

# EXECUTIVE *focus*

ISSUE 1  
SPRING 2017



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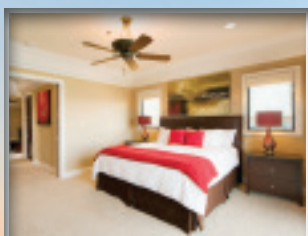
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## SUBMISSIONS

News items from our membership are welcome. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit and/or reject all materials received. Submissions may be condensed in order to fit the allotted space. Local photographs may be submitted by our members for consideration of cover placement. Please submit photo in high resolution and include a photo release. Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication.

## ADVERTISING

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# 2017 Calendar

## Board Meeting

March 14, MSAE Office

## Membership Meeting and Workshop

April 21, Capitol Plaza Hotel  
Reception Sponsored by  
Stoney Creek Hotels

## Board Meeting

July 18, MSAE Office

## ASAE Annual Meeting

August 12-15, Toronto

## Missouri Event Summit

August 1, Capitol Plaza Hotel

## Board Meeting, Funfest and Annual Meeting

September 18, Meadow Lake Acres Country Club

## Board Retreat

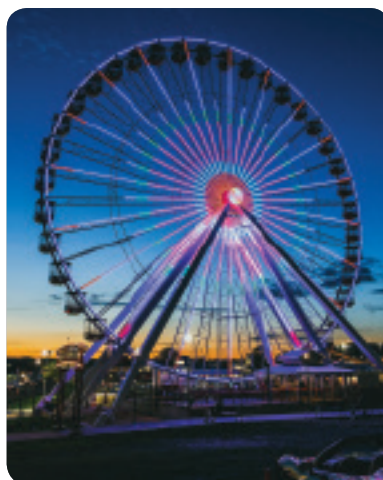
October 27-28, Lake Ozark

## Membership Meeting and Workshop

November 3, Doubletree Hotel  
Reception Sponsored by  
Embassy Suites by Hilton  
St. Charles

Go to [www.MSAE.net](http://www.MSAE.net) for  
current Calendar of Events

# Cover



The Branson Ferris Wheel has landed in Branson, so should your meetings! Formerly Chicago's iconic Navy Pier Ferris Wheel, this historic wheel was ridden by nearly 17 million people from 1995 to 2015. Standing 150 feet tall, its 40 gondolas hold 240 riders and lights up the night with 16,000 LED lights. An amazing light show, "Electrify"- A Music and Light Spectacular! is featured at 7:00, 8:00, 9:00 & 10:00 pm every night March-December and on weekends in January and February (weather permitting). Groups of 20 or more enjoy special rates. A great new off-site event option for your next meeting in Branson!



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY JAY HAHN

Greetings! Hopefully the cold blustery winter is now behind us. It is hard to believe that it is already March and the spring flowers are already starting to come up.

Speaking of Spring, the General Assembly is in full swing during legislative session on some matters that will affect our members. For those that do have legislative agendas this year, I wish you the best of success. We all know how important some of these issues are to our industries and associational membership. Keep hitting the ground running...well, at least until May 12!

With Spring here now, MSAE has lots of opportunities for our members to take advantage of this year. Beginning on April 21, MSAE will be hosting a membership meeting and education workshop at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Jefferson City. This workshop, like other workshops hosted by MSAE, offers you the ability to meet and network with fellow associational executives, to increase your association's effectiveness and image, and to have fun while doing it. This workshop will be followed by our Missouri Event Summit at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Jefferson City on August 1, and our annual FunFest and Annual Meeting at Meadowlake Acres Country Club in New Bloomfield on September 18. FunFest and our Annual Meeting are a few of my favorite events, so make sure to mark your calendars. You won't want to miss out.

With lots of opportunities for involvement, and activities for our members, there is something for everyone. As always, our association's success is directly linked to the participation of its Members. I look forward to seeing you there and making MSAE as vibrant as ever.

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## CVB, Sports Commission Announce Staff Changes

Susan Wade, Public Relations Manager, Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau



Katie Johnson

Springfield, Missouri - Two staff changes were reported by the Springfield, Missouri, Convention & Visitors Bureau and Springfield Sports Commission.

Katie Johnson is now the assistant director for the Sports Commission. Prior to accepting the position, Johnson was the sales assistant at the CVB for five years. She replaces Ashton May who left the Sports Commission to pursue a career in real estate.

Johnson's responsibilities include enhancing the visibility of the Sports Commission by selling and retaining membership in the organization and assisting the director with event development.



Jill Pearce

Jill Pearce was hired to replace Johnson and now serves at the CVB's sales coordinator. Pearce oversees the group tour and small meetings market and provides support to the group sales and services department.

The Convention & Visitors Bureau and Springfield Sports Commission are nonprofit organizations dedicated to boosting the local economy through growth in travel and tourism. The Sports Commission is managed by the CVB.

