



GENERAL MANAGERS NEWSLETTER (September 2016)

“There is no education like adversity”...Benjamin Disraeli, political leader & writer

Housekeepers Olympics (October 7)

As we informed everybody several weeks ago, we had to push back the “*Housekeepers Olympics*” due to several large meetings in town on the earlier date. The new date is **Friday, October 7 at the Charlotte Convention Center**. Keep in mind, that while this event is for competition and fun between the hotels, the primary focus and purpose is to show the general public that the hotel industry is a great place to work, and housekeepers can have a great job and career with us. Our recently completed CAHA Wage & Benefit Survey bears that out; for hourly employees in the Housekeeping Department were averaging almost \$13.00/hour, which some as high as \$15.73/hour. Room Attendants were averaging almost \$11.00/hour with some as high as almost \$14.00. For salaried, supervisory or management positions, Executive Housekeepers were averaging over \$41,000/year with some as high as \$67,000+/year. These are the kind of career opportunities that are available in the hotel industry and we want to get that out to the public.

You remember we have to raise some money to put this great event on. A number of hotels have already responded with generous contributions and pledges. We’ve raised almost \$5,000, but we need your help. Join your fellow hoteliers that have made \$250, \$500, even \$1,000 contributions. Just let us know at charlottehotels@aol.com and we’ll send you an invoice. *(If for any reason this event does not come off...which won’t happen...contributions will be refunded.)*

CAHA Wage & Benefit Survey

Speaking of our first-ever wage and benefit survey, participation was *GREAT!* 25 hotels participated and they have all received copies of the summary report with all the data. (That was the promise....only participating hotels get the summary.) Some of the HR directors have already said that as great as the hourly and salaried wage data is, the information on benefits is *really* valuable.

Now, it is **NOT** our intention that this annual CAHA survey replace *WageWatch*; in fact we want more local hotels to participate in *WageWatch* so that there is enough “comparable” data for you to use. *WageWatch* is much more flexible than our survey because participants can “sort” data many different ways and create their own “competitive-sets” to compare their hotel’s

data with. We even used the *Wage Watch* job titles and descriptions for our survey. That means that hotels that participated in our survey are actually ready to participate in *WageWatch*...you only have to pull your data together one time.

So, if your hotel didn't participate in the CAHA survey this year, make sure your HR department is instructed to do so next year. This annual survey will be done during June, with a due date of June 30th. That will give us time to summarize the data and get it back out when most people are beginning their annual budget work.

2017 Federal Per Diem Rates

Federal per diem rates for traveling government employees for fiscal year 2017 have been published. The Charlotte/Mecklenburg County rate for lodging goes to \$122 (it was \$89 last year) and the meals rate is \$59.

Charlotte Hornets Home Arena Changing Name to Spectrum Center

The Charlotte Hornets have announced that the team's uptown home is changing its name following Charter Communications' purchase in May of Time Warner Cable. Spectrum is Charter's digital brand that provides TV, Internet and voice services. The name change is slated to take place before the Hornet's season starts at the end of October. The new name will appear all over the arena, including on the new scoreboard, on the court, on exterior signage and in smaller spots. The Hornets' home arena has carried the Time Warner Cable name since the team entered into a 20-year naming rights agreement in 2008 with the cable provider. The revenue stream, which industry sources say is worth more than \$5 million per year, benefits the team. Before the naming rights deal, the arena was known as Bobcats Arena, after the franchise's previous name.

Guest Room Housing Boom

Meetings & Conventions magazine had an article in a recent edition on 5 second-tier cities that are experiencing a boom in guest room inventory. The cities were, Austin, TX, Cleveland, OH, Pittsburgh, PA, Ft. Lauderdale, FL and Charlotte. They mentioned the Embassy Suites and the Springhill Suites uptown, the two new hotels for the top of the Epi Center (AC Hotel and a Residence Inn) and the Tyron Place development on Stonewall. Other properties mentioned as "in the works" was a Home2 Suites uptown and a Canopy by Hilton.

Recent estimates say that the current number of hotels in inventory in Charlotte will increase 30% with the ones that are currently under construction. That number goes to a 70% increase in room inventory if you add in the ones that have been announced, and about a 100% increase if you included the ones that are officially unannounced but being considered.

