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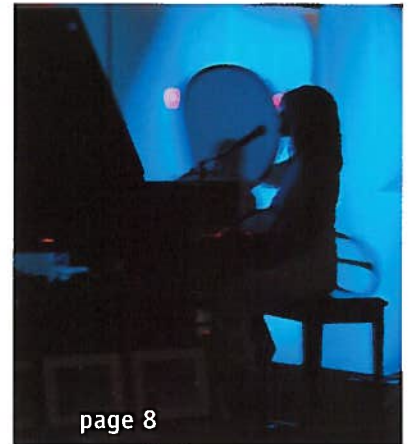
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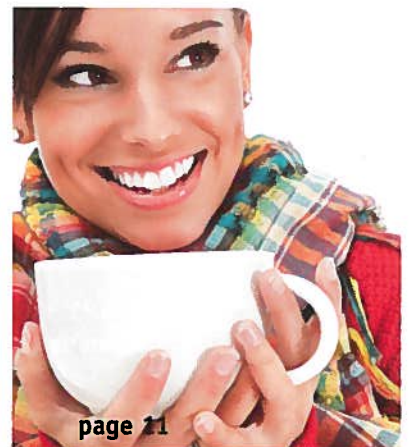
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I know budgets are tight and times are tough. However, I'm here to tell you your events need entertainment.

Don't Stop the Music

By Meredith McIlmoyle

Event Solutions Magazine

I remember producing a general session at a software company's conference many moons ago. The day started with an excellent keynote speaker. Though I can't remember his name, he had an incredibly motivating Mt. Everest story to tell.

Then, it was time to get down to the business of the meeting. No matter how much video or pyrotechnics we put behind the CEO, the material was dry. Even with a speech coach, he was dry. You could feel the sales team slowly losing its steam through the afternoon.

When dinner was finally served, and though it was somewhat interesting and definitely palatable, the life was gone from the room. You could see the conversations at each table revolving around how an unnoticed exit could be made as soon as dessert came.

Then...out comes our band, Boogie Nights. Everything changed. Within 30 seconds, people were on the dance floor. By the second song, those not dancing were singing along to disco tunes and bouncing in their seats. A majority of the team stayed through the last song and begged for an encore.

They had absorbed the material during the day, but the entertainment brought their enthusiasm about being at the conference to a level sales training alone cannot accomplish.

Entertainment is the exclamation point on any event.

I've been hearing discouraging news that some planners are completely cutting entertainment from their events. I know budgets are tight and times are tough. However, I'm here to tell you your events need entertainment.

Now, more than ever, we need to create opportunities to celebrate what is good about our world. Celebrations include entertaining our guests. Think back to your events over the years - it's hard to imagine the smiles on faces without that entertainment, isn't it?

Whether it's a costumed greeter, comedy act, interactive games, music or something as unique as a comedy roast of your CEO, don't lose the magic entertainment brings to your events.

If the programs *America's Got Talent* or *American Idol* have shown us anything, it's that there are thousands of talented people to draw from. They are looking for opportunities to be a part of your celebrations.

Even if your CEO is not as dry as my client was, his or her material will be much more memorable if it is accompanied by toe-tapping disco music! ▶

Article reprinted with permission of Event Solutions Magazine, April 2009.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



NOVEMBER 3

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6 – 7:30 p.m.
Addison Conference Centre
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NOVEMBER 19

Monthly Chapter Meeting

11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

DECEMBER 1

All Chapter Committee Meeting

6 – 7:30 p.m.
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TBD

Holiday Gala



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*MPI D/FW would like
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CITY TALK

City Talk is a spotlight on the new development and upcoming events in our Chapter's cities, brought to you by your local Convention and Visitors Bureaus.

Upcoming Developments: City of Rockwall



The City of Rockwall was recently named one of the Top 10 cities to live in the United States by *Family Circle Magazine*, for populations less than 100,000.

Rockwall's Harbor District.



Rockwall's historic downtown is located just three miles north of the Harbor District.

If you haven't visited the city of Rockwall, you need to do so!

Located on the east shore of Lake Ray Hubbard on top of a hilly terrain, Rockwall is the largest city in the smallest county in Texas (Rockwall County). Conveniently located just 22 miles east of downtown Dallas, access to this beautiful community is easy, being just 35 minutes from Dallas Love Field and 45 minutes from DFW International Airport.

