



## Reflections on an Evening to Remember

*By Carla Slink, Meeting Planner, California Department of Transportation*

As a scholarship recipient, I would like to thank the Sacramento SGMP Board for the opportunity to attend this year's National Education Conference. Every year I come back from the conference excited about a class, a new way to do business, and new acquaintances. This year my inspiration was a speaker... Ruth Gilmer.

As she came on stage, I thought what a classy lady. She was wearing an elegant dress that looked wonderful on her. She had no notes, just her memories. As I sat there listening to her recollections of this wonderful man, I recalled this award at previous conferences when I had wondered why he was thought of so highly. After Mrs. Gilmer told us of Sam's life and dreams I understood and I was in tears. I looked over at Gloria Anderson and Pam Corona and all three of us had tears in our eyes and a warm smile on our face. I kept thinking, *When I grow up, I want to be a class act just like Ruth Gilmer.*

I have enjoyed SGMP, and this organization has truly helped me in my career as a meeting professional. After Mrs. Gilmer's story of Sam and the insight she gave us of the husband, the father, the friend, the businessman, I am extremely proud to be part of such a professional and well-rooted organization. Thank you Ruth, Sam, and to all the members of this organization that have touched my life.

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## Our Honorable Guest Mrs. Gilmer Delights All

The National Conference was exciting, educational, and fun-filled. The personal highlight of many was the Sam Gilmer Awards Banquet, Friday evening, and the presence of Mrs. Gilmer.

Replete with grace, wit, and a story to tell, Mrs. Gilmer dazzled all of the members with her recount of Sam's childhood, education, and the monumental moments that led to the inception of SGMP. For those of us who did not know Sam, we truly had a sense of who he was and the vision he emanated by seeing him through Mrs. Gilmer's eyes. Thank you Mrs. Gilmer for sharing your story of Sam Gilmer and for making our 20th Anniversary National Conference extraordinary.

## President's Message

By Donna Carey

Empowered by the excitement of SGMP, I am honored to step up as your SGMP national president. Ruth Harris, currently director planner, will fill the vacancy of the 1st vice president and Linda Rogers, whose attention to detail and familiarity of the new goals and vision, will return to the National Board as director planner.

SGMP we are awesome! I am delighted to say that the National Board is committed to the goals set for 2001-2003. We are so close to completion, that this next year our primary focus will be the clarification and review of our membership categories; finalizing our members only portion of the Web site; verification and validation of our national policies and procedures; and to redefine the roles of the National Board, Education Foundation, chapter presidents, and 2nd vice presidents' roundtable.

The professionalism and dedication of our members, particularly those who are serving on national boards and committees, are to be commended for their leadership. They are the future leaders of SGMP. Your passion and creativity will take SGMP to measurable successes. Accountability, creditability and sensibility are shared also with our executive director Carl Thompson. His confidence, integrity, and charisma will keep SGMP's visibility at the top of the meetings and hospitality industry.

Let us energize our membership; define our priorities so that every manager or supervisor recognizes the educational value of our role as a meeting professional. Invest your support in the excitement of SGMP. The rewards are immeasurable!

*Note: For those who were unable to attend the National Conference in Norfolk, VA, Cheryl Thompson, CMP resigned as SGMP National President. Retiring from the US Postal Service, Cheryl is taking a new career path. Pursuing her master's degree, Cheryl looks forward to teaching children with special needs. She will not be forgotten; her support and dedication of SGMP will always be remembered. We wish you well and much success in your new endeavor!*

## CPR Celebration of Chapter Success Highlights the Arizona Chapter



This year our community service efforts were geared toward helping

people in need through donation drives. As they say, "One man's trash is another man's treasure," and we took this adage to heart! We designed a program that would encompass as many segments of society as we could throughout the year and would be able to target as many members as possible, in terms of donations. The plan was for members to clear out their entire houses and donate goods no

longer wanted or needed, giving to someone who could use them.

Results included:

- 15 suitcases to the Crisis Nursery;
- 8 boxes of clothing to Tumbleweed Teen Runaway Center;
- 25 blankets to Humanitarian Aid;
- 40 toys to C-Jaz for its Christmas Angel Program; and
- 30 bags of clothing to the Phoenix Rescue Mission for the Homeless.

*Editor's Note: Each issue we will be featuring a chapter success.*

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## SGMP Web Site [www.SGMP.org](http://www.SGMP.org) *Members Only* Section Coming Soon

By Steve Hilberg

A new benefit for SGMP members will be available this summer on the SGMP Web site. You may have noticed that the redesign and upgrade of the site includes a window on the home page for logging in to the *Members Only* section. This section requires the construction of a separate database to handle logins and passwords, which is being worked on and after some testing it will be available for use.

The new feature will contain a meeting professional's toolbox and resources for chapters. There are plans to include an on-line membership directory in the future. As new tools and resources are developed they will be included on the Web site.

