



As our association comes down from the high of its Annual Meeting, I want to take a moment and reflect back on the event.

This was the first time that a sitting Governor addressed the Greater Miami hotel industry. When one looks back in history, one wonders why it took so long. The answer is simple: You, the members of GMBHA have made it possible for us to be recognized for our leadership in the halls of the Capitol.

Because of all of you, WE passed the Clean Air Act allowing smoking outdoors; WE were able to have then Governor Bush veto the Sloppy Joe's bill, a bill that would have had a negative impact on our hotels and dining establishments; WE were also able to have Governor Bush veto a bill which would have allowed a surcharge on car rentals; and WE passed the "Save Our Summers" bill allowing schools to open no earlier than two weeks before Labor Day.

WE is a powerful word. Every time I look at the faces of the 20 young people from Best Buddies who are now independent and have meaningful jobs, I think WE. When I think of our new community initiative, a Hotel Division of Habitat For Humanity, I think WE.

With the Holiday Season approaching, WE have a lot to be thankful for; family, good health, good friends and the knowledge that through our actions, WE made a difference, not only in the industry we serve, but also the quality of life of all the people WE touch.

I thank all of you who have made the past 14 years meaningful for me. I've said more than once, it's not about me, it's about you, it's about WE. I hope 2008 brings each and every one of you good health and a prosperous New Year.

Stuart Blumberg, Pres./CEO

Governor Charlie Crist Addresses 700 Attendees At GMBHA Annual Meeting



GMBHA President Stu Blumberg Greets Florida Governor Charlie Crist at 13th Annual Meeting

(The following is an excerpt from an article in the South Florida Business Journal written by Ty Traps who covered the event)

Gov. Charlie Crist linked property and insurance tax reductions to the health of the tourism industry in a speech Monday to the Greater Miami and the Beaches Hotel Association Annual Meeting.

"If we reduce those taxes, residents will have more in their pockets to spend at hotels," Crist said.

The meeting looked at some of the organization's notable accomplishments during its 16 year existence. The hotel association was responsible for the state's "Save Our Summer" bill which moved the opening of school this year to August 21 to allow more time for Florida vacationers. The organization also opposed a bill allowing a surcharge on car rentals, vetoed the previous year by Gov. Bush at the insistence of GMBHA.

"It means a lot to our members that Crist came because it recognizes and validates the hard work we do," Blumberg said.

Blumberg also announced a new partnership with Habitat for Humanity/Greater Miami (creating a Hotel Division) where hotels undergoing refurbishment will donate older furniture, electronics or bedding to the non-profit organization. "With so many of our hotels undergoing renovations, it's a great solution" Blumberg said.



SO WHAT'S GOING ON AT GMBHA?

This has been an extraordinary 4th quarter for our association and it looks like we are not going to slow down as we say goodbye to 2007 and hello to 2008.

GOV. CRIST ADDRESSES ANNUAL MEETING

This event is well documented on the front page of the "Hotelier" and all we can say is that his visit was the highlight of not only this year, but since our inception in 1994.

2008 MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGNS KICKS OFF

"One dollar more, one member more" continues to be the theme of the GMBHA Membership Campaign. Under the leadership of Spero Canton and Armando Valdes, the Membership Committee, which each year has achieved that goal, is committed to keeping the streak intact.

We at GMBHA believe that our "inclusive" membership (website, Visitors Guide, Luncheons, Inn Key Awards, Annual Meeting and above all 100% representation on all levels" is what we ask individuals and companies to consider.

We look forward to achieving our goal.

(FOR INFORMATION CALL 305-531-3553)

GMBHA PRESIDENT HONORED

Stuart Blumberg, GMBHA President was recently honored by both the ACADEMY OF HOSPITALITY & TOURISM and THE MIAMI BEACH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Blumberg, along with Bob Dickinson and Jeanne Westphal, founded the Academy 20 years ago. Along with American Express, watched the program grow from a single school to over 90 chapters throughout the U.S.

The Chamber honored Blumberg as the Founder of "The Pillars" as well as being a Past Chairman of the Chamber. Long time Chamber member and Past Chairman Leon Manne was also honored.

MANDARIN ORIENTAL RETAINS CUP

The golf team from Mandarin Oriental repeated as champions at the 2nd Annual Chairman's Cup held at the Miami Beach Golf Club.

Over 100 golfers, representing both Hotel and Allied members took to the links to try and topple last year's champion but to no avail.

Runner up was the team from the Florida Marlins followed by Capital Grille.

Longest drive was Vladimir Tabares and Closet to the Pin was Gabriel Valle, both from Capital Grille.

Best Buddies was our partnering organization.

"HOTELIER GOES HI TECH

Beginning with this issue, you will now find our newsletter on our website www.gmbha.org.

As much as we've enjoyed mailing it to you the past 14 years, we believe it's time to join other organizations who use their websites for information.

We hope you find this more convenient and it will be tough to throw it away as in the past unless you are ready to toss your computer.

GMBHA PARTNERS WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY GREATER MIAMI.

Not being an organization that is satisfied with past accomplishments, GMBHA, at its Annual Meeting announced the formation of a Hotel Division within Habitat For Miami.

The initiative, being chaired by George Cozonis, Sonesta Bayfront Suites, is the first of its kind. Our member hotels who are continually upgrading their properties and disposing of old furniture now will have an outlet that at the end of the day will be providing Habitat families with much needed furnishings. This includes old TV's, dishes, linen, etc., in addition to furniture and bedding.

For additional information and how you can participate, call George at 305-529-2828 or Steve Levin at ReStore 305-637-4913

BEST BUDDIES CONTINUES TO GROW.

We are very proud here at GMBHA of the success we've achieved with our partner, Best Buddies Jobs.

When we approached Founder Anthony Shriver three years ago we promised that we would set a goal of at least six young people being placed in full time positions in our member hotels.

As we near the end of year three, we are proud to announce that we have placed 20. Full credit goes to Kevin Devine of Best Buddies Jobs who has worked with us from day one so we could meet our goals.

For additional information please call Stu Blumberg at 305-531-3553.

"INN KEY" 2008 SCHEDULED FOR HYATT REGENCY MIAMI

Incredible but true. Here we are saying goodbye to 2007 and we are already in the planning stages for the 2008 Annual "Inn Key" Awards Luncheon which is right around the corner.

On Monday, May 5, 2008, the stars will again shine on your employees as they gather at the Hyatt Regency Miami to celebrate the 14th year of this spectacular event.
