

CONNECTS

Volume 24, Issue 4• Summer 2010

MPI Rocks Our World: Strategic Board Retreat: May 14-16, 2010

By Lauryl Hinerman, CMP



Lead Rock Star: Joy Florentino

Back-up: Cindy Miglino and Amanda Flangas

If the Annual Board Retreat is an indicator of how much fun MPISSN is going to be this year, you won't want to miss a beat! Incoming President Joy Florentino left no rock unturned in what was an action packed weekend filled with many accomplishments, new

friendships and a clear vision for the next 12 months. What we thought would be a "relaxing time" wine tasting in Napa turned out to be a whirlwind of adventure with a perfect balance of activities and accomplishments.

First, let's give kudos to our many hosts. Rosanne Beals, Senior Sales Manager at the Napa Valley Marriott Hotel & Spa, made us all feel very welcome by making sure all details of our stay were well taken care of. This property is undergoing a major renovation and is a beautiful work in progress. Attention to detail has been carefully given to the executive suites, guest rooms and meeting rooms with elegant furnishings, luxurious carpet and state of the art lighting. The Spa is absolutely gorgeous and one can sense the pride in the staff of their treatment rooms which are decorated in warm and relaxing earth tones and cool blues.

A few of us tested the new e-bikes at the Napa Valley Marriott Hotel & Spa by pedaling to Yountville for lunch. Too tired to pedal? Just give the handlebar a little turn and feel the bike surge forward. The expressions on real road-cyclists faces as we effortlessly pedaled past them was priceless! Next time you're looking for a new Napa adventure, email Carolyn Nguyen, Operations Manager of Change of Greenery at <http://changeofgreenery.com>.

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CONNECTS

EDITORIAL/GRAPHIC DESIGN

Diane Ramsdell

d.ramsdell@sbcglobal.net

ADVERTISING

Lynda Sagar

Sheraton Grand

Lynda.Sagar@sheraton.com

PRINTING

Karen Leland-Dolce, CPA, CMM

Copeland Printing

karen@copelandprinting.com

STAFF

Cindy Miglino, CMP, CAE

Chapter Administrator

P.O. Box 2338

Rocklin, CA 95677

916-624-2627

Fax 916-624-2648

cindy@mpissn.org

www.mpissn.org

Next Editorial and

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President's Message

Amanda Flangas

John Ascuaga's Nugget



Thank You For Your Support

The next few months as we roll into summer and I proudly pass the gavel on to Joy Florentino, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our volunteers who served our chapter so well this past year. You all worked so diligently to meet the needs and requests of our Chapter members and I am truly honored to have served with you!

To our Chapter members, I thank each of you for the wonderful support you afforded me through these last 12 months. Although I reside in Reno, Nevada, I was welcomed into this Chapter with open arms six years ago and as I began to get involved on committees, I was not an "outsider" but instead was encouraged to get even more involved and to join the volunteer leadership team. That experience has been one of tremendous personal and professional growth and I encourage each of you to follow suit. You will reap great rewards if you take the time to get involved, build new relationships and grow your business opportunities.

I know that we have all had our share of economic challenges over the last year, but the result of this is that we have found new, more efficient ways to do business. We have built better business relationships and found cost effective ways to get the job done, through networking and relationship building – a big part of what MPI is all about. I hope you will stay involved or get involved and allow MPI to "Rock Your World" in the 2010-2011 year. I look forward to seeing all of you at many upcoming chapter events.

Wishing you much success and happiness,

Amanda Flangas

Stay up to date at:

www.mpissn.org

Bringing the Latest In Technology To Meetings

By Karen Grunwald

Earlier this month I had the opportunity to attend an event in Chicago for event marketing professionals. It was a three day educational meeting highlighting some of the most innovative ways we can use technology, social networking and the internet to increase the value of our meetings and conventions.

Everyone who is reading this is most likely connected constantly to their phone. It may be a Blackberry, iphone or other technology but we are instantly connected to our email and our social networks. At the Chicago meeting, technology was the focus so upon arrival, we were given a small beeper device with a five digit personal code. If we met another attendee and wanted to exchange business cards, we only had to enter the other persons "code" and we would have this information sent to our own personal file which could be downloaded after the event. In addition, when attending sessions, you could enter the session code and have the content of the session sent to your file. It was an interesting way to gather information about exhibitors, attendees and course content without ever having to exchange paper.

