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Endorsed by the Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association
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GEORGIA Amusement JOURNAL

Purple reign?

IGT to release new game set

By Paul Tash

Georgia Amusement Journal

Gaming manufacturer IGT is ready to release its Purple Set, the first set of games in the Georgia market to feature the Peach Pot Progressive game, and includes additional pay-table options.

The progressive links all games on the machine to one shared jackpot.

"All the games contribute to the progressive, and all the players are eligible to win," said IGT representative Jared Hale.



The Purple Set is the fourth set of games IGT has released in the Georgia market

since the fall of 2015, following the Black (classic), Blue and Red releases.

The new game suite was approved June 8, and Hale expected the new game set to be available later in the month. The new games are compatible with – and can be ordered with

See PURPLE Page 3

TASH COMMUNICATIONS

File missing
YOUR FILES HAVE BEEN ENCRYPTED!
WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO INTO PANIC MODE NOW?
YES NO

DARK WEB

Ransom-held files spark ill-fated cyber journey

By Paul Tash
Georgia Amusement Journal

Editor's Note: Last month's news of the worldwide "WannaCry" ransomware attack is a reminder for businesses large and small to protect themselves from these nasty cyber-attacks. It can happen to anybody. In fact, it happened to me two years ago. Following is my terrifying tale, first published in the Montana Tavern Times in April 2015, of unscrupulous computer hacking. It's a story driven by bad luck and poor decisions, bitcoin purchases and off-grid browsers, and an ill-fated journey into the Dark Web.

One Friday morning in late January I stop in the office to finish some editing and answer some emails before leaving town for the weekend. It's simple stuff, and I expect to be done in just a few minutes.

I call up a Word document. It doesn't appear. Instead, a window pops up with this message: "Your files were encrypted and locked with a RSA2048 key."

I call up another document. Same message. I try an Excel file. Same message. Panic

See DARK Page 10

Licensing deadline June 30 to avoid late fee

By Paul Tash

Georgia Amusement Journal

June 30 is the deadline for location Class A and Class B licensees, master Class A and Class B licensees, and manufacturer and distributor licensees to renew for the 2018 licensing period, which runs July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2018.

The Georgia Lottery Commission (GLC) will assess a \$1,000 late fee to those licensees who do not meet that deadline. An existing COAM licensee will not be allowed to apply for a new license to avoid payment of the late fee.

June 30 is also the deadline for master licensees to purchase additional Class A and Class B decals, or for location licensees to add Class A and Class B machines for the 2017 licensing period.

In addition, the COAM licensing application remains open for the 2018 licensing period for the following:

- Master Class A – new and renewal
- Master Class B – renewal
- Location Class A – new and renewal

See LICENSES Page 6



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Purple

from Page 1

– the same prodiGi Vu cabinet that hosts the other three IGT game suites.

"This new game set builds on the success of the first three," Hale said, "and offers a one-cabinet solution."

IGT has about 2,000 machines in the Georgia market. Southern Gaming Solutions is Georgia's sole provider of IGT games.

Benefits and features

Each game in the Purple release features a peach symbol on the third reel. When that symbol is nudged onto the payline, the progressive is triggered, giving players the chance to win a jackpot award.

The set also introduces six new themes to the Georgia market that have already proven themselves as player-favorite games in other areas: Gypsy Moon, Haywire, Latino Machino, Texas Tea, Three Kings and Viracocha.

Gypsy Moon – This three-reel, single payline theme features a free games bonus and big awards. The top prize is awarded when three moon symbols land on the payline during base game or bonus play. "This theme features an enticing symbol set and a popular free games bonus with a pick feature that keeps players entertained," IGT says in its promotional material.

Haywire – Three-reel, single-payline theme features the player-favorite Haywire feature. When the Haywire symbols land on the payline, any of the winning combinations (except for the progressive) may be awarded repeatedly, up to five times. The top prize is awarded when three Haywire symbols land on the payline during regular play.

"The Haywire theme is a proven player favorite and is exclusive to IGT," IGT says.

Latino Machino – This three-reel, single-payline offers plenty of scatter and wild symbol action plus two festive bonuses. The Cucaracha Wilds bonus is triggered when a line win is formed with a wild symbol on reel one. The Piñata bonus is triggered when three bonus symbols land on the payline. When three Latino Machino symbols land on the payline with the max credit bet, the player takes home the top award.

"The pick-a-prize bonus gives players the opportunity to earn big rewards," IGT says.



IGT photo

GEORGIA
GAME FAMILY
"PURPLE SET"

Texas Tea – This three-reel theme features two bonus games. Animated symbols add to the action with comical characters, such as oil tycoon Texas Ted and his armadillo from Amarillo, a Texas bull, and Texas-inspired status symbols like Ted's corporate jet and his classic Longhorn limousine. When three oil derricks appear on the payline, the Big Oil Bonus is triggered. The bonus takes

place on a map of Texas where players pick from eight regions.

"Animated symbols and interactive bonuses make this theme stand out," IGT says.

Three Kings – Three-reel, single-payline theme features a free-games bonus and the special pick-a-scatter feature. The free-games bonus is triggered when three identical lion symbols appear on the payline via the nudge skill. When three lion symbols appear in each color on the payline during the main game or anywhere during the free games bonus, the pick-a-scatter feature is awarded allowing players to pick a lion symbol for a prize.

GAMING manufacturer IGT is expected to release this month its Purple Set, the first suite of games in the Georgia market to feature the Peach Pot Progressive game, and includes additional pay-table options. The progressive links all games on the machine to one shared jackpot.

"The ability to see the number of free games available to win in the top box increases anticipation," IGT says, "making this theme stand out with players."

Viracocha – This "exotic" three-reel, single-payline theme has a free-games bonus that includes a build-a-bonus feature that awards random wilds. Players are awarded 10 free games when three temple bonus symbols appear on the payline via the nudge feature.

