

## POST SHOW PRESS RELEASE

The Arkansas Hospitality Association Convention and Trade Show  
September 14-15, 2011 in Little Rock, AR



**“Innovative, TRUE BLUE Growth” is the trend of 2011 in Arkansas Hospitality**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Little Rock, AR (September 23, 2011)** – If you stand still, you fall back. Arkansas is moving upward and onward at rapid speed and we have an event to prove it!

There was a time when Arkansas Tourism was hardly even a concept due to years of inadequate funding and budget constraints for park restoration. A one-eighth-cent conservation sales tax was passed to ensure our state parks would be rebuilt and maintained for many generations to come. Well, the time is here and Arkansas continues to be a leader in technology, natural beauty, and fun times. The 67<sup>th</sup> annual Arkansas Hospitality Association (AHA) 2011 Convention and Trade Show represented all of these successes.

**INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY** - Arkansas was the first state to have its own iPhone app, and is one of the first states to implement QR codes in their publications. The LA Times reports QR code scans nationwide are quickly growing—from 80,000 a month in 2009 to two million a month in 2011. **NOW THAT’S GROWTH!** Arkansas consumers can directly link to the most desired visitor resources, such as the Free Vacation Planning Kit and Hot Deals and Packages.

**NATURAL BEAUTY** – Arkansas continues to expand with 52 parks, 2.9 million acres of national forest, Ozark Mountains, 200 camp sites, caves, caverns, lakes, rivers, scenic byways, and sunsets you can only experience. They cannot be described with words. Tourism continues to grow every year as more and more people return for fresh air, friendly people, and Arkansas charm.

**FUN TIMES** – Casino! Casino! Casino! The vendors have never been so creative and jazzed about a theme. This excitement spread through out the trade show floor to attendees, customers and even to Montine McNulty, Executive Director of AHA. She stated, "Our vendor community really excelled this year in their effort to support our theme, *Arkansas, A Sure Bet*. We congratulate Sysco for the 'Outstanding Booth Award'. The design encouraged interaction between vendors and clients which is a triumph for all parties."



## Tuesday, September 13, 2011 - Chef's Culinary Classic Competition & Silent Auction

Always a highlight of the tradeshow is the annual Chef's Culinary Classic competition and silent auction hosted at the Statehouse Convention Center. "Our chefs were a large part of the innovation and growth this year," said McNulty. "Their creations were fresh and new. We are thrilled to share in such talent." This year's auction was a smashing success with 50 delightful items and everyone was bid on.



### Appetizer:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place: Tung Nguyen and Seth Harris with Southland Park Gaming and Racing - Beef Carpaccio
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Matthew Cooper with Lulav Modern Eatery - Coquille Saint-Jacques
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place: Andre Poirot with Peabody Hotel - Crawfish Lasalle

### Soup/Salad:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place: Larry Patrick with Peabody - Quail and Andouille Gumbo
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Tung Nguyen and Seth Harris with Southland Park Gaming and Racing – Strawberry and Mixed Field Greens
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place: Jamie McAfee with Pine Bluff Country Club - Roasted Red Pepper Soup

### Entrée:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place: Brandon Douglas - Pulaski Technical College - Cast Iron Seared Beef
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Jason Knapp - Aramark - Pan Seared Filet of Beef
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place: Joe Coleman - Peabody Hotel - Cabernet Braised Kobe Beef Cheeks

### Dessert:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place: Jason Godwin - Dogtown Coffee and Cookery - Sorghum Latte in Chocolate Mug
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Jan Lewandowski - Pulaski Technical College - Floating Island
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place: Jason Knapp - Aramark - Strawberry & Buttermilk Bavarian Cream

### Best of Beef:

Tung Nguyen and Seth Harris from Southland Park Gaming & Racing with Beef Carpaccio

### Coleman Pride:

Brandon Douglas from Pulaski Technical College with Cast Iron Seared Beef

### People's Choice:

Andre Poirot with Peabody Hotel with Crawfish Lasalle

## Wednesday & Thursday, September 14-15, 2011 – Iron Chef Competition & Hospitality Games

The tradeshow floor was entertaining and electric with live demonstrations and nail biting competitions.



