

Service Isn't Dead... It's Just In A Coma



**Brian Lee, founder,
Team Hospitality**

Join Brian Lee, founder of Team Hospitality, for a discussion on customer service during January's meeting on January 28 at the Comfort Inn in Oak Ridge.

In today's fast paced, technology driven society are our customers receiving the service they should be? As more and more companies focus on the bottom-line, attention to service seems to be overlooked. Excellent service is actually a very easy task to achieve and a relatively inexpensive one to focus on. Your business already spends a great deal of money on labor, but is your staff treating your customers the way you want them to or ignoring opportunities to give great service? Regardless of your industry, great service is always important. The customer is always the customer. You can create loyalty from your customers to your business by improving your focus on customer service. Brian will show you how in this interactive meeting.

Before beginning his new venture, Brian worked with Blackberry Farm, a 44-room country house hotel in Blount County, for over eight years. As Director of Guest Service, his efforts resulted in Blackberry Farm achieving the ranking of #1 in service in the country for small luxury hotels (#4 in the world!).

It's time to revive service from its coma!

February Preview:

Make plans to attend ETMP's first educational conference, co-sponsored by Tennessee Business Travel Association (TBTA), on Tuesday, February 11, at the Knoxville Airport Hilton Inn.

Look forward to an information-packed conference, with concurrent workshops, opportunities to network, and a fascinating and compelling presentation by keynote speaker Al Haynes, captain of United Airlines flight 232. Hear the account of the July 1989 flight where the aircraft experienced massive engine failure and marginal control at best and of the 184 people who miraculously survived the crash landing in an Iowa cornfield. Learn about true crisis management as Captain Al Haynes describes the expertise, communication, and cooperation between

the air traffic controllers, the crew of flight 232, and Sioux City emergency and airport personnel.

ETMP and TBTA are pleased to offer various cost options for attendance to the conference:

All Activities: \$75 members, \$100 non-members
(includes workshops, lunch, and reception)

Workshops/Reception Only: \$50 members, \$65 non-members
Lunch Only: \$25 members, \$35 non-members

Online registration will be available by visiting TBTA's website at www.tennesseebta.org and clicking on Meeting RSVP by February 7.



Members and guests (from left) Jeff and Debbie Shrewsbury, Rachel Park, and Sarah Schroeder mingle at the ETMP Holiday Social and Silent Auction. More than \$1,000 was raised for 2003 ETMP Programming!

Were you captured on film? Look on page five...

TRACK MEETings

"What were the four largest 2002 meetings at MeadowView by total attendance?"

SOURCE: MeadowView Marriott Conference Resort, Kingsport

FOOD CITY FAMILY RACE NIGHT	9,000
TENNESSEE HOEDOWNERS CLOGGING CONFERENCE	3,500
FUNFEST - NICOLE C. MULLINS CONCERT	3,200
HARLEY DAVIDSON SPRING OWNERS CONFERENCE	2,200

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ATTENDEES (THOUSANDS)

Your President Speaks

A brand new year is upon us!



by **Norma Cardwell,**
president, ETMP

Undoubtedly, 2003 will bring a lot of change and challenges as well as opportunities for ETMP. Being that we are barely six months old, we are still very much in the infant stage for the organization, so we should take a moment to celebrate our successes. We have had quite a few, but there are a few that stand out.

We now have 30 members, with a membership drive that promises to help us reach our goal of 50 members. We have had great educational programs in just a short time. And if that hasn't been enough: we had a wonderful holiday event and silent auction where we raised funds for future educational programs.

I am convinced that we will be celebrating even more successes next year because of the wealth of experienced leaders and members we have in our organization! But to have that success, we must first envision what it takes. Let us proclaim some New Year's resolutions. That is, let us establish a theme for 2003 since resolutions tend to exist to correct negative behavior.

I have considered several aspects of our organization, and I believe the theme that best represents what we are trying to do is GROWTH. Simply put: growing our membership and reaping the rewards of the increased member base. Growth is pertinent to all parts of our mission statement to be an organization committed to Education, Career Development, and Developing Business Contacts for Meeting and Event Professionals in East Tennessee. Let's examine each component.

Education – To really provide top-notch education for our members, it is important that we GROW our membership base – in numbers as well as diversity. With a large, diverse membership we will not only have the demand for top-notch education, but we will also have the resources required to meet that demand.

Career Development – There is no doubt that a person's career is determined by the knowledge and skill he or she has to offer. Part of that knowledge and skill is the education component already mentioned. Another major component is the leadership skills obtained by being an officer, committee chair, or committee member. In ETMP, our members have the opportunity to develop many of the same skills that are so valuable in the workplace. An organization with a large membership provides many opportunities to be involved in activities to enhance members' opportunities for advancement. ETMP develops leaders.