"The build-a-bonus awards 10 free spins and up to three random wilds per spin," IGT says, "giving players the opportunity to earn big awards."

prodiGi Vu cabinet

The prodiGi Vu cabinet comes fully equipped with features that "greatly enhance the player's experience," OGT says. The player-tested design includes optimal screen heights and button panel locations, a wrist rest and increased leg room.

The prodiGi Vu cabinet's ergonomic design features dual 22" wide LCD screens, multi-channel audio for enhanced and enriched sound quality, standard left- or right-handed play, remote buttons, and award-winning digital buttons.

The powerful Sensys EP® platform is built for full graphic and expansion capability, IGT says, supporting digital glass, vibrant full-color digital buttons, and a selection of popular peripherals.

Journal Opinion

Operators boost economy, education

By Shawn Fellows
GAMOA President

Over the last four years, the COAM industry has worked diligently and cooperatively with state leaders to create regulations, enforce the law and give back in a significant way to educational programs.

COAM operators have long helped Georgians by boosting our economy and providing revenue for our local governments, but they also provide income that allows many rural convenience stores to stay open – not only aiding the rural tax base but also provided a needed service for Georgians who don't live close to a city center or grocery store.

The regulation of our industry has brought these contributions to light and it cemented our partnership with the Georgia Lottery, through which a percentage of COAM revenues go toward the Pre-K program that gives a head start to our children and the HOPE scholarship that has furthered the education of millions of Georgians kept our best and brightest minds here in the state.

We're proud of our role in

funding these programs that are so important – even sacred – to Georgia families. The people in our communities depend on these programs, and we're making a difference.

What might surprise people



Shawn Fellows

is how much of a difference. Through the end of the last fiscal year, COAMs contributed \$60 million to the Lottery's education programs. We estimate that this current fiscal year alone, the industry's total will surpass \$50.5 million! That translates into a whole lot of Pre-K classrooms and HOPE

scholarships.

Georgians need to know about these eye-popping statistics. As we all know, it wasn't so long ago that demand on our educational programs began to outstrip revenues. In 2011, with

tainable, the HOPE scholarship covers a little less each year of college tuition. As partners with the Georgia Lottery, the COAM industry is making a huge impact in providing new dollars for these deserving students.

Next year, all statewide offices will be on the ballot and campaigns are already up and running. Even at this early stage, the Lottery programs are topics of discussion as we look for ways to expand benefits closer to where they used to be.

With each COAM machine operating legally in our state connected to the Lottery, playing our games is not only fun but also a way to support educational initiatives. Consumers don't know that, and we hope we can raise public awareness as we move forward.

We have worked in good faith – and with great results – to create a legal and regulatory system for the COAM industry that works for our small businesses and also works for our local communities and the state. That hard work is paying off for our industry by clarifying in law our legal role and paying off for students in a literal sense.

We're proud of our role in funding these programs that are so important – even sacred – to Georgia families.

the Pre-K and HOPE programs sliding rapidly toward insolvency, the General Assembly and governor passed reforms to put those programs back on sound financial footing.

Those reforms were crucial, and our elected officials stood strong to make hard choices. But to keep the program sus-

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COAM calendar

— LICENSING DATES —

Now: The COAM licensing application (www.gacoam.com) is open for the 2018 licensing period (07/01/2017 - 06/30/2018) for the following:

- Master Class A - NEW and RENEWAL
- Master Class B - RENEWAL
- Location Class A - NEW and RENEWAL
- Location Class B - NEW and RENEWAL
- Manufacturers & Distributors - NEW/RENEWAL

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 2017 licensing period (07/01/2016 - 06/30/2017)

July 1: Date a \$1,000 late fee will be assessed to Location Class A and Class B licenses, Master Class A and Class B licenses, and Manufacturer and Distributor licenses that have not RENEWED for 2018 licensing period (07/01/2017 – 06/30/2018). An existing COAM licensee will not be allowed to apply for a new license to avoid payment of late fee.