The beautiful Harbor District houses specialty retail shops, restaurants and a new full-service hotel, The Hilton Bella Harbor, overlooking the lake. This facility features 231 tastefully decorated and functional guest rooms, many with lake views. A spectacular bar with fabulous lake views is a great place to retreat after a long day of meetings or just to meet friends. The conference center at the hotel has more than 25,000 square feet of meeting space with all the amenities needed for a successful trade show, meeting or event. During the summer, there are free concerts on the lake each Thursday evening. Rockin' On The Docks is the annual signature event held in the fall at The Harbor, featuring live music all day and arts and crafts vendors. Several other hotels are within a couple of miles of the Hilton, providing accommodations for thousands.

For more information contact the Rockwall Convention and Visitors Bureau at 214-771-3685 or visit the Rockwall Chamber Website at www.rockwallchamber.org

Great activities abound in the area, including boating, wake boarding and fishing. Sailboat cruises for groups up to 50 at a time are available, as well as golf at the beautiful Buffalo Creek Golf Club and a full-service, first-class entertainment facility, Shenaniganz, which can accommodate more than 1,000 guests. Shenaniganz offers cuisine, bowling, a private cocktail lounge, laser tag and many different entertainment options. It is a great venue for corporate team-building activities or just fun for after-hours functions. (For more information, log on to www.Shenaniganz.com.)

Rockwall is proud of its historic downtown, located just three miles north of the Harbor District. Unique restaurants, specialty retail shops and many different activities held on the square on designated Saturdays give visitors the feel and charm of a small town. Founders Day in the spring always hosts a recognized band, which performs outdoors on the courthouse lawn. Additionally, a farmers market is held each Saturday during the spring and summer. The Aspasians Arts and Crafts fair is held each fall and spring and features more than 200 food and arts/crafts vendors.

Visitors love that they can relax, hold meetings and find plenty of entertainment in Rockwall. However, if they choose to catch a Dallas Cowboys, Dallas Mavericks or Dallas Stars game, or shop or dine in Dallas, they are only 20 minutes away from the heart of the city. Come to Rockwall and experience our lakeside living and small-town feel, just minutes away from the D/FW metroplex. ■

Now That's Entertaining!

Choosing the Right Entertainment Is All in How You Stage It



By Debbie Meyers, CSEP
BRAVOEntertainment.com

In determining what musical entertainment is the right fit for your event, the natural tendency is to look first at the numbers, especially with some of the tighter budgets we are all seeing lately. For example, meeting and event professionals today often face the dilemma of whether to use a disc jockey (DJ) or live music at their events. The assumption is that in most cases a disc jockey will likely be the lower-cost option. However, basing your entertainment decisions solely on expense might not be the best approach. After all, entertainment can make or break an event and, equally important, the presentation of entertainment can make or break the impact of a performance.

The benefit to using a DJ is their ability to play the widest variety of music at a reasonably low cost. Live bands, on the other hand, offer a unique interaction

with your audience, and that is an experience that recorded music cannot compete with. DJs can be very cost effective. For larger audiences, DJs simply require additional sound, lighting and, for maximum impact, dancers, music videos and/or IMAG of party revelers to enhance their show. However, adding these production elements for larger audiences increases cost and at some point it, perhaps, becomes more cost effective to utilize a live band. So, what's a planner to do? It may be wiser to put purpose over price when making entertainment decisions.

First, consider the objectives of your event and the demographics of your audience; second, consider your budget; and, finally, consider how you can present or stage your entertainment to get maximum impact.

When designing your event, ask the questions: How many people are in the venue? How much sound coverage will the event need? Communicate with your sound professional, entertainment professional or the performer's representatives to make certain your needs are met.

Lighting can really set the stage. While some acts are perfectly fine with a general wash of light on their stage, most musical performances will stand out with a dynamic lighting design. With the

technology today, a little lighting goes a long way, and a lot of lighting will really be spectacular. Staging entertainers can be a game of smoke and mirrors! A mediocre act will shine brighter and a good dance band will suddenly become an awesome show band with the right staging, set, sound and lighting package.


Be creative. Even the simplest solutions can make a huge difference in the impact of your entertainment. If staging is available at your venue or in your budget, use it! For example, instead of placing a pianist on the ground see if your venue will put their piano on a stage riser. I've even placed a piano on a taller riser with a small sound system and surrounded it with bars for networking receptions. This adds tremendous impact, especially when your décor is minimal.

Need a simple solution to add impact to a DJ in a large event? Give them a stage in the round- in many cases your DJ can bring supplemental speakers and lights to throw sound and light 360 degrees for a reasonable cost. Surround your DJ with a dance floor and - ta-da! - you've got everybody on the dance floor. There are times when hiring both a DJ and a live band works great - especially when a continuous dance experience is your objective. When doing this you can negotiate

Instead of placing a pianist on the ground, see if your venue will put their piano on a stage riser.