Many of the session speakers spoke about the importance of social networking. I was thinking, "I know, I update my Facebook status daily!" But the reality is, the discussions related to social networking are far greater reaching than the platforms we think of such as Facebook and Twitter. The objective of social networking is to find a place on the internet where information is not just sent, but rather exchanged. The social networking site (sometimes called a microsite) should be specific to the interest group if the organization or meeting with a place to post blogs, rate products, share reviews and exchange ideas. Effective social networking sites do more to engage back and forth with the user and build a loyalty and personal interest. The result of this engagement is we are better able to deliver appropriate and relevant content to our conference attendees and management. We gain valuable feedback about our attendees and their preferences. One research study quoted that most of us turn to online product reviews for feedback before making a purchase decision. Surprisingly, 95% of us believe and rely on product reviews. Smart meeting planners will take advantage of this platform to gain powerful, positive reviews on their meetings, events and conferences by offering a forum to capture this information.

The other interesting area where meetings can be innovative is the development of applications for the smart phone which are related to their meeting. One large beverage company launched a mobile app at their meeting which was in essence a game where attendees played for the high score and won prizes. The result is the company was able to capture data specific to its user base and target their marketing and meeting content directly to individuals. The company was also seen as a thought leader in offering cutting-edge, engaging ideas to bring to their meetings an element of "fun".

These new innovations are coming at us faster than we can anticipate. Meeting planners need to be ahead of the curve in developing their online campaign as an integral part of their overall meeting content. MPI is the perfect venue to bring together best practices which will help us remain pro-active and strategic in our roles as planners.

If you would like to know more, you can call me anytime to share your ideas.

Email Karen.grunwald@techevents.biz

New MPI member!

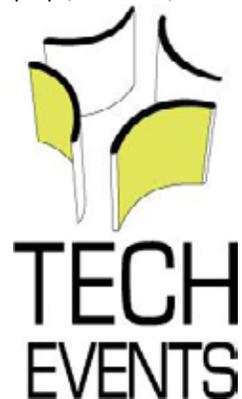
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amanda_flangas@janugget.com

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joy.florentino@marriott.com

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karen@copelandprinting.com

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lauryl.hinerman@hyatt.com

Vice-President, Education

Barbara Ambler-Thomas

bamblerthomas@hornblower.com

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Vice President, Membership

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sbuntjer@rcac.org

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lbispham@csdaca.org

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Lynda.Sagar@sheraton.com

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sdone@calwaterfowl.org

EMBASSY SUITES ANNOUNCES BEST IN BRAND AWARD WINNERS

Award Winning Hotels and Executives Recognized at Embassy Suites Regional Huddles

Mclean, VA – May 21, 2010 – Today Embassy Suites Hotels announced a complete list of winners of the 2010 Embassy Suites Make a Difference Awards, which were presented to selected properties and their leaders during the brand's regional huddle conferences in Portland, Denver, Atlanta and St. Louis this month. The huddles' "REVup" theme was designed to encourage leaders to continue to excel in all that they do while still staying true to the brand. "It was an honor to recognize the very best hotels and leaders in our brand," said Jim Holthouser, global head of Embassy Suites Hotels and full service brands, Hilton Worldwide. "At Embassy Suites, we place great value in recognizing and rewarding our team members for embodying the brand's "Make a Difference" service culture. We congratulate both the winners and nominees."

"We will continue to reward our highest performers by investing in their professional growth and development," said Charles Gremillion, director of brand culture and internal communications. "By doing this, we reinforce our service culture and develop strong leaders in the process."

The Hervey Feldman Award, named in honor of an Embassy Suites pioneer and the brand's first president, recognizes the General Manager of the Year. **The 2009 honor went to Tim Billing (pictured) of the Embassy Suites San Luis Obispo.**

Recipients were determined through key areas within the Embassy Suites brand pillars.

"The huddles were a great way to recognize our leaders and work toward a common goal as a brand," said John Lee, VP brand marketing, Embassy Suites. "We hope each leader returns to their property with a renewed drive to succeed."



Left to Right: Global Head of Embassy Suites Hotels Jim Holthouser; General Manager of the Year Award Winner Tim Billing; VP Brand Marketing Embassy Suites, John Lee; VP Brand Performance Support Embassy Suites, Shawn McAteer.



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Annual Event Rocks!