Members will be notified by e-mail when the *Members Only* section is available with instructions on how to login. A message will also be posted on the billboard section of the home page.

## From the Editor's Desk . . . Measuring Success!

By Carl Thompson, Executive Director

Measuring success always seems to be a difficult task. According to the *Webster Dictionary* success is, "the achievement of something attempted." Now, that makes it much easier for me to write this article since the focus of this issue is reflecting on the 2002 SGMP Annual Education Conference.

Held in Norfolk May 15-19, 2002, members who attended rated the conference as phenomenal. The city of Norfolk, the Norfolk CVB, the Marriott, and the Sheraton made us feel like royalty. Even the taxi drivers greeted us with open arms. This type of welcoming hospitality set the tone for one of the most successful conferences to date.

From the welcome reception held at Nauticus to the closing gathering at Busch Gardens, everything was smooth as silk. The presenters at our workshops were well prepared, and the attendees rated them higher than ever. To offer Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for the first time raised the bar of us achieving educational excellence again. We have been touting for years that our educational programs are second to none, and having our workshops offer CEUs now makes it a fact.

This year's exhibition show was the largest ever. The response from our supplier members indicated that our government market was terribly important to them, and our planner members are definitely liv-

ing up the phrase "Government Meetings... We Mean Business."

Our opening keynote speaker Lt. Governor Kaine of Virginia expressed how important it was to him and to Virginians that SGMP selected the beautiful port city of Norfolk to hold its meeting there. Listening to our marvelous luncheon speaker Lynn Swann, from the football Hall of Fame, again showed that SGMP has reached the pinnacle of visibility in our industry. Willie Jolley, our closing keynote speaker, taught us how to bounce back from a set back. We all heeded his words of wisdom, telling us to pick up the pieces in our lives and business, move on, and make it even better.

Who can forget the unbelievable speech given by our founder's wife, Ruth Gilmer? She was not only elegant but also eloquent in her comments about Sam and how proud he would be in seeing how far SGMP has grown in numbers, in education, and in recognition in the hospitality industry. I must say though, Mrs. Gilmer did show me up a little. She did not need notes...I did.

To try and cover all of wonderful happenings at this conference in one article would be ludicrous. So many great things happened in Norfolk, and the only word that truly defines it is a huge SUCCESS.

## Highlighting the Newsletter of the Year Awards

By Kit Gonzales, Committee Chair, Newsletter of the Year

As co-chair for the 2001 Newsletter of the Year Committee, I assembled a six-member committee comprised of planners and suppliers from various chapters throughout our organization. After a slow start due to the nation's tragedy in 2001, an enthusiastic panel was solidified. There was much

anticipation among us to get started. Although trying to break the record number of entries, we were still quite pleased to tie the record at 13.

### Preparing for the big event

The *judging* started at the same time as the Winter Olympics. After voicing sympathy for those Olympic

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ice-skating judges, this committee quickly learned about subjectivity. We also claim a spot for being part of the evolution for judging newsletters distributed electronically.

In Norfolk, a fun video was filmed to entice conference attendees to attend the awards ceremony at the business meeting. This video introduced the accounting firm of *SGM&P* (committee members). Then representatives of each chapter that entered the Newsletter and Program of the Year competitions arrived on the red carpet via limousine, and were interviewed by Honor and Awards Program chair, Kristi Griffith. Even a passerby joined in the fun and hopped in the limo on one side and out the other side and spoke to Kristi as if he was a nominee...after introducing himself he just walked on down the sidewalk. This video was a hoot!

#### **And the award goes to...**

Coinciding with the first-ever business meeting, a first-ever Honorable Mention Award was given to the San Francisco Chapter. Their much-improved newsletter scored so well they almost tied for third place. The \$100 and third place award, however, went to the Texas Lone Star Chapter. The \$200 and the award for second place went to the Atlanta Chapter; and \$300 along with the award for **the best** newsletter, went to the National Capitol Chapter. Congratulations to all that entered; keep up the great work! For those interested, I would like to offer insight to each chapter on where their newsletter did not score the maximum points allowed. Contact me at: [smgb@consrcv.ca.gov](mailto:smgb@consrcv.ca.gov).

#### **Chapters deserving special mention**

After the formal scoring was complete, the committee had fun selecting outstanding articles to

honor with special awards. The Emeril Lagasse *BAM* Award was given to the Atlanta Chapter's *Peach Beat* for their regular feature, Chef's Corner. The Best Use of Bovines was awarded to the Old Dominion Chapter's *Commonwealth Connection*, June 2001 issue highlighting the Cows on Parade event from last year's conference in Kansas City. Finally, the Best Use of Industry Humor Award was given to the Great Lakes State Chapter's *Lakesview*, for a cartoon in their January 2001 issue. Tokens of our delight, relevant to the honored articles, were given.