— MEETINGS —

June 22: GAMOA meeting, McDonough, GA

June 25-27: GACS convention, Sandestin, FL

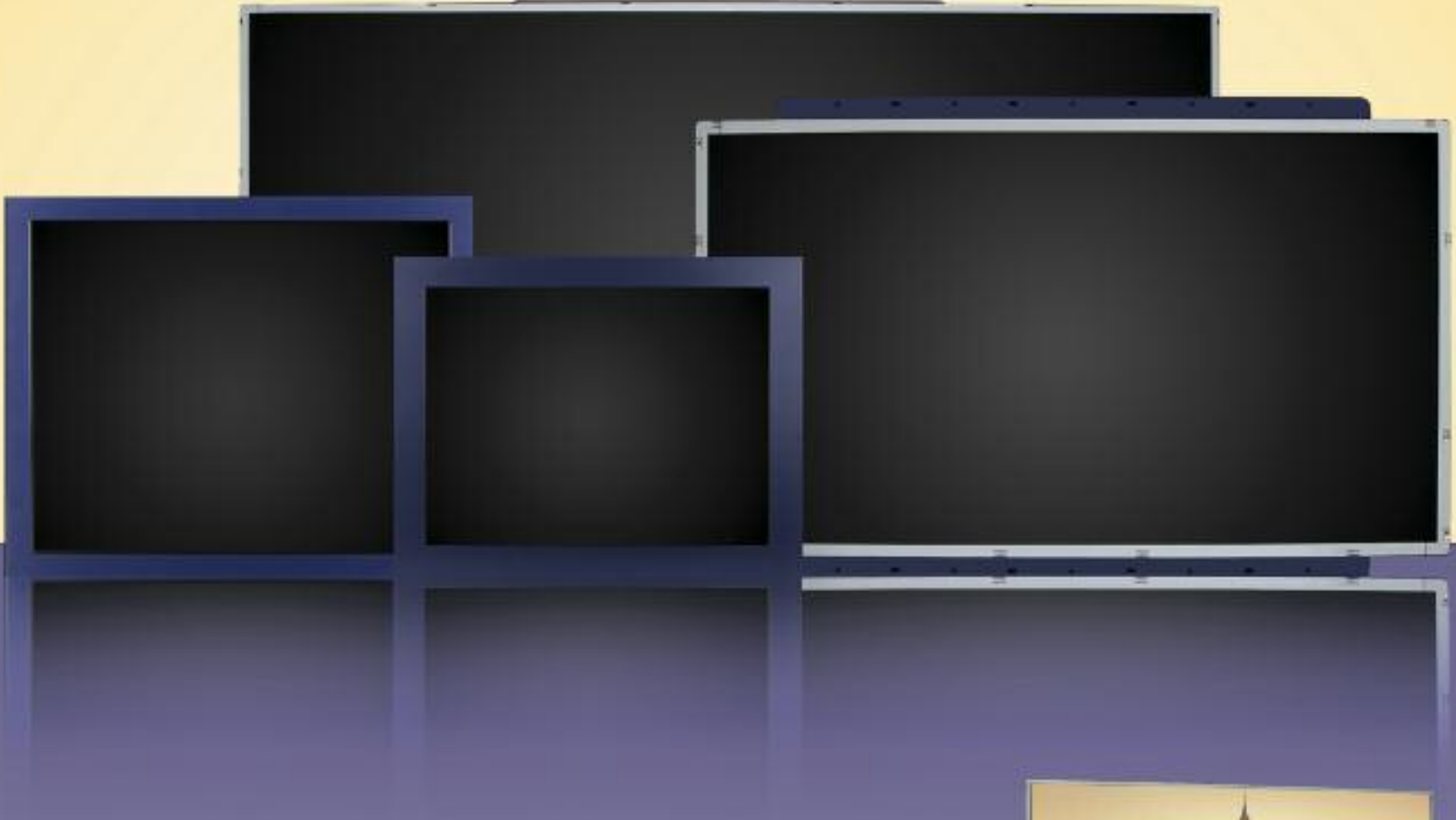
July 12: COAM Advisory Board, Atlanta, GLC office

Sept. 7-8: GAMOA Trade Show, Atlanta Airport Marriott

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. The *Journal* reserves the right not to print letters it finds objectionable.

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GLC hires two firms to conduct its audits

The Georgia Lottery Corporation (GLC) announced recently its partnership with the audit firms of McGovern & Greene and KPMG to conduct audits of Master License Holders (MLHs) and Location License Holders (LLHs).

"Through professionalism, integrity and transparency, both audit firms aim to redefine and reshape what it means to be a coin-operated amusement machine (COAM) licensee," a GLC news release stated. "We are excited about this new partnership and cannot wait to see how it can help ... compliance within the COAM industry."

Performing audits of MLHs and LLHs is necessary to encourage

compliance and identify any regulatory deficiencies through review of accounting and business records, the GLC said.

"Fraud, abuse, or non-compliance with rules and regulations can all be hidden beneath the surface of the day-to-day accounting practices and operations of MLHs and LLHs, and can become more pronounced the more the business grows," the release said.

As a reminder, all MLHs and LLHs are subject to audit by the GLC and its authorized agents. For these audits, each licensee shall retain records of all its COAM transactions for no less than the last five full calendar years and current year to date.

'Play Responsibly' decals, 'Fraud' signs must be displayed

The Georgia Lottery Corp. is reminding Master License Holders (MLHs) that they must prominently display the "Play Responsibly" decals on each Class B machine.

The Play Responsibly decal should be displayed so that a player can see it while playing the COAM. The "Play Responsibly" decal provides a toll free number (888-236-4848) to assist problem gamblers and their loved ones with a means to receive much needed treatment regardless of their ability to pay.

MLHs also must provide Location License Holders (LLHs) with a

"Fraud, Abuse, and Cash Payout" tip line sign that must be displayed near the Class B COAMs. If you would like to report any instances of fraud or other illegal activity related to the operation of COAMs, please call the GLC confidential tip line at 855-515-0004. Reports will be assigned to a compliance inspector for follow-up investigation.

Failure to post a "Play Responsibly" decal on each Class B COAM or post a "Fraud, Abuse, and Cash Payout" sign near the COAM(s) may result in disciplinary action, fines and other penalties.

COIN OPERATED AMUSEMENT MACHINE LOCATION SWEEP AND MASTER PUSH CALENDAR



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

*Indicates sweep or push date has been changed to accommodate holiday

Licenses

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- Location Class B – new and renewal
- Manufacturers and Distributors – new and renewal

Applications can be found at www.gacoam.com.

"As you prepare for this year's COAM license renewal and application period," the GLC said on its website, "be sure to review your business records and verify you have submitted COAM license applications for any new businesses that will be operating COAMs during the licensing year."

The GLC only accepts applications for new Class B Master licenses through an auction process at least once every three years, with the last one just held May 3.

The GLC awarded five master licenses for Class B COAMs last month at auction, with winning bids totaling \$5,460,000. The winning bidders are undergoing "rigorous integrity checks" and must meet all licensing qualifica-

tions to receive their licenses and begin conducting COAM business, John Heinen, vice president of GLC's COAM division, told the *Journal* last month. The Lottery at the *Journal's* June deadline had not released the names of the winning bidders, pending that approval process.

About 50 bidders prequalified to participate in the auction, which took place at the GLC Headquarters in Atlanta. The auction took about an hour.

GLC had to pre-approve auction bidders, who were required to submit a participation form and a proof of funds letter. The minimum starting bid was \$100,000, with bid increments of \$10,000. The bid amount does not include the \$5,000 licensing fee and the cost of the permit stickers that are due upon submission of a license application to GLC. The winning bid is not transferable to any other bidder or party other than the person or entity that made the winning bid.

If you encounter any problems with the COAM licensing website or have any questions, please contact the GLC COAM Helpline at 1(800) 746-8546.