By Sylvia Done, Annual Event Chair

The 2010 Annual Event and Installation on June 8th was a great success. Over 200 attendees enjoyed two fantastic bands (courtesy of Associated Entertainment Consultants / Hip Entertainment) during the evening, and a delicious food provided by Monty Montgomery of All Seasons, All Reasons Catering.

Attendees enjoyed a cocktail session sponsored by Marriott, a Silent Auction filled with fabulous prizes (Thank YOU Sponsors) and our first band Mother Mayhem provided knock out entertainment for all. Just when we thought it couldn't get any better, our "concert goers" moved inside for a SECOND band, inspiring installation ceremony and a strolling dinner.

The Center at Twenty Three Hundred pulled out all the stops with spectacular lighting and a full stage show that included entertainment with Love Train. With such a great setting and powerful entertainment the crowd was more than happy to head down to the stage to dance!



Amanda Flangas gave a gracious and heartfelt farewell followed by the installation of the 2010 -11 President and officers. Out thanks goes to Amanda for the gift of your time, strong leadership and dedication to our chapter.



Last, but not least incoming President Joy Florentino gave a short presentation discussing her vision for the upcoming year and how she believes MPI will ROCK our worlds!

We sincerely thank all of our sponsors for their support -

Marriott, Renaissance and JW Hotels and Resorts, Party Concierge, Steve Bloom of Sacramento Associated Entertainment Consultants (Love Train and Mother Mayhem), The Center at Twenty-Three Hundred, Copeland Printing, BBJ Linen, PIP Printing, All Season all Reasons Catering, Brian Sharp, Go Big Consulting, Sonoma County Tourism Bureau, STL, Ltd. Convention Contractors, Northern California Meetings + Events magazine, Matthew Kane Photography, Illuminate Production Service



Photos courtesy of J. Matthew Kane Photographer Paris in the Fall Photography

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sbuntjer@rcac.org

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tamalon@coavision.org

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litzac@graphic-promotions.com

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kelli@wmma.com

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katrina@calcasa.org

CSR CORNER

Corporate Social Responsibility - Share The Good News

By Katrina Duncan, CMP-Event & Meeting Planner, CALCASA

Enter in a drawing to win a lunch for two at two great down town restaurants, MaJong's and Ambrosia Café! Simply email me a testimonial, paragraph or story about your Good News (CSR Efforts) to Katrina@calcasa.org.

Corporate Social Responsibility, are positive efforts that affect our families, our friends, and our communities. Let's leave a legacy of a responsible, cleaner, and safer world for future generations.

I am proud to partner with the Palazzo for our Campus Institute, held June 12-19 in Las Vegas. The Venetian, The Palazzo and the Sands Expo and Convention Center all under one roof, is the largest "green" building on the planet. The Palazzo is a recipient of the LEED Silver Award for New Construction. Their water conservation efforts save 97 million of gallons of water annually. The water they save every year can supply the annual water needs for more than 580 average American households. The Palazzo also partners with a not-for-profit organization, Opportunity Village is a not-for-profit organization that serves people with intellectual disabilities by providing them with vocational training,

employment, and social recreation services that make their lives more productive and fulfilling. They have partnered with Opportunity Village's linen and terry recycling program. Opportunity Village receives clean, but worn out fabrics, and converts them to usable cleaning cloths. Through the program, Opportunity Village is able to employ more than 30 people, training these individuals for potential employment in the community.

I look forward to hearing about how you are doing good!

Take Action

The meetings and events industry is under attack. You can help protect the 17 million travel-related jobs in America by taking action today. Tell your elected officials and the media that anti-travel rhetoric is leading to the displacement of thousands of American workers. Encourage them to look beyond the politics, to support meetings, events and performance incentive travel because it is good business and can help recover and grow the economy. It creates jobs, generates tax revenue and sustains communities around the country. Go to :

<http://meetingsmeanbusiness.com/take-action>



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916-773-3821 • cell 916-425-8211
e-fax 916-405-3687 • terri.schrader@marriott.com

Joy Florentino, CMP
Senior Account Executive
State Association Sales Office
Marriott, Renaissance and J.W. Hotels and Resorts
P.O. Box 660153
Sacramento CA 95866
916-486-6218 • e-fax 916-914-2207
joy.florentino@marriott.com

Education Programs Post High Marks

By Theresa Stamey, Chair Educational Programs

April 2010 held at Scott's on the River:

Doctor Lawana S. Gladney, spoke to our MPI membership and guests about "Reaching Your Leadership Potential" in April during our membership luncheon and about "Creating Meetings that Excite the Brain" during the morning workshop.

