



Dear Members:

Greetings and happy New Year to all! Hopefully your year ended on a high note, and 2009 is shaping up to be as rewarding as you need it to be. Certainly we have all faced challenges recently, but let's agree to look at them as opportunities, shall we?!

In our industry, the holiday season can make huge demands on our time, our stress levels, our personal lives and, in fact, on nearly ALL aspects of our lives. We are not able to let up until every event has been brought to fruition; every client has been "wowed"; every bit of equipment has been washed, repaired, polished and put away. When all this has been accomplished, then and only then can we relax for just a moment. Which is precisely the goal of the annual CEC holiday Ball!

For those of you who were unable to attend for any reason, I must tell you that you missed a "gem" of an event at the Trump Hotel. This year's event marked the finale of the Catering Executive Club's 75<sup>th</sup> year as the premier organization for catering professionals. And what a grand jubilee it was! I don't even drink, and I have a bit of a "hangover"; is there any chance that all the fun could be the cause?

Our hostess Monika Lotter truly created an event worthy of the CEC. The overall ambience just oozed elegance (think Diamonds!). The Ballroom was oriented perfectly. The tables were accented and set just so. A very special thank you to our vendor partners who once again rose to exceed expectations! Heffernan Morgan again with an outstanding "look" (Bling and Bubbles my friends); BBJ linens, who have been so supportive of us always; Hall's rental (Tom Luft is truly an amazing partner!); Swank Audio Visuals and the lighting... the CEC logo centered on the dance floor and even making "the pillar" a star studded part of the room, and of course no event would be complete without Edward Fox capturing the moments as they have done for years. What a reflection of the grand tradition that the CEC represents; words almost aren't enough for the care and attention to detail evident to all.

And all of this before we even sat down for dinner! Executive Banquet Chef Michael Siddler, Banquet Sous Chef Justin Purdue and Executive Pastry Chef Hichem Lareche created an exquisite menu. Each course was prepared to perfection. Perhaps the coolest part: these guys have got presentation DOWN! From soup to salad to main course to dessert; a wonderful visual treat every single one. And all of *this* before we even lifted up a spoon or fork. I'm truly awed by the talent these professionals put on display for us. Of course the Banquet service staff executed the game plan perfectly. Monika, consider yourself lucky to have the team you have to work with.



Okay, great room, great presentation, great food. But how about Lynne Jordan and the Shivers? Add another "great". I'll freely admit I'm not the dancer my wife wishes I was. But I found myself tapping my toes, starting to "chair dance".... and then heading right out onto the floor! Pretty hard to resist when the whole darn room starts to get moving. Good thing my wife is a great dancer; she made me look like I actually knew a step or two. Enthusiasm will only take you so far! Trust me though; I wasn't the only one out there cuttin' the rug. The whole evening, my friends, was a recipe for a "fun hangover". And worth it every single bit I might add!

While you may not have been able to join us at the Trump, please consider joining us for our next monthly meeting at The Union League Club. Of course having access to one of the premier private clubs in Chicago is wonderful. But I'm pretty sure our hostess Wendy Cutka and her team will remind us once again what it means to host our organization. Plus, our Education Committee (Kim Polk and Jen Jones) has something in mind, which should be detailed a bit more in another section of this mailing. And don't forget to put Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup> on your calendar for our Annual Spring Scholarship Ball, where honoree and longtime CEC member Harry Kempf will be feted in true CEC style at the Hyatt.

In conclusion, I'd like to ask each of you to take a moment to be grateful. We are in some tough times as a nation, as an industry, and even as individuals (trust me, I KNOW). But rather than focusing on what we think we should have, perhaps we can think about what we do have. Last night I was reminded yet again of the greatest benefit of membership in the CEC. And that is the warmth of friendship and fellowship you can only get by being an active member of our Club. May each of you be blessed this year with something that touches your life in a way that helps you to be the best **you** can be. Together we can meet any challenge we face with confidence.

John Kaht, President

## CATERING EXECUTIVES CLUB OF AMERICA ~ JANUARY MEETING

January 26, 2009 - Union League Club of Chicago

65 West Jackson Blvd – Chicago, Illinois 60604 – 312.427.7800

6:00 cocktails 6:45 dinner

Members \$60.00 ~ Guests \$85.00

Please R.S.V.P. By Wednesday, January 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:00p.m. to

Sergeant-At-Arms Philip Pessin at 847-899-2671,

or online at [www.cateringexecutives.org](http://www.cateringexecutives.org)

### MEMBERS

#### OF THE BOARD

Board Meeting at 4:15 p.m.

If you cannot attend the

event, you must inform the

Sergeant-at-Arms

reservations made after 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>

will be charged the guest fee of \$85.00, and no-shows will be charged.

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## ETIQUETTE AND PROTOCOL EDUCATIONAL SPEAKER

Companies are recognizing that etiquette and protocol intelligence is a form of business intelligence. This has created an unprecedented demand for expert guidance on matters of modern business etiquette and international protocol. In fact, soft skills are so important in the workplace, a recent survey found 86% of employers consider them to be among their most important hiring criteria.

P.J. McGuire, president of Modet, Inc, and a graduate of the prestigious Protocol School of Washington, will share her expertise on a wide range of topics including body language and gestures, greetings/introductions, eye contact and proper understanding and respect for cultures.

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## CATERING EXECUTIVES CLUB CALENDAR OF UPCOMMING EVENTS

### January Monthly Meeting

January 26, 2009

Union League Club of Chicago

### March Monthly Meeting

March 30, 2009

Private Dining Rooms of Spiaggia

### February Monthly Meeting

February 23, 2009

Signature Room at the 95<sup>th</sup>

### Spring Scholarship Ball

April 13, 2009

Hyatt Regency Chicago

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**CATERING EXECUTIVES CLUB OF AMERICA**

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**CRYSTAL LAKE, ILLINOIS 60012**