As committee chair, I did not want to miss the opportunity to present the Newsletter of the Year awards to the winning chapters, so I solicited, and was awarded scholarship funding from my chapter to facilitate my attendance in Norfolk. As a tangible benefit, my national committee participation earned me valuable points toward this scholarship. While there are several other tangible benefits of serving on a committee, either national or local, the intangible ones are just as valuable: new friendships, personal and professional growth, and satisfaction of contributing to these worthwhile activities which adds to the pride of ownership in SGMP. Volunteering for SGMP is easy, especially when it involves something you believe in. Chapters AND members will benefit from your *donations* and volunteering helps make SGMP a continued success! Give it a try!

I wish to individually thank the six committee members for their time and efforts in selecting this year's winners for the best newsletters SGMP has to offer. Jane, Keri, Natalie, Kay, Susan, Ann - you were great!! I think I speak for the whole committee when I say we look forward to being the first in line to volunteer as committee members for next year's competition. See you all in Orlando!

## **A Poignant Good-bye**

*By Cheryl Thompson*

As many of you know, the US Postal Service is in the midst of a major reduction-in-forces (RIF). After serving 23 years with the organization, my position was victim to the ongoing RIF. I had the utmost confidence that another US Postal Service or government position with meeting management responsibilities would become available and not require relocation from the St. Louis Metropolitan Area, which was a priority to me and my family. Unfortunately, that was not the case and I am electing to take an *early-out* retirement from government service.

Based on our current bylaws and looking to the continued forward movement of the organization, effective May 24, 2002 I resigned as national president of the Society of Government Meeting Professionals. First vice-president Donna Carey will make an admirable replacement. She will be the strong leader and outstanding communicator that SGMP needs as we begin our third decade of excellence.

I am grateful to have had the honor to be SGMP's president, for the personal growth and friendships afforded me through the affiliations with our group, and I look forward to serving the organization in other capacities. Please feel free to contact me at 407 Gruber Avenue, Union, MO 63084-1901; [thompson@yhti.net](mailto:thompson@yhti.net); or 636.583.4595.

## Conference Quotable Quotes

- ◀ “This is what we work for all year. The blood and sweat is SO worth it when we get here,” says Raquel Correa.
- ◀ “The more skin you show, the less powerful you look,” heard at the *Secrets of Professional Image* workshop.
- ◀ “Y-M-C-A,” the Village People performing at the welcome reception.
- ◀ “Don't attend all the arguments you've been invited to,” heard at the *Survival at the Speed of Life* workshop.
- ◀ “Your attitude determines your altitude,” says Willie Jolley, guest speaker.
- ◀ “SGMP is *the* BEST professional organization in the meetings industry.”
- ◀ “5 + 5 = 60,” No, it is not new math, just ask anyone who attended the *Survival at the Speed of Life* workshop.

## CHAPTER MONTHLY MEETINGS CALENDAR

### Chicago Chapter

- June 19: Awards Dinner and Nominations

### Dallas Chapter

- June 14: Awards & Installation of Officers

### Florida Capital Chapter

- June 18: Honors & Awards, Hiltons of Florida
- July 16: Oceans Resorts

### Greater Oregon Chapter

- June 18: Member Application & Installation of Officers, Red Lion Salme

### Heart of America Chapter

- June 19: Family Feud, Marriott Downtown
- July 17: Team Building, Holiday Inn Citi Center

### Heart of Illinois Chapter

- June 24: Putt Putt Event
- June 25: Installation of Officers, Island Bay Yacht Club

### Lone Star Capital Chapter

- June 13: Time Management, Norris Conference Center
- July 11: You want it by when?, Radisson Hotel

### Minnesota Northern Lights

- June 20: Liz Jordan, Hotel Sofitel Minneapolis
- July 18: Summer Outing, City-View Banquet & Conference Center

### Missouri State Capital Chapter

- June 13: Behind the Scenes Program, Awards and Installation of Officers, Lodge of Four Seasons
- July 11: Scholarship Recipients Tell All, Hotel DeVille

### National Capital Chapter

- July 18-19: Board Retreat, Radisson Penn Harris Hotel

### Old Dominion Chapter

- June 12: Awards Banquet, Holiday Inn Koger Centers

### Rocky Mountain Chapter

- June 25: Annual Awards Banquet
- July 23: Double Tree SE

### Sacramento Chapter

- June 13: Awards & Recognition Celebration, Embassy Suites

### St. Louis Gateway Center

- July 24: Lodge at Grant's Trail

### San Francisco Chapter

- June 13: Balance-Healthy, Fit, and Dealing with Change, Serrano Hotel
- June 18: Working with CVBs, USS HORNET

### Wild West Chapter

- June 13: Awards and Installation, Waterford Hotel

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