MID-ATLANTIC TENT RENTERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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MATRA Spring Update Edition 2014

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President's Message

Michael Fitzwater
Special Events Virginia



Time is the most precious resource we have. In today's business world, we are bombarded by things taking our time. Emails, sales meetings, site visits, conference calls and family constantly vie for our time. So many things to do and

MATRA Welcomes Three New Board Members

MATRA is pleased to announce the addition of three new Board members to the Board of Directors. Each of these new Directors will serve a two year term and were elected during the Annual Meeting at the 2013 Conference held at Dover Downs Hotel & Casino.



Kenny Puff, Party Line Tent Rentals and Green Monster Manufacturing, Elmsford, NY, comes to the Board with 24 years in the industry. Originally starting with a tool rental business, it was his customers that began requesting tents and other party rental goods. It was a challenge for him as he wanted to be a professional rental company, complete and compliant. Kenny states, "Currently, our biggest obstacle is permitting and educating the municipalities; our second biggest is dealing with cut rate, fly-by-night (non-professional) tent companies." He does contend that their success is their 75% repeat and referral business along with their preferred vendor status in many of the tri-state area venues. A significant change that Kenny has observed over the years in the rental industry are the permitting and engineering requirements as well as a more demanding customer. We have all have seen that! Kenny indicates that... **read more**

Melani Kodikian, A to Z Party Rental, Montgomeryville, PA, was born and raised in the industry and as a second generation owner, distinctly remembers assisting her father at the young age of 12. She continued to work in various departments in the company until leaving home for college. Melani actually began her industry career in 2006 after serving the insurance industry for several years. The transition was not always easy as she entered the already established business that included staff that had been in place for quite some time. It's not always easy to come into that type of situation with new ideas and a fresh way of thinking! While staff was often hesitant to change, Melani states, "I simply wasn't satisfied with a business that didn't focus on growth". As owner and President of the company, Melani encouraged staff never to settle for average... **read more**

there is so little time. I'm sure that for many of you this Newsletter is just one more thing vying for your time. As the new MATRA President, I'm going to tell you why this one is different. This newsletter explains MATRA and what we do. In my personal experience with MATRA, I have met many new contacts. I'm not talking about the vendors that financially support our association, but the guys like you and me, the tent renters. Through MATRA, I have access to a peer to peer network... **read the full article**

Used But Not Abused Resale Section

Check out our members looking to sell products **here**.

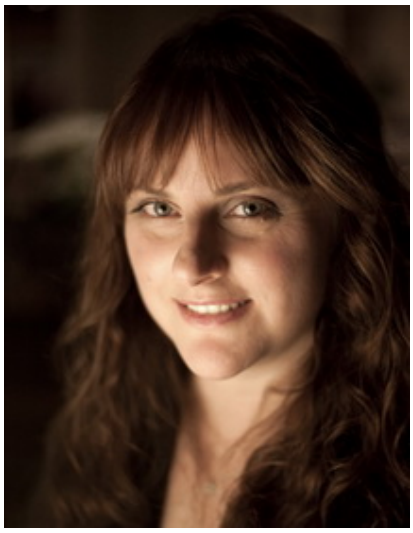
MATRA Logo Usage.

As the main identity of the Mid-Atlantic Tent Renters Association, Inc., we ask that all current/active members use the proper logo on all promotions and collateral materials advertising membership in MATRA. **Click here** for logo usage rules and regulations.

Executive Corner

Michael Tannen, CSEP,
Executive Director





George Poston, US Event Structures, Frederick, MD, has been in the industry for approximately 34 years beginning right out of high school. Although it was initially intended to be a summer job while attending college, four years later, he and a partner obtained an SBA loan and purchased the company, George then sold the company and moved to North Carolina where he started another company that later merged with Remsberg Tent. In 2000, the company was sold to United Rentals. Focusing on Clear Span Tents, George and Doug Remsberg started US Event Structures in 2007. George indicates that, "the seasonality of the business has always been a challenge at times, and most likely will continue to be so, although more and more we see tenting in what was once considered the "off season"". He also points out that, "it has been important and somewhat of a challenge to keep up with and stay ahead of a changing industry that demands better technology and design in both equipment and event production" while noting that... **read more**