Developing Business Contacts – Whether we are planners or suppliers, we cannot be successful unless we have the opportunity to network with our counterparts so that we can know where to go to get our needs met. Sure, we often work with people outside our organization, but we must admit that we tend to do more business with people we know, like, and trust than those we don't know. Some great relationships develop in ETMP, and it benefits us all. With a larger member base, the opportunity to develop these relationships is enhanced.

If GROWTH is the key to success for ETMP, we should expect this theme to be repeated all year long, starting with the current membership drive and ending in December 2003 with an invitation to renew. It promises to be a great year!

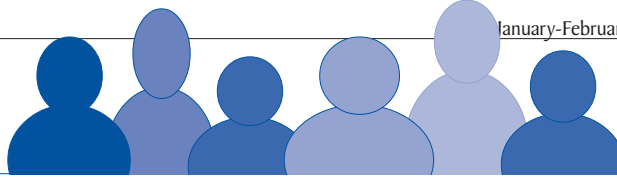
Members Meeting Successes!

Welcome to new member planner **Rose Marie Lasorsa** of the UT Department of Dental Education.

Birthday wishes in January to member supplier **Kathy Nichols** on January 12th and to member supplier and board vice president **Gina Cappelletti** on January 15th!

Birthday wishes in February to member supplier **Laney Shorter** on February 7th and to member planner **Rose Marie Lasorsa** on February 24th!

Meet Your Members...



**Amparo Henderson,
Oak Ridge Associ-
ated Universities**

Name: Amparo Henderson
Title: Program Specialist
Organization: Oak Ridge Associated Universities

1. I've been in the meeting industry 4 years as a planner.
2. The best advice I ever got was: Do not wait for tomorrow to do what you can today because tomorrow is not promised.
3. My worst meetings disaster/horror

story is: I missed my flight out of Knoxville on my way to my first meeting to California as a new employee. I was scheduled for a long layover in Atlanta, so I had the bright idea that I could catch the second leg of my flight by driving to Atlanta and still get to California without my colleagues ever being the wiser to the fact that I had missed my flight! Of course, my ticket was only valid from the point of origination, and I had to drive back to Knoxville and be totally embarrassed. I STILL made it to the meeting on time though!!

4. I wish I could stop: assuming the worst.
5. The average number of events I handle per year is: 40
6. My current home is Oak Ridge, but I've also lived in (born in) Colombia, South America, Massachusetts, Georgia, Italy and Germany.
7. My favorite meetings industry website is It will be www.etmp.org very soon!
8. I really admire the Worthy Woman of Proverbs 31 because she had all the energy, talent, and compassion that I strive for!
9. The most satisfying part of my job is getting paid!
10. Something that most people don't know about me when they first meet me is: That I was born in South America.
11. Some international countries represented at events I've been responsible for include: Africa and England
12. The song I most often sing in the shower is: I don't



**Gina Cappelletti,
Smoky Mountain
Convention &
Visitors Bureau**

Name: Gina Cappelletti
Title: Sales Coordinator
Organization: Smoky Mountain Convention & Visitors Bureau

1. I've been in the meeting industry 15 years as a supplier.

2. The best advice I ever got was: you derive what you receive from any endeavor proportionally to what and how much effort, energy and enthusiasm you expend.

3. My worst meeting disaster/horror story is: When I worked for a hotel I finally got this planner to bring his annual convention to the hotel and then changed jobs about two weeks before. Well, he had some major problems and still reminds me about it!

4. I wish I could stop: Working! No, actually I wish I could slow things down a bit. It seems life is speeding by much too quickly.

5. My current home is Knoxville, but I've also lived in Louisiana and Michigan.

6. I really admire people who follow their passions and are able to make a living doing so because it wouldn't feel like work at all.

7. The most satisfying part of my job working with people, planning an event and seeing it come to fruition successfully.

8. Something that most people don't know about me when they first meet me is: That I'm very active and love adventure trips. I've been to Africa three times, plus Peru and Thailand on adventure trips. I've completed three marathons and three triathlons. My ideal vacation is somewhere exotic, doing something active such as mountain climbing, hiking, biking, etc.

It takes both planners and suppliers to implement successful meetings.

Each month in ETMP News we profile two members; one planner and one supplier.

Let us know more about you!

Complete a Member Profile Questionnaire to be included in a future issue of ETMP News.

Planners and Suppliers needed!

Contact Amparo Henderson at hendersa@orau.gov for an electronic questionnaire.