IMAGE COURTESY OF DEBBIE MEYERS, CSEP.





Basing your entertainment decisions solely on expense might not be the best approach. After all, entertainment can make or break an event.

to some degree with your DJ if they can share sound with the band.

DJs are coming up with new twists all the time. I've used DJs with dancers, musicians, video and musicians. Now DJ Ravi is a great example – he mixes music and jams on an array of drums and trash cans – toss in some lighting, and it's a great show.

Let's not stop there! There are all kinds of new acts on the scene. I am especially excited about acts that are now fusing technology with live performance. These acts offer the best of both worlds! Musicians and singers who perform with pre-recorded tracks is not new, what is new are acts that are putting a twist on musical styles: Jazz mixed with techno beats, classical ensembles putting their twist on classic and pop hits, synchronized swimmers with techno pop mixes of classic Hollywood musicals! Imagine a harpist playing Led Zeppelin – it's all very cool, and these are real attention-getters for your events.

The latest craze is LIVE Rockstar Karaoke bands! Yes, you and your guests can literally be in the band! (Not all Karaoke Bands are created equal so check around or ask an entertainment professional to see who the best bands are.)

In the end, keeping costs down is on our agenda every day. Keeping your



DJ Ravi.

internal costs down are also important. When budget has to determine your choice be oh-so-careful whom you book. While there are some great values out there, it is also true in entertainment booking that you "get what you pay for." Google is a great tool for finding entertainers... or is it? We get calls regularly from folks who have procured donated entertainment or school-based performers who cancel or no-show. So, again, do your homework on any performer you hire.

You may not need help to find a solo pianist, a trio or a DJ for your event. Yet, when it really matters and you have a million other details to attend to, using a credible, ethical and professional entertainment agent or producer can work in your favor. Consider that a well-established

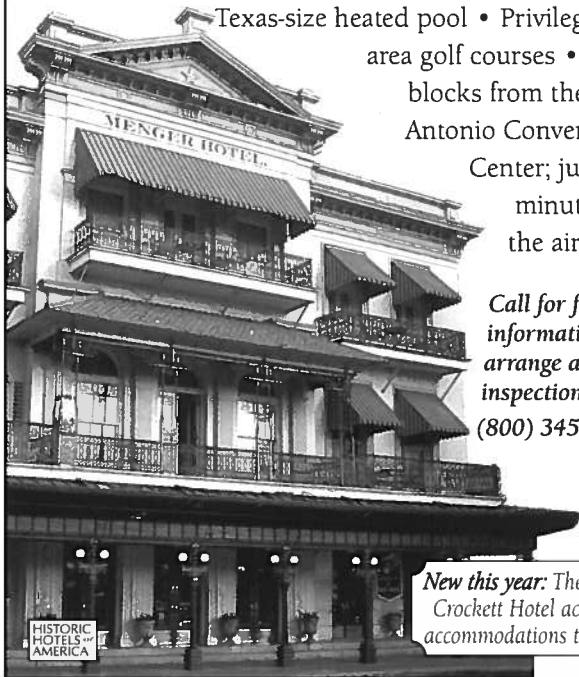
entertainment agent (one that represents artists) or entertainment production company (one that represents buyers) puts entertainment in hundreds of events a year, booking thousands of entertainers. Their knowledge, buying power and long-standing relationships with entertainers allow them to deliver DJs, bands and other entertainers for a lower cost that you can get buying them direct. Just like entertainers, all entertainment agencies and production companies aren't created equal, so do your homework.

The best part is there are more and more great entertainment options out there every day. Just remember to put purpose over price. Select entertainment that helps you meet your event objectives and stage performers for the best impact! ▶

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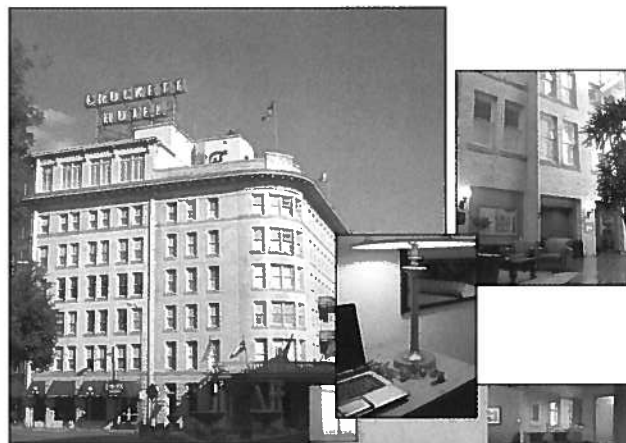
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Staying Emotionally Healthy Through the Holidays



By Dr. Lawana Gladney
Emotional Wellness, Inc

Although the holidays are intended to be filled with peace, joy and cheer, they often bring on stress, depression, imbalance and unhealthy eating. This season is especially difficult because of the state of our economy. Many people have lost jobs, homes, relationships, and self-esteem because of the financial crisis. For those who have lost a loved one, the season is particularly challenging because of the memories and loneliness. So, how do you stay emotionally healthy during this season?

