

2020 Reno WFA Convention

We left Watsonville at 8 am with my Suburban full. The drive to Reno was great, we stopped at the San Luis Dam Visitors Center, since Dave had never been there! Then into our next stop at a Farmers fruit stand at the Foresthill Rd, then again we made a stop in Truckee to have a bite to eat.

Arriving in Reno where the weather was much warmer than I expected, along with the roads were dry coming over the pass. Dinner was at Ruby River where the wait was long, and after being settled the wait was really long. By now Richard and Mary had joined us.

January 19: The first meeting was with IAFE, Financial Management 1, the speaker Denny Magruder gave a in depth talk about Financial statements, and there is several different types we can use. He recommends the Line Item Budget, I find the statements hard to understand sometimes as well. He also talked about Boards responsibility for a Budget, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow and etc.

CEO & Directors work shop: Why are we here today? The class was designed to sharpen and understand. How casting the vision for the future rest with the Board. What attracted you to serve? Before you say Yes for the service do you know who you will serve? Do you know how often the Board meets? Have you visited a board meeting while in Session? Is there a financial expectation? It is amazing how many people come on board and do not know this. After you say yes, to serving on the Board do you know your Liability and Duties? Duty of loyalty? Duty of Obedience, Number one duty : You are responsible for the fiscal health of the organization. Strategic Planning, evaluate & rank current structure /programs.

Succession planning: Whom will follow your staff leader, who will fill your spot on the board? You need to look at the community who would be a good fit to follow you. The boards job is Governance, sitting policy, acting to oversee the financials, casting vision for the future. Either you are all in or you are out!

General Assembly had speaker and a motivated lady, Tami Evans, she stated a happy workplace is imperative to success, but how do you remain positive and Professional? Engagement empowers employees to collaborate through challenges, create innovation solutions and communicate confidently. We had a very relaxed session even learning a new dance.

The trade show was well attended but I did feel there was not a lot of new and exciting things offered. We walked the entire building, stopping to talk to many vendors, seeing some bands we would to see at our fairgrounds, a great train to haul people from the parking lot. Everyone gathered up material to look at later. 3:45 -5pm, we attended the class Show business, crafting connection to engage and delight, again this class was taught by Tami Evans, when it comes to audience engagement, the experience we create is critical, and can be a defining factor to the growth of your event. We broke up into groups of 5 and had the chance to talk to different fair grounds attendees. It was a very good class.

The entire groups of Fair Board and Heritage Foundation Director met in my room where we could visit, talk and enjoy the beauty of the lights of Reno from the huge plate glass windows.

Tuesday January 21: The first class was at the Foundation and Board Directors, Jeannie Kegebein was the host for the meeting, we had a large group attend the meeting. We listened to other Fair Directors talk about the pluses and minuses of their Foundations. We were lucky to have nothing but praise for ours.

9:45-11 am, it was here we heard speaker Allison Jones go into deep depth of preparing for unexpected spectators, and what you need to do if animal rights activists showed up to disrupt your event. Unfortunately these groups are using increasingly aggressive tactics to get attention. Some groups are targeting youth. The amount of money these activists have is staggering amounts in the millions of money to disrupt the different groups from children doing 4-H to private businesses.

11:15-12:30 We heard a great band sing and then the key note speaker Bill Ogg gave us a talk that covers, staff, boards, service members and CEOs. To remain effective professionally and relatively sane, we must be energize our internal personal batteries.

Bill used his life experience, quotes and humor to share his contagious enthusiasm and love for fairs to make others feel genuinely good about themselves and their contribution to the success of their fair.

We returned to the WFA Trade show, walked around the floor checking our more booths and I heard the name Jody! I stopped and listened and I hear the announcer again say, Jody, from Santa Crus County Fair you won

the raffle! By god she won \$100.00. We sat and watched several entertainers, a woman roping, a man blowing balloons, he made one for me to give to Cash!

3:45-5pm, Class Social Media 2.0, Angel Moore from Alameda Fair gave the presentation on who to reach the public through social Media like Face Book, Instagram, and Tik Tok. Another man gave us information on how to reach the public, and giving us skills to reach the public.

Tonight Read and Steve took 23 people out to dinner at the same Basque restaurant we have gone to for several years, the food was so filling and good. What a wonderful, generous thing for them to do.

Wed. Jan. 22: We started our day off attending the area meeting, a lot of discussion was concerning AB1499 bill, also SB 5 there is 5 fairs given money, we are one of them, several million dollars going to deferred maintain equity. Another bill SB84 has 18 million, with a 5 year pay back. (I hope I got this right). Also the Farm Bureau has bought 280 pen panels that fairs can use.