Fourth Annual MATRA Spring Training



Spring Training 2014 will be hosted by **Party Reflections, Charlotte, North Carolina,** on March 25, 2014 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Walk away with dozens of new ideas on how to recruit, motivate, engage and retain top talent for your business, cost effective measures for marketing your company and using social media on a daily, weekly and monthly basis to keep your business healthy! In addition to other informative sessions covering Ballasting, Kentucky Code and Disaster Preparation, Chris Wilcox from Party Reflections will present insight into logistics and warehousing concerns for the rental company. As Party Reflections was named one of the top 30 rental companies in the world by *Special Event Magazine,* you do not want to miss the opportunity to attend his session as well as tour the Party Reflections warehouse!

It seems the news in the last few months was all about Target, Neiman Marcus and Michaels Stores. Why? Not because of the big sales they were having, even though a great sale can be a good thing. No, it was about how over 40 million people have had their account information compromised, and it continues to grow as I began writing this article. So, let's talk about cyber security and ways to protect your identity.

Tell me your password. No, really, can I have your password...please? I can guess, of course. And I would start with the 25 Worst Passwords in 2013, which were announced by a company called SplashData, Inc. This company creates a list...
read the full article

Registration is Open!.

Early Registration deadline is March 4, 2014:
MATRA members, $59.00; Non-members, $79.00;
Exhibitor Table Registration deadline is March 4, 2014; $179.00 members; Non-members $279.00;
After March 4, 2014 add $20.00 to each Registration!
Lunch is included in your Registration!
To review the entire Spring Training Schedule,Sessions and Presenters...
Click Here



Renew your MATRA Membership before January 31st, 2014

Renew your MATRA Membership is quick and simple. Just go onto our **MATRA Homepage** and enter your **Username and Password.** Once there, you will be on your Profile Page and look for the red link to Renew your Membership. You may pay by credit card or print out an invoice to pay by check. You may also elect to "automatically" renew each year within our system, so you won't have to worry about future emails and invoices. You may always cancel at any time the automatic renewal process.

All MATRA Membership for 2013 will expire on January 31st, 2014 with no access to the backend

MATRA
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

MATRA Scholarship Applications for 2014

As a member of MATRA*, we are, once again, offering Scholarships for the 2014-2015 academic year. We are pleased to announced that two (2) general academic scholarships in the amount of $1,500 each as well as one (1) George A. Smith, Jr., Scholarship in the amount of $1,500 will be awarded to a full time university, college or technical school/community student entering their sophomore year or higher. Applications with supporting documentation are due **on or before April 1, 2014.** Award recipients will be notified **on or before May 15, 2014.**

Should you or someone within your company be interested in pursuing higher education, consider submitting an application for MATRA Scholarship funds. In

of our website or to receive Member pricing. Renew now, so you may be listed in our 2014 Membership Directory in June. REMINDER: Upload a current photo of yourself on your profile page. That's one way we can visually feature you as a member on the website!!!

today's economy, every little bit of assistance can certainly be helpful! Take advantage of this economical MATRA member benefit. It is very easy to apply:

1. Download the **MATRA Scholarship Application;**
2. Complete the form and attach required documents:
3. Submit to the MATRA office, either via email, **on or before April 1, 2014** or regular mail which must be postmarked, **on or before April 1, 2014.**

Please share with anyone in your company that may be interested in this 2014-2015 educational opportunity. If you have any questions or require further information, please contact the MATRA office.

**MATRA member eligibility requirements are located on the Scholarship Application*



Hershey Lodge is MATRA's 2014 Conference Location in Hershey, PA!

The Conference for 2014 will be hosted by the beautiful **Hershey Lodge in Hershey, Pennsylvania!** Make sure you put this year's **Conference dates - November 3rd-6th, 2014** on your calendar! Tucked in the rolling hills of Central Pennsylvania, streetlights are shaped like Hershey Kisses, Chocolate Avenue meets Cocoa Avenue and the air is filled with the wonderful aroma of chocolate! Known as *"The Sweetest Place on Earth"*, MATRA is looking forward to this exciting new venue. Look for future emails or check the MATRA website for updated information regarding Hershey Lodge accommodations, Conference sessions and Registration!

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MATRA - The Association for the Tenting Professional

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