



Journal marks anniversary - Page 4

# GEORGIA Amusement JOURNAL

Dedicated to serving the Georgia COAM industry  
 Endorsed by the Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association  
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## Intralot updating site controllers

*Benefits are many, board told*

By Paul Tash

### Georgia Amusement Journal

New site controllers that will bring more functionality and less complications are coming to the Georgia COAM market.

“We’ve got some great technology news for you,” John Heinen, COAM senior vice president, told the COAM Advisory Board April 18.

Intralot will be updating and replacing all the site controllers and modems in the Georgia market, he said.

“They’re going to be refreshing everything,” he said. “There’s going to be software enhancements, as well.”

One of the benefits of the new site controller, he added, is that it will eliminate some of the “troublesome cabling” that master licensees have had to deal with, including the despised octopus plug. The controllers have 10 designated ports to connect the machines directly to the controller.

“That should eliminate some problems for you,” he said.

Another important benefit of the upgrade, Heinen said, is that it will allow Intralot “to do some things remotely,” avoiding the necessity of scheduling and sending out technicians to locations as much.

“I think that will be huge for the industry,” he said.

John McCormick with Intralot told the board the process to switch out site controllers will start immediately in May,

but begin slowly “to make sure we don’t have any issues” and build up throughout the year. All controllers will be

replaced by the end of 2024, he said.

**Heinen also** provided an update on some COAM business statistics. He said as of April 18 about 34,000 machines were in play in about 6,200 locations in Georgia.

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Paul Tash photo

**LES SCHNEIDER**, attorney and lobbyist for GAMOA, provides an update on legislation at the group’s meeting May 4 while President Shawn Fellows listens.

## Cooperation cited in legislative effort

Paul Tash

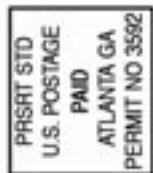
### Georgia Amusement Journal

Though legislators didn’t pass the COAM industry’s measure to enhance existing COAM laws this year, especially to formally allow gift cards as a form of redemption, there’s optimism that it’ll get done next year.

“It was a very lively session,”

said Les Schneider, a lawyer and lobbyist for the Georgia Amusement and Machine Operators Association, told the GAMOA members at their meeting May 4. “Even though we didn’t pass the bill we wanted, there was probably greater cooperation among all the people that were lobbying on the issue

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## COAM licensing period underway for 2024

Paul Tash, Georgia Amusement Journal

The licensing application process for coin-operated amusement machines (COAMs) opened May 1 for the 2024 licensing period through the Georgia Lottery Corp.’s COAM website, [www.gacoam.com](http://www.gacoam.com).

“This is an exciting time of year for us,” said Mike Parham, COAM Division vice president, at the April 18 COAM Advisory Board meeting.

He said the COAM Division continues to look for ways to “streamline” the licensing application procedure to make it quicker and easier for licensees.

“We’re constantly working on improving our processes,” he said. “Hopefully there should be no system issues in licensing.”

The Lottery’s COAM Division has begun to email reminders to 2023 licensees to renew for the 2024 year, which begins July 1. June 30 is the last day for licensees to renew for the 2024 licensing period to avoid a \$1,000 late fee. Sept. 28 is the deadline to submit a license renewal. If a holder of a 2023 COAM license fails to renew their license by that date, or their license application is not

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# Board

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“That’s about the highest I’ve seen it,” Heinen said. “The numbers continue to grow.”

With a quarter to go in Fiscal Year 2023, he said revenues are “on track for another record-breaking year.”

Heinen also said about 69,000 gift cards have been activated in the statewide gift card pilot program. About \$17 million have been loaded on those cards for prizes, he added.

In other business, Board Chair Emily Dunn asked regulators about the possibility of lowering the minimum load on the gift card that currently is \$20.

She said some locations have customers who are “in and out” and would play the machines if they could redeem for smaller amounts.

Heinen said InComm told him it is open to the possibility of lowering the minimum load, but the costs of producing a physical card limits how low InComm can go and still make business sense. InComm, an Atlanta-based payment technology company, is managing the gift card pilot program for the Georgia Lottery Corp.

