

Conventional Wisdom

The Official Newsletter of the Greater Columbus Convention Center

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GREATER COLUMBUS
CONVENTION CENTER

Ongoing Battelle Hall renovation proceeding on time to reopen for January 2010 events

A construction project that operates on time, on budget and is progressing according to plan sometimes seems like a dream. In the case of the transformation of Battelle Hall into Battelle Grand, it is coming true.

Turner Construction Company, ranked by the *Columbus CEO* Leaderboard as the leading central Ohio general contractor based on contract value, is the construction manager for the Battelle Hall project.

"We're flying. I can't believe how fast we're going now," said Turner Project Manager Jeff Baumann about the project's progress. "Everybody involved with this building ought to be ecstatic."

Renovation of an existing structure can involve architectural design and construction, blended with detective work and the curiosity of an archaeologist.

One example is the strategic removal by crane of pieces of pre-cast concrete weighing between 6,000 to 12,000 pounds. The pieces may not look that heavy as they are being transported, but envision elephants weighing the same amount dangling from a crane!

A year of planning was devoted to planning the removal of the concrete pieces, including determining the exact and limited area where the massive crane could be balanced safely and successfully to perform the work.



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“Nobody’s been on a project where they’ve done this before,” Baumann said. “Usually, you blow it up or knock it down. You want to open walls on a renovation and find the problems so you can find solutions.”

In keeping with the environmentally friendly practices of the Greater Columbus Convention Center, Turner also is providing recycling opportunities. The pre-cast concrete pieces are being placed in a river bank by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a form of preventive erosion control.

In conjunction with the Battelle Hall portion of the renovation, there will be an improved freight elevator, fire alarm system updates and about 450,000 square feet of new patterned carpeting installed throughout the facility in meeting rooms, the main concourse and ballrooms.

In becoming the largest multi-purpose ballroom in Ohio and one of the largest in the Midwest, Battelle Grand will feature floor-to-ceiling windows with a view overlooking Nationwide Boulevard and the city. The ceiling lighting fins will be capable of projecting 65,000 different color combinations, while the space itself will be divisible into five different configurations. There will be 50,000 square feet on the main level and 24,000 on the mezzanine.

There is also significant progress in the construction of the first floor meeting rooms. Later this year, the purposely vacant retail island concealing ceiling work will be demolished, providing some Food Court & Shops merchants with the “beachfront property” sightlines they have been awaiting, as well as a relaxing common area for guests to relax.

Escalators leading to Battelle Grand have been delivered and carefully lowered by crane into position for installation.

Plans are being made for the debut of Battelle Grand in 2010. The Sales Department has already made a variety of sales calls to promote the new space, and clients visiting the facility for hard-hat tours have shared our enthusiasm for the development of the crown jewel of the Convention Center!

Community Return

Employee Council continues to guide facility’s charitable endeavors throughout the year

The Greater Columbus Convention Center is fortunate to have an Employee Council that guides the official participation of the facility staff in charitable endeavors.

This year, the Employee Council informed employees about Foodfight 6.30, a benefit developed by the Mid-Ohio Foodbank and the Central Ohio Restaurant Association for the benefit of Operation Feed. The staff collected 136 pounds of food to donate to the Mid-Ohio Food Bank, resulting in meals for 136 people in need.

A refreshing break from the work day kicked off the summer season with an ice cream social enjoyed by employees on June 19. Special commemorative ribbons were presented to the parents on staff to wear proudly in honor of Mother’s Day and Father’s Day.

Employees from a variety of departments and colleagues from Experience Columbus participated in classes taught by Security Manager Marc Dickson in training for First Aid, Automatic External Defibrillator use, and CPR assistance for adults, infants and children. A blood drive is being organized in conjunction with the American Red Cross on August 20.

The theme for the Experience Columbus Annual Meeting was “The Faces of Tourism,” focusing upon the scope of the tourism industry in the Columbus area. Convention Center, ARAMARK and tenant employees participated in a photo shoot to be included in a presentation during the meeting. Others were invited to appear on stage at the conclusion of the session to visually capture the variety of skills and professions required to make the hospitality industry a success. The photos can be viewed at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/experiencecolumbus/>.

Receptionist Alesia Hardy was the winner of the “Name the Room Contest,” to select a name for the special meeting room that is part of the Battelle Hall renovation. She chose the name “36 on the Boulevard” because there are 36 window panels in the room and one side of it faces Nationwide Boulevard. Her prize for providing the winning name was four tickets to the Convention Center’s suite at Huntington Park for a Clippers game.

During an all-staff meeting, Terry Boyd of Franklin University offered a presentation on Team Dynamics, emphasizing the

importance of working together for common goals for the benefit of customers.

Teams of employees participated in the 2009 MS Walk at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium and 2009 Central Ohio Bike to Work Week Challenge. The GCCC Loop Riders were among those honored in an awards luncheon at Buca di Beppo.