TO REPORT

FRAUD, ABUSE OR CASH PAYOUTS

related to the operation of coin operated amusement machines,

please call GLC's confidential

TIPLINE (855) 515-0004

JCM Global names SGS as Georgia distributor

JCM Global has appointed Southern Gaming Solutions (SGS) as a distributor of JCM products in the state of Georgia.

SGS is widely recognized across the state for distributing premium products into the Georgia amusement industry, and the company will represent JCM's award-winning UBA (Universal Bill Acceptor) throughout the state, according to a press release.

"JCM products are known and trusted by operators of all sizes worldwide, and the UBA in particular has a solid reputation of protecting operators with high levels of security and keeping patrons happy with built-in convenience features," said Southern Gaming Solutions President Lee Hunter. "We are honored to have been selected as a JCM distributor for the UBA in Georgia, and we look forward to continuing the delivery of the UBA validator legacy."

Dave Kubajak, JCM vice president of operations, said, "In just a few years, Southern Gaming Solutions has established itself as a leader in the Georgia amusement and music operators field. We are very pleased to have them as a distributor in the state, and in bringing the protection and convenience of our UBA bill validator to operators throughout Georgia."

JCM's UBA is trusted and used worldwide, the release said. Currently, about 1.6 million UBA units (UBA-1x, UBA-2x, UBA-RC) are

operating in the field. Among UBA's many features, the release stated, are its patented removable stacker mechanism; a powerful combination of powerful magnetic and optical sensing technologies; anti-stringing technology; automatic retry feature; self-centering mechanism; and faster drops with the ICB Intelligent Cash Box.



JCM will exhibit in SGS's booth at the Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association (GAMOA) Tradeshow, Sept. 7-8 at the Atlanta Airport Marriott. SGS is a Diamond Sponsor of the tradeshow.

For more information, visit JCM and SGS at GAMOA 2017 and join JCM on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

About JCM Global

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Its extensive line of award-winning products set global standards with ground-breaking peripheral transaction components, innovate digital media hardware and the systems to tie them together. For more information on JCM Global, visit www.jcmglobal.com.

About Southern Gaming Solutions

Southern Gaming Solutions (SGS) is a licensed and exclusive distributor of IGT Coin Operated Amusement Machines (Class B) in the state of Georgia. The company was established in September 2015 and strives to provide its customers with the highest customer service around. SGS is a Licensed GLC Distributor and active members of GAMOA.

The company joined with IGT to provide customers with the most advanced Coin Operated Amusement Machines around. For more, visit www.southerngamingsolutions.net.



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Georgia c-store convention June 25-27

Featuring a legislative panel, educational and motivational speakers, and "game show entertainment," the Georgia Association of Convenience Stores (GACS) will hold its 2017 Annual Meeting and Convention June 25-27 at the Sandestin Hilton in Sandestin, Fl.

The convention kicks off Sunday night with its very own GACS Game Show,

a unique, high-energy, interactive program for the entire family.

On Monday, convention-goers can relax by

playing golf at one of Sandestin's finest courses, The Raven, or spend a day deep-sea fishing with the option to catch and keep. Expect to catch various types of snapper, rigger, and mackerel. Those not interested in golf or fishing can relax at a pool party and enjoy a cold beverage with colleagues.

Featured speakers include Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle on Monday morning, followed by a legislative panel discussing issues affecting the c-store industry. An educational session titled "Food Feuds" will feature Dr. Nancy Caldarola, a management dietitian with over 45 years of experience, and Bart Stransky, executive director of Merchandising for RaceTrac Petroleum. The two will discuss the necessary food precautions to take and the possible con-

sequences you may face if you don't.

The keynote speaker Tuesday morning is Inquoris "Inky" Johnson. A routine tackle in Knoxville's Neyland Stadium in 2009 ended the football career of Johnson, a Tennessee Volunteer cornerback, and almost ended his life. The injury left him with a paralyzed right

arm and dashed his dream of playing in the NFL. However, his triumph over seemingly insurmountable odds inspires and motivates when he shares his dramatic story.

The convention will close Tuesday evening with recognition of the new GACS board of directors, its supplier committee, and supplier of the year. The drawing for the \$5,000 Education Foundation Raffle will also be held. Tickets for the Education Foundation Raffle will be sold throughout the convention to help fund the GACS Educational Foundation's effort to provide scholarship funds for GACS employee members and their families. Tickets are \$100, and only 550 are available for sale.

Following is the convention schedule. For the first time this

year, GACS will have its very own event app that attendees can download to keep convention info in the palm of their hand, while having some fun.

Sunday, June 25

8:30-9 AM – Coffee & Beverage Break

9 AM – Combined Board/Supplier

Committee Breakfast 10 AM – GACS Board of Directors Meeting

10 AM – Supplier Committee Meeting

Noon-5 PM – Registration Open

5:30 PM – New Member Reception

6:30 PM-Midnight – Children & Teens Program

7 PM – Welcome Reception & Silent Auction

8 PM – Opening Dinner & Entertainment featuring Game Show Family Face Off

After-hours Hospitality Room open until 12:30 AM with DJ Joboo

Monday, June 26

7 AM – Registration Open

7:30 AM – Legislative Breakfast & Educational Session

9 AM- 4:30 PM – Children's Program

10:45 AM – Association General Program

11:20 AM – 11:40 PM Fishing Bus Departs

Noon – Golf at The Raven

Noon-2 PM – Pool Party

4-9 PM – Tabletop Exhibit Set Up

Evening Open – Dinner on your own

Tuesday, June 27

7 AM – Registration Open

7:30 AM – Breakfast, featuring Keynote Speaker Inky Johnson

8:45 AM-1 PM – Children's Programs

9 AM-Noon – Tabletop Exhibits

5 PM – General Supplier Meeting (open to all supplier members)

5:45 PM – Midnight Children & Teens Program

6 PM – Closing Reception

7 PM – Closing Banquet & Celebration

After-hours Hospitality Room open until 12:30 AM with DJ Joboo



CAGLE



JOHNSON



CALDAROLA



STRANSKY



Location licensees reminded to keep COAMS connected

The Georgia Lottery Corporation (GLC) reported in its *COAM Connection* newsletter that it is seeing an increase in the number of Location License Holders (LLHs) that are either not ensuring the COAMs at the business location are connected to the site controller or are not powered up on a continual basis.