The homeless situation was discussed as well as CEO salaries. In California there is 11 new CEOs and they need some help with their new jobs.

Upcoming meetings: Salinas Valley Fair, April 9.

Dave gave an update on our fairgrounds this year 1/2 million dollars has been put into our fairgrounds . He talked about the E.coli scare that is a very important issue. This year 220 people have been effected. Petting Zoos need to have a Insurance policy regarding coverage for the E.coli problem.

Santa Clara has signed a 20 year contract with the county, so they can now move forward and just signed Cirque du Soleil a 6 year contract. They have great plans for the facility. Their fair was 3 days after the Gilroy shooting and their numbers was way down.

San Benito numbers were up 30 %, there theme for 2020 is, 2020 vIsion for fun.

Salinas Valley Fair had a lot of rain and that hurt there numbers, there fair date is May 14-17 and there theme is "This fair belongs to you and me. "

Monterey Co. Fair, their Heritage foundation has given them \$ 200,00 for a new beef barn. There theme will be " Fiesta" this is the 250th Birthday of Monterey, and there special host will be Joe Morris.

Cow Palace, attendance has been way down and they are not sure how many days their fair will be, the Mutton Busting has been banned, it is a step in the door to ban other events.

Contra Costa: They received 3 days of rain, thank god they had insurance. They are looking into a Food Commissary for 24 trucks, with a kitchen, wash stations. Their Equestrian center has been turned into a Paint Ball Center. Fair date May 14-17 theme " Were off to see the Fair"

Alameda: Theme " Road to summer fun". Horse racing is way down, they have 600 horse stalls and are looking at converting some of them. They have installed Solar on their barns and Parking structures 1 million people, came to their fair this year! They spent \$250,00 on a elevator and \$250,00 on a well.

10-11:15, What is the right Mix of Food at your fair: People vote for the best food item by their wallet. In Minn. the best food items are, Pork Chop on a stick, Cheese Curds, Fresh cut Potato fries. Each area has their own taste in food.

The right mix has to include Healthy items, Kids and Senior meals and Nitch items. You need to know what is a new item, foods that attract media attention, appeal, give currant building a face lift. Try new ideas, do not duplicate items, never have like products in eye view or on the same path.

10-11:15. How to make money for the Fair, Sue went to this meeting, so took notes for me. Salinas Fair, Horse Shows, Latino Concerts, Self producing events.

Alameda: 285 events , 3 hired coordinators, Interim rentals, Parking Fees is their biggest money maker! Every 3 years look at you rental rates. They charge 18 cents per square foot for buildings. They use Credit Cards-even for parking.

Sonoma: Large shows for utilities, Food and Alcohol, Electric Marque, charge Advertising Fees, Web site and social media, Anything advertised on Marque will be paying a fee.

Self Produced events: Flea Market, Horse Shows, Brew Fest.

Evaluation of events, if it does not make money after 3 years let it go. Book your event years ahead.

11:30-12:45, Leadership Luncheon and Merrill Award Finalists Presentation, the lunch was great and we were presented the winners.

LA County Fair, their challenge of large events and festivals is to create a sense of safety and security for their guest. With two mass shootings this year the LA Fair felt the aftermath of those tragedies as we were asked by media and guest if the fair was safe to attend. So they built a \$200,000 state of the art command center. Their film was a highlight of their fair.

Pima County Fair, Arizona presented their Concierge Program, they aspire to acknowledge the partnership with their vendors and concessionaires, address issues they have in traveling . The fair developed a concierge program that included many things that make the lives of concessionaires life better, showers, cooking facilities, hook ups, barbecue and etc.

Antelope Valley Fair and Alfalfa Festival, " Kids feeding Kids" is a new program is dedicated to helping the hungry in the local community. Approximately 70%of the families in the Antelope Valley who food banks, Grace Resource Center and SAVES. secure food via the two community. The 4-H, Grange, FFA and Independent Livestock all worked together to to raise animals, sold their animals initially set a goal of 11 hogs and raised \$15,000. In their inaugural year, Kids feeding Kids raised 30 hogs and over 18k in donations raised. Over 3,500 lbs. of protein was donated to the food banks.

The Bid Fresno Fair \$4 " Fill the Need " Day. The fair partnered with the ABC 30 and the Fresno Valleys Children Hospital and promoted the fair as a special day event Oct. 10th, \$4.00 deal to get into the fair and \$2.00 would be given to the hospital it was a great success, the promotion and buzz was everywhere, signs put on TV, they held a function at the Hospital . As a result, 18,748 people purchased the \$4.00 " Fill the Need" day tickets online or at the gate, resulting in \$37,496.00 being donated to Valley Children's in just the first year of this two year partnership.

Tonight the winners will be presented the Merrill Award.