The Lottery and InComm will



Paul Tash photo

**MIKE PARHAM**, left, provides an update to the COAM Advisory Board April 18 while John Heinen and Gretchen Corbin, president and CEO of the Georgia Lottery Corp., follow along.

investigate the possibility of lowering the minimum load, he added.

**In a report** to the board, Mike Parham, COAM Division vice president, provided some licensing statistics. The number of enabled licenses as of April 18 were:

- Class A master licenses – 248
- Class A location licenses – 2,201
- Class B master licenses – 190
- Class B location licenses – 6,588
- Manufacturers licenses – 28
- Distributors – 3

Julie Barker, attorney for the COAM Division, reported that the GLC is continuing to hold hearings

virtually or in person, or a hybrid of the two, depending on the needs of the hearing participants.

The ability to participate virtually for people, especially in rural areas, Barker said, has been “a real asset to them and their attorneys.”

In another report, COAM’s lead investigator Andrew Pippin reported that the COAM Division has performed 4,851 COAM inspections and issued 521 warnings so far in the year.

“We’re spending a lot more time at locations educating,” he said. “We’re taking the time with these locations to make sure

they’re in compliance and that they understand the rules.”

Pippin said his team of 13 inspectors is “extremely talented” and “they all care ... and spend that time with locations.”

Board Chair Emily Dunn said she “appreciates the different approach” by the state’s investigators that emphasizes education to help locations comply.

“I think that’s very important,” she said. “It’s a really complicated industry. And we do want to be compliant.”

The next COAM Advisory Board is July 18.

# GAMOA

from Page 1

than there’s ever been.”

The 2023 General Assembly failed to pass House Bill 353, which among other enhancements would allow gift cards as a form of redemption and place the COAM Division of the Georgia Lottery Corp. under the Administrative Procedures Act. The APA provides guidelines and details processes on how rules are adopted, including requirements for hearing notices, comment periods and legislative input.

The bill had passed the House but failed in the Senate. Sessions are two years long in Georgia, so HB 353 is still alive. It has been returned to the House, where Rep. Alan Powell, R-Hartwell, the bill’s chief sponsor and committee chairman, can agree with the bill as passed by the Senate, disagree, or agree and amend the bill. The bill then returns to the Senate and could possibly end up in a conference committee with House and Senate conferees.

“We actually had more votes in our favor than we’ve ever had,” Schneider said.

GAMOA President Shawn Fellows urged licensees to get involved in the bill’s advocacy in



Paul Tash photo

**SALIM KHAMBAWALA** blows out candles of a birthday cake at a GAMOA social after the board meeting May 4 in Duluth. GAMOA staff surprised Khambawala, who serves as treasurer, with the cake.

next year’s legislative session.

“Get out and meet your legislators this summer,” he said.

“There’s always fundraisers and other local events going on in your community that provide a great op-

portunity to engage with your legislator.”

“Introduce yourself,” he said. “Let them know you’re a voting constituent of their district and that the COAM industry means a lot to

you.”

Many legislators don’t know “all the nuances” of the industry, so “let them know if they ever have a question related to COAM, give them a card so they can reach out to you.” Building those relationships, he added, helps immensely during the legislature when the industry is working on COAM bills.

GAMOA officials also have urged members to download the association’s mobile app to stay informed of industry matters, including industry-related legislation at the Capitol. The app is the primary method the organization notifies members regarding GAMOA meetings, legislative happenings, and other industry news.

Fellows also reminded folks that the Southern Amusement and Entertainment Expo, sponsored by GAMOA, is Aug. 23-24 at the Gas South Convention Center in Duluth.

He encouraged licensees and vendors to register as soon as possible, as the trade show and hotels “fill up quickly.”

Sponsoring the GAMOA meetings for the year are Jackpot sponsors Banilla Games, Innovative Technology, and Toccatà Gaming; Bonus Round sponsors Bad Dog Games, Betson Goldfinger, Pace-o-Matic and Primero Games; and Max Bet sponsors Jenka Labs and Pyramid.