To ensure accurate reporting of financial data to the Central Accounting System, the GLC says it

is imperative the LLH ensures all equipment remains connected 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.

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You'll Love The Classifieds

Dark

from Page 1

sets in. Rapid-fire clicking on dozens of files follows. None can be accessed, but my desktop is littered with “your files were encrypted” windows.

The message now is loud and clear – I’ve been hacked.

Mental health experts tell us that human beings often go through phases during recovery from a personal trauma. Grief, for example, may have several stages to work through during recovery, from shock and denial to acceptance and hope.

Only two stages exist for computer hacking, however. Panic and anger. Sometimes a third phase comes up, but it’s just another round of anger.

A special place in hell is reserved for computer hackers. It’s right next door to the place awaiting those who prey on the elderly with their phone scams. Bad, bad people they are.

Under the encryption message are directions on how to “decrypt,” or unlock, my files. I see these are not simple traffic directions ... take a right on Harrison Avenue, go to the second stop light, and Walmart will be on your right.

These directions are complex and take you into the cyber world to places you’ve never been, or even heard of. First, I’m supposed to download something called a Tor browser, then go to <http://r7twae4a7jtozjvw.onion> and “follow the instructions.” I do so, just to see what they are, and find more steps that focus on the acquisition and transfer of something called bitcoins.

I have never heard of bitcoins. After a Google search, I discover that bitcoins are a type of digital currency used in an online payment system invented in 2008. The payment system is peer-to-peer, and users can transact directly without using a financial institution or intermediary.

According to Wikipedia, bitcoins have grown in popularity as a form of payment for products and services, and merchants have an incentive to accept it because fees are lower than the 2–3 percent typically imposed by credit card processors. The price of a bitcoin fluctuates, and some people purchase them as an investment.

Further research tells me that bitcoins are becoming the currency of choice for cyber criminals. I can verify that because the instructions say it’s going to cost me one bitcoin for the hackers to email me the key to unlock my files.

“Oh no,” says the computer expert I call to describe my problem.

“Oh no,” he says again as I continue with the story.

After a third and even more emphatic “Oh, no!” from my computer guy, I realize I’m having a very bad morning.

He tells me I have two options: one, wipe my computer clean and lose everything on it, or two, follow the directions and buy the key to hopefully unlock my files. My first reaction was, “they can kiss my butt.” I’m not paying their ransom, period (one of the names to describe this particular hack is, in fact, “ransomware”).

Then I start thinking ... always a dangerous proposition. What all was I going to lose? I know computer backups are important. Everybody knows that. And, yes, I do back my files up whenever I remember to. I just hadn’t remembered to lately.

But even though I’d lose some important files, I could get by. What really has me thinking is the enormous chore of reinstalling all of my software. The reinstalls would literally take days, if I could even find all the installation CDs. And before launching that effort, the computer tech would need 2–5 days to wipe the computer.

So I begin to waiver. What will this key cost? I research further and find that one bitcoin, the amount of ransom asked for the key, is currently about \$257. The instructions say I need to buy two bitcoins, to assure that should the value of the bitcoin fall before the final transaction is made to the bad guys, I’d still have enough bitcoin purchased to send them one.

So I begin to rationalize. It’ll cost me \$514 initially to get my computer back the way it was with all my files, and in less time than it would take to wipe and reinstall. And I’d probably have a bitcoin left over.

So I make a decision. I’m going to chase the key.

Why on earth would I trust the people who hacked me in the first place to actually send the key, after they have their money? My research seems to indicate that most of the victims of this computer attack do indeed receive a key. Why? Because the bad guys want to perpetuate their scheme. If victims found after Internet research that the key wasn’t ever being sent after the ransom was paid, nobody would pay. Though maybe successful originally, the scam would end rather quickly.

The following Monday, after returning from a weekend that was not restful at all, I visit a computer store. I ask a computer expert there about the mysterious Tor browser, which I’d downloaded the previous Friday. He looks at me, and pauses like he isn’t sure I can handle the truth.

“That’s the portal to the Dark Web,” he finally says.

“The Dark Web,” I say. “What’s the Dark Web?”

“That’s where people go to find hit men,” he answers, watching my face turn white. “Lots of drug deals and other bad things go on there, too.”

Tor, he explains, allows much more anonymous communication than regular browsers. Wikipedia says the browser “directs Internet traffic through a free, worldwide, volunteer network consisting of more than six thousand relays designed to conceal a user’s location and usage from anyone conducting network surveillance or traffic analysis.”

I think, this is crazy stuff. I think, I should bail on this key thing right now. Then I think, but I can have everything back to normal by Wednesday or Thursday.

I return to the office and begin my journey into the Dark Web.

Seated at my ailing computer, I print the directions from the web address reached in the Tor browser. (The computer’s print and some email

Then I go to the Post Office, as required, to purchase a money-order for \$596 – \$514 for the two bitcoins, plus the Coin Café transaction fee and the money-order charge. The price for this cyber safari is rising.

I then overnight the money order to Brooklyn. I miss the day’s delivery cutoff, though, so it isn’t scheduled to arrive until Wednesday. When it arrives, Coin Café will purchase my two bitcoins, then transfer them to my virtual wallet.

on Saturdays, however, so my transaction will have to wait until Monday.

One of the main reasons for chasing the key was to retrieve the use of my files in the quickest way possible. That reason is no longer valid.

I first encountered CryptoLocker on my computer Friday, Jan. 23. It’s now Monday, Feb. 2, exactly 10 days later. I had just 10 days to get the hackers the ransom of one bitcoin. After that, ransom doubles to two bitcoins. Now I wonder, did the 10-day window expire?

venture into the dark alley to look for his lost puppy. But he always does, and bad things always happen.