Tips for the Holidays

1 **Don't feel pressured to buy, buy, buy.** Pare it down. You may have always been the Santa for your extended family, but take the pressure off yourself. Everyone is feeling the effects of the economy. If you still feel you have to give a gift to everyone,

2

3

make a gift, or give small, practical gifts such as candles or gift cards for gas or groceries, or bake some cookies – healthy ones, of course.

Avoid emotional eating. It's common to use the holidays as a reason to stuff ourselves like the turkeys, and then make resolutions on New Year's Day to get fit. This is an unhealthy cycle. Most often, you either don't start as planned or start and stop before you reach your goals and get depressed and eat more. Set limits and stick to them.

Don't take on extra projects, activities, parties, etc. If it wasn't already on your agenda, don't add anything extra. It will add stress and imbalance to your life, and you will

4

5

end the year exhausted instead of energized.

Give to the less fortunate. There are so many people hurting and in need. Donate your things you are not using. I cleaned out a closet and found coats, clothes, curtains, comforters and shoes, all in great condition. I have found a family to donate it to, and I am sure it will help make their season bright.

Count your blessings. It is human nature to focus on what we don't have. I challenge you focus on what you do have and be grateful things are not as bad as they could be. Remember, there is someone who would love to trade spots with you. ▀





Spotlight on Tony Cummins, CMP, of THE MEETING DEPARTMENT LLC

Current: What is your position?

Cummins: Planner/Consultant (Owner).

Current: What is a summary of your duties?

Cummins: Everything from CEO to mailroom.

Current: What do you like and not like about working for yourself?

Cummins: I report to my clients. They genuinely appreciate me and what I do for them. It's a very good feeling. Going solo can be isolating. I miss the camaraderie of co-workers and teamwork.

Current: What is your favorite meal?

Cummins: Carolina-style pulled pork sandwich, potato salad and barbecue beans, onions, jalapenos and a cold beer.

Current: Who would be your ideal dining companion (past or present)?

Cummins: My wife. She is my ideal companion. Cheesy, huh?

Current: What is the last book you read?

Cummins: *Now, Discover Your Strengths* by Marcus Buckingham.

Current: What was the last good movie you saw?

Cummins: *Julie & Julia* – fun movie for a foodie like me.

Current: If you could go anywhere you want where would it be?

Cummins: Santa Fe, N.M., and Italy for international travel.

Current: What show(s) do you never miss?

Cummins: *Two and a Half Men*, and my favorite that's gone now, *Boston Legal*.

Current: What are some of your hobbies?

Cummins: My music collection, recording LPs to digital formats, cooking and sharing some wine with friends.

Current: What is the best event you have ever attended?

Cummins: Super Bowl XXXVIII with a ticket to the *Playboy* Lingerie Party, 10th Annual Haight-Ashbury Street Festival, Eric Clapton's Crossroads Festival.



CURRENT: TELL US AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF THAT WE MAY NOT KNOW.

CUMMINS: I OWN A TURNTABLE AND STILL USE IT TO PLAY RECORD ALBUMS. I KNOW, WHAT'S A TURNTABLE?



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

By Lisé Lang | Society Editor

Spotlight on Laura Hallock of FFE Texas

Current: What is your position?

Hallock: Regional Director of Operations.

Current: What do you love about working for FFE Texas (Fun Factory Events / Superior Expo Services)?

Hallock: We are a family-owned company. We have a strong, 25-year history, not only in the Dallas area but all over Texas. Not only our great product, but our amazing people make me so proud to be a part of our company.

Current: What is your favorite meal?

Hallock: Breakfast, every day. It's really good for you.

Current: Who would be your ideal dining companion (past or present)?

Hallock: Breakfast with my dad. He lives on the east coast, and we don't get to do it often enough. We have great talks!

Current: Last book you read?

Hallock: The MPI D/FW *Current* of course. No time for books and the *Current* is way more informative...

Current: Last great movie you saw?

Hallock: *It's a Wonderful Life*. I have the DVD and wear it out!

Current: If you could go anywhere where would you go?