# Journal Opinion

## COAM-serving *Journal* turns six

By Paul Tash

GAJ Editor/Publisher

The *Georgia Amusement Journal* is marking its sixth anniversary with this May issue. Though we're thrilled to reach that milestone, we're more excited about the future of the industry we cover. Georgia's COAM industry continues to grow at an amazing pace and now boasts over 34,000 machines in more than 6,600 locations, while breaking revenue records every year.

As the industry grows and matures, the *Journal* will continue to play its important role. We will continue to serve the state's COAM industry and its related businesses with the same unwavering dedication our readers now expect and appreciate across Georgia and beyond. Licensees can count on us to deliver the information they need to run their businesses in the most cost-effective, compliant and profitable way possible. The *Journal* is also proud to work with an industry that contributes more and more to the state's Hope Scholarship and Pre-K education programs – nearly \$200 million in Fiscal Year 2022.

The *Georgia Amusement Journal* would not be the respected trade journal it has be-



Paul Tash

come without the support of the Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association (GAMOA). It has been a *Journal* advocate from the start.

"GAMOA has found the Georgia Amusement Journal to be a great resource for our members and non-members over the past year," GAMOA President Shawn Fellows has said. "When industry news needs to be delivered to the entire industry GAMOA relies heavily on the trade journal for its independent and comprehensive reporting."

Whether GAMOA utilizes the *Journal* to post important dates or a call to action, he added, "the statewide distribution and ability to reach all licensees

The *Journal* takes every opportunity to highlight the benefits the COAM industry provides for the Georgia economy and its education.

within the COAM industry is one of our most valuable tools."

The *Journal* is mailed free of charge to thousands in the COAM industry, including Class A and B master and location licensees, vendors, regulators, and others. With the endorsement of GAMOA, the *Journal* works diligently to provide industry-related news and features to help all licensees navigate state regulation and run their businesses more effectively and efficiently.

The *Journal* provides regular coverage of the GAMOA membership meetings and COAM Advisory Board meetings. The publication also features stories on industry leaders and regularly introduces new companies in the Georgia marketplace, as well as new products and services by the many successful firms already established here.

Wherever an industry-related event occurs, the *Journal* will be there covering it, from the Amusement Expo International in Las Vegas in March to GAMOA's Southern Amusement & Entertainment Expo in Atlanta in August to Global Gaming

Expo in Vegas in October.

The *Journal* also provides a great deal of coverage on the retail side of the industry. The *Journal* covers the Georgia Association of Convenience Store (GACS) events, including the Southern Convenience Store and Petroleum Show this month in Macon and its convention in August. We also run regular columns from GACS and the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA).

The *Journal* relishes its role as the industry's voice and takes every opportunity to highlight the benefits the COAM industry provides for the Georgia economy, and especially for state education through its funding of the Hope Scholarship and Pre-K program.

The Georgia Amusement Journal is able to perform its industry role thanks solely to the advertising dollars it receives. An independent publication, the *Journal* receives no funding from any association and survives on the tremendous support of its advertisers. We thank all of them for recognizing its growing value as the outlet for companies to promote their products and services to those in the COAM industry. It's heartening to know our advertisers believe that marketing in the *Journal* consistently is a worthy investment.

Finally, I'd like to thank the many dozens of individuals, from Lottery regulators to industry insiders, who continually provide the *Journal* staff their expertise in understanding Georgia's unique COAM industry. You all are greatly appreciated. And to our readers, thank you for your loyalty.

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## COAM calendar

### — REPORTING DATES —

**May 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 —

**May 18:** Southern Convenience Store & Petroleum Show, The Centreplex, Macon

**July 18:** COAM Advisory Board, Lottery Headquarters, Atlanta

**Aug. 23-24:** Southern Amusement and Entertainment Expo

## Journal Opinion

# GACS sets dates for education programs

**By Sharon Shuford**  
**GACS Membership**

While the Lunch & Learn and GACS InStore programs are two separate events, GACS conducts them on the same day because it is advantageous both logistically and from a marketing standpoint. The Lunch & Learn retail host has an opportunity to showcase a nearby store and spend time exchanging ideas with local legislators and other local government officials.