During her luncheon presentation she explored whether there is a leader inside of each of us waiting to emerge? Are leaders born or self-taught? Certain personality types lend themselves to natural leaders but leadership skills can also be a learned skill. Learning the art of leadership is imperative to progress and productivity that will enhance your career and daily living. She presented the steps to achieve leadership potential.

Dr. Gladney is a psychologist, speaker, trainer and author. As CEO of Emotions Wellness, Inc. and as a mind doctor, Dr. Gladney has presented speeches and training sessions to educational institutions, businesses, organizations and churches. She is one of Meeting Professional International's platinum speakers. She is a television personality and has been a co-host of a cable show and an expert for Fox 4 in Dallas.

Her areas of expertise include; emotional health and wellness, intrinsic motivation and learning, leadership, stress management, and work/life balance. In addition to being a speaker, author and trainer, she is the founder and executive director of a non-profit organization for women, The Six Million Dollar Woman's Club. She also has served on the board of National Speakers Association North Texas and the board of Meeting Professionals International D/FW chapter and was the recipient of MPI's Rising Star Award.

May 2010 held at the Hornblower in Old Sacramento:

During our Networking Luncheon program Jim Pelley presented: "Embrace Risk, Manage Change & Laugh Often". Jim asked us to discover how laughter and humor can work to your advantage when dealing with the seemingly unfunny business of balancing risk and managing change. During the session he urged us to learn how flexibility and responsiveness can be critical qualities for thriving in a world of ever-accelerating change.

The presentation was fun and explored how the successful use of humor can reduce stress, build morale, and help lead others through difficult times of change. We discovered the importance of maintaining a positive attitude and clarifying values when facing change - or when simply pursuing a happier, more satisfying life.

Jim Pelley was a contributing writer for the original Saturday Night Live Show and Showtime Cable Television. For the past 25 years he has taught people how to use humor to become more creative, more productive, and less stressed. Jim has kept them laughing at more than 2,412 top associations and corporations in the U.S. and abroad, including: Walt Disney Company, Intel, Southwest Airlines, Mattel Toys, and MPI, ASAE.



ON THE MOVE

NEW POSITION

Bea Gomez has joined Shaw/Yoda/Antwih
Denise Yee has joined Smith Moore and Associates

NEW CMP's

Paula Currie, CMP

Deborah Irwin, CMP





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Planner Spotlight



Katrina Duncan is a meeting professional with over 15 years experience, and the chapter's CSR Chair. She has worked in the association, government, and corporate markets and is the Meetings & Event Manager for the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault. Currently, Katrina is featured in the spring issue of Northern California Meetings,

"What to look for before you sign on the dotted line".

Why did you become CSR Chair?

Integrating CSR within conferences and events is the next logical progression in my career. Initially I was involved in only the logistics of planning meetings and conferences; next I became skilled at business strategy and branding of conferences and events. As I have "grown" professionally as a meeting planner, not only do I want to produce meetings and events within budget that drive results for businesses and organizations. I also want to make a positive impact on my community and the environment.

Favorite MPI moment: Attending last year's World Education Congress closing concert, with my arm around Smash mouth and Joy Florentino as my witness!

Favorite Conference or Event you managed? An elegant dinner set on a theatre stage for a 150 customers, serenaded by a tony-nominated Broadway star. Followed by gaming, tequila tasting and cigar lounge, and the evening was capped with an after-hours party on the San Antonio River Walk.

Family: Husband Steffen, Children, Trent 14, Anika 10 & Lizzy our yellow lab

Favorite travel experience: Manilla, Philippines, my husband and I stayed at a resort in the Makati district, of Manilla. We visited Corridor Island and saw monkeys in the wild. I experienced the downpour of a monsoon, tasted banana catsup, and was in a police raid while shopping. The highlight of the trip was visiting the most beautiful tropical jungle with waterfalls and seven natural springs and ponds.

Books Recently Read: The Strength that Remains, by Tracy Kidder and "the Mennonite in the Little Black Dress" by Rhoda Janzen

Favorite Website: Ted.com

Personal Motto: Life. Be in it!

Favorite food: I love simple, fresh food, especially tomatoes from the garden and roast chicken, and I'm a woman who can't refuse dark chocolate.

What is the one skill, sport or talent that you don't do but would love to learn? It is more of a fantasy, but I would love to learn how to play the sax.