Hallock: The mountains!

Current: What shows do you never miss?

Hallock: *Hell's Kitchen*, *The Amazing Race* and *CBS Sunday Morning with Charles Osgood*.

Current: What are your hobbies?

Hallock: Any activity in the mountains that I can enjoy with my two dogs.

Current: Share something our members might not know about you.

Hallock: FFE Texas is very active in the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition. Every year we sponsor the "Walk to break the Silence." We have had the largest team for the past three years.



CURRENT: WHAT IS YOUR BEST ALL-TIME MEMORY?

HALLOCK: MY FIRST TRIP TO VENICE, ITALY. THE SIGHT OF IT FROM THE WATER WAS SO BEAUTIFUL. I TEARED UP.

Champagne A New Year's Tradition



By Matthew Massengale, CMP, DCMP
Celanese Corporation

Join us as we turn over a new leaf. Welcome to *Off the Vine*, the hottest place to come for the latest trends in food and beverage, cool tips from great local chefs and the latest news from the culinary world. *Off the Vine* is proudly sponsored by The Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau.



The vernal equinox is a time of rebirth and renewal. Dictated by the position of the sun, the stars and the Earth, this phenomenon occurred in early spring as one growing season ended and the next began. Almost every ancient culture welcomed this change with festivities and celebrations. Our ancient brethren would gather with friends and loved ones to sing, dance, eat, drink and celebrate. The celebrations would escalate to a peak the day before the new planting season would begin. European farmers would bang drums and blow horns to drive away demons that might destroy crops, and the Chinese would light the night sky with fireworks to scare away the forces of darkness.

The official start date of the New Year is unknown and varied over the centuries. Between 900 and 1200 A.D., the British Isles celebrated on March 25; the Japanese on Jan. 15; the French on Easter Sunday; and the Italians on Christmas Day. The Roman Senate established the celebration on Jan. 1, long before Christ was born. During the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church came to power and banished all pagan rituals, but aligned some of their religious holidays to fall in line with these ancient celebrations. This allowed the religious to celebrate the New Year with their Pagan neighbors.

Today, New Year's Eve celebrations pay homage to both the religious and the worldly traditions. An elegant evening for

adults to dress in their finest and celebrate all that sparkles; from the glittering orb suspended high above Times Square to the endless stream of champagne bubbles. The excitement of gathering with friends to celebrate the global countdown with an eruption of horns and noise makers and the pop of champagne corks are reminiscent of our predecessors beating drums for luck. Like our ancient relatives, we celebrate with feasts and flowing beverages to celebrate and ensure that the forthcoming year is full of abundance and prosperity.

Food and beverage are very important for a successful New Year's event. Your selections will depend on the type of party you are planning: sit-down formal dinner or all-out celebration with finger foods and hors d'oeuvres.

A standard, all-purpose basic spread should include a cheese (two hard and two soft, such as cheddar, Swiss, brie and chevre) and cured meat display, pâté, crudité's with dip, fruit and a selection of crackers. Ask your guests to bring their favorite dish to share. This is a fun way to try other people's specialties and learn new recipes. As midnight approaches, a selection of desserts and sweets can be set out for your guests to enjoy.

Many cultures serve "good luck" foods on New Year's in order to make sure that next year will be successful and full of good fortune. In Spain, 12 grapes are consumed at midnight – one grape for each stroke of the clock. This practice was started by grape growers to ensure a fruitful crop in the following year. Many Latin cultures still practice this tradition today. Other countries consume cooked greens, as citizens think the leaves are symbolic of money and their economic future. In the Southern

United States, legumes (black-eyed peas) are eaten with financial rewards in mind, as they look like little coins that swell as they are prepared. Around the world, other foods such as pork, fish and little cakes are eaten, as they represent progress, wealth and luck. There is also the belief that there are some foods that should not be eaten on New Year's. Lobsters, chickens and winged fowl are said to be bad luck as lobsters move backwards and this could lead to setbacks; chickens scratch backwards and this could lead to regret or dwelling on the past; and winged fowl because good luck could fly away. In some cultures, it is also customary to leave a bit of food on your plate at midnight to guarantee an abundance of food in the New Year.

**"Champagne should be a daily delight to those who know the true meaning of life."
-Winston Churchill**

Setting up the bar for your New Year's bash can be both exhilarating and daunting. A well-stocked bar is important and should include, beer, wine, champagne, sodas, and a selection of hard liquor, sodas and mixers. An average person has one drink per hour (two, if they are drinking champagne), and there are approximately six glasses in a standard bottle of champagne. This average includes both light and heavy drinkers and can be used to calculate the amount of champagne you will need to buy:

(# of guests x # of hours x 2 drinks per hour) ÷ 6 drinks per bottle = # of bottles of champagne to purchase.