Sharon Shuford

### Lunch & Learn: Bringing education closer to C-stores

In February 2023, GACS held its first Lunch & Learn program of the year at the Race-Trac Training Center in Smyrna. The topic: “EV, the Ins and Outs of NEVI funding.” Georgia Power was on hand to discuss the rate case. Nearly 30 members attended, making this one of the largest Lunch & Learn programs since their inception.

Three more programs are scheduled for 2023:



**June 28** – “Endorsed Programs” at Jet Food Stores offices in Sandersville. KC Cook will discuss the PI=X credit card processing program, the GACS special pricing, and how it can save retailers money. Also, a representative of Points to Part-

Nearly 30 members attended, making this one of the largest Lunch & Learn programs since their inception.

ners will present GACS’ newest endorsed program – a loyalty card program specially priced so that even single store operators can afford to participate.

**Sept. 20** – “Emergency Management” at The Parker Companies on St. Simons Island. GEMA, GIFA and the Department of Agriculture will discuss strategies for handling weather-related emergencies and provide information on available resources.

**Oct. 18** – “The Ins and Outs of COAM” at Pit Stop Convenience Centers offices in Peachtree City. This Lunch & Learn will be a panel of retailers who’ve navigated COAMs and will share their stores. A COAM expert will moderate.

Before COVID led to the cancellation of the Lunch & Learn program in 2020, more than 120 retailers attended Lunch & Learn programs across Georgia. Feedback has been consistently positive:

“The contacts I made were more than worth the time spent.” – Retailer, VP operations.

“I learned some things I did not know and look forward to the next one.” – Retailer, VP marketing.

The format is short, not exceeding 1½ hours, making them easy to attend. Each meeting includes ample time for Q&A, and members make good use of this opportunity to get answers to the questions and issues that

See GACS Page 7

# AMOA installs leadership for upcoming year

**By Lori Schneider**  
**AMOA Executive Director**

At the conclusion of Amusement Expo International and its annual meeting Thursday, March 30, AMOA installed new leadership. The principal officer team includes Luke Adams (OH), President; Michael Martinez (CA), First Vice President; Bob Burnham (WY), Treasurer; and Brian Brotsch (NY), Secretary. Each principal officer will serve a one-year term.

Also installed for a three-year term were the 2026 class of VPs, which includes Jeff Prescott (NY), Jamie Meyer (AZ), and Jim Tartal (PA).

Elected by the membership at its annual meeting was the director class of 2026. Directors include Nicholas Comella (OH), Shawn Dean (MN), John Farmer (MS), Tom Graham (SD), John Humphrey (NC), Don MacBrayne (CO), Scott Renville (IL) and Greg Young (LA).

### Legislative update

AMOA has actively been monitoring several issues in DC:

• **Fair Access to Banking** –



Lori Schneider

We continuously push legislators for relief in this area. While some operators are still dealing with account closures, we continue to hear more and more about banks not providing cash and/or refusing to open new accounts for operators who provide ATM services. AMOA and its legislative counsel continue to work on finding a vehicle for language requiring banks to provide a reason for closing a bank account and requiring the reason to prove wrongdoing. Please advise the AMOA office

AMOA has been actively monitoring several issues in Washington, D.C.

of any banking issues you may be experiencing as recent examples are extremely beneficial when we meet with legislators.

• **Payment Choice Act** – Significant progress was made last Congress on support of the Payment Choice Act (PCA). The PCA has had strong bipartisan support and we hope to finally get it over the finish line this Congress. Stay tuned for any Call to Action alerts once re-introduced. House Resolution #341 was recently introduced supporting the

importance of maintaining cash as a robust and viable payment option. This resolution paves the way for the Payment Choice Act.

