

NEWS

ACOM Turns 20, Will Throw Party

By Kevin Eaton

Like most of us kissing goodbye to the teenage years and embracing a 20th birthday, the Association for Convention Operations Management (ACOM) is throwing a party and everyone is invited.

During the upcoming Annual Conference to take place at the Westin Seattle, Jan. 11-13, the association will have a gala atop the Seattle Space Needle to celebrate its 20th anniversary.

The theme for the gala is "Red Hot Anniversary Party" and the association will be honoring all of the past presidents as well as the founder of ACOM, William Just.

The gala will take place Jan. 12, and the "red" theme will be running through the entire event with red accents abounding.

The association is asking for gala attendees to wear something red, "...a ribbon, a scarf, jewelry, blouse, tie...get

creative! But you'd better be sporting some red, as you walk the red carpet to what will be a truly fun night of mingling, laughing, eating, drinking and lots of merriment – ACOM style!" according to the conference Web site.

Specifics of the different recognitions have yet to be determined, but there will also be an anniversary tribute presentation during the last day of the conference.

The conference itself will be undergoing some changes. This year the event will include a leadership track for those with more experience in the industry as well as a track for those newer to the industry.

The track for those newer to the industry is called "The New CSM's (convention service managers: Survival Boot Camp)." This is the first time that ACOM has geared sessions for all CSM's rather than a breakdown of venue, CVB or convention.

"We're teaching them the tricks of the trade," said Lynn McCullough, ACOM, executive director, about the boot camp.

This year's conference will feature a keynote address by Cary Mullen, the world downhill speed skiing record holder at 95 miles per hour.

"We believe the Cary's message to our membership will be very inspiring. We're excited that our members will hear his story and believe it complements the spirit of ACOM projects," said Norman Ford, ACOM president. "He brings an upbeat energy in a very important year for our members."

Mullen survived three near fatal crashes and was initially an underdog, placing last in his first World Cup race. Mullen was also selected as one of Successful Meetings "Hot Speakers" for 2006.

His book series "How to Win" outlines how he used five winning strategies to become a two-time Olympian and

record holding skier.

During this years conference, ACOM is asking attendees for donations for Street Youth Ministries a charity for at-risk youth ages 13-22 in the Seattle area. The faith-based charity offers a "Drop-In Center" where the youths can stop by for showers, light meals as well as hygiene kits and clothing.

The association is looking for donations of hygiene supplies for the free kits, especially combs, brushes, deodorant and travel sized shampoo and lotion as well as art supplies.

ACOM is not stopping with just one charity they are also looking for donations for Childhaven a charity focusing on children one month to five years who are at risk of or have suffered neglect.

For Childhaven ACOM is looking for donations of diapers, baby food, new toys and gently used clothing.

Linda DiMario, Head Of Arlington, Texas CVB, To Resign

By Jonathan Trager

Though she's had a "very exhilarating" ride, Linda DiMario has decided to step down as President & CEO of the Arlington CVB.

DiMario, 58, has led the agency for over six years. She will stay on until December 31, while the board searches for a replacement to lead the \$3 million organization.

"It has been a sometimes challenging, but very rewarding experience," DiMario told USAE. "I work with the greatest and most talented team of CVB professionals in the country, if I may say so. It just seemed like a really good time to make a decision to do something else."

DiMario came to the organization from Los Angeles, where she headed up the Long Beach CVB. The adjustment from

the West Coast to the Lone Star State was a major one, DiMario said. "Texas is like a whole different country with its own unique culture," said DiMario, who became a fan of the Texas Rangers baseball team when she moved. "It's been fun to be part of sort of that Texas pride and tradition. California tends to be much more of a melting pot."

DiMario is leaving at a busy time for the north Texas locale. A new stadium for the Dallas Cowboys is being built, an expansion of the Arlington Convention Center is being discussed, and the Super Bowl has been booked for the city in 2011.

Pamela Roach, Arlington CVB Chairwoman, told USAE she was surprised by DiMario's resignation, but "excited about all that she's accomplished for the city of Arlington."

"She's an extraordinary talent," said Roach. "We're going to miss her, but if there was ever a good time to leave, now would be it."