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## MSAE Member Featured in Midwest Meetings 2016 Winter Issue

Congratulations to Maria R. Davis, CMP, Missouri REALTORS' Director of Meetings and Partner Relations, on being the cover feature of Midwest Meetings magazine 2016 Winter Issue ([www.midwestmeetings.com](http://www.midwestmeetings.com)). Maria shares some insights on how she goes about her work in planning and executing all of the association's Conferences and Events including her guiding principles as a Meeting Planner.

Midwest Meetings is published quarterly and circulated to 28,500+ meeting and event planners plus hotels, resorts, and CVBs in MO, IA, MN, KS, NE, ND, SD, WI, IL, MI, IN, OH. Maria has been in the Meetings/Lodging/Tourism industry for the past 26 years, and with Missouri REALTORS for almost 3 years.



Photo Credit: Casey Buckman Photography - Columbia, MO



## CVB Presents Annual Awards from Springfield, Missouri

Springfield, Missouri - The Convention & Visitors Bureau presented awards to travel industry individuals and organizations at the Salute to Travel & Tourism awards banquet and CVB annual meeting Feb. 16.

Roseann Bentley was presented with the Pinnacle Award, honoring individuals who have been active in the travel industry for many years and have made substantial contributions to the betterment of the Springfield area's travel industry.

Bentley, former Greene County commissioner and state senator, improved the city's travel and tourism industry in many ways, including improving the environment and infrastructure and helping obtain funding for Wonders of Wildlife. While serving in the Missouri Senate, Bentley also was a member of the Tourism Commission, the governing body for the Missouri Division of Tourism.

To see a video honoring Bentley, go to <https://www.springfieldmo.org/salute17>.

Awards were presented in four other categories:

- The Hospitality Award was presented to Hotel Vandivort. This award is presented to an attraction, lodging facility or restaurant which demonstrates outstanding hospitality to the traveling public and exhibits a team spirit in promoting growth of Springfield area travel and tourism.
- The Diplomat Award went to Dan Lennon, director of the Missouri Division of Tourism. This award is presented to a government official, organization or employee who has provided significant support to the Springfield area travel industry.
- The Spotlight Award went to the Price Cutter Charity Championship. This award is presented to an individual, business or organization not usually considered part of the travel and tourism industry for noteworthy contributions in advancing travel and tourism in the Springfield area.
- The Ambassador Award was presented to the Missouri chapter of Future Business Leaders of America. This award is presented to individuals or organizations who generated significant economic impact for the area by working to encourage tourism or secure a major convention or event in Springfield.

The CVB also presented Decade of Service Awards to Gary and Georgia McKean and the Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to Craig McMichael.

The CVB is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the local economy through growth in travel and tourism.

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Calendar for*

**April 21**

**Capitol Plaza Hotel**

*Roundtables on  
Conference Planning and  
Membership Meeting Luncheon*



## CVB is Excited to Announce Two Viewing Events in Anticipation of the Total Solar Eclipse

In anticipation of the total solar eclipse on Monday, August 21, 2017, the Columbia Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) is excited to announce two viewing events for residents and visitors to attend. On the day of the eclipse, those in Columbia will witness over two and a half minutes of totality beginning at 1:12 p.m.

Cosmopolitan (Cosmo) Park will host the largest viewing event, which will be open to the public. Attendees can expect live music, food vendors, activities, educational information, recreational opportunities and more. The park also is home to large open spaces, which are ideal for viewing the eclipse.

Eclipse enthusiasts who are traveling with large equipment may want to view the eclipse at Gans Nature Area, where there will be less activity and a smaller crowd. The location is near the ideal path for viewing totality.

Along with the viewing events on Monday the 21st, the CVB plans to announce other weekend events in the coming months to entertain residents and visitors and embrace the spirit of the eclipse.

In order to continually keep residents and visitors informed, a website regarding all eclipse-related events and information has launched at [www.Co-MoEclipse.com](http://www.Co-MoEclipse.com). The site will be updated frequently as new details and events are confirmed.




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## Ramada Plaza Hotel & Oasis Convention Center has New Name

The Ramada Plaza Hotel & Oasis Convention Center has announced that effective March 1st, the hotel will be renamed the Oasis Hotel & Convention Center, and will become a member of the Ascend Hotel Collection through Choice Hotels. This will mark a departure of the hotel from the Ramada Worldwide brand. The hotel ownership, management, and staff will remain the same.

The hotel has seen much success during its time in the Wyndham franchise as a Ramada. This includes Best of the Best awards in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2016, Wyndham Sales Team of the Year in 2012, a promotion to the higher classification of "Ramada Plaza" in 2013, Property of the Year award in 2015, and Quality Hotel of the Year and Innovator of the Year in 2016.

Speaking about Ramada Worldwide, Oasis General Manager Missy Handyside stated, "Becoming a Ramada was a very good move for us at the time. I am confident that we were successful at meeting or exceeding the brand's quality expectations throughout our partnership."

