

Press release from TEA

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Photos of [Steve Thorburn](#)

Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) Re-Ups Thorburn as President

On Aug 20, the International Board of TEA ([Themed Entertainment Association](#)) unanimously confirmed for a second one-year term as president Steven J. Thorburn PE, LEED AP, principal of Thorburn Associates. Thorburn will formally commence his 2nd term in November.

Burbank, Calif., USA, 27 August, 2009 – “Steve Thorburn has brought to the role of TEA president a level of control and detail and management that are exactly what was needed in these times,” says Nick Farmer of Farmer Attraction Development, immediate past president of TEA (Themed Entertainment Association). “He’s a diligent, get-it-done kind of guy who drives through the outstanding issues and clears them up. He’s an engineer, and he sees things through to the finish. When the chips are down you need someone like Steve - a detail oriented, creative problem solver. He is of great value to the TEA and we’re fortunate he’s put his hand up for another year.”

Steven J. Thorburn, PE, LEED AP, principal of [Thorburn Associates](#), will serve a second one-year term as President of TEA, as unanimously confirmed August 20 by the TEA International Board. TEA, www.teaconnect.org, is an international nonprofit alliance founded in 1991, representing the creators of compelling places and experiences, and headquartered in Burbank.

Stepping into his first term during a severe recession, Thorburn showed himself a pragmatic, conscientious and outspoken leader, working to keep TEA on track fiscally while supporting the creation of programs to position the association and its members for economic recovery. (The attractions industry has been squeezed by lower revenues, funding shortfalls, project cancellations and layoffs.) Thorburn’s achievements in his first year include finalizing passage of new by-laws to bring TEA up to date, expanding services that help match TEA members with employers, restructuring the association’s debt, and overseeing the successful Fast Track Expansion membership growth initiative.

“Some of the loftier projects I had in mind when I first put myself forward for the presidency were put on hold because of the recession in order to focus on practical concerns,” says Thorburn. “Many associations are shrinking, but TEA has grown 30% over the past two years, with a record number of networking and educational events among our three divisions [Eastern North America, Western North America and Europe & Middle Eastern]. In my second year I hope to revisit some of those initial goals, such as reaching out to bring more architects into the membership.”

New Divisional Presidents

TEA’s Divisional Boards also elected the following Divisional Presidents:

Eastern North America: Brian Morrow, SeaWorld. (Outgoing is Steve Birket of Birket Engineering.)

Western North America: David Aion, The Aion Company (Outgoing is Daren Ulmer of Mousetrappe)

Europe and Middle Eastern: Alan Wilkinson, Electrosonic (Outgoing is Kevin Murphy of Event Communications Ltd.)

About TEA

The TEA ([Themed Entertainment Association](#)) is an international nonprofit alliance founded in 1991 and based in Burbank, Calif. TEA represents some 7,500 creative specialists, from architects to

designers, technical specialists to master planners, scenic fabricators to artists, and builders to feasibility analysts working in more than 680 firms in 39 different countries. TEA presents the annual Thea Awards and the TEA Summit, and this year will host the third annual [SATE Conference](#) (Storytelling, Architecture, Technology, Experience) Sept 24-25 in Orlando. TEA also produces a variety of print and electronic publications, including the TEA/ERA Global Attraction Attendance Report, TEA Sourcebook, TEA Project Development Guidelines, and TEA Annual & Directory. Visit www.teaconnect.org.

Additional Background on Steve Thorburn

TEA president Steve Thorburn, 47, principal of [Thorburn Associates Inc.](#), is an active and visible participant within his industry. Altogether he has served as project manager and engineer on more than 2,000 projects, including the lead engineer role on four projects that received Thea Awards. As an educator and lecturer in the field, he has logged more than 40,000 student hours. Thorburn has been a TEA member for 16 years, and served on the TEA International Board as Treasurer for four years prior to becoming president.

Thorburn's other association ties include the Large Format Cinema Association (five years on the Executive Committee) and ICIA/InfoComm (1996 Educator of the Year). He has had some 100 articles published in the trade media and writes a regular column for Systems Contractor News. Within his own company, Thorburn Associates, founded in 1992 with his wife Lisa, Steve Thorburn has fostered a service- and education-oriented culture and encourages his staff to continually advance in their professional development and training.

Steve Thorburn began working as an acoustical engineer for Salter Associates (San Francisco) in 1985, after receiving his degrees at Michigan Technological University (dual Bachelor of Science degrees in Electrical Engineering and Technical Theatre). He worked on studio projects for Lucasfilms, Todd-AO, Dolby and Disney, then entered the Experience Industry headlong as the acoustical engineer for the Disney MGM Studios Tour. Shortly after that, designers at WDI asked him to help with the acoustical design of Pleasure Island, when they found it had not been reviewed for acoustics.

He subsequently worked on Knott's Camp Snoopy at the Mall of America, and hundreds more leisure and entertainment projects for major operators. He provided technical design services on various specialty theaters, large format theaters, family entertainment centers and the development of construction guidelines and feasibility studies for a host of international projects.

Thorburn Associates has exerted a steady influence on the building and construction industry through its advocacy of Acoustically Integrated aRchitecture (AIR) and successful projects that embody its principles. AIR is a holistic best practice which, recognizing that the foremost purpose of buildings is to foster human community, seeks the optimal interface of disciplines for a result that supports the specific intended uses of the building.