For example: If you anticipate 50 guests at your party and your party is from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. and they are all drinking champagne, you would need 84 bottles of champagne:

(50 people x 2 drinks per hour x 5 hours) ÷ 6 drinks per bottle = 83.3.

Champagne is synonymous with New Years and is born of passion. Crafted by skilled artisans who lovingly combine aged wines with new harvest fresh fruits, champagne is created to provide the clean taste and loving bubbles that dance on the tongue. Winston Churchill once commented "A single glass of champagne imparts a feeling of exhilaration. The nerves are braced; the imagination is stirred; the wits become more nimble." Champagne awakens the senses and the more it is experienced, the more it is appreciated.

The making of champagne is called méthode champenoise, and legend tells us it was perfected in the 1600s by the Benedictine monk, Dom Pérignon. The world's greatest sparkling wines are still produced by his methods. Using this process, the sparkling wines are fermented twice with the second occurring in the bottle. During the second fermentation, the bottles are stored in

subterranean caves and kept at a constant temperature of 59 degrees Fahrenheit and are aged anywhere from 18 months to five years. The less expensive sparkling wines are made in a bulk process method called "Charmat Process." These wines are fermented in large batches for a very short period of time, sweetened, filtered, bottled and shipped. These wines are much less expensive than the méthode champenoise wines, and the flavors and aromas are much lighter and less complex.

There are many styles and flavors of champagne. When selecting the type of champagne you want to drink, it is important to know a few things, starting with the degree of dryness you prefer. Dryness is determined by the amount of sugar added during production. The charts show the items one might consider when selecting the right champagne – flavor and size of bottle.

After you have selected the style and bottle size of champagne, it is important to chill the wine. Sparkling wine should be served very cold – 36 degrees Fahrenheit to 45 degrees Fahrenheit. It is best to chill a bottle in a champagne bucket with ice and water for approximately 30 minutes before serving. When you are ready to serve, remove the bottle from the ice bucket, remove the foil and wire cage that holds the cork. Never lose hold of the cork after you loosen the cage. Point the bottle away from you (and others), tilt the bottle at a 45-degree angle and slowly twist the bottle. Ease the cork out of the bottle so that you only hear a soft "sigh" as the gas escapes. Never let the cork fly out of the bottle. Serve you champagne in a clean, dry, room-temperature flute.

As the bubbles tickle your nose and dance on your tongue, take time to reflect on the past and celebrate your future.

Happy New Year! ▀

Champagne Sweetness Chart

Term	Taste	Sugar Content
Brut	Very dry	1% to 1.5%
Extra Dry or Extra Sec	Slightly less dry	1.2% to 2%
Sec	Slightly sweet	1.7% to 3.5%
Demi-sec or Semi-seco	Sweet, dessert wine	3.3% to 5%
Doux	Very sweet	5% or more
Spumante (Muscat based)	Extremely sweet	7% to 9%

Champagne Bottle Size Chart

Bottle Name	Fluid Measure	# of Glasses	Comparison to Standard Bottle	Description
Benjamin	187 ml	2	¼ Bottle	Perfect to order at a table for one or on a short flight.
Split	375 ml	3	½ Bottle	Great size to share before dinner.
Bottle	750 ml	6	Standard Bottle	Standard size and perfect for taking to a party as a gift.
Magnum	1.5 liters	12	2 Bottles	An abbreviation of the Latin Magnum Bonum, meaning a large good thing.
Jeroboam	3 liters	24	4 Bottles	Named after the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel, who was notorious for warlike ways and idol worshipping.
Rehoboam	4.5 liters	36	6 Bottles	Named for the son of Solomon.
Methuselah	6 liters	48	8 Bottles	Named after the man who, according to the Bible; lived to be 969 years old.
Salmanazar	9 liters	72	12 Bottles	The bottle of the last king of the Israelites, who ruled in about 600 B.C.
Balthazar	12 liters	96	16 Bottles	Named for one of the three kings who brought offerings to the baby Jesus.
Nebuchadnezzar	15 liters	120	20 Bottles	This bottle's namesake destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C., thus beginning the Babylonian captivity. Famous for his hanging gardens, he later went mad and ate grass.
Salomon	18 liters	144	24 Bottles	Extremely large bottles only produced for special occasions.
Sovereign	27 liters	216	36 Bottles	Weights more than 75 pounds and is used to christen ships.