• **Coin Content** – Recent legislation was introduced to change the content of coins as a cost-savings measure. While this legislation has not gained traction, and we don’t expect it will, we are keeping a close eye on this piece of legislation especially as it pertains to the quarter.

• **Non-Compete Rule Change** – Earlier this year the FTC introduced a proposed rule change that would eliminate non-competes. During the comment period, AMOA submitted written comment to the FTC opposing the rule change and participated in an online hearing where the FTC opened up the floor for verbal comment from the public allowing AMOA to provide verbal comment as well. The initial comment period had been extended a couple of times and finally ended on April 19. We are monitoring further movement on the rule change by the FTC.



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# GACS

from Page 1

are on their minds.

Mark your calendars now for the remaining 2023 dates and locations. Visit the GACS webpage, [www.gacs.com/events](http://www.gacs.com/events), for updates and to register.

To maximize participants' opportunity to learn and engage with subject matter experts, GACS limits the number of sponsorships available for each event. No competing sponsors are booked, and meetings are closed to non-sponsoring industry supplier companies.

## GACS InStore: Turning advocacy into action

In July 2022, GACS re-launched its GACS InStore program with RaceTrac at its store on South Cobb Drive. GACS has always been heavily invested in advocacy. With the InStore program, GACS takes the important step of turning advocacy into action.

Engagement with the legislative process is crucial to success. We need to know our representatives on the local and state levels, and they need to know us. The objective of the InStore program is to bring C-

Store retailers together with their communities and members of the state legislature by offering legislators the opportunity to learn first-hand about our industry and local convenience store operations.

During each InStore event, legislators meet store staff and gain an understanding about how the store serves the public. They converse with community members and GACS retailers from their districts about issues important to them.

When they return for legislative session, elected officials are better informed and equipped to make decisions about issues that affect convenience stores. By making personal connections, they have C-store contacts they can call on – putting a real face on the industry.

GACS has scheduled three InStore programs for the remainder of 2023:

**June 28** – Jet Foods Store in Sandersville

**Sept. 20** – Parkers Store on Ocean Boulevard

**Oct. 18** – Pit Stop Convenience Store in Peachtree City

If you would like to be considered as a host for a future GACS InStore event in 2024, please email Sharon Shuford at [sshuford@gacs.com](mailto:sshuford@gacs.com).

# Trivits joins Betson as parts specialist

Betson Imperial Parts & Service recently announced that Danny Trivits has joined the Betson team as a parts specialist.

“With over two decades of experience in the industry, Danny brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the parts team,” a Betson news release said.

Trivits has spent his career working to develop and execute successful strategies selling parts dedicated to the amusement, gaming, and VLT industries. His understanding of the market, passion for innovation, and commitment to customer satisfaction make him a valuable addition to the team.

“Betson Imperial Parts & Service is committed to providing customers with exceptional service and support,” the release said.

“With Danny on board, the Betson team is confident they can deliver the highest level of expertise and innovation to customers.

“We are dedicated to bringing

the best talent in the industry to our company, and Danny Trivits is a prime example of that. With his expertise and deep understanding of the amusement, gaming, and VLT markets, we are confident that Danny will help us deliver even greater value to our customers. We look forward to working with him

and are excited to see the positive impact he will have on our organization and customers,” said Betson Imperial Parts & Services President, Richard Zayas-Bazan.



**TRIVITS**

## About Betson Imperial Parts & Service

Betson Imperial Parts & Service is a full-line distributor of products, parts, supplies, and OEM services for the Casino Gaming, Amusement, and Vending industries. Betson Imperial Parts & Service provides real-time service and on-time shipping of parts and accessories for arcade games, vending, office coffee service, monitors, and more.

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NOTICE

## Georgia COAM Class B Master License



**ONLINE AUCTION**

Bidding Opens June 5th at 2PM

**Bidding Closing June 7th at 2PM**



Interested bidders will be required to pre-qualify prior to the auction date to participate. Pre-qualification packets, terms and conditions, requirements to bid and forms are available on the website. Pre-qualification forms must be submitted by Monday, May 22nd, 2023 at 2PM.