Marc Dickson instructs a CPR class.



Chef's Column

Moroccan Chicken Tagine with Apricots and Almonds

Executive Chef
Lesa Holford
Certified Chef de Cuisine

One free range chicken, cut into eight pieces

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

One medium onion, large dice

1T turmeric

1T salt

1t fresh ground black pepper

Two cinnamon sticks

5T honey

1T ground cinnamon

6oz dried apricots

4oz slivered almonds, toasted

1/2oz sesame seeds, toasted

1T fresh cilantro

Heat olive oil in tagine. Gently fry onions until translucent in base of tagine. Rub the chicken with the turmeric, black pepper and salt. Add the chicken to the onions, skin side down and cook for a few minutes. Add cinnamon sticks and enough water to barely cover the chicken. Place the tagine lid on the base and simmer the chicken for about 15 minutes. Remove the chicken and add the honey, apricots and cinnamon, simmer until it becomes a sauce-like consistency. Add the chicken back to the tagine and simmer on low heat for another 10 minutes. Sprinkle with the toasted almonds, sesame seed, and fresh cilantro.

Serve with steamed couscous.

If you are using a clay tagine, be sure and soak the base in water for at least 12 hours to prevent cracking. A traditional clay tagine and lid can be purchased at Sur La Table for about \$20. It really produces a tender stew like chicken, plus the presentation in the tagine is unique, too.



From the Regional General Manager

Convention Center guests to benefit from new downtown hotel to open in 2012

Regional General Manager
Craig Liston

In addition to the opening of Battelle Grand in January 2010, Convention Center guests will have another terrific amenity when the new 500-room hotel opens across from the facility in 2012. For years, meeting planners have expressed the need for another full-service hotel near the facility to accommodate their blocks of sleeping rooms in the style their attendees prefer.

Moody-Nolan was chosen as the local architect, joining national architect HOK of St. Louis. Turner/Smoot will join the project as construction managers, building on the synergy in the area from building Huntington Park and our own Battelle Hall renovation. A brand manager for the new hotel will be selected from Marriott International, Sheraton/Starwood, Hilton, Omni, and a manager of Marriott properties, White Lodging.



Rendering of New Hotel

The City of Columbus, Franklin County and the Franklin County Convention Facilities Authority agreed on a financing plan for the \$160 million publicly financed

hotel.

The promise of this new hotel will enable the Convention Center to compete for 92 percent of our target market and house more concurrent events, as Franklin County Convention Facilities Authority



Major League Gaming

Executive Director Bill Jennison has said.

We've also been happy to host a number of notable groups that garnered media attention. Major League Gaming, a new event for us, attracted more than 10,000 gamers competing in the fastest growing sport in the country as part of its largest series. More than 7,000 members attended the Mennonite Church USA convention, followed by the renowned OFA Short Course presented by

OFA - an Association of Floriculture Professionals. This event is among the Top 200 trade shows

in the nation based on net square feet of paid exhibit space and fills our exhibit halls and concourse with beautiful displays.

We appreciate the confidence our clients have placed in us, and especially that of the Franklin County Convention Facilities Authority in exercising a two-year extension of the management contract for SMG. As the world leader in venue management, marketing and development, SMG's network encompasses more than 200 facilities.

In 2008 alone, the Greater Columbus Convention Center hosted 364 events accounting for 896 event days.

During your event, you may enjoy the services of ARAMARK, our exclusive caterer. Executive Chef Lesa Holford recently became a Certified Chef de Cuisine through the Culinary Institute of America, achieving ProChef Level II honors. Joining Chef Lesa in receiving accolades are ARAMARK Director of Sales Adrienne Yates Moore and Sales Manager Sherry Johnson, who became Certified Meeting Professionals (CMP) after completing an extensive training course, "boot camp" and rigorous examination.



The 2009 OFA Short Course

Our guests can also enjoy new restaurants and services in our Food Court & Shops and visit our area restaurant partners. Our liaison to the restaurants, Marketing & Communications Manager Jennifer Davis, was presented with the Unsung Hero Award for 2009 by the Central Ohio Restaurant Association.

Our clients are sharing our "green" philosophies and encouraging our quest for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) – Existing Building certification. This process is being guided by MIS and Telecom Manager Shaun Fontanella, who was named a LEED Accredited Professional by the U.S. Green Building Council. This is also the first issue of *Conventional Wisdom* to be presented solely in electronic format.

We look forward to your next visit to the Greater Columbus Convention Center!



Representatives from more than 110 nations attended The Gideons International 110th Annual Convention.

In the Spotlight

Solomon Ghebrehiwot



Solomon Ghebrehiwot

As a parking attendant, Solomon Ghebrehiwot has the opportunity to assist visitors to the Greater Columbus Convention Center and greet them as they enter and exit the parking garages.

Hired on January 15, 2008, Solomon began his employment on part-time status on first shift, and then was promoted to a full-time position about eight months later.

