

# Opening Doors

The newsletter of Philadelphia Hospitality

Winter 2008

Promoting the Greater Philadelphia Region

## Vision for Philadelphia 2007 honors Nicholas DeBenedictis

Philadelphia Hospitality's *Vision for Philadelphia* Award Gala honoring Nicholas DeBenedictis had it all! There were stunning views of Center City from an historic skyscraper and stimulating conversation with distinguished elected officials. There was exuberant entertainment by 30 members of the award-winning Fralinger String Band, and the pure fun of joining Eileen and Nick DeBenedictis in the Mummies' strut. And most of all there was the pleasure of guests and hosts alike in paying tribute to our extraordinarily well-deserving honoree.

How do you create such a party? You start with a revered community leader – one who is respected for his business acumen as Chairman and CEO of Aqua America, who is beloved for his concern for friends and acquaintances and appreciated for his enthusiastic and energetic role in making Philadelphia a lively travel destination, a business-friendly corporate location and an exciting place to live and work.



Honorary Co-Chair Governor Ed Rendell enters the reception with Philadelphia Hospitality Chair Emeritus Chris Perks and his wife Francesca.

Add a spirited and diverse mix of guests including Honorary Co-Chair Governor Ed Rendell, future Mayor Michael Nutter, Senator Vince Fumo, Representative John Perzel and Councilman Frank Rizzo. Present a mouth-watering menu and an exceptionally sumptuous dinner prepared by Loews Philadelphia Hotel's outstanding chefs.



Honoree Nick DeBenedictis (second from right), pauses during the VIP reception with Co-Chairs Joe McLaughlin, David Cohen and Manny Stamatakis.

And select as co-chairs an esteemed former honoree (1999), David Cohen, an energetic board member, Joe McLaughlin, and an engaging business leader, Manny Stamatakis.

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Nick and his wife Eileen, enthusiastic Mummies' fans, dance to the music of the Fralinger String Band.

During the fast-paced program, Governor Rendell good-naturedly pointed out that the number of guests was far greater than when he had been honoree (1995). David Cohen remarked upon the stability that Nick has brought to the water industry and cited Nick's service to both the community and his shareholders. Joe McLaughlin drew rousing guest participation with his wholehearted recognition of the evening's sponsors. And Master of Ceremonies Manny Stamatakis delighted the gathering by weaving the myth of the water carrier into his comments and then toasting Nick with a champagne glass filled with – what else but water!

*(Continued on page 5)*

## *Message from the Executive Director*

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**William E. Mifflin**

Dear Friends – both new and longstanding,

This is my first letter to you as Executive Director of Philadelphia Hospitality.

It is both an honor and a privilege to be associated with an organization that enjoys the history, reputation and professional stature that Philadelphia Hospitality has established over the 25 years of its existence.

As a native Philadelphian with a graduate degree from Temple University, School of Tourism and Hospitality Management and with 37 years of public service with the City of Philadelphia, I am looking forward to the challenge and opportunity to position Philadelphia Hospitality as a premier organization dedicated to promoting Philadelphia as a world class destination.

Governor Rendell and Mayor Nutter both value and appreciate the role of cultural tourism in the economic development of our region. There could not be a more perfect time to participate in this new energy and optimism that surrounds us.

Our great city has a wealth of arts and cultural, historic, horticultural, educational and public institutions that make Philadelphia and the region unique and unequalled in this country.

Since July 1, 2007, I have taken the mission and message of Philadelphia Hospitality “on the road.” Most days include meetings with the leadership of non profit organizations, government officials and community leaders who all share similar goals of managing, protecting and promoting the abundance of historic sites, museums, attractions, special events and world class institutions in our community.

There is no need to “reinvent the wheel!” Molly Espey and the Board established a clear path for the organization. Part of my challenge is to create meaningful and productive partnerships with organizations that promote and market the Philadelphia region and to provide innovative, exciting and creative tourism experiences for groups and individuals.