The move to the Ascend Collection through Choice Hotels will allow the Oasis more freedom and flexibility to embrace the hotel's unique identity. "Ascend is an upscale brand featuring unique, historic, and boutique properties that connect with the essence of local culture," says Handyside. "While some hotel chains insist on remodeling to create consistency and familiarity, the move to Ascend allows for the Oasis to maintain its unique attributes." The Oasis Hotel & Convention Center is known for

a modern and tropical décor, including live tropical plants in the indoor Atrium. Local owner Robert Low has continually made improvements to the property since his purchase in 1999. This included an extensive expansion and renovation in the mid 2000's, expansion of the convention center in 2012, and remodel of poolside guestrooms, suites, and addition of courtyards in recent years. The move to the Ascend brand corresponds with the renovation of 120 guestrooms, also slated for completion March 2017.

Handyside states, "We are excited for the opportunities that the rebranding will bring. We are very proud of our continued upgrades in both facility and service, and are ready to take both to the next level."





## Best Western Plus Capital Inn Recognized with The Brand's Highest Honor at Best Western's 2016 Convention

At Best Western® Hotels and Resorts' 2016 convention held in Phoenix, Arizona, the Best Western Plus Capital Inn in Jefferson City was recognized for the fourth consecutive year with the brand's highest honor, the M.K. Guertin Award.



The prestigious M.K. Guertin Award is held in the highest regard as hotels that receive this award best represent the vision of Best Western's founder and demonstrate exceptional levels of quality, guest satisfaction and dedication to the brand. The hotels must also meet other brand standards and membership requirements to qualify for this award. The Best Western Plus Capital Inn is one of only 31 hotels out of more than 2,100 properties in North America to receive this award.

In addition to the M.K. Guertin award, the Best Western Plus Capital Inn received the 2016 TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence for the fourth year in a row. This award is given to hospitality businesses that have earned great traveler reviews on TripAdvisor over the past year. The Best Western Plus Capital Inn is currently ranked the #1 hotel in Jefferson City and also has a full 5 out of 5 ranking on TripAdvisor.

Located at 1937 Christy Drive, the Best Western Plus features 75 oversized suite style rooms as well as an indoor pool & hot tub, and 24-hour fitness and business center. Family owned and operated by the Gerstner family, the Best Western Plus Capital Inn strives to provide the highest levels of customer care and cleanliness.

For reservations, call the hotel directly at 573-635-4175 or call Best Western's 24-hour, toll-free number at 1-800-WESTERN. Reservations are also available through [bestwestern.com](http://bestwestern.com).



Property with newly released logo



Left to Right:  
Terry Porter, Vice-Chairman of Board of Directors Best Western Hotels and Resorts  
Dale Gerstner, Owner Best Western Plus Capital Inn  
Kathy Gerstner, Owner wife Best Western Plus Capital Inn  
David Kong, President and CEO Best Western Hotels and Resorts



Left to Right:  
Lori Norman, Executive Housekeeper Best Western Plus Capital Inn  
David Kong, President and CEO Best Western Hotels and Resorts  
Kelsey Brown, Assistant General Manager Best Western Plus Capital Inn  
Dale Gerstner, Owner Best Western Plus Capital Inn





## What's New in Branson

### TITANIC MUSEUM ATTRACTION

Titanic Museum Attraction, honoring James Cameron's "TITANIC" in celebration of the iconic movie's 20th anniversary, has a limited engagement new gallery to showcase many, never-before-seen elements from the movie – costumes, set pieces, props, signed scripts and more. March 12-June 13. Titanic Branson looks forward to "TITANIC" re-release in 2017 and to honoring its 20-year anniversary.

**Sycamore Creek Family Ranch** – this new venue is looking to expand into the association market as a unique off-site event site for up to 300 people. Visit their website here <http://www.sycamorecreekfamilyranch.com/> or contact the Branson CVB for more information.



### JOHNNY MORRIS' NEW GOLF COURSE

Bass Pro Shops founder and noted conservationist Johnny Morris has teamed up with golf icon Gary Player to create a world-class short course that will deliver an unparalleled experience for golfers. Winding through breathtaking rock formations and showcasing some of the most dramatic views in the Ozarks, Big Cedar Lodge will unveil its newest golf experience in the spring of 2017.

### Fritz's Adventure

This dynamic family attraction brings the excitement and challenges of outdoor adventure into a multi-dimensional indoor environment. Explore three stories and 80,000 square feet where you can experience elements of the world around you that, anywhere else, would be prohibited or discouraged. All ages are encouraged to experience the family adventure together.

### Pub Crawls at the Branson Landing

The Branson CVB can connect you to the restaurants and bars on the Branson Landing to organize a fun pub crawl or progressive dinner. This lakeside entertainment complex features options including Irish pubs, Mexican cantinas, sports bars, moonshine tasting rooms, fish & seafood houses, piano bars and steakhouses. These progressive events can be structured many different ways – using wristbands or attendee badges and can be billed to the group or individuals can pay a discounted rate for drink and food specials. Many of these establishments can feature live music.





