of partnerships between retailers and suppliers forged by The Show.

The date is May 16, and the location is The Centreplex in Macon.

The Show provides an opportunity for c-store suppliers to showcase their products and services

and for retail decision-makers to discover what's new in the industry.

Here are the top 10 things you can do to prepare:

10. Visit [www.gacs.com/events](http://www.gacs.com/events) for information about The Southern Convenience Store and Petroleum Show and to contract for your booth.

9. Join GACS to save \$500 on your booth.

8. Purchase an ad in the Trade Show Guide distributed to every retailer who attends The Show. Rates are \$300 for a half-page ad and \$500 for a full-page ad for members.

7. Book your hotel room at the Macon Marriott – GACS special pricing of \$149++/night expires on April 26. Visit [www.gacs.com](http://www.gacs.com) to book your room.

6. Increase your visibility and become a GACS Sponsor. Sponsorships start at just \$1,000 annually.

5. Get your “stuff” together: booth décor, product samples,

booth staff (up to four included with your booth). Remember, no goodie bags – these are handed out at the check-in registration desks.

4. Order electrical, water, internet and other services using the Exhibitor Services Kit sent to each exhibitor when space is reserved using the GACS exhibit contract form. Ship materials using the forms in the Exhibitor Services Kit.

3. Set up your booth Wednesday, May 15, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

2. Attend the District Managers Boot Camp preview at 5 p.m. on May 15.

1. Most importantly: Be present on May 16, the day of The Show, from 9 a.m. until closing. Exhibits should be manned during Show hours. Remember, this is your opportunity to show store owners, buyers and operators new ways to improve their businesses. They are there to engage with you.

Call (770) 736-9723 for more information.

### Show schedule Wednesday, May 15

8 a.m.- 5 p.m. – Exhibitor setup

2-5 p.m. – Show registration open

4-6 p.m. – Cocktail reception

### Thursday, May 16

8-9 a.m. – Speaker Jessica Lamb

8 a.m.-3:00 pm – Show registration open

9 a.m.-4 p.m. – Trade show floor open



GACS photo

GLENN SNOW of Jet Food Stores of Georgia makes connections at last year's Show in Macon.





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# Jammer

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were arrested in Georgia when they were caught using the devices on COAMs, Pippin said.

In an interview after the board meeting, Pippin said EMP jammers (EMP stands for electromagnetic pulse) “are readily available” on such shopping sites as Amazon and eBay, In fact, videos showing how to build them are available on YouTube.

The device works simply hold-

ing it close to a COAM’s bill acceptor and pushing a button, which sends out electromagnetic signals, he said,

“The bill acceptor will think you just put \$100 in,” he said, “and you’ll have an automatic \$100 credit on the machine.”

The defense against illegal use of EMP jammers is pretty straightforward, he added.

“You update the bill acceptors,” he said. “If you have a new, up-to-date bill acceptor, jammers won’t do anything to it.”

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Contact Rick Murphy for More Information:  
(770) 316-0945 | [rmurphy@betson.com](mailto:rmurphy@betson.com)

# Board

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training-video section.”

## Controller installations

Installation of new site controllers that promise more functionality and fewer complications “is still scheduled to be completed a little less than a year from now,” Parham said.

He said 173 site controllers had been installed so far since installations began last summer. The controller eliminates some of the cumbersome cabling that master licensees have had to deal with, including the problematic octopus cord. The new controllers have 10 designated ports to connect the machines directly to the controller. The controller also allows Intralot to provide some maintenance remotely, easing the need for technicians to visit locations as much. The controllers also come with software enhancements to improve functionality, regulators have said.

## COAM gift cards

Regarding COAM gift cards, Heinen said that as of Jan. 1, \$48.6 million had been loaded onto about 182,000 gift cards in about 1,900 locations.

“The average gift card load is



Paul Tash photo

**COAM ADVISORY BOARD** member Shawn Fellows, right, discusses an item during the group’s recent meeting Jan. 16 in Atlanta. From left are Hemal Patel and Dhaval “Bunty” Doshi.

about \$260,” he said.

He also said about 52 percent of locations that have registered to offer gift cards are actually participating and activating gift cards, he said.

“While that number is still low in my eyes,” he said, “it is starting to trend upward.”

In October the gift card participation rate was about 48 percent, he said, “and before that it was much lower.”

“So that number is starting to creep up,” he said. “That’s good.”

The state’s gift card pilot pro-

gram was extended last year and opened up to all location licensees in Georgia, now totaling about 6,900.

## COAM revenues

With the 2024 fiscal year half way over as of Dec. 31, Heinen reported that COAM revenue has experienced a “slight decrease.” However, he said, the decrease mirrors revenue drops of Lottery products “across the board” in the last few months. Heinen said the potential for a traditional revenue rebound in February was good.

“Hopefully we’ll see a revenue boost in the next three weeks,” he said.

Heinen reported that as of Dec. 31 the Georgia market had about 36,000 Class B COAMs in over 6,500 locations.

“That’s almost 3,000 more COAMs than we had this time last year, and about 400 more locations,” he said.

Average revenue per COAM was \$107.44 per day, he said, a decrease from the \$115.53 average this time last year. However, he said, “take those numbers with a grain of salt” because the market has introduced so many more machines.

In his initial report to the board, Parham provided some licensing statistics. The number of enabled licenses as of Jan. 2 were:

- Class A master licenses – 267
- Class A location licenses – 2,216
- Class B master licenses – 194
- Class B location licenses – 6,898
- Manufacturer licenses – 32
- Distributor licenses – 4

The COAM Advisory Board next meets April 16 at the GLC headquarters in downtown Atlanta.

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