

RePlay magazine

FOR THE AMUSEMENT ROUTE, ARCADE & FEC OWNER • OCTOBER 1999



AMOA's New President Has Reason to Celebrate

Frank Seninsky, flanked by Jerry Merola & Joe Camarota,
views their ever-expanding Alpha-Omega "world of coin-op"

*At long last,
AMOA President...*

A Man for the Times



former maverick
Frank Seninsky is now
the ultimate insider;
New Jersey's
mega-operator has
proven his political
vision...and he's still
"rocking the boat" for
a good cause

[Frank Seninsky donned the mantle of AMOA president this September. It marks a signal triumph for a man who, 10 years ago, held such unpopular views that he wasn't moved up to VP on the association's board of directors (although he ran two AMOA Committees for the next four years from behind the scenes). In the mid 1980s and early 1990s, Frank dared to take an outspoken stance in favor of industry unity. During an era when rivalry and animosity were the order of the day, Frank's was one of the few voices publicly calling for cooperation and inclusiveness. "I was always on good terms with the manufacturers and AAMA leadership (thanks to Ed Adlum for seeing that I became 'one of us') and I believed AMOA should work with them as much as possible," he recalls. "I also thought AMOA should welcome fun centers, their owners and operators with open arms. I never made any secret of my opinions...in fact, I freely admit I'm a boat-rocker. At the time, few appreciated my taking such a public stance about

these 'radical' ideas. In fact one of the leaders requested that I stop writing for the trade magazines. But sometimes creating a reaction is the only way to get people thinking and proactive."

But as the years have transformed the industry, Frank himself has been transformed from a "voice crying in the wilderness" to the official spokesman for, and leader of, AMOA. His once-radical views have become orthodoxy and now the entire AMOA board supports him: its members have been working diligently for the same goals. Also aboard the unity bandwagon are the leadership of AAMA, IAFEC and Fun Expo organizer Reed Exhibitions Co. (as well as several IAAPA Board members).

"The co-location of our annual trade show with Fun Expo has really brought AMOA and IAFEC closer together," Frank notes. "Behind the scenes, AAMA's entire leadership and board also play a great supporting role. Nothing is a solo act for any association in our industry any more; we have all realized that —



Mondial's Tony Yula "Sr." presents Frank the 1991 "Man of the Year" award from the Northeast operator associations: AMOA-New York (city and state), AMOA-New Jersey and and AMOA-Connecticut (Tony won it in 1990).

as Ben Franklin once said — 'We must all hang together, or we will assuredly all hang separately.' As AMOA president, I hope to play an influential role in helping our association move further down the path of greater cooperation and combined strength with our industry allies...a path that leaders like Tami Norberg-Paulson, Randy Chilton, Don Hesch and Jim Stansfield have launched us upon.']

Congratulations, Frank, on your ascension to the AMOA presidency and on the 30th anniversary of your company, Alpha-Omega Amusements...

and also, happy 50th birthday!

Thank you. The honor of leading AMOA is a great place to arrive at when you turn 50! I'm looking forward to a super-busy year; it's a challenging but exciting time to be in the industry and we have a lot of work to do as we enter the new millennium. I am looking forward to working closely with Ron Cararra, the new AAMA president. Ron and I have been good friends for many years and we expect to meet each other at airports as we crisscross the country.

Let's talk about all of those issues. First, how would you assess the health of AMOA?

AMOA is in excellent financial shape after its first year since 1985 as a stand-alone organization. Membership is way up from last year at this time and, as this interview takes place (Sept. 8), we still haven't had our show, which last year saw 200 new members. We are within our budget and should for the first time in several years make a significant contribution to the AMOA Reserve Fund. Our AMOA in-house staff — Executive

Hoboken, NJ had 2 Frank's - Both with the initials F.S.

One went on to become famous in the music business.

The other Frank came out of Steven's in Hoboken and went on to become famous in the games business.

We think the games business won.

BUT — what would have happened if he became an engineer instead? Maybe Bill Gates should be thankful he didn't.

Maybe we would have the Seninsky Towers today instead of the Trump Towers.

It's been a good 30 years since it all started while Frank was still in college. I've have the pleasure of being there for all 30 of those years. First with Cortlandt Amusements, then with Coin Machine Distributors, and now with Benchmark Games.

Wishing Frank, Joe and Jerry nothing but the best life has to offer.

Al Kress & Ron Halliburton



VP Jack Kelleher, Executive Assistant Mary Benz and Bookkeeper (plus everything else that needs doing) Nancy Gigac — are super-efficient, and real AMOA “team players,” always finding new ways to save money and get things done.

We are increasing member services like never before. We are in a position to find new revenue sources beyond the trade show earnings and membership dues. Our rank and file members are presently well informed because our “The AMOA Edge” newsletter is back on the streets. The AMOA board of directors communicates daily on the Internet through a single server network. This means we can poll the board on a range of issues in almost an hour, which removes guesswork and increases input from all types of operators, distributors and manufacturers (Bob Fay really helps in this area). AMOA’s political relationships with its sister associations are better than they have ever been in the history of the organization, and we can thank our recent past presidents for that.

We’ve made strong efforts to create liaisons with AAMA, IAFEC, and overseas trade groups literally around the world. We are planning to live up to the “international” part of the AMOA International Expo by hosting the largest Summit Meeting in industry history in Las Vegas with perhaps a



Frank’s “first lady” Karen Nagel snapped this shot of Frank during their visit to Normandy Beach in May, 1999. Frank’s dad was a crew chief of military transport plane that dropped men and supplies there on D-Day (he also helped fly Gen. Omar Bradley to secret wartime meetings).

dozen associations invited from Asia, Europe, Australia, and North and South America. We are setting up a mechanism to exchange useful information with these global allies on a broad range of issues: currency, debit cards, coinage, gambling laws, disposable income, leisure trends, technology, political and legal questions...it goes on. To sum up, I would say that AMOA is doing a great job of positioning itself for the 21st century.