## Chef Paul Trout Named Executive Chef at Chateau on The Lake Resort, Spa & Convention Center in Missouri

BRANSON, MO (January 2017) -- The AAA Four-Diamond Chateau on the Lake Resort, Spa & Convention Center, located in the picturesque Ozark Mountains overlooking pristine Table Rock Lake in Southwest Missouri, has named Chef Paul Trout its Executive Chef. The announcement was made by the resort's Vice President and General Manager Stephen Marshall.

In his new position Chef Trout is responsible for overseeing all culinary operations at the resort, which boasts one of the largest convention centers in Missouri, with 43,500 square feet of flexible meeting space all on one level, with the ability to host groups from 10 to 3,000. He also oversees the food at the resort's dining venues, which includes the award-winning Chateau Grille, the Downstairs Deli, the Atrium Café & Wine Bar, and The Sweet Shoppe, as well as in-room dining. Widely considered one of the finest resorts in the Midwest, the 301-room resort has received the coveted AAA Four Diamond Award for 18 consecutive years, and is the only hotel or resort in Branson to hold the prestigious rating in 2016.

Prior to his promotion, Chef Trout served as the resort's Executive Sous Chef since 2011, where he handled all kitchen operations in the absence of the Executive Chef. In that position, he created menus and recipes for the resort's restaurants, banquets, and winemaker dinners. He has been very instrumental in the quality and creativity of the resort's food over the last several years, which enabled the hotel to receive such honors as 417 Magazine's "2016 Readers' Choice Award" as one of the "5 Best Branson Restaurants" in 2016.

Prior to working at the resort Chef Trout served as Sous Chef and Banquet Chef for Tapas Downtown in Redding, California; Chef for The Shasta Experience, a catering business in Redding, California; and for the U.S. Air Force as Field Technician for the

Electro-Mechanical Team Section of the 341st Missile Maintenance Squadron. A Certified Fire Fighter, his diverse experience also includes serving as a firefighter for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Chateau on the Lake Resort & Spa's dining options include the award-winning Chateau Grille, known for its elegant presentation and exceptional cuisine. Casual fare options include: the Downstairs Deli (seasonal), serving bistro-style sandwiches, hand-made pizza, and "to go" box lunches; Atrium Café & Wine Bar, located in the lobby beside an indoor waterfall and stream; and The Sweet Shoppe, offering ice cream, baked goods, candies, and specialty coffees.

"Chef Paul is an outstanding and very talented chef, and we are so pleased that he is now overseeing the culinary offerings at Chateau on the Lake," said Marshall. "He has been instrumental in bringing our food offerings to an even higher level, and our guests and groups will love his truly delicious, creative and beautifully presented cuisine."

Chateau on the Lake Resort, Spa & Convention Center is known for its breathtaking vistas of Table Rock Lake, lush gardens, and surrounding mountains. In addition to its impressive setting, the resort offers an array of recreational options, award-winning service, and a location convenient to the diverse entertainment offerings of popular Branson.

Not resting on its many laurels, the resort completed the renovation of its 301 guest rooms and suites, and the renovation of all of its smaller meeting rooms, in January 2015. In addition, in January 2015 the resort added a new Executive Board Room with state-of-the-art A/V and technology capabilities, and enhanced all of its meeting space (including its 32,000-square-foot Great Hall ballroom) with new LED lighting,



new flex-back banquet chairs, and new "linenless" meeting tables.

The resort offers 20 meeting rooms, including the 32,000-square-foot Great Hall, and three corporate board rooms in addition to the Executive Board Room. The resort also features a private 54-seat theater for special presentations, high-speed Internet access in all meeting rooms, a 24-hour business center, on-site Audio/Visual service with state-of-the-art A/V equipment and technology, complimentary Wi-Fi in pre-convene areas, and outstanding banquet and catering services.



# Why Great Executive Directors Need Great Boards

By Larry Merrill, CAE, *Reprinted from Association Impact, Volume 33, 2016*

**In too many organizations, an effective board is more a product of public relations than reality. It's time to move beyond only the appearance of meaningful contributions from your board.**

Effective organizations need effective boards. And great boards are essential for an executive director to be great. But effectiveness and greatness do not occur by accident or by boards that are limited by their own executive directors' governance expertise. Great boards must be able to think and act in collaboration with the executive director, and with competencies they are capable of exercising independent of staff direction and control.

Governing boards are expected to lead. They are expected to be the effective voices of those to whom their organizations are accountable, and to bring stakeholder perspectives into high-level, strategically important discussions. Governing boards are also expected to protect the public interest; in fact, state and federal case law very clearly place a high fiduciary standard of care, loyalty, and obedience on board members. When a number of high-profile public and private organizations broke the public trust in spectacular fashion about 16 years ago, regulatory agencies and Congress raised their expectations for governing boards to curb executive excesses. Board members are accountable for having a high level of knowledge and understanding of the organization's legal obligations and compliance.

Governing boards are expected to ensure that their organizations have the necessary resources to accomplish things members value and expect. Governing boards are expected to prevent bad things from happening. The very legitimacy of an organization's actions depends on board proclamations and media statements from elected leaders giving assurance that a transparent,

democratic body accountable to the association membership is in charge and stands behind the organization's position.

