

Convention Bureau Proposes Tax Increase

As indicated in a recent Advocate report, the Baton Rouge Area Convention and Visitors Bureau has expressed an interest to increase their operating budget by one million dollars (The Advocate, July, 2004). This proposition has arisen due to the need to increase marketing dollars and staff to market the expanded and renovated Baton Rouge River Center. Currently, occupancy taxes (collected at 4% on hotel room night sales) provide approximately \$2.2 million dollars, 98% of the Convention and Visitors Bureau's operating revenues. To fairly review the need to justify an increase, a task force has been created comprised of hoteliers, restaurateurs, attractions, and automotive rental / leasing agencies...those that might be impacted by the proposed taxes. The task force desperately needs your input to evaluate the need for an increase.

To test the feasibility of such an increase, the task force has requested the hotel community to research transient and group market contributions so that a conclusive market segment number can be realized and to confirm the need to spend approximately \$400,000 on

transient and leisure marketing. Once determined that this market segment is feasible, the task force will proceed to support the increase with the understanding that ALL of the proposed entities will be taxed, not only hotels.

To complete such a task, we e-mailed a worksheet (MS Excel – but is available for fax or mail in hardcopy) to be completed by August 15th. Please take the time to complete the worksheet. The data is vital to the success of the task force's recommendations. Please send all confidential data to:

Innovatis IMC Worldwide
Attention: Lee E. Melancon, III,
Chief Operating Partner
PO Box 4092
Baton Rouge, LA 70821
E-mail to: lee@innovatisimc.com
Fax to: (225) 201-1556

If you should have questions, feel free to contact me at (225) 924-5000.

Janet Beck Schwartz,
BRHMA President

It's Times Like These Your Membership in BRHMA is Critical!

Please take the time to renew your BRHMA membership dues today so that you too can stand and be heard. In order for the needs of the industry to be addressed, the industry must speak as a unified voice, and that means ALL of us. We are in this together. At this time, dues are prorated. Contact our membership team at (225) 303-0164 so that you can begin taking advantage of the membership benefits offered by BRHMA including professional development, networking, membership discounts, employee recognition programs, and most importantly political action. **Join us on September 2, 2004 at the Marriott on Hilton Avenue (11:45am) as we host our "Meet the Mayoral Candidates Forum."** To RSVP, call (225) 303-0164.

Feel free to contact me at (225) 927-6700 if you should have questions or need more information on how the BRHMA may assist in making your hospitality industry business operate more effectively and efficiently.

Join us - Get Involved!
Margrett Fels
BRHMA Secretary

BRHMA Teams Up with Local Sales and Marketing Associations to Host 2004 Mayoral Candidates Forum

On September 2, 2004, the BRHMA will team up with the Baton Rouge Area Hospitality Sales Association and Sales and Marketing Executives of Baton Rouge to host the 2004 Mayoral Candidates forum. The forum will be held at Marriott Hotel on Hilton Avenue. The program is as follows: 11:15 (networking), 11:45 (seating), 12 noon (lunch served), 12:15 (forum begins).

Each candidate will present his platform and respond to one general question. Candidates will then be given three additional questions taken from each organization. Take this opportunity to e-mail your question to the Mayoral Forum Committee. Send questions to lee@innovatisimc.com. Questions can also be faxed to (225) 201-1556. Not all questions will be posed. The forum is being moderated by WBRZ's Political Analyst, Veronica Mosgrove.

RSVP for the Mayoral Candidates Meeting now at (225) 303-0164. Cost is \$17.00 per person and should be paid at the door. No shows will be billed. Last day to RSVP is August 27th by 5pm. For questions, call (225) 303-0164.

BOWL...BOWL...BOWL ME OVER!

The First Annual BRHMA Bowling Tournament will be held on Monday, September 20th from 2:30pm - 5:00pm at Circle Bowl at 8878 Florida Boulevard - Across from Cortana Mall. Each team should consist of 6 people and the cost is \$15 per person or \$90 per team (includes shoes). Door prizes will be offered and team trophies will be given for first, second, and third place team. Individual best score trophies will be given to first, second, and third place winners in both male and female categories. Refreshments will be served. To register your team, fill out the form below:

Yes, I would like to enter the BRHMA Bowling Tournament.

Contact Name _____ Property _____

Team Members: _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____ (optional)

Register _____ individual(s) at \$17.00 each. Register _____ team(s) at \$90.00 each.

Payment Option:

Enclosed is my full payment in the amount of _____ made payable to BRHMA,

Bill my property _____ in the amount of _____.

All fees must be collected by September 15th by 5:00pm.



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Baton Rouge Area Hospitality Management Association
Post Office Box 4092
Baton Rouge, LA 70821

Upcoming Events

Joint Meeting BRHMA & BRHSA / Allied Member Trade Show
(Trade Show Free – to register, call 303-0164)

Wednesday, August 18th / Drusilla's Seafood Restaurant
(10am Trade Show Setup, 11:00am Trade Show, 12noon Lunch, 3482 Drusilla Lane)

Mayoral Candidate Forum / September 2nd, 2004
Marriott Hotel (5500 Hilton Avenue)

BRHMA Bowling Tourney / September 20th, 2004
Circle Bowl (8878 Florida Boulevard – Across from Cortana Mall)

BRHMA HAS A NEW PHONE NUMBER 303-0164
RSVPs for BRHMA Functions, call 303-0164 / www.brhma.org

BRHMA Mission

Creating a unified hospitality industry through business partnerships, collaboration, continuing education, and networking.