



## orlando

# From the President



*Welcome to the new Skål Orlando web page!*

We hope you like the new website's spectacular view of the downtown skyline from Lake Eola, and the picture of our two most prominent political leaders, as well as one beat-up hotel guy (photo on page 3). Many thanks to past Skål Orlando president and President of the Orlando/Orange County Convention and Visitors' Bureau, Gary Sain, for arranging this.

A word about the change to our webpage: your board of directors, after deep consideration, felt that it was time to concentrate the club's visual image on the magnificent product we all sell: Orlando. In so doing the board elected to feature only our product, Orlando, not our many attractions partners – as in the past.

There was another reason for this change. While we deeply appreciate our partners whose logos have previously adorned our home page, we fielded many requests for additional members' logos to be included. This posed the following issues:

- We would have ultimately been faced with the prospect of the page being one big series of logos, obscuring the main message and product.
- There were enough requests for prime placement spots on the page that it became impossible to please all of our partners.

The webpage change is also consistent with one of the significant advantages of Skål. It is not a trade organization, per se; thus its charter doesn't allow for "allied" members. Allied members are very important to the right kind of organization, but not to one like ours. A Skål gathering is supposed to be one where industry professionals can mingle socially, free from the prospect of vendors trying to sell something.

I'm sure many Skålleagues share my personal frustration at attending other trade organization meetings – and not being able to step more than a few feet into a reception room without several vendors trying to sell me something. This seriously ruins the sense of sociability which should prevail.

This non-intrusive atmosphere does prevail at Skål functions, and always will.

## 2009 Officers & Directors

President - Grant Bannen

Vice President - Barbara Kenney

Secretary - Brian Peters

Treasurer - Carlton Hudson

Executive Secretary/Treasurer  
Tom White

SIUSA Representative  
Dennis BeMent

SIUSA Representative  
Fred Corrigan

## Immediate Past President

Ron W. Silveira

## Directors

Mike Cassara  
Lissa Curtin  
Ryan Deming  
Mike Dyrland  
David King  
Scott Major  
Carla Ritthamel  
Roger Royston  
Gary Sain  
Ron W. Silveira  
Steve Trover  
Bob Van Bergen

## Auditors

Jim Enos & Chris Reynolds

# Public Relations and Communication

After accepting the position of PR and Communications Director for Orlando Skål, I thought it may be time for a little refresher course in being effective at getting the word out as to who Skål International is and what we contribute to the world as well as our community!

Obviously, the main goal of public relations and communications is to enhance an organization's reputation and in this case Skål International!

Public relations provides a service for our organization to give those in the Tour, Travel and Hospitality sector a better understanding of what our organization is all about and what it contributes to the community.

Recently, I sent a photo of our new President Grant Bannen and the names of our new officers with a short article to the *Orlando Sentinel*, *Orlando Business Journal* and to CFHLA to include in their *Travel & Tourism* edition. As we

move forward, I plan to get more information out to willing publications to promote both our local and worldwide organization.

Remember, public relations cannot function without readership, so please share with me anyone that would be willing to run an editorial to get the word out about our great organization!

Sincerely in Skål!

Mike Dyrland

[michael.dyrland@dtag.com](mailto:michael.dyrland@dtag.com)

Cell: 407-701-4411

## Venues & Program Committee

Each month Skål Orlando has the privilege to enjoy each other's company in some of the finest venues in Orlando. How does this continue to happen? The answer: Generous and entrepreneurial members of Orlando Skål. The Program Committee is continually seeking new and unique venues. We, of course, first seek to utilize the resources of our membership, and then when necessary look outside Skål membership.

When the planning group lays out the year, we are continually challenged to find venues that are willing and able to provide space and dinner for more than 100 members each and every month. Are you a member with a facility able to be a venue location? If you are, then we really would appreciate you to step forward and invite us to your property.