I don’t care. Come hell or high water, I’m going in after my puppy.

I decide to transfer two bitcoins. Money is no longer a concern, nor is sleeping or eating. I’m consumed by the Dark Web. I launch Tor, and go to my virtual wallet. Coin Café has indeed purchased my bitcoins and transferred them to my wallet.

The address of the hackers’ virtual wallet is a mind-numbing 25 characters long, virtually impossible to type in correctly. I copy and paste it. After completing the rest of the bitcoin transfer information, I double check everything. Then I check it again, and pause. Then I hit send.

You’ll notice on the *Tavern Times* masthead that my email address has changed. I was advised to make the change after four days of waiting for a key that never arrived.

That’s right. No happy ending came from my exasperating 14-day encounter with the CryptoLocker. Those last four days were especially excruciating. I was Charlie Brown, waiting by the mailbox for a Valentine that never comes.

Emotionally and physically drained, I took my computer in to be cleansed of the ransomware. A couple of days and another hundred bucks later, I picked it up.

Lessons were learned, however. For one, my computer is backed up every day, automatically, on the cloud. And I unplug external hard drives from my computer when I’m not using them. Some of the nastier viruses can crawl right into those drives, if they’re connected during the initial attack, and infect them, too.

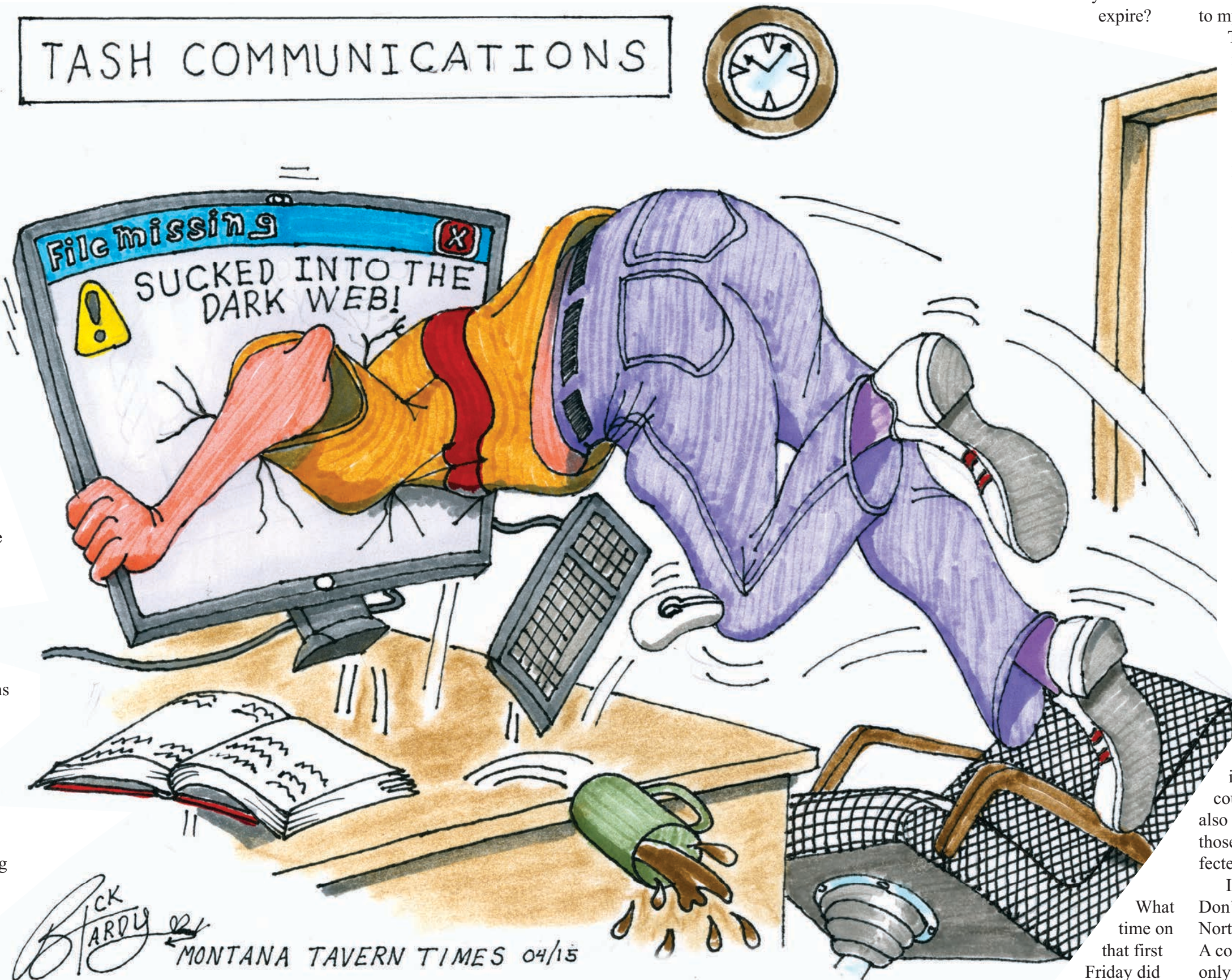
I’m more careful now opening email attachments. CryptoLocker usually invades computers through email attachments, especially ones that falsely indicate they’re from FedEx or another courier service. However, the ransomware can also hijack certain websites and infect from those. I don’t know how my computer was infected.

I’m also more selective in my web-browsing. Don’t expect your anti-virus software, such as Norton and McAfee, to keep your computer safe. A computer wizard told me those programs are only 40 to 50 percent effective in catching all the bad that’s floating around the web.

I hope you’ve learned something, too. Back up your files daily. Be wary of unfamiliar emails. And if you ever come face-to-face with CryptoLocker, remember my arduous journey into the Dark Web.

Believe me, you do not want to star in your own horror movie.