Iron Chef Champion: Stephen Burrow, Clinton Presidential Center

Celebrity Winners: Pamela Smith, Channel 7 News & Cynthia East Malik, Pulaski Technical College

### Bartending:

1<sup>st</sup> place: Shane Parker representing The Pantry Restaurant, LR

Runner up: Jason Moix representing The Peabody Hotel, LR

### Maintenance:

1<sup>st</sup> place: Mtn. Harbor Resort, Mt Ida, Justin Orendorff, Allen Jones & Tye Wright (2.32)

**\*\*\*this is Mtn. Harbor's 5<sup>th</sup> straight win in maintenance**

2<sup>nd</sup> place: Arlington Hotel, Hot Springs, Jim Perros, Matt Davis & Rick McCormick (3.03)

3<sup>rd</sup> place: Razorback Inn, Little Rock Air Force Base, Darin Long, Don Pierce & Chari Ward (3.14)

4<sup>th</sup> place: Peabody Hotel, LR, Michele Bradfield, Mike Mateo & David Hite (4.03)

### Bell Cart:

1<sup>st</sup> place: Razorback Inn, Little Rock Air Force Base, Eric Pieper, Rafeal Serrati & Tony Armstrong (3.41)

2<sup>nd</sup> place: The Peabody Hotel, LR, Logan Hebda, Rick Holthoff & Austin (3.69)

3<sup>rd</sup> place: The Arlington Hotel, Hot Springs, Freddie Brown, Stephanie Knox & Ted Marshall (3.96)

### Bed Making:

1<sup>st</sup> place: The Capital Hotel, LR, Cayetana Cornejo, Mireya Collin & Olivia Gonzales (1.33)

2<sup>nd</sup> place: Embassy Suites Hot Springs, Manuela Guardado, Azona James & Karen Shannon (1.42)

3<sup>rd</sup> place: ASAP, LR, Marisol Morales, Susanna Olmas & Aleyda Morales (2.08)

4<sup>th</sup> place: The Peabody Hotel, LR, Marilu Hernandez, Anthony Jackson & Shanika Sisk (2.33)

5<sup>th</sup> place: Mtn. Harbor, Mt. Ida Dusty Owens, Amber Hanover & Lacy Bernham (3.24)

6<sup>th</sup> place: Razorback Inn, LR Air Force Base, Marilyn Hubbard, Joecyline Gustin & Mae Takcik (3.60)



## Wednesday, September 14, 2011 – AHA Awards Gala & After-Party

The annual AHA Awards Gala held at the Robinson Center was a delightful evening filled with live music, delicious food and the installation of the new officers for the 2011 board. The after party made one thing clear, the Arkansas Hospitality industry is *A Sure Bet* and our dedication to continued growth and progressive thinking made us all winners! List of officers and board members for 2011-2012:

PRESIDENT, Kurt Schatzl, Arkansas Lodging Association And Chairman of the Board

PRESIDENT, Mike Coats, Arkansas Restaurant Association

PRESIDENT, Pam Ferguson, Arkansas Travel Council

### **New Board Member Of The Arkansas Travel Council:**

Jim Mishler, Self Creek Lodge & Marina

Allyson Twiggs Dyer, Rogers Convention & Visitors Bureau

### **The New Board Members For The Arkansas Restaurant Association:**

Tim Janssen, Janssen's Lakefront Restaurant

Don Dugan, Dugan's Pub

Mike Nabors, Neighbor's Mill Bakery & Cafe

### **New Board Members For The Arkansas Lodging Association:**

Monte Hanson, The Peabody Hotel

Bob Martorana, The Arlington Hotel & Spa

Chet Patel, Quality Inn & Suites – Clarksville



The Arkansas Hospitality Association (AHA) is the official voice of the restaurant and entertainment, hotel and lodging, and travel and tourism industries in the state of Arkansas. The association serves as an umbrella organization for the Arkansas Lodging Association, the Arkansas Restaurant Association and the Arkansas Travel Council. Members include restaurants, bars, hotels, lodges, resorts and other businesses related to travel, tourism and entertainment, as well as companies who do business with them. For more information on AHA and these events: [www.arhospitality.org](http://www.arhospitality.org)

MEDIA CONTACT:

Krista DeBuhr || 216 280 4766 || [media@snerq.com](mailto:media@snerq.com)

AHA CONTACT:

Holly Heer || 501 376 2323 || [holly@arhospitality.org](mailto:holly@arhospitality.org)