With the support of our dedicated Board of Directors and the superb staff, we are developing ideas for new initiatives, creating new programs and new strategic and marketing plans.

Finally, we are proud of our relationship with you – our Friends and supporters. I welcome your ideas or suggestions, and your assistance in spreading the word about our role in promoting this incredible region of ours.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill".

William E. Mifflin

# New Faces!

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## Our New Executive Director

We are thrilled to welcome **William E. Mifflin** as our new Executive Director. You may know Bill or have heard of his work through his deep commitment to our region or through his involvement in the arts and culture of the area.

If you've ever walked the trails of Fairmount Park, or cheered as your favorite rowed by on the Schuylkill, if you've ever reenacted our past at Fort Mifflin on the Delaware or learned about the future of ethanol, if you've ever inhaled the heavenly scent at the Subaru Cherry Blossom Festival or received pointers on how to save your garden from deer, then you know his accomplishments. As a previous Executive Director of the Fairmount Park Commission, on the boards of the Dad Vail Regatta, Fort Mifflin on the Delaware, The Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture, the Japan America Society of Greater Philadelphia and as former Chair of the Pennsylvania Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council, Bill's exceptional civic commitment and talents are widely-known and highly-respected.

We look forward to the new course Bill has set – innovative and exciting ventures and programs that will build upon Philadelphia Hospitality's solid past and ensure a rewarding future.

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## Philadelphia Hospitality is pleased to announce the addition of four Philadelphia-boosters to our board of directors: Elizabeth H. Barber, A. Bruce Crawley, Sheldon B. Margolis and Aaron Siegel.



**Elizabeth H. Barber**

Associate Dean of the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management at Temple University, **Dr. Elizabeth H. Barber** formalizes our relationship with the region's premier center for study of the hospitality industry. Betsy's primary responsibility at Temple has been to head curriculum development in Commercial Recreation and Tourism. As a past member of the Governor's Travel and Tourism Council and a member of the Pennsylvania Travel Council's Hospitality and Tourism Education Committee, Betsy's hands-on experience is as strong as her academic achievements.

We are delighted to welcome **A. Bruce Crawley**, veteran Philadelphia Hospitality board member, back to our Board of Directors after a four-year absence. Principal owner of Millennium 3 Management, Inc., Bruce has been a long-time leader in the Philadelphia hospitality industry, serving for five years as Chairman of the Board of the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau. He was also a co-founder of the Convention Bureau's Multicultural



**A. Bruce Crawley**

Affairs Congress and a founding member of the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation.

**Sheldon B. Margolis**, founder of Margolis Wine and Spirits, brings a passion for and knowledge about hospitality's essentials – food and wine – to Philadelphia Hospitality. A board member of Temple University's School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Shelly is also a member of the gastronomic society Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, as well as a member of both Commanderie de Bordeaux and the Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevins.



**Sheldon B. Margolis**

The internet marketing expertise of **Aaron Siegel**, Chairman of Siegel Ventures, LLC and Chairman of the Advisory Board of Knowledge Flow, will add an invaluable dimension to Philadelphia Hospitality's effectiveness. Aaron has provided marketing and consulting services to many venues in the Philadelphia area, including the Dad Vail Regatta,



**Aaron Siegel**

Penn's Landing – Blue Cross River Rink – and the South Street Head House District. With experience in destination development, Aaron's skills will be a tremendous asset to Philadelphia Hospitality.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## One Visit – Two Connections



**Cherry Bombeck welcomes visitors from the Springfield (MA) Museum School.**

Readers of *Opening Doors* are familiar with our ongoing delight with the connections guests discover between themselves and their hosts and even among themselves. The visit last June from the Springfield (MA) Museum School to the lovely home of Cherry and Hans Bombeck was no exception.

It turned out that the Bombecks had spent lots of time in Marlborough, a town very near the Springfield Museum, where they have close friends. In fact, Cherry Bombeck, a serious gardener, spoke of her intention to send a rare variety of lilac plant, a Miss Kim lilac from Persia, to her friends in Springfield.