In association newsletters and at member events, association executives pay homage to their boards' leadership. But in too many organizations, an effective board is more a product of public relations than reality. When asked what makes a board good or great, the bar is set pretty low. Executive directors might describe their boards as "nice people." "Our meetings are very civil." "Our chairman runs a good meeting." "They stay out of my business."

Civility is a good thing, sure, but do their governing boards actually contribute anything of major value toward the association's success? Are executive directors satisfied with — or even prefer — boards that only provide appearances of member accountability and oversight, but which in fact do little other than rubber stamp staff recommendations?

And what do board members expect from board service? Well-intentioned board members are quick to affirm that it is not their job to "micromanage," but often struggle to describe what their job actually is. Absent a clear definition and understanding of what boards are expected to contribute to the organization's success, governing bodies too often devote their time to sanctifying the executive director's operational decisions. This may create the appearance of meaningful board oversight, but it accomplishes little other than providing political coverage to the executive director. Boards that do not understand their job can become preoccupied with their own perks and prerogatives rather than focusing outward on what the association is supposed to accomplish.

Well-intentioned boards may think they are doing the organization a favor by limiting themselves to passive roles

in critical decisions, deferring to staff "experts" in all matters. In turn, executive directors think they are blessed to have a board that mostly stays out of their business. When a board not only stays out of the executive directors business but also relinquishes all real leadership to the executive director, is the organization truly well served? Even when an executive director resists the temptation to lead a weak board, someone or something else will step in to fill the vacuum — one or two strong board members, the executive committee, or the board president — to do the thinking for the board. To the organization's detriment, insights from the full board remain untapped.

Passive boards weaken organizations. When the staff invariably steps in to try to fill leadership void, time and resources spent doing the board's thinking can't be directed at operational issues that also need staff attention. Absent meaningful board engagement, strategic decisions will not be as well informed, staff biases can inadvertently alienate members, board service is less rewarding, and members are less enthusiastic to engage on association advocacy campaigns that lack authentic stakeholder ownership.

And executive directors who own their associations' risky decisions also put their jobs on the line if important people within the organization get upset because something didn't go right. Boards lacking the knowledge to provide meaningful oversight of association finances risk contributing to an organization culture that tolerates shortcuts and short changes measures that would effectively protect the associations assets.

However, when governing boards exercise authentic leadership, members tend to be more energized and willing to become more engaged — because their peers are guiding the organization's

» (continued on page 17)





# The Dysfunctions of a Board

By Connie Hanner, M.Ed., and Bob Harris, CAE

Volunteers are integral to an association or chamber of commerce. Members are asked to contribute time, energy and resources on boards and committees.

Every nonprofit organization requires a board of directors. The model have proven for more than a century: **The board GOVERNS and the staff MANAGES.**

The board is intended to be visionary in setting the direction of the organization. Staff and committees are expected to implement decisions of the board, advancing the programs and initiatives to fulfill the vision.

The organization's mission statement and strategic plan communicate the organizations priorities and should frame nearly every discussion of the board.

## Governance vs. Management

While volunteers readily accept an offer to join the board, very few have experience with governance. It is an amorphous concept, influenced by state and federal laws, governing documents, culture and established precedents by prior boards.

The most sought after directors are members who are known to be successful in their field of work; owning a business or heading up an organization. Their success is usually based on management duties which they bring to the board table. However, having management skills does always translate to great governance skills.

Management includes hiring and firing, investing, purchasing and marketing, for instance. Governance requires visionary perspective, maintaining relevance, ensuring sustainability and increasing organizational awareness. Governance is the development of strong leaders and the creation of a strategic plan.

At the board table, directors sometimes revert to short term thinking and tactical advice (familiar to management). However, these are the responsibilities of professional staff and committees — not the board.



## Fiduciary Roles

There are numerous dysfunctions that can affect boards. While all directors should be appreciated for their volunteer work, an organization wants to be cognizant of dysfunctions that may arise.

- 1. Over Extended** – Organizations often seek out persons with board experience. That means the volunteers may be serving on other boards simultaneously. Be leery of a volunteer who is over extended, cannot say “no,” or may have a conflict of interest by serving on multiple boards with similar purposes.
- 2. Founders Syndrome** – The founders of an organization rightly have great pride; but sometimes they don't want to allow future leaders to take over. It might require some grievance, but founders must release their powers and trust that future leaders will respect their values and purpose.
- 3. Engagement** – Once on the board, directors must do more than just attend meetings. They are trustees of a corporation; stakeholders or members expect them to come to meetings prepared. Between meetings directors may have assignments, reports to read or prepare, visits with members or need to help committees.
- 4. Valued Contribution** – Directors are expected to contribute to the mission and/or money to the organization. They should continuously evaluate resources, recognizing they are positioned to help raise funds, enroll new members, or personally give their time or resources. In-kind contributions are valued.
- 5. Pretty Face** – Some organizations seek to increase their stature by adding persons to the board because they are respected and recognizable. The problem is while the directors may have been added to increase organizational posture, they are trustees who are expected to fulfill fiduciary duties and advance a plan of work.
- 6. Dominant Board** – The board or some of the directors don't trust the staff. Directors meddle with programs best managed by staff. Staff should be respected as professionals in their field of work.