ETMPNEWS

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DID YOU KNOW? *watching industry trade journals...*

Food Trends On the Horizon

In *Unconventional Cuisine*, the Hyatt Meeting and Convention Cookbook published by *Convene*, the focus was on tips and emerging trends for food and beverage events.

Top Hyatt F&B executives noted what's hot these days in terms of banquet food:

- Simpler food is in, as opposed to nouvelle cuisine.
- Authentic ethnic food and low-cal, heart healthy is also in.
- Out with the chafing dishes, and in with food platters presented in smaller portions and replenished frequently.

Food makes a lasting impression...if it's a good impression, people will want to attend your meeting again next year, according to Nancy Monte-Frye, the senior director of catering and convention services at the Hyatt Regency Long Beach. Properly executed food functions play an important role in meetings:

- Give people who haven't seen each other all year an opportunity to catch up.
- Give people who don't know each other an opportunity to network.
- Keep attendees alert and energized throughout the day by offering the right combination of protein, fat, and complex carbohydrates.

Innovative catering managers are looking at their surroundings to infuse meetings with local flavor. Every destination offers culture and history that can be visually conveyed and tied into a menu. Gary Marr, director of catering at the Hyatt Regency Chicago offers these suggestions:

- Don't overlook the obvious – a fish fry in New Orleans, a clam bake in New England. When people travel to a meeting, they expect to experience the food of the area.
- Go beyond theme parties. In keeping with a cherry blossom theme in D.C., an afternoon break could feature a cherry cobbler, and a reception might have an Asian flavor, since the cherry tree was a gift from Japan.
- Feature locally grown food throughout the meeting. In Calgary, for example, menus might include venison, lamb, Alberta beef, goat cheese, or lamb.

Seasoned directors of catering at major Hyatt properties offer these recommendations for getting more value for your F&B dollar:

- Don't delay menu planning: the further out you plan, the more likely you are to be able to negotiate a better price and the more time the chef has to do something creative!
- Rely on the hotel's expertise: give catering managers your budget and let them tell you what they can do for you.
- Set realistic budgets: don't be forced to cut things later because of an unrealistic budget.
- Start a dialogue: meet the chef during a site visit to establish rapport and build a relationship.



...Mark These Meetings

DATE/TIME: **Tuesday, Jan. 28:** Registration 11:30 a.m., Comfort Inn, Oak Ridge.

TOPIC: "Customer Service Is Not Dead, But It May Be in a Coma" Speaker, Brian Lee (educational meeting)

For more information or to register, please contact Jim Johnson at jhjohns2@prodigy.net or 865-300-7365.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

• **Tuesday, February 11:** TBTA/ETMP Educational Conference. *Knoxville Airport Hilton*

• **Tuesday, March 25:** "Meeting Planning Jeopardy - Do You Know The Answers?" *Location TBA*

Holiday Social/Silent Auction Recap:



Debra Irwin, Denise Viator, and Amparo Henderson

Wow! What a great time we had at the first ever Holiday Celebration/Silent Auction. Thirty members and guests attended the event at the luxurious Club LeConte in downtown Knoxville. Everyone seemed to have a great time, and for some of us it was the first opportunity to actually meet face-to-face!

The evening began with a wine and cheese reception featuring an array of selections as attendees mingled and browsed through the bid items for the Silent Auction. The networking continued during the sit-down dinner, complete with a fine selection of scrumptious beef, chicken, or shrimp entrees. The smooth and mellow sounds of none other than Whistlin' Bob Brittle of

Sevierville, Tennessee, entertained the group as he sang classic country and great folk music to the accompaniment of his guitar. The fun really kicked in when Whistlin' Bob led the attendees in several rousing rounds of sing-a-long – thank goodness he provided the words!!

Silent bidding continued throughout the wine, food, and song as we attempted to outbid each other to claim the fabulous Silent Auction items. We must have been very competitive because we raised an astonishing total of \$1,055 – not bad for our first auction! We could not have done it without the generous support and donations from many of you, member suppliers and planners, who put money down to secure the wonderful array of items, including snack treats, body lotions, and all-inclusive weekend get-aways at some of our supplier hotels.



Betty Pearce



V.P. Gina Cappelletti and Steve Gibson share some holiday cheer



Kristina Pardue and Barbara & Doyle Turner listen intently to silent auction information

When it was all said and done, the night was undoubtedly a ringing success and a great jumpstart to the holiday season. The hard work of our Special Events Committee certainly paid off, and we will be hard-pressed to outdo ourselves next year!



Extends to all members and guests a happy and prosperous New Year!



Teresa and Jim Johnson



Terry and Angie Beach