You guessed it – someone in the group knew the friends – and volunteered to take the plant directly to them. So the Bombecks showed up at the Union League early on Sunday to bid farewell to the Springfield Museum group and send the Miss Kim lilac to Marlborough with a very special courier!

The Springfield visitors, who had come to Philadelphia especially for the King Tut exhibition, were so intent upon their study of Tut and his era that they were accompanied by an Egyptologist, Dr. Charles Hayward, who absolutely loved the presentation at The Franklin Institute. To further enhance the group's visit to our city we had arranged for two graduate student guides to lead them through *Amarna* at the University Museum. Dr. Hayward spoke glowingly about the two students and in a lovely, albeit *future* connection, he made plans to meet with them next winter in Egypt. He'll be leading a group from Springfield to Egypt and the students will be doing dissertation research there at the same time... a very nice Philadelphia/Cairo connection.

## Marketing News

While maintaining our tried and true methods of outreach and promotion, Philadelphia Hospitality's new marketing initiative will focus on developing partnerships. Leaders from organizations and festivals in the area are eager to provide their guests with experiences that expand beyond their own offerings. Our expertise at creating relevant, cultural travel programs has been sought out by the Chinese New Year Spectacular, West Oak Lane Jazz & Arts Festival and the Cherry Blossom Festival. Plans are under way for 2008 and 2009 to provide the audiences of these events with a multi-day experience option.

We are also very enthusiastic as we explore opportunities with local universities to provide programs for potential faculty and staff, as well as visiting dignitaries, international students and parents of prospective students. These initiatives have come about as a direct result of our increased efforts to raise awareness of our mission among educational institutions, corporate and professional groups and the local hospitality and tourism community. It is a major goal of the marketing department that Philadelphia Hospitality becomes the recognized leader for providing unique tourism experiences for discerning visitors to the Philadelphia region.



**Director of Marketing Leslie Day-Pearson greets Crystal Jacobs, a member of Councilwoman Marian B. Tasco's staff, at our recent open house.**

Mr. Dennis Pickeral, Site Administrator & Program Coordinator at *Stenton*, was the business card raffle winner at our Fall Open House. Dennis received a 2008 Philadelphia Card.

Ms. Janet Stone of Virginia was entered in the *Renoir Landscapes* raffle by returning her post-event questionnaire, and won the prize - a \$50 American Express gift card!

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## New Faces! - (Continued from page 3)

Philadelphia Hospitality also welcomes three talented new staff members. Besides Bill Mifflin, they include **Leslie Day-Pearson**, Director of Marketing and **Elizabeth Eckhardt**, Marketing and Development Associate.

Leslie was formerly with the City of Philadelphia, Office of the Representative, Ceremonial and Special Events, where she was responsible for public relations and special events for the city. Additionally Leslie was the race director for the Philadelphia Marathon, creating the first formal marketing and sponsorship programs for the event. Elizabeth was previously the Marketing and Development Associate with the Philadelphia Shakespeare Festival where she designed materials and honed her skill in graphics. We're delighted to include both Leslie and Elizabeth on our team!



Diane Dalto Woosnam welcomes Nick to the Sponsors' Party that she and Richard Woosam hosted in their Center City home.



Co-Chair Manny Stamatakis toasts our honoree.



Eileen DeBenedictis and Marguerite Lenfest, star students of the Mummer's' strut, lead guests in festivities.



Previous honoree (1996) Bill Giles shares a moment with Nick.

Our honoree Nick DeBenedictis displayed his customary regard for friends and colleagues by speaking briefly, but from his heart, evidencing his appreciation to all who turned out to pay tribute to him and those who made the gala Philadelphia Hospitality's most successful ever.

We extend a special thank you to the many wonderful sponsors who generously supported the 2007 *Vision for Philadelphia* Award Gala.