Something MPI Members would be surprised to learn

about you: I have worn combat boots, possessed a top-secret security clearance, and was once M-16 qualified (even though I'm scared of guns). I was a member of the 149th Air National Guard, Combat Communications Squadron for six years.

(Annual Board Retreat continued from page 1)

Joy prepared us weeks in advance with thought provoking video clips provided by our facilitator, Steve Swafford of Leadership Outfitters. Each of the Vice Presidents gathered on Saturday and Sunday to lay the groundwork of the retreat reviewing this past year's accomplishments and challenges, worked, what could be improved, etc. When the Committee Chairs joined us Sunday afternoon, we had a good foundation of the rest of the strategic planning session.

Next it was on to the Lodge at Sonoma, A Renaissance Hotel & Spa for mini spa treatments, a tour and a very special 4 course dinner prepared by Chef Janine Falvo with wines for each course selected by sommelier Christopher Sawyer. Special thank you to General Manager Dave Dolquist for showing us the Lodge and making us all feel like VIP's.

After an intense all day meeting on Sunday establishing the MPI map for the year, Sonoma County Tourism Bureau's Paula Higgins, CMP, hosted us at Safari West, a real African safari experience just two hours away from Sacramento. A tour of Safari West included the cheetah exhibit, the aviary with very exotic birds and one of their newest family members, a baby giraffe! An authentic cookout rounded out the evening. Overnight accommodations are available in real African Safari tent cabins. For more information, visit www.safariwest.com.

What made this retreat so special was the collaboration and input everyone contributed. Our last session consisted of VP's meeting with their Committee Chairs to review specific goals for each committee and the plan of attack on how to accomplish those goals. Everyone left with a clear vision of the job ahead with clearly identified goals and missions written by each of the committees with their VP's.

If you're new to MPISSN, then expect a call from me in the next couple of months. One of my goals as (soon to be) President-Elect this year is to reach out to members to explore a volunteer position within one of the many committees. If you would like to talk with me sooner, please give me a call 916.788.8503 or drop me an e-mail at lauryl.hinerman@hyatt.com. How will MPI Rock Your World this year? Join us...it's gonna be a great ride and we promise...it'll be a lot of FUN!

WRAP-UP: MPISSN 2010 Golf Tournament

By Kellie A. Schroeder CMP, CAE - Golf Committee Co-Chair

The MPISSN 2010 Golf Tournament was a day filled of networking, fun and wonderful mild weather. The morning began with Grand Marshall Roberta Campbell (formerly of the California Farm Bureau Federation before retiring) making a rock star entrance to officially start the festivities. The players then headed out to the course to visit with each of the sponsors at their assigned tee boxes prior to swinging away on the fairways.

The competition was fierce amongst the tee sponsors this year for the Sponsor Creativity Contest. During the awards luncheon, the following sponsors were honored for their efforts: Most Unique or Unusual – Hyatt Regency Sacramento; Best Table Décor – Sacramento CVB; Best Costume – Sacramento CVB; Best Game – Sacramento CVB; Best Food/Beverage – Marriott Rancho Cordova; Best Giveaways – Sacramento CVB; and Best Overall – Sacramento CVB.

I would be remiss if I did not send a big thank you to all of our sponsors this year! It is the support of our sponsors that allows MPISSN to produce fun events for the membership to participate in. The table games, costumes, beverages and snacks were much appreciated by the players.

As the sponsors were battling it out trying to win votes, the players were competing on the greens. The third place team was only off the winning score by 3 strokes. There was no separation in the scores between the first and second place teams—they tied! The Pro Shop initiated a scorecard playoff on the back nine to determine the tournament winners. In third place were Gene Coughlin, Lawrence Crane, Jill Dolce and Dave Boldt. The second place team was Jim Jungsten, Robert Best, Howard Harris and Morgan Fussell. The tournament first place team consisted of Jonathan Wiser, John Thompson, Kelly Macy and Rick Perkins. Congratulations to all of our winners!

The 2010 tournament was a sanctioned The Golfe event which was an added bonus as the organization donated four gold watches to our first place team prizes. Another benefit of The Golfe affiliation is the three placement teams will be invited to play in The Golfe's Meeting Masters Championship Golf Tournament taking place November 17 – 21, 2010, at La Quinta Resort & Club. We wish all three teams good luck in their next tournament!