A self-described "voracious reader of historical fiction," DiMario also plans to work on a novel she has started. The book will be a fictionalized account of her two grandfathers, both born in 1900 but whose lives "took interesting and divergent paths."

DiMario, who's married with two stepchildren, also said she's interested in exploring consulting. She said she has a couple of different types of consulting concepts she's working on that she'll be testing out with focus groups over the next couple of months.

"I'm hopeful my 30 years of experience will continue to be of some value," she said. "I do really love this industry. I want it to prosper and succeed."



Linda DiMario

Association Update

By Kevin Eaton

Association of Litigation Support Professionals Selects SmithBucklin for Full-Service Management. SmithBucklin has been selected by Association of Litigation Support Professionals (ALSP) as its full-service management company. Recently incorporated, ALSP is dedicated to setting global standards for the litigation support profession through member collaboration, education and certification. ALSP has established its headquarters at SmithBucklin's Chicago offices. ALSP is the only litigation support association open to all sectors of the profession including litigation support managers and analysts, attorneys, paralegals, technical support staff, consultants, software developers and judiciary professionals. The association provides a collaborative forum to share information, analysis and future developments concerning this rapidly developing industry. Offering certification and continuing education

to all members, ALSP is dedicated to the career development of practitioners around the world. As its management partner, SmithBucklin will help ALSP establish education, networking and mentoring opportunities to drive value for members. ALSP recently launched its Web site, www.alsponline.org as a resource for members, and began its Charter Sponsor program.

National Structured Settlements Trade Association Selects SmithBucklin for Full-Service Management. SmithBucklin has been selected by National Structured Settlements Trade Association (NSSTA) as its full-service management company. NSSTA, which is dedicated to advancing the use of structured settlements to resolve personal injury, workers compensation and other types of claims, remains in Washington, D.C., and will relocate to SmithBucklin's offices there. NSSTA is made up of more than 600 members whose primary mission is to promote the establish-

ment and preservation of structured settlements in order to provide long-term financial security to claimants and their families through periodic compensation payments. Since 1985, NSSTA has worked with attorneys and consumer and disability activists to champion the benefits of structured settlements.

NTA to Assist NPS with Structuring Group Fee Increases Scheduled for 2010. The National Tour Association is a long-time advocate for equitable and reasonable entrance and user fees at America's national parks. Because of a longstanding partnership with the National Park Service, the two groups have been able to ensure that visitors have equal access to the national parks. As a result of recent meetings with NTA and the park service, there will be no increases in National Park group entry fees until 2010.

While entrance fees for individual travelers did increase in 2007 at many park sites, and will increase

in 2008 and 2009 at additional sites, NTA and NPS have worked to ensure that group fees will remain at the current rates until 2010. Additionally, the industry will be notified of the 2010 rates by August 2008.

Four Association Management Companies Receive Industry Accreditation. In the association arena, Association Management Companies (AMCs) serve as third-party strategic advisors and consultants to thousands of trade associations and professional societies worldwide, offering full-service management and specialized outsourced management resources. AMC Institute, the trade association that represents the association management industry, advocates and administers a benchmark accreditation program to qualify AMCs according to the highest standards of association

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Javits

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Europe, told USAE only that the situation is being studied by the association. Spinnato said the association wouldn't comment until after the October meeting.

The new plan is significantly less than a \$4 billion plan previously considered by the state, as reported in the New York Times. However, it's also significantly higher than the \$1.8 billion proposal passed by the New York legislature in 2006 during the tenure of former Gov. George Pataki. Charles Gargano, who headed the Empire State Development Corp. for Gov. Pataki, says there's no question that the state could build a

"meaningful expansion" of the Javits Center within the \$1.8 billion budget he crafted.

"Right now, the Javits Center works for trade shows but is a disaster as a convention center," Gargano told Crain's. "There should be a way to find the money in Albany to build it."

The project has ballooned in cost, say insiders, due to higher prices for antiterrorism upgrades, utility relocations, contingency accounts, higher construction trade costs, additional renovations and energy efficiency measures to meet LEED standards.