Epilogue: As of June 11, 2017, bitcoins were selling for \$3,012, an all-time high. Brian Kelly, a financial expert, told CNBC June 12 that the cryptocurrency was “in the first years of what is likely to be a multi-year bull market. Of course, there will be corrections and even crashes along the way, but bitcoin is here to stay.”



functions are not affected by the ransomware, which for the record is officially called CryptoLocker.)

Working in the Tor browser, I download and install software to create a virtual “wallet” that I later will transfer my bitcoins to. Directions take me to a website that lists a dozen or so companies that sell bitcoins. I choose the top one, called the Coin Café that’s based in Brooklyn, N.Y.

I then set up an account at the Coin Café. To do so, I have to upload to the company’s website a photo of me holding my driver’s license next to my face to prove identification. This photo had to be taken in bright sunlight with an identifiable background to make it more difficult to fake the photo.

From my wallet, I’ll transfer one bitcoin to the bad guys’ virtual wallet, and within 12 hours of that transaction, I’ll receive my key via email.

But as college football analyst Lee Corso likes to say, “Not so fast, my friends.”

The Northeast has endured an awful winter. An awfully snowy winter. The worst of that snow came in the last week of January. So much snow fell that it closed schools and businesses and airports. It delayed postal deliveries for days.

In an unbelievable example of Murphy’s Law, the money order does not arrive in Brooklyn on Wednesday. Nor does it arrive on Thursday or Friday. Finally, on Saturday at noon, delivery is confirmed. The Coin Café is not open

to run?

Throughout this process, all I’ve had are the original instructions – there’s no way to contact the hackers. Dilemma. Do I transfer just one bitcoin, hoping I’m within the 10-day window, and risk the possibility of not getting the key after all the trouble? Or do I send them two bitcoins, at the cost of an extra \$257, just to be sure?

Of course, another option exists. I could shut down the whole crazy cyber safari, cash in my bitcoins to rescue the majority of my money, and wipe the computer clean. That’s what I should have done in the beginning, but now ...

Now, I have to see this through. Way too much effort has been expended not to experience some conclusion. It’s like one of those B horror movies. Everybody knows the guy shouldn’t

What time on that first Friday did the clock start

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COAM industry praised for SAS compliance

By Paul Tash

Georgia Amusement Journal

The Georgia COAM industry has received some high praise from state regulators for its impressive adoption of the new SAS protocol.

The Georgia Lottery Corporation (GLC) last year required Georgia Class B master licenses to update their machines to the SAS 6.02 protocol by Dec. 31, 2016. The protocol provides "a more secure way" for those COAM machines to communicate with the state's central system, called the Vendor Central Monitoring System (CMS), said John Heinen, vice president of the GLC's COAM division.

"The industry did a phenomenal job," he said, with compliance better than 99 percent.

The extensive upgrade challenged operators and regulators alike, Heinen said, and said the

GLC "got a little nervous" as the deadline neared. GLC provided "a tremendous amount of outreach and marketing" to help educate the industry on the upgrade, Heinen said, using every communication method available.

"Everything but skywriting," he said.



JOHN HEINEN

Heinen also praised Intralot, the state's lottery-management company, for playing a beneficial role in the upgrade process. Despite a transitional period that included two main holidays – Thanksgiving and Christmas, Intralot "went out and really worked with the industry" to keep the upgrade on target.

"It was a good team effort," he said.

GLI 23 discussed

The lottery agency also is exploring the potential of adopting a GLI 23-based standard for machine development and testing in the Georgia market, though no decision has been made.

"It's just a discussion," Heinen said. "A series of meetings."

The GLI 23 standard, developed by the global Gaming Laboratories International for

video lottery terminals, identifies standards for development and testing processes to ensure consistently fair and secure play. Heinen said the Georgia market could use GLI 23 standards as a starting point to develop Georgia-specific regulations.

"We're not going to do anything that doesn't make sense ... in the Georgia market," he said. "We don't want to add needless expense to the masters."

On the other hand, he said, GLC wants to be "proactive" in case a good opportunity to "mature the market" comes along. It would be unfortunate if that opportunity arises, "but we're not ready," he said.

Heinen said the market in some ways is upgrading standards "on its own." For example, he said, metal cabinets are now the norm, when just a few years ago most cabinets were wood.

Just as importantly as developing Georgia-specific development and testing standards for licensees, Heinen said, is creating fair-play guidelines for players.

"We're going to talk about player responsibility, as well," he said.

He emphasized that any GLI-standard movement remains in the discussion phase.

"We don't want people to panic."

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House leaves debit swipe-fee reform intact

Convenience Store News and ABL Update

The U.S. House of Representatives this month passed financial-reform legislation that keeps pro-competitive debit-card swipe fee policies in place and aids retailers and consumers in the battle against excessive swipe fees.

The Financial CHOICE Act of 2017 was passed by the House June 8 with a 233-186 vote. The bill received widespread attention as the initial draft included language that would have repealed the consumer and small business measures included in the Durbin Amendment. Repealing or weakening the swipe fee law would have removed competition from the debit routing market, and eliminated other reforms that have benefitted consumers by making transactions not only less expensive, but also more secure.

The Financial CHOICE Act aims to replace the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

"NACS applauds the fact that clearer heads in Congress have prevailed, and the House has protected debit swipe fee reform.

Eliminating this reform would have been an endorsement of duopoly price fixing of swipe fees by the credit card behemoths and would cost consumers and Main Street retailers \$8 billion per year," said Lyle Beckwith, senior vice president of government relations at NACS, the Association for Convenience & Fuel Retailing.

"We want to thank the members of Congress who stood tall for everyday citizens and made it clear that debit swipe fee reform has been good for their constituents," he added. "They made clear that any bill that would repeal those debit reforms cannot pass the House of Representatives."