**7. Dominant Staff** – The staff babysits the board, not trusting them to develop a strategic plan or to head up committees. It takes a partnership of board and staff trusting each to advance interests together.

**8. Recruitment Failure** – The number one lie of a nominating committee is, “You won’t have to do anything when you get on the board.” Equally as bad is to advise a member who briefly leaves the room, “Guess what, we’ve assigned new duties.” The nominating process should be taken seriously. Consider it an interview process rather than simply a list of names on a slate.

**9. Personal Agendas** – A volunteer with a personal agenda to promote their interests is a distraction. The IRS expects organizations to identify conflicts of interest, suggesting that everyone on the board is working towards the same mission without personal agendas.

**10. Board Size** – The average size board in the USA is 15 persons. The IRS suggests the board be of a size to allow for meaningful discussions. A large board is more costly to manage and staff, although there is more diversity and input. A smaller board is easy to convene and make nimble decisions.

**11. Term Limits** – The majority of organizations have term limits, suggesting a director must take a year off after serving two 3-year terms or three 2-year terms. This allows for new persons to bring fresh perspectives. No board wants to be characterized as the “good old boys.” If term limits exist in the bylaws, be sure they are respected.

**12. Group Think** – Some boards are characterized as moving through the agenda with minimal discussion. “Group think” is characterized by decisions made simply to support the ideas of peers. The board table is not the place to rubber stamp business.

**13. Self-Evaluation** – Directors are expected to evaluate programs and financial performance. Only a few boards are willing to keep a scorecard of whether or not directors are fulfilling expectations. Volunteers should implement a continuous improvement process through a board evaluation and discussion of director engagement.

The greatness of America is reflected in the 1.5 million nonprofit organizations working to improve a community or cause. In every instance, a volunteers are credited with governing the organizations.

*Note:* Connie Hanner, M.Ed., a doctoral candidate in Non-Profit Organizational Leadership, is President of the Colleyville Area Chamber of Commerce and Bob Harris, CAE, provides free governance tips and tools at [www.nonprofitcenter.com](http://www.nonprofitcenter.com).



# Meetings

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## 6 Event Planning Myths

By Brittany Bowens, *Reprinted from Successful Meetings, December 2016*

When I tell people that I am an event planner, I often get a response like, "Wow, that sounds like fun." I usually reply with, "absolutely," even though I would love to tell the truth: Event planning is full of sleepless nights of décor prep, stressful budget negotiations, and 16-plus hours on your feet in any given workday. Being an event planner is more than just a fun job, and here are some of the biggest misconceptions about what we do.

### Myth ❶ Anyone Can Do It

Sure, anyone can throw his or her best friend a surprise birthday party. But coordinating intricate details of the itinerary, budget, seating chart, and lava décor for the mayor's ball requires experience and skill. An event planner should be creative, flexible, organized, quick-witted, and comfortable working in the background. The goal of every event is to make sure the client shines; and this could mean you get dirty - literally. Only someone who is great under pressure can do it, and do it well.

### Myth ❷ Planners Cost Too Much

If you hire the right event planner, the opposite is true. With each project, I begin by creating an estimate of my client's wants, and then I feverishly work my relationships with my vendors to negotiate pricing and get more bang for their buck. Furthermore, established event planners have a wholesale license to get decor and other event goodies at the best possible prices. It's an event planner's job to keep track of his or her clients' budgets, and manage expectations about what they can afford.

### Myth ❸ Meetings Aren't Events

Meetings require venue booking, invitations, and days of coordination! A meeting planner is an expert in minute details, including staging and technology, pamphlets, meeting setup, registration, travel, food, A/V arrangements, and meeting accommodations. He or she handles details presenters and attendees don't think about, but that, if not accounted for, could make for a true meeting disaster.

### Myth ❹ Event Planning Is All About Fun, Flowers, and Fluff

Well, a good event planner does make an event look flawless; but bringing a client's vision to life takes months of tedious preparation and an early day-of schedule to pull it all together. Tack on guest and VIP complaints, a missing tablecloth or late catering, and things can get stressful. It's important to handle any issues with grace so that the client and their guests never know a thing.

### Myth ❺ Event Planning Is a Hobby

With days of venue walkthroughs, late nights making centerpieces, and hours spent setting up décor just to break it down after the festivities have ended, planning an event can quickly become a full-time workload. Plus, good customer service means always being available to address the needs of your clients at all times — and sometimes, their "emergencies" are unpredictable.

### Myth ❻ Virtual Planning Websites Are Making Event Planners Obsolete

There are many websites where people can search databases of vendors and venues, as well as YouTube videos for DIY décor, but the event world is based on established connections. When clients find vendors online, they usually don't know much about them. As a result, things aren't clearly outlined in contracts and the client pays way too much or the product or service they pay for isn't exactly what they expect or need. Often, the planner has to step in to get everyone on the same page.