What are AMOA’s greatest strengths and weaknesses now?

Well, let’s get back to basics. AMOA’s greatest strength is the diversity, talent, and commitment of its large board of directors...and the greatest weakness (pause — let me think)...is the same thing: the large size of its board! I think the efforts of recent years to restructure AMOA with a smaller board are over, at least for now. Maybe the work goes more slowly with a 48-member board than with a 10 to 12-member board, as most industry trade groups now have. But many of us are used to working with a big board now. And, as I mentioned, it has become easier to keep everyone informed with new technology and organizational methods. Those who want to do a lot of work come to the forefront anyway, so we now enjoy a situation where the size can work to our advantage since we make an effort to have members from all over the country, all sizes and types of operators and distributors involved. It creates a good diversity of opinion and helps ensure that AMOA remains truly representative of the nationwide coin-op community.

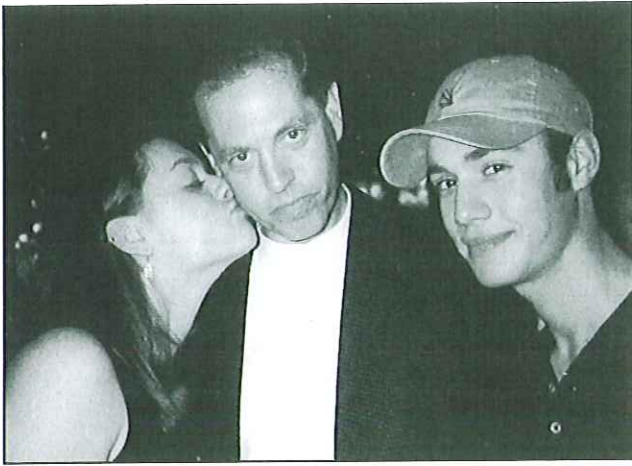
What are your top priorities as AMOA President?

To stay out of trouble, to get into trouble and draw attention to the issue, and to get out again as fast as possible—no I’m only kidding. Now back to being serious: first, create more services for AMOA members that will also help increase membership— such as educa-

**Dear Frank,
Congratulations on your 30th
Anniversary, and Happy Birthday!
With best wishes for many more.**

Your friends at:





Above: The 1991 NE Regional Assn's. "Man of the Year" gets a kiss from daughter Jaimie as son David looks on. Today Jamie is 23; she teaches elementary school. David, 21, just graduated with a computer programming degree. Both kids have worked at Alpha-Omega. **Below:** Son David Seninsky helps on route when needed. Says his proud pop: "David combines the talents of his uncle, his dad and his grandfather!" **Bottom:** Vacationing at the pier in San Diego, Calif. in 1997: Frank, David, Jaimie and Karen.



Above: Frank's brother Richard (left with Frank's nephew Alex) at a Bet-son open house. Richard was originally an Alpha-Omega partner from day one in 1969. In 1985 Frank bought him out. Today Rich owns and runs the Wizards World Arcade on the Long Branch, N.J. boardwalk. **Below:** A family outing to Nantucket. **Bottom:** The Seninsky kids David & Jaimie with Frank's "first lady" Karen Nagel and the 1991 NE Regional Association's "Man of the Year."



tional manuals, insurance programs, huge value discount coupon books — and along with that, create more revenue streams for AMOA.

Second, broaden AMOA's base through even greater cooperation with other groups such as our co-location with Fun Expo; by creating a multi-industry "think tank" to offer more business opportunities for our members and by creating a joint spring show someday (while always maintaining a coin-op show in the Fall — hotel size

like in the past).

Third, make AMOA membership so attractive that the decision to join becomes a "no-brainer." I also hope to support the idea of creating other levels of membership so that some of our affiliates (such as locations, players, and even other related associations) can fall under the AMOA umbrella.

You said the current operating climate is both challenging and promising. As you know, many trade members are

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Frank Seninsky
The new president of
AMOA



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**THE CARE AND
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by Frank "The Crank" Seninsky



Ten years ago my whole life was pinball! At that time I ran a route of nearly 400 pinballs with only one other man, so you can bet I learned all there was to know about fixing and maintaining the machines. A small amount of "preventative maintenance" and some "common sense" is all that's necessary to "profitably" operate pinballs. Pinball is definitely making a comeback, so if it's your new Bally pinball machine, as well as other pinballs you come across. Let's start with the basics.

"Frank the Crank's" cartoon caricature has been an Alpha-Omega logo for many years, starting with this Bally pinball guidebook Frank wrote in the early 1980s.

worried or depressed. Once again, you're going against the grain because you say this is an exciting time to be in the business. Can you explain?

It's always an exciting time to be in this industry, because we go in five to seven year cycles and each cycle creates its own unique opportunities. The challenge is to identify the opportunities and be willing to totally reinvent your business, if necessary, to take advantage of those opportunities. It's a shame that so many operators who have been doing the same thing for so long, are nearing the end of their careers...or maybe their patience. Many may be disappointed because their children do not want to get involved in the business and don't see any reason to take risks at this time. Some operators are unwilling to learn new technologies and take advantage of change. I'm sorry to say that I find more and more operators who are blasé about the business and don't see — or don't care if they see — the opportunities that lie before them.

What are some of these new opportunities?

For street operators, the opportunities include putting more jukeboxes (with new downloading capabilities), counter-tops, and merchandise dispensing machines into the growing number of

upscale regional chains of nightclubs, restaurants and sports bars. Downloading and its advertising potential are just beginning to come on line for coin-op, but I believe this technology will play an increasingly important role in the street operator's future revenues. Now is the time to investigate and educate ourselves about this.

For arcade operators, new opportunities can be found in aggressively

expanding themed game areas in bowling centers, casinos, location based entertainment areas, new pocket parks and theme parks. And for both street and arcade operators, there is a growing opportunity to sell your hard-won expertise and service capabilities to other locations in the USA and around the world as a consultant, as a strategic ally, or as an important partner in the whole concept of the location's business.