MPI's D/FW Chapter Recognizes its Trailblazers and Pioneers



By Timothy Arnold, CMP
Hospitality Performance Network

The MPI D/FW Chapter is fortunate to have many exceptional people who have given their time and talents to get the chapter to the level it is today.

The people enshrined in the Community of Honorees, our highest chapter award, are trailblazers and industry pioneers. They have mentored hundreds of chapter members and continue to be active in the chapter's success.

Inductees will be profiled on these pages each month – concluding with a remembrance of Sally Goldeberry, CMP, CMM – to allow readers to get to know them a bit better.

Steven Foster, CMP

Managing Partner
of Circle R Ranch
Past President of MPI D/FW Chapter

What was your proudest accomplishment?

It isn't career related. Being married to Wendy Foster is my greatest accomplishment, no doubt. Raising a family with her, building a business together and somehow managing to keep her interest for almost 20 years. Nothing has been more challenging, at times, or more rewarding, both personally and professionally.

What advice do you have for newer people in the industry and in the MPI chapter?

Probably the same advice we all received over the years, but were slow to act upon. GET INVOLVED. Don't waste time being intimidated by the group. Sign up and join a committee. You will make new friends, access a great knowledge base, establish long-term business relationships and have fun. None of this happens if you're standing on the outside looking in.

How valuable have earned designation(s) been for your career and personal life?

As a supplier, the CMP has been hugely valuable. It certainly has been helpful in establishing credibility with planners who also have their own certifications and appreciate the fact a supplier took the time to "do what they have done, professionally." From a personal standpoint, I have always been proud of the fact that the CIC recognizes Wendy and I as the first husband/wife business team to earn the Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) designation, which we accomplished in 1999.

Where do you see the industry in five years?

Faster. Bigger. Better. I think we're on the brink of significant growth and respect as an industry.

What direction would you like to see the D/FW chapter take in the next few years?

I would love to think that a new group of dynamic chapter leaders will step up and take their place as recognized industry leaders. The chapter has a long legacy of leadership, not just at home, but across the industry as well.

What change have you been most encouraged to see in the chapter or industry?

As an industry, we always seem to be on the forefront of change. That speaks for the vision of leadership we have. As a chapter, we seem to be hitting our stride again as a leadership organization.

Who inspired you to become the very best professional you could be?

My mother, Carole Foster. She was a single mom raising three kids and she made sure we had every opportunity available, even when that meant she went without. I've never been concerned about trying to impress anyone but her.

What is your favorite place to vacation and get away from it all?

Home in the islands – Grand Cayman, Little Cayman and Cayman Brac!

Describe the most memorable meeting or event that you planned or hosted.

The Miller Brewing Company National Sales and Distributors Meeting in 2006. The event was for 3,000 top distributors and featured all 12 Miller brands. We created signature-themed areas for each brand, including a sports bar for Miller Lite featuring NASCAR drivers Rusty Wallace and Kurt Busch, a surfing beach for Fosters, a casino with a Texas Hold 'Em tournament officiated by Gabe Kaplan (Welcome Back, Kotter) for MGD, an outdoor lodge and campfire with a longhorn cattle drive for Leinenkugel and a classic car show for Mickey's. We partnered with our good friend Kelly Massey and the terrific team at Freeman and with VWV Group of South Africa. We also made a life-long friend in Cynthia McPhedran, the meeting & event planner at Miller.

What currently inspires you?

My kids. Conor, 8, and Aubrey, 12. I look at them all the time with wonder and appreciate the great privilege it is to be a father.

Colleen A. Rickenbacher,
CMP, CSEP, CPC

President,
Colleen Rickenbacher Inc.

Past President
of MPI D/FW Chapter

What was your proudest accomplishment?

I am blessed. I feel there are a few, including my first book and starting my own business. But none of those compare to the personal side and the grandkids.

What advice do you have for newer people in this industry and in the MPI chapter?

Surround yourself with leaders. Meet the DFW chapter board members, get involved with a committee and truly be involved. Find a good mentor and appreciate all they can share with you.

How valuable have earned designation(s) been for your career and personal life?

I actually received my CMP designation before I "finally" completed my college degree. So to me the CMP was like receiving

my Ph.D. It also gave me the credibility and confidence I needed for my job.

Where do you see the industry in five years?

Hopefully it will be much stronger and better than ever. I hope we see that change in the industry in the next year.

What direction would you like to see the D/FW chapter take in the next few years?

Involve your past leaders. Our chapter is blessed that it has so many industry leaders that we need to take advantage of all of them.

What change have you been most encouraged to see in the chapter or industry?