This industry requires you to take on huge responsibilities. Events are often life-changing moments and very important. While seeing a successful event through to the end will give you great joy, know there's lots of work that comes with it.

*Brittany Bowens is the founder of special event company iBee Events. Her love for the event planning industry developed as an extension of her natural passion for strategic planning and community service. iBee Events has successfully produced events for corporate clients including North Carolina Central University, Dillard's, Hilton Garden Inn, and more.*

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## White House to Issue New Travel Order

After criticizing the “bad decision” he got from an appeals court panel last week, President Trump said in a press conference today that he will issue a new executive order on travel next week.

A three-judge federal appeals panel last Thursday refused to reinstate Trump’s executive order that bans travelers entering the U.S. from seven mostly Muslim countries. The order, issued last month, indefinitely barred Syrian refugees from entering the United States, suspended all refugee admissions for 120 days and banned citizens of seven Muslim-majority countries from entering the U.S. for 90 days. The seven countries on the list were Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

In a unanimous ruling last week, the Ninth Circuit panel said the government

“has pointed to no evidence that any alien from any of the countries named in the order has perpetrated a terrorist attack in the United States.”

“Rather than present evidence to explain the need for the Executive Order, the government has taken the position that we must not review its decision at all,” the ruling said.

The administration, which had urged the panel to reinstate the ban as a matter of national security, had been silent on whether it planned to appeal the decision to the Supreme Court. Given that the high court still lacks its ninth member, a 4-4 decision would leave the appeals court ruling in place.

It appears that instead of pursuing the issue through litigation, Trump will

issue a new directive which he said will conform to the legal ruling handed down by the courts.

“The new order is going to be very much tailored to what I consider to be a very bad decision,” Trump said today. “We can tailor the order to that decision and get just about everything, in some ways more.”



## Welcome Members

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*Missouri Head Start Association*

*Ashley Brown*

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*Jeremy Cady*

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## Trump Preparing Government Reorganization Order

The White House is reportedly preparing a new executive order that will require federal agencies to quickly draft plans for improving how each agency meets its mission.

The draft order includes a list of elements that agencies need to include in their plans, including programs that are duplicative and assessments on whether state and local governments or the private sector could do the work better, according to Federal News Radio.

President Trump signed an executive order last month freezing federal hiring, and has vowed to downsize the federal government and discretionary spending.

The Senate earlier today narrowly confirmed Rep. Mick Mulvaney (R-SC) to head the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Mulvaney's reputation as a fiscal hawk suggests he will play a critical role in carrying out the administration's plans to reorganize the federal government.

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## Join Us for American Associations Day 2017

On American Associations Day, March 15-16, hundreds of association professionals will congregate in Washington, DC to educate members of Congress and their staffs about how the association community makes the country and world stronger. Just a few registration spots remain. To sign up to find out more about the scholarship, click [here](#) or contact Mary Kate Cunningham at [mcunningham@asaecenter.org](mailto:mcunningham@asaecenter.org).

Even if you aren't able to join us in person, ASAE Public Policy asks you to support this effort in a simple but powerful way virtually through our social media Thunderclap, a collective social media amplification using the power of the crowd.

Sign up now to participate in our #AssociationsStrengthenAmerica Thunderclap and on March 16 at 9:00 am our industry will speak jointly via Twitter, Facebook and Tumblr. By giving a safe, one time access to your social media channels, a consistent message will be shared about the millions of association professionals in every industry and sector collectively working to enrich lives around the globe.

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## DC Mayor Lets Paid Leave Law Take Effect

Washington, DC's Mayor Muriel Bowser said this week she will not veto a paid-leave bill that was passed by the DC Council on Dec. 20.

Bowser's action lets the law take effect without her signature. Bowser said in a letter to the council this week that she continues to have "grave concerns" with the bill and she hopes to work with council members to address its deficiencies. She said the legislation represents "one of the biggest tax increases in DC's recent history" and extends two-thirds of its benefits to non-DC residents.

The bill will create roughly \$250 million in new taxes on local businesses in the District to fund two months of paid time off for workers to care for newborns or

adopted children. The bill, which applies to both full and part-time workers, also grants employees six weeks of paid leave to help ailing relatives. Two weeks of leave are available for personal sick leave.

The bill was heavily resisted by DC business leaders, many of whom warned of a long-term drag on the city's budget and a possible exodus from the city limits for some area businesses.

ASAE and a coalition of Washington, DC-based business and university groups proposed an alternative "Employer Mandate" plan, whereby small and medium-sized organizations would have two years to implement a paid-leave benefit for their employees. ASAE supported the Employer

Mandate proposal because it would have preserved the existing employer-employee benefits relationship and would have left the DC government out of managing paid leave benefits. Many DC employers already offer paid leave benefits, but for those smaller organizations that don't currently offer paid leave, the plan would have created a shared-risk insurance pool through the private insurance market to help offset the cost.