"Every promise of Dodd-Frank has been broken," said Financial Services Committee Chairman Jeb Hensarling (R-Texas). "Fortunately, there is a better, smarter way. It's called the Financial CHOICE Act. It stands for economic growth for all, but bank bailouts for none. We will end bank bailouts once and for all. We will replace bailouts with bankruptcy. We will replace economic stagnation with a growing, healthy economy."

Hensarling was the sponsor of the new legislation. With swipe fee reform protected, retail groups threw their support behind the legislation.

"In the wake of the financial crisis it was vital for Congress to act to assure the American people that our financial markets were stable and that a new regulatory apparatus would prevent another systemic problem," said Austen Jensen, vice president for government affairs at the Retail Industry Leaders Association.

"Preserving swipe fee reform was a big win for retailers and consumers across the country. No retailer – big or small – received a bailout during the Great Recession, and we support provisions of the CHOICE Act that seek to ensure that Americans are never again forced to bail out failing financial institutions," Jensen added.

American Beverage Licenses (ABL) also applauded the U.S. House of Representatives for passing the Financial CHOICE Act.

"On behalf of the nearly 15,000 independent bar, tavern and package store owners ABL repre-

sents, I would like to thank members of Congress for their determined efforts during the legislative process to listen to the concerns of the beverage retailer community and support a bill that maintains laws that have helped level the debit card routing market, and takes into account runaway swipe fees," said ABL Executive Director John Bodnovich.

ABL members and state affiliates played an important role in this spring's swipe fee debate, Bodnovich said, responding to ABL's call to action and opposing the repeal of the Durbin Amendment. Their "grassroots advocacy" amplified the chorus of American retail businesses that was heard "loud and clear" across Capitol Hill, he said.

"This is an important win for our members because it's a bottom line issue that affects their businesses and their customers," said Bodnovich. "An effort like this is a good reminder that beverage licensees will stand up for their interests on Capitol Hill and continue to play an important role in policy debates that affect their businesses."

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Retail Matters

ICEE honors partnership with Coke

Convenience Store News

The ICEE Co. is celebrating five decades with Coca-Cola as a top flavor and long-term partnership by offering retailers to merchandise the product with special point-of-sale displays highlighting 50 years of friendship.

"It's an exciting year for ICEE as we celebrate 50 years as America's favorite frozen beverage and we're thrilled to have had Coca-Cola by our side for all this time," said Dan Fachner, president of The ICEE Co. "There are not many days that go by where we don't hear someone say their favorite ICEE flavor is Coca-Cola and we suspect it will remain one of our top sellers for years to come."

The displays are part of ICEE's yearlong celebration of its golden anniversary.

ICEE will also debut various new flavors, including Fanta Sour Grape, which is available for Coca-Cola pouring retailers. Consumers can enhance their ICEE experience with limited-edition packaging and golden spoon straws.

"Congratulations to The ICEE Co. on this important milestone," said Dan Manning, region



vice president at Coca-Cola. "We are incredibly excited to build on our long-term partnership to inspire and refresh ICEE customers through unique, value-added programs."

The ICEE Co. started out as ICEE of Los

Angeles in 1967. Today, The ICEE Co. has both national and international distribution, selling about 500 million ICEE drinks each year – enough to fill 141 Olympic-size swimming pools, according to the company.

Speakers urge EMV upgrade for fuel dispensers

Chelsea Regan

Convenience Store News

Earlier this year, it was announced that Visa Inc. and MasterCard Inc. pushed back the deadline for installing EMV chip-card readers at gas pumps in the United States to 2020, following discussions with retailers who stated that they did not have adequate time to complete the multibillion-dollar upgrades.

However, presenters at Gilbarco Veeder-Root's 2017 Retail Technology Conference, held recently in Myrtle Beach, urged retailers not to delay in upgrading their automatic fuel dispenser systems to EMV, and offered several reasons why they should act now despite the later deadline.

EMV is an acronym for Europay, MasterCard and Visa, the three companies that originally created the security standard. Under EMV liability shift deadlines, c-store retailers needed to upgrade their POS to EMV-ready readers by Oct. 1, 2015; at the ATM

on Oct. 1 of this year; and at the forecourt by Oct. 1, 2017 in order to avoid being held financially responsible for fraudulent transactions. Merchants now have until October 1, 2020 to adopt the technology.

Conference speaker Steve Scarince of the U.S. Secret Service has seen his fair share of credit card fraud cases and explained that since Canada went full tilt in EMV acceptance, there has been a corresponding sharp uptick in fraud cases in the United States. This speaks to the credibility of EMV, and the urgent need for U.S. retailers to get on board, according to Scarince.

EMV is far from perfect; criminals have already found ways to work around the increased security, Scarince acknowledged. However, despite the continuation of credit card skimmers and other scams,



EMV is more than worth having, he believes.

Among retailers' leading concerns about the 2020 forecourt liability shift is the chargebacks they will face if they don't get on board by 2020.

During one of the conference sessions entitled "At the Pump: EMV 2020? Now What?" retailers were informed that chargebacks could hit their businesses even before the 2020 deadline. At sites that have a high occurrence of credit card fraud, chargebacks could be coming soon, the speakers cautioned.

In addition to chargebacks, retailers are concerned about their customers' willingness to adopt EMV.

One of the ways they can make the new payment process appealing to customers, according to Gilbarco, is to point out the safety benefits — foremost among them being that chip cards cannot be duplicated. Currently, baby boomers are the generation most likely to embrace EMV due, in part, to their increased interest in secure

payment.

Millennials are the least enthused about EMV due to their perception of it taking longer than swiping, and the reality that it takes longer than tap-and-go. To get more millennials to embrace EMV, retailers need to point out the aforementioned safety benefits while also finding creative and effective ways to train customers to use chip card readers, according to Gilbarco executives.

Interestingly, while 44 percent of U.S. businesses have made the switch to EMV, making up three-quarters of that percentage are small and medium-sized businesses. Big businesses with the infrastructure to implement EMV should follow the lead of the smaller businesses and fast, presenters at the event urged.

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