**WAY TO GO
FRANK!**

**FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT
MUNCIE NOVELTY CO.**

President Seninsky

As your friend & confidant, I'm pleased to join with everyone in the industry who's wishing you a great year in office. Give it your very best!

LEE WESSON

PEACHTREE MUSIC & AMUSEMENTS

It sounds like you're calling on operators to change their ideas about their role in locations and about their fundamental relationship to other businesses.

Exactly. Today's business climate absolutely requires operators to change the way they think of themselves. We can't be just "the games guys" or just "the jukebox man" anymore. If you're open to all the different possibilities, then there is not enough time in the day to research them all and decide which to pursue. Technology is really coming fast at us; the rate of change is being accelerated for coin-op, just like it is for everybody else. This creates new markets that can lead to new businesses and new revenue streams. I truly believe that today's industry offers more opportunity than ever for those who want to take on the challenge.

At the same time, all of this change scares some people. As you know, coin-op has been a very tradition-bound business.

Yes, the industry has previously been easier to figure out than it is today. But this should not discourage us; it should make us realize we can be more proactive than ever in defining our own particular niche and creating our own destinies. Learning new ways to do business does not necessarily mean higher risk. What can be more risky than buying video games and trying to make a decent ROI?

Are you practicing what you preach in your own business, Alpha-Omega?

You bet! We are always looking for new opportunities. We try new things almost every day. Our whole route is changing. When you find something that works, it can lead to a new division of the company. One new market for us is Indian casinos, for example. We are the game suppliers for Kid's Quest who run child care facilities at the Mohegan Sun Casino and Soaring Eagle Casino. At those locations we install totally nonviolent games and train their staffs how to operate them. We now have gamerooms in some of the country's top Indian casinos including the largest casino in the world, Foxwoods Casino in Connecticut. And



Frank with his good friend Steve Epstein at one of their successful PAPA (Professional & Amateur Pinball Assn.) tournament events. They're seen with a pinball that was turned into a work of art by locally famed artist Fazzino; it was auctioned off to help support PAPA's N.Y. Special Olympics fundraiser. (Actress Brooke Shields also attended that year's event.)

we expect this division to grow.

At Foxwoods we helped create our own opportunity. They owned their own games and operated one of the best gamerooms around. I worked with their finance department, engineers, architects, electricians, security, and entertainment center management to develop another gameroom as an addition to their current one. The casino management company liked the concept and got tribal council approval. We ended up placing 75 games on a revenue share arrangement and

my projections are right on target.

As another example, we are now operating an upscale billiards/game room, complete with snacks, beverage, and pool retail sales at one of the Campus Centers of Rutgers University. We hire student staff and have the

opportunity to market and run all kinds of promotions and tournaments. It is a new experience for Alpha and it looks to be much more interesting than just supplying the games. As a third example, at one time we had the gameroom account for nearly every military base within our territory. Today these revenues are flat or decreasing but we are considering getting involved in setting up a full family entertainment center on one of the bases which has many families living on base and will also be open to the public. We have started leasing games to some of our locations that include built in rotations and service schedules. This provides the locations with another option instead of them owning their own games after they decided that they did not want to revenue share.

At the ATEI last year Joe and I saw a great novelty game. We discussed it with Peter and Robert Betti and Bob Geschine at Betson who licensed the game for North America. Alpha ordered 25 units on the spot and this game, *Addam's Family Generator*, was perhaps our best performer this summer and is on our "highly recommend-



Can you pass this test?

What is the correct reason to congratulate the dynamic & wonderful FRANK SENINSKY this month?

- A. For his invaluable service on IAFEC's Board of Directors (Thanks, Frank!)
- B. For 30 years of success with his company, Alpha Omega Amusements (Nice goin', Frank!)
- C. For surviving 50 years on this planet (Happy Birthday, Frank!)
- D. For his election as AMOA's new president (Wow, Frank!)
- E. ALL OF THE ABOVE

You guessed it -- He's done it all!

Best wishes, Frank, from your friends & fans at IAFEC & FUN EXPO

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 FUN EXPO: 383 Main Ave., Norwalk CT 06851 • (888) FUN-EXPO • FAX (203) 840-5593





At the 1999 IAFEC Silent Auction, from left: IAFEC's Carole Sjolander, Harold Skripsky, Frank, Bev Skripsky, Linda Brandel, George Smith, Tracy Purcell and Brian Fisher.

ed" buy list. Jumping on new games and getting them out in the field quickly is seeing an opportunity and seizing that opportunity.

But trends change; all segments have good and bad cycles and we raise and lower our profile in various niches while keeping the best ROI accounts.

During the last five years, our consulting and amusement management division has really grown; we're now handling up to 20 clients in fun centers and LBEs around the world, and even helping some operators with efficiency audits. This includes feasibility studies, business plans, seeking funding, them-

ing, attraction selection and sourcing, writing standard operating procedures, and setting up training programs. You know, as consultants, we get involved in everything from \$2 million rollercoasters to designing \$6 million roads to bring traffic to a new facility, to building a monument for the leader of a country.

Sounds like you chose the right word: "challenging"!

Some of this may sound exotic, but remember it all grows from the basics, like knowing how to operate cranes and redemption. Many operators have extensive knowledge in these areas, but they take their own strengths for granted. They don't realize how they could market their abilities and their track record. What operators know and can do are really valuable commodities to people outside our industry who need our help to complete their projects. Plain old-fashioned expertise in redemption is more important than ever in our operating and consulting businesses, and this knowledge has been freely available for years at Expo seminars and association manuals...and in trade magazines like *RePlay*, of course.

Including columns, manuals and seminars by yourself. How should operators respond to the trend of consolidation in the industry?