There were two contests running on the fairways during the tournament. Congratulations to Debbie Murdock as she was the winner of the Closest to the Pin Women. This year for a fun twist, a Surprise Water Trap drawing was added to the tournament. On Hole 9, if a player hit into the water from the tee box, their name was entered into a prize drawing. Jeff Gillaspay was the

lucky player whose name was drawn, and he was awarded a bottle of wine for his efforts on the course.

I spent the last year working with our fabulous golf committee members, VP of Special Events, and my awesome co-chair, Kris Keesling of Embassy Suites Lake Tahoe. I would like to recognize each of them for their dedication and efforts on the tournament. Big kudos going out to: Kris Keesling; Lisa Bispham; Donna Boggs; Laura DeOrio; Janneh Johnson; Jessica Lewis; Ed Mahoney; Jill VandenHeuvel; Tamara Williams; Jennifer Winters; and Denise Yee. The golf committee also had a great group of event day volunteers: Joan Enella; Beatriz Gomez; Sarah Sutherland; Melissa Reisinger; and Rosanne Beals. Thank you, committee and volunteers! You did a fantastic job! I would also like to recognize Cindy Miglino, chapter administrator, for overseeing the entire event. Cindy was the thread keeping all of the pieces sewn together.

Kris Keesling and I are turning over the chairing of the golf tournament to Ed Mahoney of Event Ready for the 2011 MPISSN Golf Tournament. We wish Ed and his new golf committee well as they begin making preparations for next year's event.



Photos courtesy of Curtis Tarpley - Express Event Imaging

And The Winners Are...

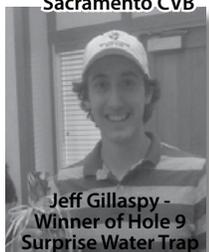
CONGRATULATIONS GOLF SPONSORS!



Best Table Décor, Best Costume,
Best Game, Best Giveaways, and
Best Overall.
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Best Food and Beverage
Marriott Rancho Cordova



Jeff Gillaspay -
Winner of Hole 9
Surprise Water Trap



Most Unique
Hyatt Regency - Sacramento

CONGRATULATIONS AWARD WINNERS!

At the Annual Event Dinner on June 8th, our chapter prestigious Planner and Supplier of the Year were awarded to:



SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR

2009-2010

~Ed Mahoney, Event Ready~



PLANNER OF THE YEAR

2009-2010

~Heather Tanfani CMP, events!~

My First Meeting

By Diane Ramsdell, Publications Chair

The year was 1986; I was Training/Store Manager in Seattle for a national shoe company. Twice a year the company had a National Sales Meeting hosted by various regions. This year our region was hosting the summer meeting. Now normally the Regional Manager would be responsible for the details but he delegated that to me and the two Washington State District Managers.

Where to begin? Sure I had hosted many a social event but never a meeting for 500. Sheer terror set in – the entire company, District Manager level and higher, would be there, including all the top executives and Buyers from the Corporate Office in New Jersey.

My first thought was many of the attendees had never been to the Northwest before and many of the “East Coast Elite” had a pre-conceived notion of Seattle – flannel, Birkenstocks, Honey Granola and so forth – never mind Boeing, Microsoft, Nordstrom and Starbucks! So the three of us agreed our theme would be the best of the Northwest (the Northwest Region included Northern California, Oregon, Washington and Idaho).

We would give each attendee a gift basket filled with Northwest products, host a dinner cruise on Puget Sound and make our own guide books – all of which I was in charge of.

Problem, where do I get 500 gift baskets? Have to make them ourselves. I called all the companies whose products I wanted to include, Chateau St. Michelle winery, Tillamook Cheese, Frango mints etc., enlisted the help of the local store managers and set up an assembly line in my in-laws garage. Gift baskets – check.

Problem, guide book - PC's were not common place yet, cut and paste involved a pair of scissors and a bottle of glue. This is when I discovered Kinko's. Guide books – check.

Big problem, cruise – the weather in Seattle is very unpredictable, even in June. Regional Manager approves budget for cruise, caterer, bartender and band. Dinner cruise – check. Regional Manager calls and says he has second thoughts about cruise, “what if someone gets sea-sick?” Dinner cruise - uncheck. I convince him that no one is going to get sick on Puget Sound; Dinner Cruise – check. We go back and forth on the cruise idea for a month until I finally tell him “too late, it's booked”. Oh boy, what have I got myself into?