"He'll come in when no one else will," said Parking Coordinator Stephanie Aman. "He is a very dedicated worker."

Originally from Eritrea, located between the Sudan and Ethiopia, Solomon has lived in the United States for about two years.

"It was easy to leave because there were no job opportunities," he explained about his decision to move here.

After living in New York for six months and working at the West Side Market, he moved to Columbus because he had a relative in the area. When he arrived, he secured a job with the Convention Center and another assisting with banquets at the Crowne Plaza across the street.

When he isn't busy working, Solomon enjoys spending time with Iordanos, his wife of more than 10 years. Other interests include watching movies and reading books, particularly involving fiction, history and politics, in the hope of increasing his English vocabulary.

"Everyone in the Greater Columbus Convention Center is friendly," he said. "Most understand English is not my first language and they help me."

Solomon speaks six languages. He intends to continue his education by studying business management at Columbus State Community College.

Meet the Merchant

5 businesses join Greater Columbus Convention Center as new tenants

The SMG-managed Greater Columbus Convention Center is proud to offer a variety of quick-service restaurants, shops and services in the Food Court & Shops on Level 1.

Having a food court and retail area is a rare amenity within convention facilities. The merchant mix has expanded even further with the addition of five new merchants in recent months.

The newest tenant, Mozaik Modern Lounge + Tapas, is located at 51 Vine St. in the first level of the West Garage. Mozaik features a menu with small plates of food served until midnight, refreshing cocktails, and an elegant décor.

“The addition of these new tenants provides an enhanced array of amenities for our guests visiting our Food Court & Shops and Vine



Blues, a barbecue restaurant with headquarters in Chicago, offers dine-in, carry out, delivery, catering and the popular Lunch Box Blues option.

Tony J's Mexican Grill offers Mexican favorites, ranging from tacos to burritos with chicken, steak and vegetarian options.

Real Living/HER/Dunigan Real Estate Group is a full-service real estate office open from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday and by appointment.

SegAway Tours of Columbus offers two-hour narrated city tours of Columbus while the guide and participants are riding Segway vehicles.

Street properties,” said SMG Regional Manager Craig Liston.

To learn more about these businesses, visit our Web site at www.columbusconventions.com. Individual businesses will be featured in this column in upcoming issues.



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The Greater Columbus Convention Center is owned and developed by the Franklin County Convention Facilities Authority (FCCFA).

August 2009

- 7/30-8/3 Longaberger Bee
- 8 Britt Worldwide
- 10-13 2009 AEP Boiler Reliability Optimization (BRO) Forum
- 10 Budget Analysis and Discussion Seminar
- 10-11 Great Teachers Make Great Schools; Connecting Ohio's Best
- 10-15 Heart of Ohio Tole Chapter's 29th Annual Decorative Painting Convention
- 14-15 TEAM
- 17-19 Defense Supply Center – Columbus Location Annual Conference
- 19-21 Talbot Hall, The Ohio State University, The Addiction Studies Institute
- 26-27 AOPHA's 2009 Annual Conference and Tradeshow
- 27-30 Ohio Dental Association – Picture Your Possibilities

September 2009

- 1-2 Enforcement Expo Great Lakes
- 1-3 Reliable Plant 2009
- 2-3 Arthritis Foundation
- 11 Chemical Dependency Professional Board
- 11 Marvin Pliskin Advanced Probate & Estate Planning Seminar/Ohio State Bar Association
- 13-16 2009 APWA's International Public Works Congress & Exposition
- 15 "How to Cut Cost with Asphalt-Rubber"
- 19 TEAM
- 20 COA Cheer and Dance/Back to School Blast
- 20-23 Gordon Food Service National Sales Meeting
- 20 ITT Technical Institute – September 2009
- 20-23 Ohio Association of Realtors Annual Convention & Exposition
- 23-24 Ohio Council for Home Care Fall Conference & Tradeshow
- 27-28 Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Clinic
- 28-30 American Electric Power

October 2009

- 2-3 Central Ohio Fundraising Expo
- 3 Cameos of Caring Awards Gala
- 9-11 MalicJewels Gem & Mineral Show
- 10-12 Mid-American Beauty Classic
- 15-16 American College of Physicians/ACP Ohio Chapter-Cleveland Clinic
- 15 The Leadership Prayer Breakfast
- 16 "Imagine Every Child Reading" COBIDA Fall Reading Conference
- 16-17 Nationwide Better Health Columbus Marathon Expo
- 17 JamFest Spirit Jam
- 19-23 American Society for Nondestructive Testing 2009 Annual Convention & Tradeshow
- 20 Big Brothers Big Sisters Annual Meeting
- 20 The Salvation Army Need Knows No Season
- 21-23 OELMA Annual Conference: Educating 21st Century Leaders
- 24 American Cheer Power National Competition
- 27-28 Ohio Transportation Engineering Conference
- 28-29 The Ohio Society of CPAs