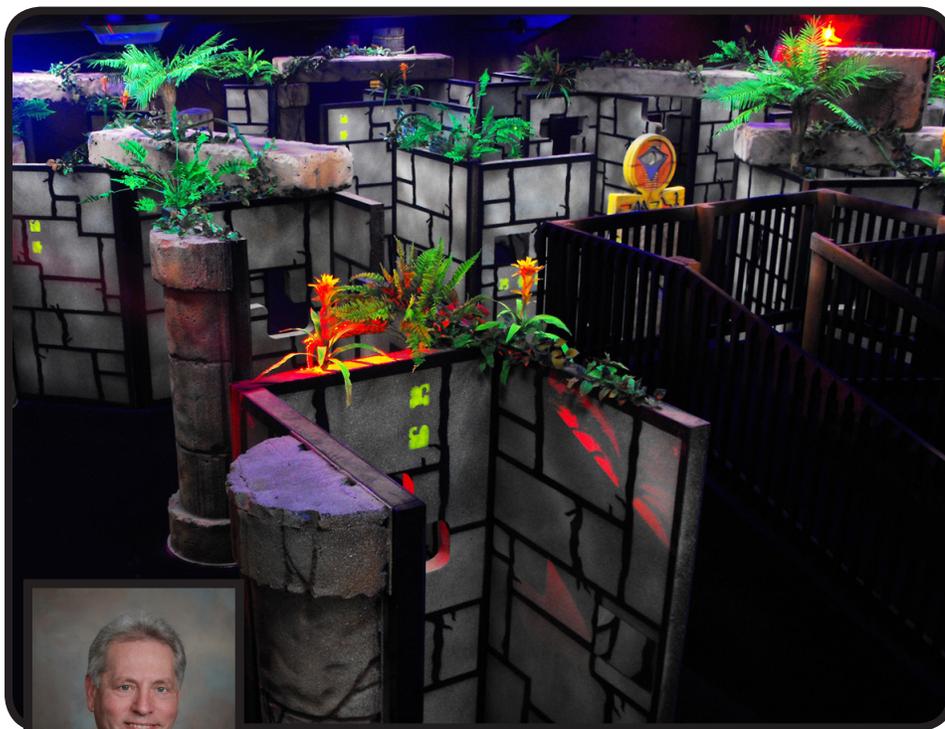


FUNTASTIK FACELIFT

TRADITIONAL GAINESVILLE BOWL

REMAKES ITSELF INTO **FUNTASTIK!**



adventure-themed laser tag arena, redemption arcade, birthday party rooms, and reconditioned bowling lanes. “With only word-of-mouth advertising throughout the community and during the slowest season, the new center just set record sales for the year!” claimed owner, Debbie Love.

Debbie and her husband Mike Love, along with Debbie’s parents, Bud and LaQuita Lunsford, have owned and run the Gainesville Bowl since early 2000. Although the family had done some initial cosmetic upgrades to the bowling center, it has been the family’s dream to open a much larger center that included a broad spectrum of activities to entertain an entire family at one time. For several years Debbie and various family members attended trade shows like Bowl Expo, Fun Expo, and the

IAAPA Attractions Expo in order to gain knowledge about the industry and the attractions that were available. They also participated in as many educational programs as they could to learn about opening and running an Entertainment Center, including programs like Foundations Entertainment University (FEU). It



By Frank Seninsky
President/CEO,
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Gainesville Bowl, in Gainesville, GA, a traditional 24-lane bowling center, unofficially reopened its doors on July 3 as Funtastik Family Entertainment Center, a full-service fun center. The expanded 27,500 sq. ft. facility boasts a 5000 sq. ft. addition that includes a new façade, a 3,500 sq. ft. two-story

was during their visit to Foundations that they met and later developed their professional relationship with Jerry Merola, Managing Partner of Amusement Entertainment Management (AEM).

Funtastik’s owners elected to use AEM’s “Project Development Services” to coordinate all project details, including initial concept planning, interior design—including the layout of the expansion space, coordination of construction, procurement of financing, acquisition of equipment, and establishment of control and operating systems. According to Debbie, “Jerry provided us with information regarding trends in the industry and guidance on transforming a traditional bowling center into a successful family entertainment center. He is one of the smartest individuals I have met during this process and he has shared a wealth of knowledge and experience that put us on the right path when the economy brought a halt to our initial expansion plans.”

Initially, the family had wanted to open an entirely new, larger facility within the town, but as the market dried up and banks became cautious about lending, they had to look at other options and to other non-conventional resources to help finance their dream.