The three of us worked pretty much 24/7 for several months, not only did we have to plan the four day meeting but we also had to have our stores in perfect condition as the executives would be touring our stores. Falling asleep in the McDonalds drive-thru, when that midnight cup of coffee didn't come soon enough, was not uncommon.

The big day was finally here, the meeting had been going well and it was time for the cruise. Somehow I had arranged for one of Seattle's most perfect days, the sky was blue, the water was calm and you knew why Seattle is called the Emerald City. I'm on the boat, the caterer shows up, the bartender shows up, the band shows up and I again have enlisted the help of the local store managers to blow up balloons and decorate, all is well.

I have a huge knot in my stomach as the buses arrive at the pier with the attendees. They all board and the Regional Manager is pacing, giving me the “you better not screw this up” look. After an hour or so he gives me the thumbs up signal and I can finally breathe. Later he comes over to me and says “Can we stay out another hour?” But I am thinking “how am I going to get not only the Captain, but the caterer, bartender, band and buses to stay another hour?” I looked around, everyone was having such a wonderful time and that's when I knew I was in love with meeting/event planning. I said “Sure, no problem!”

MPI Meet Different

By Joy Florentino, CMP, Marriott International

Where does the time go? I kicked off my year with MPI Meet Different, February 20-23, 2010 in Cancun, Mexico. In one word...OUTSTANDING! Think about it, it had to be an outstanding conference to keep attendees in their sessions and off of the beautiful beaches of Cancun. Thankfully I was able to enjoy the beach a few hours before our Kick-Off Leadership luncheon on Saturday.

Chapter leaders gathered on Saturday to discuss what is going on with our members in today's world. MPI International listens to what we have to say and has created programs to assist out of work Meeting Professionals to keep their Membership through difficult times. Why? Because while our membership in MPI is a valuable resource all of the time, it is most important when a member is out of work and needs their network to assist them with finding employment.

Jeremy Gutsche, our opening Keynote Speaker is BRILLIANT. Stop right here, and it was worth every penny of my conference registration. Founder of TrendHunter.com, Gutsche taught us

how to become the catalysts for change.

One of my favorite breakout sessions was Dr. Lawana Gladney's presentation on "Creating Meetings that Excite the Brain." She was so insightful and her content so relevant to what we do as meeting professionals that our Chapter brought her out to Sacramento where she presented the same session at our morning workshop.

Most impressive was the "Virtual Access Pass." If you could not make it to the conference, MPI brought the conference to you, FREE! This is the best deal ever. The VAP features more than 100 classes on tap through video, audio-synchronized Power Point and presentation handouts. Do not let this opportunity slip through your hands, visit www.mpimeetdifferent.org. My pick top pick, check out Jeremy Gutsche's General Session.

If you have never been to an MPI Conference, I strongly recommend putting it in your personal plans. Consider it an investment in yourself!



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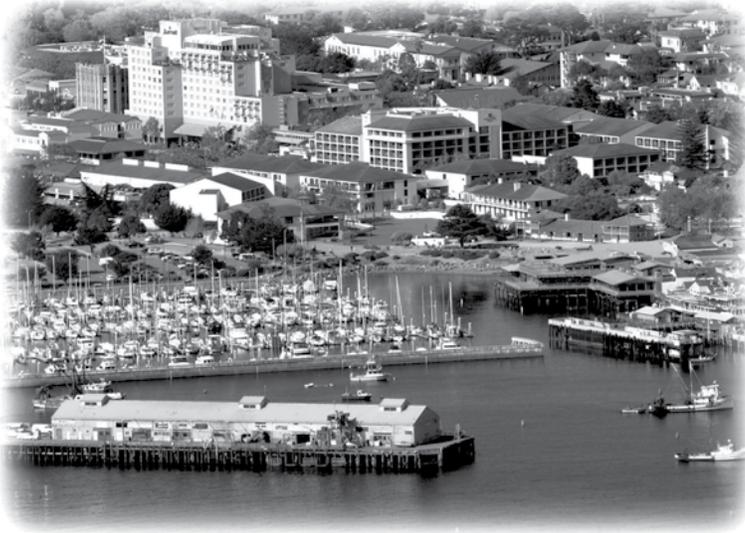
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MPISSN members, family and friends walked and ran in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure on Saturday May 8th, at Cal-Expo in Sacramento. The team raised \$2180.00 for Susan G. Komen foundation - this year's charity. Thank you to Marriott for sponsoring our team shirts!



2010 MPISSN Race for the Cure Team



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