They should learn from it and first consolidate their own businesses when appropriate. I talk a lot about new growth opportunities, but at the same time, I always like to emphasize the flipside of the coin. For every opportunity that we expand into at Alpha-Omega, we know that it will require management's time and money, so we also look ruthlessly at older types of operations and cut back if that's what makes sense. Operators must get used to the idea that they can grow their company when opportunity is good, but they should also shrink their business — or the underperforming parts of their business — when conditions in that particular niche are not so good. Bigger is not always better; lean and mean can spell profitability, even though it contradicts the dictates of ego and industry tradition. If we had a choice between making a million dol-

Congratulations Frank,
on your achievements
and Happy Birthday!



**BOB SNYDER & ASSOCIATES, INC.
NATIONAL GAMES LABORATORY**

lars operating 2000 games, or \$2000 by operating a million games, most of us know which one we would choose! We operators are very fortunate that we have the opportunity of moving our assets (games) from location to location as business conditions dictate. Asset allocation, real world depreciation, and cash flow are areas we watch and measure every day.

How does this constant re-evaluation of a route work in practice?

Street operators should really analyze each of their locations on a weekly basis, which is why I came up with the now famous "rubber band ratio" and "delta" to determine which locations and games are the real cash cows and which are the underperformers (the losers or "dogs"). I've said this in countless columns and seminars. It's a waste of time to have more assets in a location than necessary; try to make each location profitable. If you can't do it through proper asset allocation, try to renegotiate your agreement for more favorable terms. If that doesn't work, get out if your agreement permits you to do so. There's no time in the day to service games you're losing money on. At Alpha-Omega, we make a serious effort to expand and contract as the numbers dictate; we can always find something to do with our assets and our hard-working and talented staff!

Obviously, this approach requires wide-ranging expertise.

You don't have to do it all yourself. In fact, you shouldn't try unless you have the time to spend 60 hours a week keeping up with this business; no one operator can be an expert in everything. At Alpha-Omega, we have built a strong team with our COO Joe Camarota and CFO Jerry Merola that brings expertise in evaluating, buying and selling games; financing and dealing with banks; ...whatever comes up, we pool our knowledge to benefit our clients and our route business. We also get valuable industry input from our distributors friends as well as many members of the AMOA and IAFC Boards. What I enjoy is that these varied divisions of Alpha-Omega provide me personally with an opportunity to



At the 1998 Fun Expo, Frank joined Namco's George Smith and CEO Entertainment's Karyn Gitler to give a seminar on redemption merchandising.

What do you hope will happen to improve business conditions for the average operator?

Right now the industry needs less-expensive, "back to basics" equipment for the street operator. It could be video kits, video and music download, or even pinball, which

apply all of the expertise I've learned over the course of my life, going back to my old high school drafting classes and yearbook editorships (high school and college). I get my hands into design work, layout and bubble drawings, writing, my math and engineering background, my minor in computer programming...I get to be a "sponge" and absorb knowledge while I get to talk with some of the world's top businessmen, architects, factory engineers, and technicians in their own language. It's fun and is always a learning experience!

has almost priced itself out of business. More operators will have to get into operating redemption and merchandise dispensing machines. The new dollar coin will also help and could really be a plus if AMOA and AAMA are successful in getting our legislators to agree to a phase out of the dollar bill.

Will we get such less-expensive equipment?

Yes, eventually market forces will pressure the manufacturers to produce products that offer a good return at a reasonable price. But I do not advocate sitting

*Congratulations Frank and
Good Luck on Your Upcoming
Year as AMOA President!*

*It's Been Great Serving
on the Board
with You!*

*Marion Paul
"Fannie Farkles"*





Frank and Karen with FEC wiz Ben Jones at a seminar where coin-op was compared to Wall Street (hence the floor trader coats and stock market ticker tape on wall behind them).

around "waiting and hoping" for improvements to come to us like manna from heaven. I think we, as operators, can and must be active agents of change. We must help promote the new conditions and types of equipment that we want and need. We must work closely with manufacturers to help them

design better games (even though most do not seek the advice of operators, but my hat is off to those few that do). I also believe it may take people outside our industry with no political agendas to help solve this major problem, because so many traditional industry members at all levels are wearing blinders and

have such huge egos...
Still rocking the boat, I see!

That's pretty mild but someone has to say it before it could ever happen. That's why one of my goals as AMOA president is to create that "Industry Think Tank." I feel confident that if we bring in some of the best experienced minds from outside the industry — leaders from the fields of equipment manufacturing, entertainment, advertising, and marketing — and have them confer with the best minds in our business, we may find many, many ways to improve our industry. We have to think outside the box to save the box, as in cashbox!

"Thinking outside the box to save the box"...that sounds like a pretty good definition of your entire career to date, Frank. Thanks for this interview and good luck for the upcoming year.

Thanks to all the *RePlay* family, especially Eddie for giving me this great honor at this turning point in my life. After 15 years of "Frank Talk," do I get the next month off?

Congratulations Frank!!

*We Love You
 and
 We're Proud of You!*

Karen

*Mom
 Manny*

*Jaime
 Dave*

*Rich
 Marcie*

*Alex
 Mitchell*

*Mary
 Mike*

*Cheryl
 CJ*

Frank, Why Do You Write Columns and Give Seminars?

After penning over 600 columns and speaking on 130-plus seminars over the past 20 years, Frank says he is sometimes asked: "Why do you write these columns and put on seminars...aren't you helping the competition?" Clearly, his high profile in the industry is helpful to Alpha-Omega. But this magazine's editorial staff can testify if visibility were his sole motive, Frank would not have to work so hard at this job.

"Seminars and columns help me in three ways that many trade members may not realize," Frank explained. "First, it forces you to really educate yourself on a subject if you're going to write or speak about it. Many people tell me my speeches and seminars are full of practical, real life 'how to' information with lots of details and not much highfalutin' theory."

Second, Frank added, "I know that the more you can



Frank clearly enjoys giving seminars. Over the years he's spoken at over 130 educational sessions.

educate operators and FEC/LBE owners, the better they will run their businesses and the less chance there is of anyone messing up the whole marketplace through dumb business practices. We're all familiar with the video boom newcomer operators who gave away huge commissions, hurting other operators until the

newcomers finally went bankrupt. So one of the best things each of us can do for our industry is to raise the bar of professionalism. This helps us all become more profitable and more respected. This is why I support a full range of educational programs from trade associations — not just seminars at Expo, but manuals, newsletters, faxes, emails, the Notre Dame and Ogelbay Institute programs, and the like."

