

# CMAA's Leadership Conference

*Focuses on Current Issues*

Leadership is the act of motivating individuals to work as a team to accomplish great things," says Scott Julien, chief operating officer, Waverley Country Club, Portland, OR. "This makes the Leadership/Legislative Conference an invaluable platform by providing leadership education and leadership resources to accomplish just that.

"The objective of this intimate gathering of CMAA members is met by motivating chapter officers and other individuals to work together to accomplish great things at the chapter level. They clearly met their objective."

And so, the benefits ripple down through the private club industry, directly to CMAA chapters and clubs.

Immigration reform and its effect on staffing; new audit standards; marketing and member retention; spa and fitness facilities are all major topics on the agenda for private clubs today.

Dealing with these myriad issues stresses the need for greater education, exposure, debate and action by private club managers and boards of director, in not only the United States, but also private clubs around the world.

And these issues garnered the focus at the Club Managers Association of America 2007 Leadership/Legislative Conference (LLC) recently in New York City.

Editorial staff of BoardRoom, including publisher John Fornaro attended the conference at the behest

of CMAA's chief executive officer Jim Singerling. It offered an opportunity to better understand the educational process CMAA provides for its members, as well as open the door for future stories about CMAA, the Business Management Institute, and other learning programs available to club managers.

The conference also marked another step in the development and co-operation between the Club Managers Association of America and the Club Managers Association of Europe, with the announcement of a new CCM designation for European club managers at the Business Management Institute, St. Andrew's, Scotland in November 2007.

"This is good news for managers

*Cover Story by Dave White, editor*

who, for the first time, will have a professional qualification recognized throughout the European club industry,” said Jerry Kilby, CMAA chief executive officer, London, England, who attended the New York conference. “Managers who aspire to be among the best in their profession and aim to develop their careers will benefit significantly from this qualification.”

In New York, the conference was another great success for CMAA. “With just under 170 chapter leaders in attendance – the highest total to date – and 42 chapters represented, it was a busy and productive weekend,” enthused Kim Pasquale, CMAA senior vice president, membership operations.

This highly participatory program is designed to provide CMAA chapter officers/directors/chairmen and national committee members, and ultimately club managers with the education and training necessary to successfully accomplish chapter and related leadership goals.

CMAA’s LLC highlights expert presentations on leadership skill-building and legislative/regulatory developments that have immediate impact on volunteer management and chapter members. Topics at the 2007 conference included:

- Leadership and chapter outreach
- Time and risk management and team building
- The “State of the Association”
- Legal, tax and governmental issues updates and
- Strategic development and thinking.

At these conferences, everyone has ample opportunity to network and discuss pending association/industry issues, and provide valuable feedback to the CMAA board and national headquarters staff during focus groups and roundtable discussions.

“Being at industry conferences and education seminars gives us the opportunity to tap into the secrets of the successes of the industry experts,” explained Alan Kinkle, chief operating



officer, Lexington Country Club, Fort Myers, FL.

“Club management professionals join CMAA for the same reasons that members join a country club – to be with individuals of similar backgrounds and interests which, in turn, allows us to learn and grow and benefit from their knowledge.”

Chapter leaders are encouraged to deliver the information garnered from all the sessions, especially Jim Singerling’s ‘State of the Association’ address to their chapter constituents and club colleagues upon arriving home.

“Information sharing from events like this keep the grassroots nature of our association intact,” Pasquale expounded.

“This conference helps the general managers by exposing them to the most current legal and tax related issues facing clubs today,” added David McCabe, CMAA’s senior director, education.

“It also exposes them to excellent presentations on leadership issues that

managers can use in their role as chapter officers, as well as in their everyday job of leading their clubs. Many chapters find new and exciting speakers for their chapter events by attending LLC each year. We try to introduce a number of new speakers each year as well so that our members are not hearing the same presenters year after year.”

“The education chair is responsible for designing the chapter’s educational calendar for the year,” McCabe explained. “This is usually completed after the chapter surveys members to find out what topics they would like to see covered each year.”