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(Seated, front row) Adrian King, Alice Dagit, Pat Morley, Sandy Marshall and Aaron Siegel; (Standing, front row) Betsy Barber, Tom Stewart, Mark Samuels, Judy Block and Hilarie Morgan; (Standing back row) Bruce Crawley, Shelly Margolis, Anne Hamilton and Richard Woosnam

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

William E. Mifflin

## Philadelphia Says Goodbye

Associate Friends and volunteers, homeowners and the cultural community, Philadelphia Hospitality board members and Governor Rendell – all turned out in force to bid Molly Tobin Espey a fond farewell. Molly resigned after fourteen years as Executive Director and – as so many of our guests remarked – the heart of Philadelphia Hospitality to spend a year (or perhaps two!) in Istanbul.

The evening began in the striking Snyderman–Works Gallery, in the heart of the vibrant Old City gallery district, where Ruth and Rick Snyderman introduced guests to unique painting, jewelry and ceramic works on display. Then the Snydermans invited everyone upstairs to enjoy the remainder of the evening in their exquisite loft home, where they have graciously welcomed several of our visiting groups.



Governor Rendell presents a citation from the Commonwealth to retiring Executive Director Molly Espey.



Barbara and David Seegul chat with Philadelphia Hospitality Chair Pat Morley.

In a very poignant moment of the evening, Molly was honored with a citation from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, presented by Governor Ed Rendell, and one from the City of Philadelphia for her superb leadership and her contributions to the community. Then our Board of Directors showed its great appreciation with a very special pendant – a gold key to the city.

Guests enjoyed an assortment of wines specially selected and poured by our generous supporter and good friend Greg Moore from Moore Brothers Wine Company and a savory sampling from Fork, Philadelphia’s acclaimed bistro, also

located in Old City. The entire evening was filled with high spirits, celebrating Molly’s memorable achievements and her adventures ahead.

All of Molly’s many friends, knowing her Pied Piper reputation, fully expect that when they see her again in Philadelphia, it will be with Turks in tow.



Frequent Philadelphia Hospitality host Rick Snyderman (far right) shows Richard and Diane Dalto Woosnam and Jay Tolson through the Snyderman - Works gallery.

As this newsletter goes to print, our next member reception is imminent. **Barclay Prime, one of famed restaurateur Stephen Starr’s dining spots**, will host Philadelphia Hospitality’s Patrons’ thank you and welcome to our new Executive Director Bill Mifflin. Pictures and details can be found on our website at [www.philahospitality.org/support\\_us/special\\_events.html](http://www.philahospitality.org/support_us/special_events.html).

## Words from a Partner



Steve Santini

Steve Santini  
Senior Vice President and Regional Director  
Wachovia Wealth Management

At Wachovia, giving back is a vital component of our culture. We know that we grow stronger, as a corporation and as individuals, when we are fully engaged in serving our communities. We understand that with our resources comes the responsibility to make a real difference.

Wachovia Wealth Management takes a unique approach to serving the needs of clients at diverse levels of wealth and geographies. Our best-in-class approach goes beyond our highly esteemed investment platform to include all aspects of wealth, from creating liquidity to leaving a legacy. Because our approach leverages the combined knowledge, experience and skills of the team, our clients are assured that every aspect of their financial life will be considered in the context of their real-life needs and plans.

Wachovia Wealth Management is pleased to underwrite this newsletter and proud to partner with Philadelphia Hospitality to provide uncommon experiences in our community and to make a positive impact on our region’s tourism industry. Similar to Wachovia Wealth Management, Philadelphia Hospitality takes a unique approach to serving the needs of its clients by providing innovative programs that are specially designed to suit their interests.

Thank you Philadelphia Hospitality, for the important role you play in promoting our great city and region!

## Happy Returns — They Came for the Flowers and Returned for the Art



A group from the Everson Museum of Art (Syracuse, NY) dines alfresco at the home of Page Talbott.

happy to comply. She went on to say that she first learned about Philadelphia Hospitality as a member of the American Horticultural Society, and added that she generally doesn't have time to travel, but made time for our Renoir program because it was so enticing. She pointed to a tailored, wonderful experience that she would have a hard time duplicating.