Frank admits his third motive for writing and speaking is sheer fun. "The first time I ever spoke before an audience was at an AMOA seminar in Chicago on negotiating location agreements, about 16 years ago. I only agreed because I was told to expect 15 to 20 people at most and Jim Hayes can be persuasive. I had 20 handouts ready. Then I walked into the auditorium and was faced with something like 200 attendees. I actually panicked for several seconds. Out of

sheer desperation, I launched into a dialog (by passing the microphone back and forth) with an operator in the first row of the audience and we did role playing for the next 40 minutes. He played the tough location owner and I the route operator trying to win the location contract. It turned out to be very enjoyable and we all had a great time. There emerged a strange person from deep inside of me who I had never met before, who turned up at the podium and said some things that surprised even me. That's the 'Frank the Crank' who presents seminars. It is far different from the shy, quiet person I really am. When I am in front of a group, there's a definite adrenaline rush, almost a kind of trance, that takes over when I am communicating with a larger public. It stimulates new ideas and creativity, and that's what I really enjoy."



Old Frank Talk columns came by way of regular mail...all typewritten with photos taped to blank sheets and captions typed on. Nowadays, email and laptop computers figure not only prominently in Frank's column-writing efforts, but also in regular, day-to-day business.

Laboring in the



...with VP Dan Quayle...



...with Congressman Tim Johnson (Ohio)...



...with Congressmen Bernie Dwyer & Tony Hall...



...with Brooke Shields...



...at a PAPA tournament with Steve Epstein and model Elle McPherson...

Even before becoming AMOA president, Frank Seninsky estimated that he spent "at least" 50% of his working hours on volunteer efforts for industry associations and writing articles for the trade press. During his 30-year industry career, his breathtaking list of contributions to the industry have run the gamut from politics to marketing, fundraising, trade show promotion and organization, and providing inter-association and inter-industry liaison. To name just a few outstanding achievements:

- Frank conceived and launched successful major initiatives such as the Congressional Pinball/ Games Tournaments annual charity fundraiser, which he administered for four years, raising \$95,000 in charity donations chosen by the Senators, House, and White House Office winners. Frank did not have a budget for the equipment but with the help of Steve Koenigsberg of State Sales solicited equipment donations from manufacturers and distributors.

- He chaired key events such as the AMOA Washington Conference, and most recently has represented the industry in direct negotiations with Sen. Joe Lieberman, Sen. Herb Kohl, and other Washington officials regarding the trade's voluntary video game parental advisory ratings system. He also initiated bringing IAFEC and IAAPA into the industry group (with AMOA and AAMA) as a coalition to work on this important issue.

- He chaired the AMOA-AAMA Industry Standardization Committee for 10 years, providing a vital link between the two associations when little other cooperative effort or communication was going on. At the end of his term this committee had 125 members which included the presidents and CEOs of many of the member companies and which now has members on the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) Safety Testing Committee.

In the past 18 months alone, Frank has been instrumental in getting the AMOA directors on email; shepherding the AMOA budget back into solid shape; saving AMOA \$20,000 on the membership directory; soliciting \$60,000 for the Expo Gala; obtaining a



...with Bill Clinton...

co-location trade show agreement with Fun Expo; and landing and negotiating a comprehensive insurance package option for AMOA members at discount prices (which also helps AMOA build new revenue).

And that doesn't even count his earlier, indispensable work as VP and Tournament Director on behalf of the Professional and Amateur Pinball Assn. (PAPA); his two terms as president of AMOA New Jersey (where he was honored as the Northeast Regional 1991 "Man of the Year" for uniting three regional AMOA state associations); his three years on the IAFEC Board and his chairmanship of IAFEC's Games & Redemption Council (he produced the 130 page manual) and Silent Auction chair (where he raised \$100,000+ net in two years) and set up a soliciting/benefits program that can be used for many years to come; and his development of innovative concepts like AMOA's "Developer's Row" trade show 40-booth exhibit promotion and the hugely successful ASI "Redemption City" seminar of some years back (best-attended seminar in industry history to that time) and the "Coin-Op Olympics"...and the list goes on!



...with Karen Nagel and one of "our" celebrities, Namco Chairman Masaya Nakamura...

Industry Vineyard



...with Senator Bill Bradley & Vincent Storino...



...with Julie & Dave Courington and Senator Spence Abraham (R-Michigan)...



...with N.J. Governor Christine Todd Whitman...



...with Karen Nagel & Bob Dole...



...with Country Star Crystal Gayle...



...with Congressman Frank Pallone...

One of the biggest names in
the business just got *bigger*.

Frank Seninsky

To one of our industry's most respected names, our most sincere congratulations on being named president of AMOA, 30 years in the business and your 50th birthday. All the best from your friends at Midway.



MIDWAY EXCLUSIVELY REPRESENTS WILLIAMS AND BALLY BRANDS.

Alpha-Omega's "Mr. Inside"

trained as a
psychologist,
soft-spoken
Joe Camarota
provides a steady
compass as
Alpha-Omega's COO

The co-owner, secretary, treasurer and COO of Alpha-Omega Amusements is Joe Camarota. While CEO/President Frank Seninsky often focuses on creating new business, Joe's chief responsibility is operations, including buying and selling equipment, once the account is in hand. Joe also oversees route equipment rotations and operations, traveling out of town monthly (on average) to see games, although he visits closer locations every two weeks or so.

Joe and Frank function as a classic team of "Mr. Inside & Mr. Outside." As he explains: "One of the beauties of Alpha-Omega is that,

although we're both workaholics, Frank and I have very different personalities and they mesh extremely well. Frank is always outspoken and out front on a national level, widening our contacts and raising our profile. He's a fantastic negotiator with a sharp legal mind. Meanwhile, I have usually been very low-key, staying more in the background and keeping on top of every detail. The combined approach has helped us achieve our common goals."