McCabe added: “The education chair works closely with the certification chair to ensure that all nine of the certification competencies are covered throughout the year. They are responsible for promoting the general chapter education sessions (generally anywhere from one - three hours) as well as chapter CMI workshops.”

These all day workshops generally focus on one specific topic and there’s a



test at the end of the program. Chapters generally hold one to three workshops a year.

“All of CMAA educational programs from BMI courses, LLC, world conference education and local chapter programs are aimed at providing club managers with the most recent and cutting edge information to help them provide first-class service to their members,” McCabe commented.

“Conferences like LLC are of great service to CMAA members because the chapter officers take the information back to their members. It also provides chapters an opportunity to preview new speakers, because most speakers receive multiple invitations to present their information at the local chapters after presenting at LLC,” he added.

Of course, a focus of the education is to encourage club managers in their quest for their CCM (Certified Club Manager) designation, in not only the United States, but also other countries around the world.

“We have an enormous amount of the most current information available to us through these events and through other services provided through CMAA, such as Premier Club Services and BMIs,” Kinkle commented. “The GM is a clear-cut beneficiary who then hopefully filters down this information through the board, to the members and the entire organization benefits.

“Board members should receive copies of monthly periodicals like BoardRoom Magazine, At Your Service, and Private Club Advisor, which are good resources to help them understand the club industry. A well-informed board is necessary for the success of the club,” Kinkle opined.

And now CMAA staff is preparing for next year’s Leadership/Legislative Conference back in the Washington, DC area, scheduled for September 12-15, 2008 at the Ritz-Carlton, Pentagon City, VA. **BR**

## Here’s How General Managers and Clubs Benefit!

BY **SKIP AVERY**

In our cover story on the CMAA’s Leadership/Legislative Conference, we’ve emphasized the fact that various chapters around the country benefit when chapter representatives pass the information along to their colleagues. Here are the thoughts of **Skip Avery, general manager, Nakoma Golf Club, Madison, Wisconsin** on how clubs benefit from these gatherings:

Our club benefits on many levels. Depending on the topic, I take home materials and information that has immediate impact on the club. For example, the material and information that was shared by Greg Gregory on *Leadership – “increase service – attitude and teamwork”*; or the tax information offered by Kevin Reilly, which is usually always current and pertinent.

And hearing “The Seven Levels of Empowerment” helps the understanding of how those different levels work within the management structure of your club; or hearing the “Four Traits of a Effective Team,” and just having the ability to identify the traits of the team, contributes to being a more effective general manager.

In addition, this year the legal presentation was emailed to us and that can be implemented into any club handbook.

I feel that because of the networking opportunities, just being around that many people with the knowledge and passion for the industry, you learn as much from that as then a conference itself.

If the leaders of the chapters are doing their jobs, the information they receive will impact on the chapter and individual clubs by sharing the information, by including it in the chapter education program, by providing written reports, and including them in the chapter newsletter; and by becoming a resource person for other club managers.

Chapter leaders also receive great information from Jim Singerling on the achievements and direction of the association through the State of the Association address. For some of our members who can't get to conference and only receive visits from national directors every other year, this information helps them keep in touch with national. I feel this is the responsibility of those chapter leaders or designated representative to LLC to share this information and increase the value of being a member of CMAA.

*Does the benefit come more to the GM and board because of issues that are raised? Or both?*

Yes! If it benefits the manager and that manager is doing his job, it will benefit the board and ultimately the members of that club. The information is always relative to what is happening in the industry and the networking

that's provided by LLC is priceless. This conference for the cost is one of the best values offered to CMAA members.

Moreover, managers must continue to educate their boards on the importance of professional development, just not for themselves but for their team. They must continue to promote themselves, CMAA at the chapter and national level and their staffs. But most importantly they must use what they themselves and staff have learned and show the results by improving their club.

Managers must continue to show their boards of their desire and ability to continue developing their skills or the team's skill. Then managers must use this information to improve the club experience, because if they don't the board will either start micromanaging or find a new leader. **BR**