That we are making changes. I support our new changes and I'm proud that our chapter is becoming the role model for MPI.

Who inspired you to become the very best professional you could be?

My parents. My mom and dad always supported, encouraged and told me to do my best. They have always worked hard and always gave 1,000 percent, so hopefully I

am following in their footsteps. I have also been blessed with strong mentors in my career.

What is your favorite place to vacation and get away from it all?

I love to travel and could be a perpetual tourist. I actually love to go where movies are filmed (Field of Dreams, Madison County, Steel Magnolias) and where famous people are buried, yes cemeteries. I have a list of places I still want to visit (not cemeteries). At the moment Australia, New Zealand, UAE and Egypt are at the top of my list. I have already visited all 50 states, but could do them all again.

Describe the most memorable meeting or event that you planned or hosted.

For as many events as I have planned, my favorite is still the Harley event. Other events were a lot of fun and memorable, but that was the best. My daughter's wedding is also high on the list, but that really doesn't count as an event.

What currently inspires you?

Just life. As we get older, I appreciate everything. God, my family and my dear friends.

Jim Monroe,
CMP, CSEP

President, J Monroe Designs

What was your proudest accomplishment?

My book, *Art of the Event: Complete Guide to Designing and Decorating Special Events*.

What advice do you have for newer people in this industry and in the MPI chapter?

Never stop learning.

How valuable have earned designation(s) been for your career and personal life?

Becoming a certified meeting professional and a certified special event professional were necessary steps in developing a professional career. I simply would not be the professional that I am without having been through the certification process.

Where do you see the industry in five years?

I think we will see a flat growth profile for a couple of years and then the meetings industry will skyrocket. The development of social media and virtual conferences will expose people to more options. Then there will be a driving need

to come together face-to-face to develop those options.

What direction would you like to see the D/FW chapter take in the next few years?

I would like to see it focus on education and branding.

What change have you been most encouraged to see in the chapter or industry?

I am encouraged by an increase in the awareness of the value of supplier members.

Who inspired you to become the very best professional you could be?

My mentor Colleen Rickenbacher, CMP, CSEP.

What is your favorite place to vacation and get away from it all?
The Southern Caribbean.

Describe the most memorable meeting or event that you planned or hosted.

There have been many. The event that I find most memorable is usually the one I am working on at the time. I strive to make every event the very best I have ever done.

What currently inspires you?

The students in my part-time teaching career inspire me with their enthusiasm. I find their excitement about our industry refreshes me and reminds me of why I love what we do.

Next issues's article will feature Bill Boyd, CMP, CMM, CITE; Betty Garrett, CMP, and Pat McCain, CMP.

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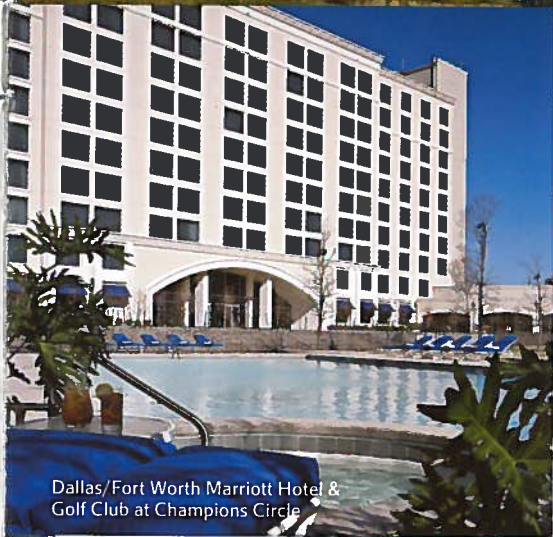
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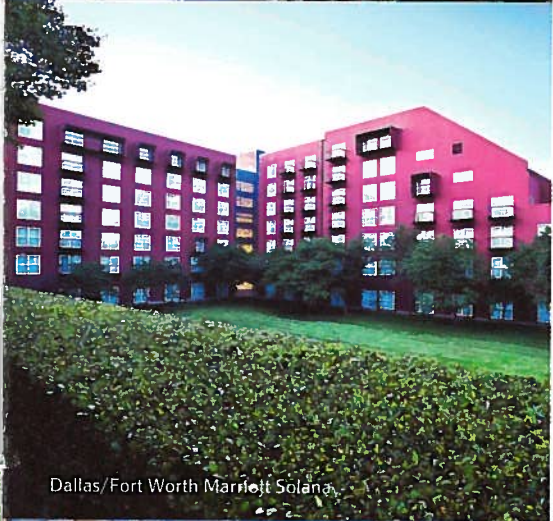
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