In fact, Joe was instrumental in urging Frank to take an aggressive stance to promote Alpha-Omega and ensure its visibility. "Many years ago, Frank wanted to

stop writing and spend more time working on the route," he recounts. "But I said no, you must keep going! We will grow and the national contacts with operators, distributors, and manufacturers will surely help. One day I walked into Frank's office and asked him for all of his route keys. I made him the promise that day that I would take care of operations so he would have the time to get involved in AMOA and other industry associations and keep writing for several magazines."

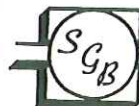
Joe was a junior at East Orange, New Jersey's Upsala College in 1973 when a work-study program landed him a job as a gameroom attendant. As it turned out, Frank and his brother Rich were the account's operators...and they liked his moxie (Joe chased down some kids who tried to steal a game). Joe began working part-time for Alpha-Omega, first testing and then repairing the games at Upsala, then full-time during summers, as he earned his masters in psychology at Seton Hall (and took care of Alpha's games at Seton Hall). "I had no family background in coin-op but I got hooked," Joe recalls today. "Frank took the time to teach me how to repair pinballs — he was very good at it. This is a very invigorating and stimulating industry; I've never regretted it."

"The key and secret is that you have to understand your route and your customers and buy accordingly," he declares. "Too many people buy games based on chart ratings alone, or word of mouth. It's getting harder to find the right pieces



Alpha-Omega COO Joe Camarota with his 18-year-old son Joe Camarota III, who works at the company's headquarters as assistant manager of merchandise. "He has great insight into what kids want," says his proud pop. (Joe's brother Steve also works for A-O as their account manager at the Cedar Point Amusement Park in Sandusky, Ohio as well as a regional service technician during the fall and winter months.)

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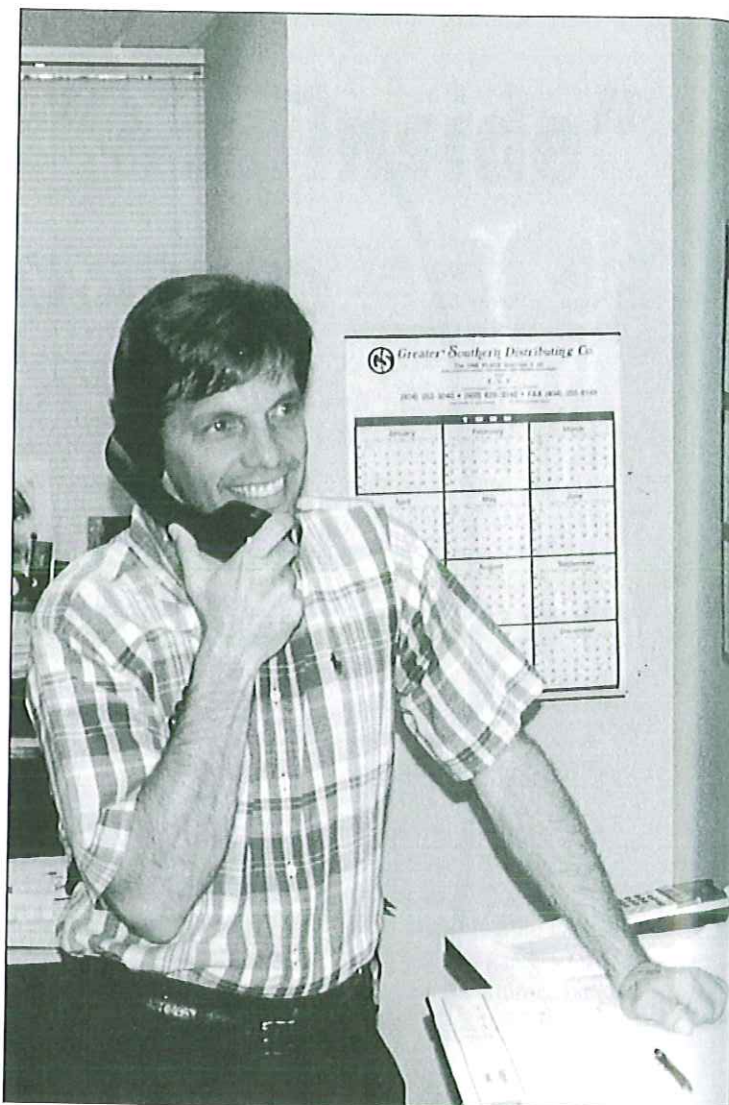


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As chief operations officer for Alpha-Omega, Joe keeps on top of every detail including buying, selling & rotation. He likes to work standing up, too!

since manufacturers are not offering the proliferation of equipment they once did, so I go to more shows now since I'm always looking for good new games. Then once you acquire a game, the other challenge is selling it: when and for how much? Frank was able to put our thinking process to paper when he created the 'Rubber Band Ratio' and 'Delta' analysis. These sales are also part of Alpha-Omega's lifeblood.' (Alpha-Omega Sales was created in 1983 as a separate company).

Of himself, Joe says: "I pride myself on being fair and honest. When someone calls to ask what's hot, I can't answer until I learn about their business and find out

what's right for them and the location, even if we make less money on the sale or don't make a sale. It makes me feel good when manufacturers and distributors ask me for advice because they know I'm a straight shooter. I've given this industry my life — 25 years — and to me, your reputation with your peers is the most important measure of success. That's what I'm most proud of. It's still fun and a pleasure to come to work."

Congratulations on your quarter-century at Alpha-Omega, Joe...you now qualify for membership in the Century Club's junior division!

