

No Tipping Please, It's Our Pleasure

In preparation for the NRA Board of Directors annual two-day retreat, I was asked by our Nominating Committee to list all of the meetings during the year at which I was present. As I reviewed my calendar, the list grew and grew....and grew. Wow. Lots of meetings. And these weren't soft, fluffy, rah-rah meetings either. These were real "save the world"-type meetings.

Looking at the list, coupled with feedback from a former NRA Chairman, I realize that this is what I wanted – an active role in an Association charged with the monumental task of protecting and promoting the restaurant industry. But I am only one of nearly twenty Board Members (and many more Committee Members) that devoted their time to causes of the Association and the Restaurant Industry. Following are some specific accomplishments of our Board during 2003.

Lorri Davidson

Lorri was added to the Board of Directors in 2003 and was promptly appointed to serve as Chairman of the Allied Committee. In less than a year, Lorri oversaw the creation of the Vendor Value Program and, with great help from Joan Heffner, prepared a wonderful brochure outlining the program. The program was kicked off at an Oktoberfest event at Ellis Island (special thanks to Karen Dorsey for hosting) and the brochures are expected to be mailed out by November 15, 2003. This program represents a commitment to creating selling opportunities for the Association's Allied Members while providing benefits for the Association's Restaurant Members. I urge all Allied members to participate in this program, which will continue to expand over time, incorporating benefits from members in Northern and Southern Nevada. Those interested may contact Rick DiMartino at (702) 878-2313, Extension 104.

Sam Facchini & Bob Ansara

These gentlemen serve as the Association's driving force regarding governmental affairs. Bob serves on the Board of Directors of the National Restaurant Association and, until this year, handled the Association's Political Action Committee events. By facilitating a reworking of the Association's Restaurant Issues Luncheons, the Association plans to exceed its optimistic PAC fundraising goals. Sam orchestrated this year's attendance at the National Restaurant Association's Public Affairs Conference in Washington, DC. The event, under Sam's watch, was the most successful I have personally witnessed during my tenure with the Association. We had great meetings with all of our Federal Legislators and dined with Congressmen Porter and Gibbons. Many of us were even lucky enough to witness the unveiling of the Blue Man Award!

Nevada Hospitality Foundation

The Nevada Hospitality Foundation is the charitable arm of both the Nevada Restaurant Association and the Nevada Hotel & Lodging Association. This year has been the most successful ever, with the Foundation awarding more than 30 scholarships to Nevada's finest students.

Please note that these are but a few examples of the great work performed by your Volunteer Board of Directors, Members of Board Subcommittees and Association Staff and Leadership. With the Nominating Committee's assistance (under Karen Dorsey's fine leadership), I believe that 2003 has seen a dramatic improvement in the number and quality of active Board Members, which, in turn, had a direct positive impact on the overall quality of the Association's activities. I personally applaud these fine folks for their contributions, and thank them for shaping the foundation upon which the future of the Association will be based.