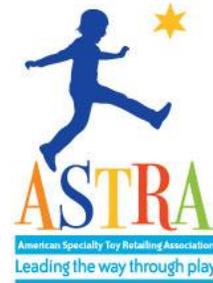


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Susan J. Oliver
773.263.3030
soliver@interaccess.com



BEAU JAMES HONORED WITH LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM ASTRA



Chicago, IL (April 11, 2019)— Beau James, a forty-year veteran of the toy industry, received the 2019 *ASTRA Lifetime Achievement Award* shortly before his passing, the American Specialty Toy Retailing Association (ASTRA) announced today.

“Beau was known far and wide as one of the most experienced and knowledgeable professionals in the specialty toy business,” said Kimberly Mosley, President of ASTRA. “He knew this market inside out. He was an enthusiastic supporter of ASTRA’s role in helping specialty retailers prosper from the very earliest days back when ASTRA was launched, and he continued his support in so many ways over many years. On

behalf of the ASTRA Board of Directors, we are grateful that we had the opportunity to present this award to Beau with our heartfelt congratulations and let him know how much he has meant to so many. Thank you, Beau, for all you did for our industry.”

For many, Beau was the “doll guy” – a reputation that started in his early days with International Playthings, then the distributor of Sasha dolls by Trendon Ltd., and continued in his tenures with Madame Alexander, Gotz and Corolle. More recently he was Managing Director of KidSource, a USA-based distribution company bringing quality European products into the US. He served on the ASTRA Board of Directors and as a consultant—both formally and informally—to many in the industry.

Above all, he was a proponent of the power of play and the value of the partnership between manufacturers and specialty retailers in bringing high-quality, well-designed and developmentally appropriate playthings to children everywhere. “When it comes to what makes specialty special, and why that’s so important for kids, Beau understood that connection deeply,” said Dee Farrell, CPE, VP Marketing, Hape International and Chair of the ASTRA Board of Directors. “We were so lucky to have him as a colleague who shared the vision ASTRA embraces for playful, healthy childhoods full of happy memories for all kids.”

...more...

On a personal level, Beau James always had a smile on his face. “Whether you were a friend, a business associate or a neighbor in the next booth, he was always happy to see you,” said Christine Blumberg, CPE of Roberts Blumberg Giacobbe and incoming chair of ASTRA. “He was well respected and admired in the industry certainly for his business acumen but also his gregarious, outgoing, wonderful personality! There is no one else quite like him and no one more deserving of the recognition the ASTRA Lifetime Achievement Award brings with it.”

ASTRA will remember Beau James and his illustrious career in toys during its annual business meeting on Monday, June 10, 2019 from 8:00 AM to 9:30 AM in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

About the American Specialty Toy Retailing Association (ASTRA)

Founded in 1992, the American Specialty Toy Retailing Association (ASTRA) is an international not-for-profit trade organization that develops and supports a membership of independent retailers, manufacturers and sales representatives in the toy industry. Inspired to change the world through the power of play, ASTRA is a community of dedicated professionals committed to providing children with healthy, quality play materials that have a high play value and are designed with a focus on what the child can do, rather than what the toy can do. Through certification programs, educational resources and networking opportunities, ASTRA equips and empowers members to make a positive impact on the economy and culture of the communities they serve. For more information, visit www.astratoy.org/.

###