As a Skål member, you remember the fine meals and camaraderie with your fellow Skålleagues at each of the dinners. For 2009, we still have a few opportunities available. If you want to showcase your property and your chef, please let the committee know. You may contact Grant Bannen, [grant.bannen@celebrationhotel.com](mailto:grant.bannen@celebrationhotel.com), Carla Ritthamel, [Carla@travelhostorlando.com](mailto:Carla@travelhostorlando.com), or Brian Peters, [bpeters@simon.com](mailto:bpeters@simon.com). Help us to keep your monthly meetings memorable, become a host venue today.

Brian Peters, Program Committee



Since our company's inception in 1992, HelmsBriscoe has grown into the largest single source of meeting and conference room blocks in the world. In 2008 alone, HelmsBriscoe contracted 3.5 million room/nights representing over \$668 million in revenue.

HelmsBriscoe's role is to understand the organizational and logistical needs of your meetings, recommend and source appropriate properties, and serve as a liaison between you and the properties to negotiate the most favorable rate, concessions, and contractual terms and conditions; ultimately ensuring your organization is receiving the best possible solution. HelmsBriscoe will provide this time-saving service at no cost to you.

As the needs of each of our clients vary, I understand the importance of creating a customized solution to meet your needs for the meetings you plan. As a fellow Skålleague, I will work hard to craft such a solution for you. My commitment is to you and the success of your meetings, and I look forward to putting the strength of HelmsBriscoe to work for you and your organization.

Paul O. Steen, Manager, Global Accounts  
(Bus.) 407-855-7796 (Cell) 407-970-8436  
(Email) [psteen@helmsbriscoe.com](mailto:psteen@helmsbriscoe.com)

## Tampa Bay to host the 32nd Annual Region IV Summer Congress August 28-30

The venue for this event will be the beautiful Sheraton Sand Key Resort, Clearwater. Registration fee is only \$110.00 per person if booked by June 30 and \$135.00 after July 1 and includes: Friday night dinner dance cruise, Saturday night reception and awards dinner, Sunday informal continental breakfast and Hospitality suite Friday through Sunday. Green fees for the golf tournament at the Seminole Lake County Country Club are \$45.00 per person. Special rate for the Sheraton Sand Key is \$119.00 per room, per night - single or double plus taxes.



Last year Tampa Bay was the winner of the Region IV trophy. Let's make sure Orlando fields at least 2 foursomes so we can win back the trophy. Complete details of the event and registration can be done at [www.skaltampabay.com](http://www.skaltampabay.com).

Exclusive Savings for Skål members~ Enjoy 10% off your next meal!



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# Membership - The Key to the Future

In our last newsletter, I indicated that we most likely would lose at least 25 members by our mandatory report date to Spain at the end of February. We ended up losing 27 members at that report time, with two reinstatements paying their dues after the deadline. The good news is that we had a nice membership jump in the final quarter of 2008 and first quarter of 2009 that brings our current membership to 172 members as of this date. NYC is now only a couple of members ahead of us as the largest Skål club in North America.

Our club now has a membership of 172 industry professionals that are leaders in their respective businesses, hospitality industry associations in many counties, and leaders in our community. While numbers are nice, our emphasis and commitment has always been for "Quality over Quantity" and we continue to maintain the standards of Skål to represent a diverse cross-section of the hospitality industry.

As we move forward in our membership efforts for the remainder of 2009, it is important to remember that candidates must be from a "qualified" tourism organization and have "time in position" in a senior management position (generally an officer, GM, DOSM or other qualifying category). While we know that our members are proud of their organization we urge those of you wishing to bring potential

members to a meeting to call a senior member of the membership committee to review your candidates' qualifications in advance. This will avoid both the sponsor and the club from being embarrassed should their candidate not meet the key qualifications of membership. The committee members to contact are Dennis BeMent, Fred Corrigan, Mike Dyrlund or Tom White. Any of us can review the business and candidate to verify their likelihood for becoming an approved member.