Banking on Alpha-Omega

former banker

Jerry Merola

brings varied

expertise to roles

as Alpha-Omega's

CFO and

trade consultant

Jerry Merola is a relatively recent addition to the Alpha-Omega management team (since August of 1995) but as CFO, he's a key player. "It was a big move for me," says the former banker of his decision to join Frank Seninsky and Joe Camarota. "I saw it as a major opportunity in a largely untapped market. Today my major responsibility, and the most fun I have at Alpha-Omega, is spearheading our consulting business. We formed Amusement Equipment Management, LLC (AEM) as a three-way partnership to educate and advise everyone from large FECs, LBEs, and theme parks, to small mall

stores, to route operators, to developing products for manufacturers."

Jerry is a New Jersey native and Fordham graduate (in accounting and finance) who took his MBA at Fairleigh-Dickenson University. Several years ago, he was handling corporate loans to Fortune 1000 firms and learning the ins and outs of his clients' construction development projects when he inherited the Alpha-Omega account from a colleague. "My first experience with Frank Seninsky was striking, to say the least," Jerry recalls. "I was well aware that management style and marketing were key to

success, and Frank was obviously strong in both. I also liked his business sense: more than any of my 400 other clients, Frank had the savvy to see good moves, opportunities and decisions. I appreciated that he did his homework and spent his money carefully...and that he helped me, his banker, see both the up side and down side to every proposal."

The appreciation was mutual, and Frank began talking about bringing Jerry into the company. "After many discussions about how national and global opportunities were arising fast and furious, we decided to blend our talents and expertise,"



With the help of key people such as CFO Jerry Merola (with glove...that's Frank at bat, of course), the Alpha-Omega team is able to successfully keep a good number of balls in the air at one time.

CONGRATULATIONS FRANK!

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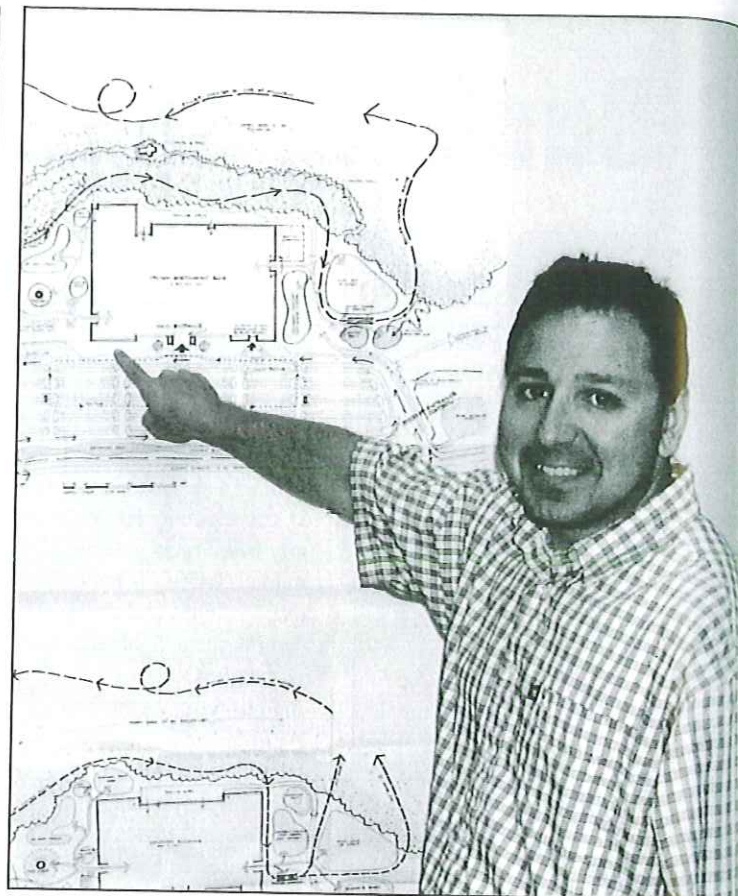
**Congratulations
& Happy Anny!**

to

**"Cranky Frankie"
and all the folks at
ALPHA-OMEGA
AMUSEMENTS**

from

**Jerry Monday
SPIRIT CONSULTING**



Amusement Equipment Management's biggest current project is a \$60 million Puerto Rican theme park; Jerry points to the new highway AEM is helping get built, leading to the facility.

Jerry says. Today, Jerry puts all that banking and construction industry knowledge to good use as he helps FECs, LBEs, and theme parks budget, plan and execute major projects. AEM also provides answers and expert help on every question from "Is our concept feasible?" to "Can you help us improve lackluster performance?" Jerry and Frank developed a unique Performance Audit procedure to measure operating effectiveness and recommend a detailed plan of daily programs that can strengthen fun center profitability as well as arcade and route operations. Their growing client list covers the USA, Puerto Rico, Morocco, Venezuela, Chile, Australia, Middle East, Canada, Korea, and the United Kingdom. "We are going global!" Jerry declares enthusiastically.

Jerry says the average new FEC/LBE budget ranges

from \$3 million to \$70 million (the latter is for an indoor/outdoor facility in the Caribbean that AEM is helping develop). "One of the best concepts we've developed is a unique monitoring program," Jerry believes. "We manage clients' equipment performance weekly, buy and sell their assets at appropriate times to protect their capital investments, educate their technicians, and guide them with future capital investment for growth and change. In this rapidly changing market, an educated customer is our best customer."

Working with Frank and Joe has kept Jerry Merola on his toes. "We regularly cross uncharted waters, but Frank can always find a solution," he smiles. "He's often the rainmaker when it comes to creative ideas, and Joe and I can put them into action with Frank reviewing our progress at each critical turn."



A \$20 Million Empire Began With a Single Pinball Machine



Alpha-Omega's big three — Joe Camarota, Frank Seninsky & Jerry Merola.

Frank Seninsky's Alpha-Omega group of companies today is a \$20 million annual business. Company staff ranges seasonally from 50 to 80 personnel who track some 12,000 to 14,000 game units a week in 15 U.S. states and up to 10 other countries, from North America to South America to the Middle East. Alpha-Omega's accounts include some of the world's largest casinos and theme parks (Foxwoods, Mohegan Sun, Soaring Eagle, Cedar Point, Dorney Park, Kennywood, Hershey Park, Knott's Berry Farm), as well as arcades, fun centers, FECs, LBEs, bowling center gamerooms, college gamerooms, and gamerooms on military bases.