Members of Executive Women's International enjoy tea at the Acorn Club.

choice to a single experience. She loved the visit to the Brandywine River Museum – particularly guide Victoria Wyeth's enthusiasm, and her insight into her grandfather's works. And she loved the opportunity Philadelphia Hospitality provides, "to meet the natives," which she believes makes our programs stand out. She truly enjoyed lunch with Mary Ann and Bill Justice in their grand home, previously owned by Larry Bowa, former Phillies shortstop, who later returned to manage the team.

Barbara Frank, who has lived in London, Tokyo, San Francisco and Chicago, couldn't resist a tribute to our city. She found the Barnes Foundation "astounding," delighted in Philadelphia's navigability, and marveled at the quality of restaurants, having no idea there would be so many outstanding choices for gourmands.

Because of her loyalty, we saved our call to Shirley Graebert, of Vero Beach Florida, for last. We were not surprised when Shirley, who has participated in six Philadelphia Hospitality programs, spoke of our region in a way we had not heard before. She returns to Pennsylvania and supports it economically because she loves our state. She feels strongly about the importance of industry and its historic role in making our commonwealth thrive. She has an abiding love for Pennsylvania and a deep respect for the symbols of our nation, found in such profusion here in Philadelphia, which compel her to return again and again. Speaking with Shirley and with other repeat clients reminded us why Philadelphia Hospitality is unique — there is no other like organization, because we have Philadelphia and its treasures to promote!

One of our most gratifying truths is that many visitors choose Philadelphia Hospitality because they already know our work first-hand.

We wondered – what about us, or about Philadelphia, made them repeat visitors? Recently we spoke with four previous participants of our *Philadelphia in Full Bloom* program, held annually during the Philadelphia Flower Show. After they returned last fall for *Rendezvous with Renoir*, our three-night program that featured Renoir Landscapes at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, we asked about the highlights of their stays.

Janice Lynch of Falls Church, Virginia, only let two years elapse before returning. We asked her why – and her response – "Because you're so hospitable!" Like any compliment recipient, we were eager to hear more and Janice was



Philadelphia Hospitality Board of Advisors member Marie Schwarz charms a visitor with her trademark graciousness.

Barbara Koegel of Flint, Michigan, was last here as her daughter's guest for our *Full Bloom* program featuring the 2000 Philadelphia Flower Show and returned with her husband for Renoir. The Koegels share an interest in art but declared the history, part of all of our programs, a bonus. Barbara also cited her desire to visit Philadelphia in the fall, especially for Longwood Gardens' Chrysanthemum Festival, as reason for her return. Like so many of our visitors, the Koegels added to our collection of countless "small world" stories. At breakfast they sat with Richard Reddington and his wife from Ashville, New York, and discovered that the Reddingtons are good friends of the Koegel's Flint neighbors who live just down the street!

We questioned Barbara Frank of Long Grove, Illinois, about her favorite part of the program. Barbara was unable to limit her



Barbara and Bob Hauptfuhrer ready a seasonal centerpiece for the Toronto Friends of the Visual Arts' (Ontario, Canada) October visit.

2007

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*Philadelphia Hospitality gratefully acknowledges  
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# Philadelphia Hospitality

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Promoting the Greater Philadelphia Region



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# Opening Doors

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## Join Us!

On Wednesday evening, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Philadelphia Hospitality will honor Mayor Michael Nutter with its 15<sup>th</sup> annual *Vision for Philadelphia* Award at Loews Philadelphia Hotel.

Mayor Nutter has worked tirelessly for Philadelphia's future – for citizen health, crime reduction, public school education, ethics reform, the arts, and tourism and hospitality. Through his dedicated vision, he has rekindled our pride in the city.

We hope you will plan to join us to pay tribute to one of our city's true Visionaries. For information about the *Vision for Philadelphia* Award Gala, contact Marilynn Farber at [farber@philahospitality.org](mailto:farber@philahospitality.org) or 215-790-9901.



**Mayor Michael Nutter**