As a result of solid planning and execution, the owners were able to pass the Small Business Association’s (SBA) stringent analysis process and obtain

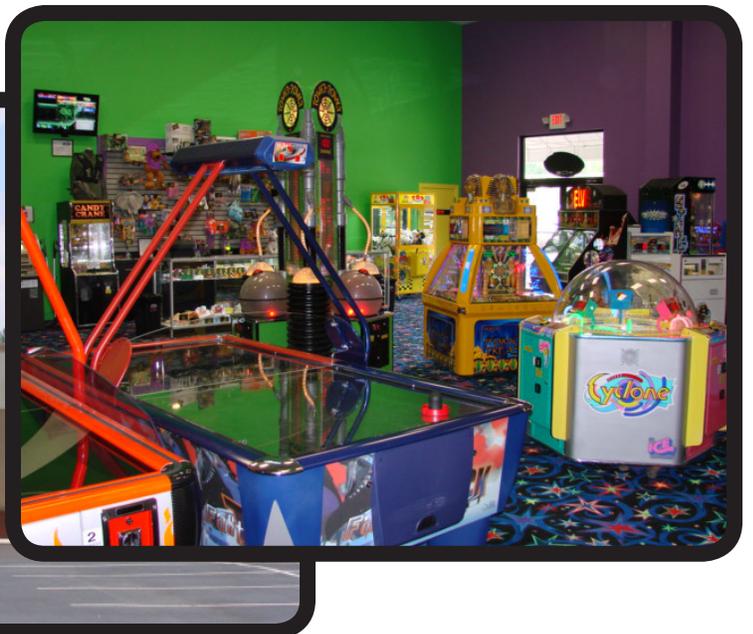


Funtastik’s family at work. Pictured (L-R) Alex, Mike, Debbie, LaQuita, Bud and John

funding for the renovations as well as refinancing of their current loan. The process took over 9 months to complete, with the renovations costing around \$800,000, much less than what they had initially planned on investing in a new facility. However, once the funding was approved, it took less than six months for the work to be completed and the redesigned center to become a reality.

Jerry noted, “I am extremely pleased that the AEM team was selected to assist Debbie in transforming a traditional bowling center into Gainesville’s hottest entertainment destination. Debbie’s sense of mission and keen understanding of the marketplace has allowed this project to garner the support of the financial services sector, municipal leaders, and most importantly, residents of the area. Debbie continues to raise the bar within the entertainment industry by continuously reinventing the formula necessary to achieve long-term success. ‘Funtastik’ is a perfect example of how a traditional bowling center can be enhanced to meet the desires of today’s guests.”

To bring the concept and planning to reality, industry suppliers like Zone Laser Tag were brought in to install their new 24-player NexusFEC laser



her husband Mike, and her parents work at the center, but her four children help out as well. Joe, their oldest son, helps out in the evenings as a pinsetter. Alex, a senior in high school, is learning the mechanical end of the business and spent three days training with Alpha-Omega Amusements technicians to learn how to repair and maintain the games, token dispensers and ticket center machines. John, also a senior, wants to pursue a career as a chef and has worked in the snack bar area for the past three years while Raya, their teenage daughter, helps out at the bowling service counter. Even their 10-year old granddaughter, Brianna, has assisted them at trade shows by “testing” the games and providing her first-hand input.

The official Grand Opening of “Funtastik” will take place in September after Labor Day. Marketing efforts will include radio spots, press releases, direct mailing, and giveaways/promotions. There are also plans to create a new website and expand their presence on Facebook. They have already captured a local youth group of 150 for a November lock-in that normally takes place in the next county and a second group is looking to bring their Spring Jamboree to the center. Local businesses have asked about group parties and have indicated their appreciation to the family for improving the bowling facility. They are hoping that other businesses will follow their example. Future plans for Funtastik include revamping the

eating/drinking operations and replacing an outdated highway sign with a new light up “Funtastik” billboard.

The Gainesville Bowl made the transition from a traditional bowling center to a full-service family entertainment center and has created a focal point in the community where family, friends, and colleagues can gather and have a “Fantastik” time. Debbie’s advice to anyone seeking to turn things around at their own center is, “Do your homework, get the education, attend the shows, and work with the professionals who know this business. The payoff and results will be immediate.”

For more information:
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Frank Seninsky is president of the Alpha-Omega Group of companies, which includes a consulting agency, Amusement Entertainment Management, LLC (AEM), a nationwide revenue sharing equipment provider, Alpha-Omega Amusements, Inc., Alpha-BET Entertainment, and Alpha-Omega Sales, a game & related equipment distributor. All are headquartered in East Brunswick, New Jersey. During his 41 years in the leisure entertainment industry, Seninsky has presented nearly 350 seminars and penned more than 1500 articles. He has served as president of the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMO) from 1990-2000 and as the President of the International Association for the Leisure & Entertainment Industry (IALEI) from 2005-2006. His columns regularly appear in Tourist Attractions & Parks, RePlay, Vending Times, and Bowling Industry magazine. Frank is co-regent for Foundations Entertainment University, that presents multiple-day sessions in the US and in growing markets including Russia, Ukraine, Dubai, UK, and potentially Asia, India, and Africa as well. His world famous ‘The Redemption Report’ e-newsletter goes out to more than 25,000 readers and has over 40 advertising sponsors.

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