In January, Gov. Eliot Spitzer put the project on hold in order to conduct what he then said would be a 90-day review of the plan passed under Gov. Pataki.

Rogers

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Tom Noonan lauded Rogers's extensive experience.

"Sam's skill set and knowledge will be a tremendous asset to Baltimore's tourism industry, as we raise the bar and look for creative and innovative ways to drive new business to Baltimore with limited marketing dollars," said Noonan.

Rogers acknowledges that Baltimore faces challenges in the years ahead. The city has been criticized in the press for failing to bring in high-profile conventions and fill

downtown hotel rooms.

However, Rogers said the city is moving in the right direction.

"[Tom Noonan] certainly brings the knowledge and energy and creativity to the bureau that will serve the city well for the many years," said Rogers. "I'm also impressed with board and staff members. There's a strong commitment to increasing business here."

A graduate of Colgate University in New York, Rogers has also briefly served as the Executive Director of the Norfolk CVB in Virginia. He's married with no children and enjoys traveling, art, reading, and theater.

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management. AMC Institute Executive Vice President Sue Pine announced the following four Association Management Companies have earned accreditation in the 2006-2007 fiscal year: Creative Marketing Alliance Association Management (CMA), Princeton, NJ; Drake & Company, Chesterfield, MO; Talley Management Group, Inc., Mt. Royal, NJ; and MCI, Geneva, Switzerland. With the addition of these four companies, 38 AMCs now hold AMC Institute accreditation.

Accreditation recognizes AMCs that have demonstrated a commitment and ability to deliver the highest quality services. AMCs must meet measurable performance practices – including contracts and service delivery; employee recruitment, training and professional development; and financial management and internal controls, among others – as determined in a rigorous independent audit of services and procedures. For consideration, AMCs must show compliance with the American National Standards Institute's Standard of Good Practices for Association Management Companies.

CEMA Teams with nTAG for Second Year to Deliver Striking Real-time Event Data Management and Social Networking Services at 2007 CEMA Summit

nTAG Interactive, the premier provider of real-time event data management (EDM) solutions, today announced that CEMA (Corporate Event Marketing Association), a national non-profit organization for technology industry event marketing professionals, used the nTAG EDM system this past summer at the CEMA Summit 2007 held recently in La Jolla, Calif. nTAG was used extensively to achieve the Summit's key objectives, share best practices and build and maintain an active community of event professionals.

CEMA also made use of nTAG's messaging features to communicate late-breaking news and reminders to attendees in order to ensure a smooth-running meeting, on time session attendance and higher attendee satisfaction.

CEMA also used nTAG to include real-time audience response at this year's technology shoot out where the audience voted on presentations by giving the speakers immediate feedback during the segment. Additionally nTAG was also able to keep track of social networking connections that were made between new and existing members, the CEMA Board and CEMA executives. The social networking analysis that resulted proved to be very effective for CEMA planners who were trying to compare components of the 2007 program.

American Management Association Offers New Curriculum on Strategic Alliances and Partnerships. American Management Association (AMA), a world leader in professional development and performance-based learning solutions, is launching a new series of programs specifically designed to empower individuals who are managing strategic alliances and partnerships for their organizations. The new Strategic Alliance Management curriculum will include seminars, Web-based programs, as well as other development materials and training resources.

The seminars in AMA's new portfolio include the Essentials of Strategic Alliances and Partnerships, Launching and Managing Strategic Alliances and Partnerships, and Measuring the ROI of Strategic Alliances and Partnerships. They are endorsed by the Association of Strategic Alliance Professionals and will prepare alliance managers for ASAP certification.

CEIR

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that had growth of 4.8 percent.

Close to 300 events contributed data for the 2006 index and the growth is based on net square feet, attendees, exhibitors and revenue.

Of the four variables revenue was up the most for 2006 with a 9.7 percent increase. Attendance was up 4.6 percent, but exhibitors only up 1.3 percent.

All four of the variables saw growth in during the 2000 to 2006 time period. The net square feet went up by 3.6 percent, revenue up by 2.6 percent, attendance up by 1.6 percent and the number of exhibitors up by 1.5 percent.

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