This vast empire began in 1969 with a single pinball machine that Frank installed in his college fraternity. (For industry historians, it was a Gottlieb *North Star* purchased for \$25 from Irving



Alpha-Omega's friendly general manager Mark Ennis.



The indispensable Patti Policastro is Frank Seninsky's executive assistant.



Alpha-Omega's front office runs smoothly thanks to these pros. Standing from left: data entry assistants Taryn Zelesny and Hazel Lensen, controller Donna Cutignola & executive assistant Patti Policastro. Seated (center) is receptionist Marie Formanek.



Master tech Ramon Vivar with parts manager Scott Baquillo and parts assistant Lonny Warner.

Morris. It was Maynard Levin who gave Frank's younger brother, Richard, a wood railed pinball machine as a bonus for working at his arcade in Palisades Amusement Park.)

"When I got into college at Stevens Institute of Technology, my fraternity (Beta Theta Pi) was looking for revenue sources," Frank recalls. "I volunteered to install a pinball that my brother and I had in the basement of our home, and offered to service it and split the revenues."

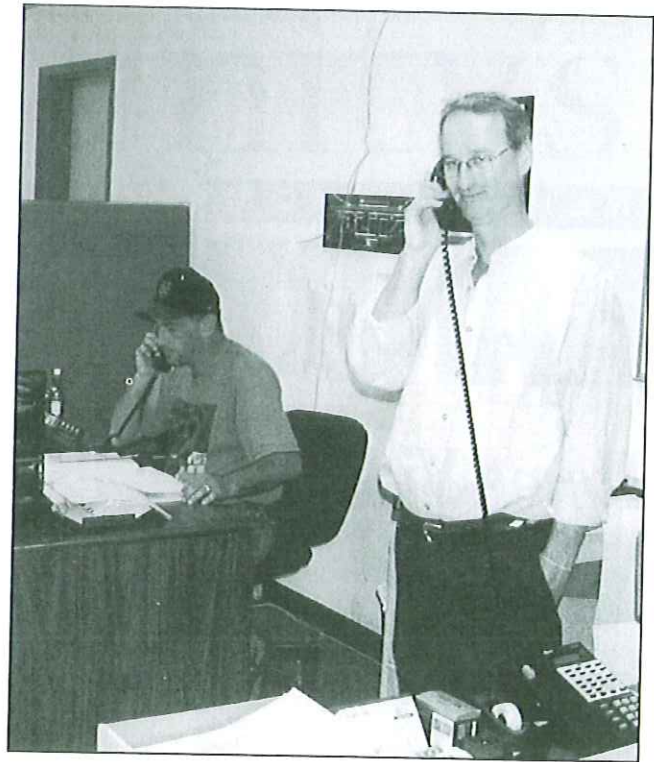
The first week on location, that used machine collected \$150 on 10-cent play (three for a quarter). When did Frank realize this would be his life's work? "When they asked for the second machine and I calculated that my ROI on my \$25 investment for a used *King of Diamonds* could be somewhere between 2 and 3 days!" he laughs. "Before I knew it, I had all the fraternities on the Stevens campus as well as Rutgers University and New Jersey Institute of Technology. Within two years I had pinballs operating in more than 50 frats and sororities. I knew this business would be a lot of fun."

Frank is a first-generation operator. He grew up in Cliffside Park, NJ, the son of a New York City midtown record store entrepreneur, and spent a lot of time at the local amusement park, Palisades Park. His kid brother Richard worked at an arcade as a 12 year old games technician during the summers (which is where the Seninskys got that old pinball). As teens, they played it in the basement and repaired it when it broke down...which led to that first installation. But not everybody approved of Frank's career choice at first. "In my early days, my family and professors asked me: 'What are you doing with your life? You should be more than just 'the pinball guy,'" Frank recalls. "I always felt confident that my entrepreneurial spirit would seize this opportunity to build a good business and apply all kinds of knowledge."

That is exactly what happened, too. After earning his engineering degree at Stevens, Frank went on to work on his MBA at Newark College of Engineering (now New Jersey Institute of Technology), while taking a full time engineering position at Public Service Electric & Gas for 18 months. Along the way, he applied what he knew to his



Warehouse manager Tony Bari and production manager Henry Stoop keep the equipment organized and sharp!



Dispatcher Mike Katz (seated) and Dave Lohr work the phones.

growing amusement operations company and picked up real-world experience in computers, design, banking, finance, technology, marketing, promotion, psychology, writing, law, mechanical and electrical engineering, drafting, and more. "I'm doing a little of each of these, each day, in this wonderful industry we call the coin-operated machines business," he grins. "Hence, there is no such thing as boredom!"

What's distinctive about Alpha-Omega? "Our highly diversified staff and vision set us apart," Frank believes. "My engineering and writing credentials are bolstered by Joe Camarota's psychology degree and Jerry Merola's financial background as a major bank's commercial loan officer, along with his construction expertise. Other Alpha-Omega employees include a non-practicing lawyer — who sometimes even fixes games! — and we have computer experts and people who are quite accomplished at arts, design and drawing, auto body repair, and a senior technician who can repair anything. This range of abilities makes it possible for the Alpha-Omega team to tackle its incredible spread of assignments with flair."



Shop tech Robby Watson (left) and master technician Ramon Vivar.

Alpha-Omega actually comprises four different companies. Alpha-Omega Amusements operates a comprehensive selection of games; Alpha-Omega Sales sells, installs and services new and reconditioned equipment; Amusement Entertainment Management provides worldwide FEC and LBE consulting (from design and game selection to oper-

ations, hiring, training and everything in-between including expert witness testimony, route and business appraisals and evaluations, performance audits, and game design). Finally, Alpha-BET Entertainment is a joint venture between Alpha-Omega and Betson, specializing in operating games for large FECs, amusement parks, casinos, and national chains.