In March, we began our new year under Grant Bannen with Carlton Hudson joining his slate of officers. Along with them we inducted several new members to the board as other long-term board members stepped down for at least one year. Although all board seats are presently filled, there are vacancies that do open up during the year. We hope that more of our newer members will step forward to become a board member and/or participate in a committee, and become a future leader of Skål International Orlando. Our future not only depends on the strength of our membership, but on the future quality of our leadership. Help do your part to assure that our club remains a top club in both North America and the World.

*Dennis BeMent*  
Membership Development Officer



Buddy Dyer, Grant Bannen, Rich Crotty overlooking Lake Eola in Downtown Orlando

## 2009 Advisory Council

**Mark Brown**

Executive Vice President  
American Automobile Association

**Steve Contos**

Vice President - Managing Director  
Grande Lakes Orlando  
The Ritz-Carlton - JW Marriott

**Bill Davis**

President  
Universal Orlando Resort

**Carolyn Fennell**

Director of Public Affairs  
Orlando Aviation Authority

**Randy Garfield**

Executive Vice President  
Walt Disney Parks & Resorts

**Richard Kessler**

Chairman & CEO  
The Kessler Collection

**David King**

Regional Vice President  
Loews Hotels & Resorts

**Mark McHugh**

President/CEO - Gatorland  
Chairman - Orlando/Orange County CVB

**Bud Nocera**

President/Chief Executive Officer  
Visit Florida USA

**Abe Pizam**

Dean  
University of Central Florida  
Rosen College of Hospitality Management

**Gary Sain**

President/Chief Executive Officer  
Orlando/Orange County Convention  
& Visitors Bureau

**Bob Stolz**

Executive Vice President/  
Chief Operating Officer  
Buena Vista Hospitality Group

**Peter Yesawich**

Chairman/Chief Executive Officer  
Ypartnership

## NEW MEMBERS

### JANUARY

Thomas Lang, Director,  
Kissimmee CVB

### FEBRUARY

Kimberly Praniewicz, President  
VS Publishing Company

Brian Shilling, Vice President of  
Business Development,  
The Mark Travel Corporation

### MARCH

Brenda Spencer,  
Director of Public Relations  
Kenney Communications, Inc.

Richard Scinta, Area Resort Manager  
Wyndham Bonnet Creek

### MEMBERS ON THE MOVE

Nick Bell - now w/ Little Bell Hospitality

Clayne Dice - Retired from the Comfort  
Inn and Suites

Deborah Farish - Left Wyndham and  
returned as DOSM at the Mona Lisa  
Suite Hotel

Bob Frobish - Promoted from General  
Manager of the Holiday Inn Express  
to Vice President of Operations for the  
BayStar Group

Chris Getley - Is now President of  
International Leisure Services

Richard Jackson - Left Wyndham and is  
now owner of Solutions by Jackson

Siegbert Kindl - Is now VP of  
Operations for Interamerican Promo  
Hotels

Tom Schwinden - Is now Regional  
Director of Sales for TPG Hospitality

Jody Seifert - left Falcon's Fire to become  
Director of Golf Operations at Orange  
Lake Resort

Eric Szymanski - Transferred as DOSM  
at the Orlando Airport Marriott

Suzee Warren - Is now DOSM for both  
Embassy Suites at LBV and Embassy  
Suites downtown Orlando

## CALENDAR OF CONGRESSES

For more information go to [www.skål.org](http://www.skål.org)

48th Annual N.A.A.S.C. (North  
American) Congress 2009

Anchorage, Alaska - 6-10 of May

Skål International Congress 2009

Budapest, Hungary - 1-6 of November

49th Annual N.A.A.S.C. Congress  
2010, Chateau Frontenac, Quebec

6-8 of May 2010

Skål International Congress 2010

Sydney, Australia - 10-15 of October

Skål International Orlando

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