[www.COAMauktion.com](http://www.COAMauktion.com)



Contact: Bo Benton - 478-731-9200 - [bo@bidderone.com](mailto:bo@bidderone.com)

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# Licensing

from Page 1

approved on or before that date, the licensee will no longer be allowed to operate COAMs.

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.

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

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.

Following are important dates for licensees to remember.

**05/31/2023 (Wednesday)**

Deadline to apply for a new lo-

cation license (Class A and Class B), a new master Class A license, and a new manufacturer or distributor license for the 2023 licensing period (07/01/2022 - 06/30/2023). This deadline only applies to 2023 COAM licenses.

**06/30/2023 (Friday)**

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 2023 licensing period (07/01/2022 - 06/30/2023). This deadline only applies to 2023 COAM licenses.

**07/01/2023 (Saturday)**

Date a \$1,000 late fee will be assessed to location Class A and Class B licensees, master Class A and Class B licensees, and manufacturer and distributor licensees who have not renewed for the 2024 licensing period (07/01/2023 – 06/30/2024). An existing COAM licensee will not be allowed to apply for a new license to avoid payment of a late fee.

**9/28/2023 (Thursday)**

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 2024 licensing period (07/01/2023 – 06/30/2024). If a holder of a 2023 COAM license fails to renew their license, or their license application is not approved on or before this date, the person or entity will no longer be allowed to operate COAMs.

All deadlines and more information are available on the COAM website, [www.gacoam.com](http://www.gacoam.com).

**COIN OPERATED AMUSEMENT MACHINE LOCATION SWEEP AND MASTER PUSH CALENDAR**



**JAN-JULY 2023**



ACCOUNTING WEEK START	ACCOUNTING WEEK END	LOCATION SWEEP DATE	MASTER PUSH DATE
25-Dec-22	31-Dec-22	04-Jan-23	10-Jan-23
01-Jan-23	07-Jan-23	11-Jan-23	18-Jan-23*
08-Jan-23	14-Jan-23	18-Jan-23	24-Jan-23
15-Jan-23	21-Jan-23	25-Jan-23	31-Jan-23
22-Jan-23	28-Jan-23	01-Feb-23	07-Feb-23
29-Jan-23	04-Feb-23	08-Feb-23	14-Feb-23
05-Feb-23	11-Feb-23	15-Feb-23	22-Feb-23*
12-Feb-23	18-Feb-23	22-Feb-23	28-Feb-23
19-Feb-23	25-Feb-23	01-Mar-23	07-Mar-23
26-Feb-23	04-Mar-23	08-Mar-23	14-Mar-23
05-Mar-23	11-Mar-23	15-Mar-23	21-Mar-23
12-Mar-23	18-Mar-23	22-Mar-23	28-Mar-23
19-Mar-23	25-Mar-23	29-Mar-23	04-Apr-23
26-Mar-23	01-Apr-23	05-Apr-23	11-Apr-23
02-Apr-23	08-Apr-23	12-Apr-23	18-Apr-23
09-Apr-23	15-Apr-23	19-Apr-23	25-Apr-23
16-Apr-23	22-Apr-23	26-Apr-23	02-May-23
23-Apr-23	29-Apr-23	03-May-23	09-May-23
30-Apr-23	06-May-23	10-May-23	16-May-23
07-May-23	13-May-23	17-May-23	23-May-23
14-May-23	20-May-23	24-May-23	31-May-23*
21-May-23	27-May-23	31-May-23	06-Jun-23
28-May-23	03-Jun-23	07-Jun-23	13-Jun-23
04-Jun-23	10-Jun-23	14-Jun-23	21-Jun-23*
11-Jun-23	17-Jun-23	21-Jun-23	27-Jun-23
18-Jun-23	24-Jun-23	28-Jun-23	5-Jul-23*
25-Jun-23	01-Jul-23	05-Jul-23	11-Jul-23

\*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

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