Regulations Broaden Who's Covered under ADA

The U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ) is issuing new regulations significantly expanding who's covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act. In a final rule published in August in the Federal Register, the agency is clarifying that those with everything from cancer to

diabetes, epilepsy, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, learning disabilities and other conditions should be protected under the ADA. The regulations cement changes that Congress made when it passed the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, the Justice Department said. Technically, the ADA Amendments Act is already in effect, but publishing the updated regulations will eliminate confusion about what the law calls for and how it should be applied, the Justice Department said.

MPI Launches a New Membership Model

Meeting Planners International (MPI) has restructured its membership model. Meeting planners and suppliers both can now choose between three different levels of membership, and a new e-subscription for certain MPI digital resources. The three new levels of membership are: **Premier Membership**, which is the highest level of membership and basically gets you everything; **Preferred Membership**, which is somewhere in the middle; and **Essential Membership**, which provides the least access to resources, but as the name implies, the essential ones that you might need.

US Economy: Retail Sales Flat in July

The U.S. Department of Commerce reported that U.S. retail sales were unexpectedly flat in July as Americans cut back on discretionary spending, pointing to a moderation in consumption that could temper expectations of a sharp pickup in economic growth in the third quarter. July's unchanged retail sales reading followed an upwardly revised 0.8 % increase in June, the Commerce Department said. Retail sales in June were previously reported to have increased 0.6 %. Sales rose 2.3 % from a year ago.

The National Retail Federation (NRF) also reported retail sales (excluding automobiles, gasoline stations and restaurants) held steady in July, essentially unchanged over June. On a year-over-year basis, however, retail sales saw an increase of 1.7 %, according to NRF's calculations. In July, the three-month moving average of retail sales on a year-over-year basis increased 3.3 % unadjusted.

Other economic data showed that producer prices recorded their biggest drop in nearly a year in July amid declining costs for services and energy goods. Cooling consumer spending and tame inflation suggest the Federal Reserve will probably not raise interest rates anytime soon despite a robust labor market.

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) Can Help with Today's Diverse Workforce

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are internal organizational structures within individual businesses designed to address the unique needs and issues of today's diverse workforce. Also known as Affinity Groups or Business Resource Groups (BRGs), they offer employees an opportunity to network, address common issues and concerns, and receive support from those who share similar backgrounds, experiences or interests. Many corporate hotel chains have such groups, but they don't have to be limited to large business only; smaller companies (including hotels) can operate ERGs fairly easily in today's technology world. Websites, emails, Face Book, Twitter offer the opportunity to bring people with special interests and/or needs together without a lot of time and overhead invested.

While ERGs are usually open to all who wish to participate, they are often created for a variety of groups with common interests, including military veterans, African Americans, Latinos, LGBT individuals, women and individuals with disabilities. Some companies choose to create a separate ERG for each group, noting that employees in each of the situations typically have very different concerns.

ERG's can be very beneficial to businesses for a variety of reasons, including the following:

- ERGs can assist in the recruitment and retention of employees.
- ERGs boost productivity.
- ERGs can promote and educate staff on employee issues.
- ERGs can promote self-disclosure by people with disabilities.
- ERGs can help companies improve their products and reach new customers.
- ERGs can support important projects and initiatives.

For employers that want to learn more, AskEARN.org has a helpful resource called the *"Toolkit for Establishing & Maintaining Successful Employee Resource Groups."* This resource helps employers understand the benefits of ERGs and the steps involved in establishing or enhancing one. It is available at www.askearn.org/refdesk/Inclusivee_Workplaces/Employee_Resource_Groups/Private_ERGs

Future CAHA Events

CAHA Annual Charity Golf Tournament for CPCC Scholarships: *April 26, 2017 Pine Island Country Club*

CAHA General Membership Meetings: *September 15, October 20, November 17, December 15 (Third Thursday of each month, 3 pm, subject to change.)*

CAHA HR Committee Meetings: *September 15; November 10 (Second Thursday of even-numbered months, 9 AM, subject to change.)*

CAHA Security Committee Meetings: *September 21; November 16 (Third Wednesday of even-numbered months, 10 AM, subject to change.)*

Support Our Supplier Members:

Afterdisaster-Metrolina; Gordon Food Service; Ipswich Shellfish Group; Moneysworth Linen Services; MSS Solutions; PIVOTek; Rainbow International Restoration; Show Pros Event Staffing Services; Tarheel Linen Service; The Charlotte Destination Group; TruGuard Construction Group; U.S. Foodservice; Visit Charlotte; and Where Charlotte Magazine

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