While a veto from Bowser would have sent the law back to the council, DC Council Chairman Phil Mendelson had the votes to override a veto if necessary. The law will still have to survive a review by Congress, as is the case with all DC laws.

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## Why Great Executive Directors Need Great Boards

» (continued on page 11)

strategic direction. In turn, the board's effective strategic leadership and enhanced member engagement can be leveraged by the executive director to generate more resources and expand the association's operational components. The power relationship between the board and executive director is truly a win-win outcome.

While the value of a great governing board is undeniable, too many associations make little or no effort to build the necessary knowledge and skills for its board members to think effectively and act collectively. Staffs who operate on a shoe-string budget argue that scarce resources should be directed towards other priorities, and board members who have never served on an effective board may not recognize the board's deficiencies and

how they compromise the organizations effectiveness. Executive directors might see weak boards as less of a threat to their own power and influence. However, executive directors who poorly conceal their view of power as a zero-sum game between themselves and their boards run a real risk of destroying the mutual trust and respect that is essential for executive directors and boards to complement their respective contributions.

Great governance starts with recruiting individuals who possess leadership competencies, but are also willing and able to develop others. Board members and the executive director need the intellectual curiosity and courage to explore new models of board governance, as well as sufficient time and resources to develop critical

leadership skills and redesign their governing processes to allow board leadership to flourish.

Executive directors need to encourage their boards to take advantage of training opportunities offered by MSAE and ASAE to develop governance expertise that will complement the executive director's management expertise. Even executive directors well versed in the principles of governance owe their boards the opportunity to hear other perspectives and be willing to allow their own notions as to how boards should govern to be challenged and evolve.

Larry Merrill, CAE is executive director of Michigan Townships Association.





# Three Life Changing Questions: One Foundational Leadership Principle

By LtCol Danny White, USMC (Retired)

Many leadership talks I heard while serving as a U.S. Marine Corps officer focused on how to lead a military unit, lead organizations, or develop your Marines to be better leaders. I don't recall ever hearing a military speaker share about how do you lead yourself

As a student of leadership, I find this surprising. One of the first principles the instructors taught us, during officer candidates school (i.e., officer boot camp), then again during our initial training as brand new Second Lieutenants, was "Know yourself and seek improvement." In fact, this principle was always first in the list of 11 Marine Corps leadership principles.

As a brand new Marine, I naively thought, "Hey, that's easy. Put a check in that box and move on to the next principle." As a Lieutenant Colonel, I realized, "That principle is a very profound one. I'm just now gaining a basic understanding of it."

So what changed for me as a leader during the 21-½ years between those two internal dialogs? Through a series of events, I was challenged with three life-changing questions:

- 1) Who are you?
- 2) What are you doing here?
- 3) Why do you act and react the way you do?

While wrestling with answering those three questions honestly, the proverbial light bulb went on—in answering those questions honestly, I now had a rudimentary grasp of "Know yourself and seek improvement."

Other experts have discussed this leadership principle when looking at other organizations. In *Heroic Leadership: Best Practices from a 450-Year-Old Company That Changed the World*, Chris Lowney writes that "All leadership begins with self-leadership....We're all leaders, and we're leading all the time, well or poorly."

Then in *The Power of Four: Leadership Lessons of Crazy Horse*, Joseph Marshall discusses the Lakota Indian chief Crazy Horse and how he developed as a leader within his tribe. Perhaps not surprisingly, Crazy Horse's first leadership principle was "Know yourself."

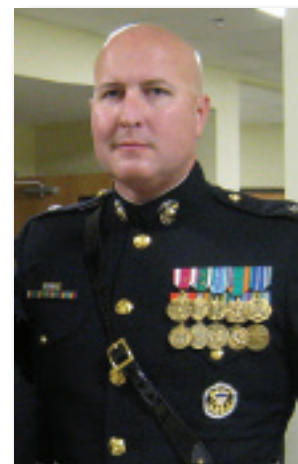
Thus, I believe that by answering these three life-changing questions honestly, we will then know how to lead ourselves—and do so well, not poorly. Then we'll be in a position to better lead others and organizations. Otherwise, a leader will plateau as he or she attempts to lead others and organizations while not understanding how to lead himself or herself.

As a bit of a warning, it was not an easy process for me to work through, and at times wrestle with, those three questions.

There was a great deal of soul searching and brutal honesty—discovering insecurity, being a workaholic, and defining myself by rows of military medals. Yet the result was more than worth it, as I gained a quiet confidence as a wiser leader and better equipped to serve my work place, family and community.

Will you accept this challenge—to answer these three questions?

*Endnote:* Danny White is a proud associate member of MSAE. After transitioning from the Marine Corps, he founded Lead with Liberty ([www.leadwithliberty.com](http://www.leadwithliberty.com))—a leadership speaking/consulting/coaching business—to share leadership lessons learned as a Marine, husband, and father. In 2014, he published *A Widower's Walk: From Desert to Destiny*.





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