

# MEETINGS ROUNDUP

## Smith Drug Company Enjoys Best Trade Show Yet!

By Christa Hampton



Attendees take advantage of the many continuing education sessions offered over the three days.

**W**ith each year the annual CE/Gift & Trade Show for Smith Drug Company has gotten better and better. But this year surpassed all previous years. Beautiful historic Grove Park Inn, nestled in the mountains of Asheville, N.C., was the host property and did a fantastic job accommodating our customers and vendor partners over the three days — July 30 through August 1.

Approximately 300 of 561 rooms were occupied by those attending the Smith show. With all of its ample meeting and convention space, 50,000 square feet was used to the fullest with our vendor partners' exhibits, our customers attending the trade show and the continuing education classes.

Rick Simerly, Vice President, Business Development, held a managers' meeting plus a sales meeting prepping everyone for the weekend. The marketing staff plus 15 territory account managers worked putting up displays, products, handing out CE materials and helping our customers. Unfortunately, this year's meeting was held without one of Smith's wonderful territory account managers, Webster Stevens. Webster recently passed away and there was a great picture of him set up in his memory.

Vendors had Thursday to set up for the Smith preview of exhibitors which was followed by dinner and some fun for all. It was Mardi Gras night decorated with mask and beads in colors of purple, green and gold. Also a fortune teller, a henna tattoo artist and a magician showed their talents making for a relaxing night prior to show time.

The customers' event kicked off with CE on Friday morning and went til noon followed by the Grand Opening of

the trade show floor that afternoon. How impressive to see over 140 exhibitors displaying health & beauty products, gifts galore, programs & services from the branded Rx side of the business; a new Wellness program; and Bill Romanoski, ex-professional football player who autographed photos and donated one of his jerseys for a door prize.

On Saturday the show floor closed at noon and went into CE afterwards. In all classes, there was a minimum of 100-125



"Old Hollywood" was alive and well during the Trade Show as Smith Drug Company team members took to the stage. At the microphone is Smith Drug president Ken Couch as Marlon Brando. Behind him are team members, from left to right: Brooke Holder as Audrey Hepburn; Christa Hampton as Marilyn Monroe; Rick Simerly as Joe DiMaggio; Amy Wolfe as Cleopatra; Donna Johnson as Harpo; Randy Lawter as Groucho; Tonia Dillashaw as Lucy; and Derek McLaughlin as James Dean.



attendees. And keeping with Smith tradition, president Ken Couch bid everyone welcome at the “Customer Appreciation Dinner” which was held that evening. Entertainment for the evening featured the Dynamic Breakers, playing beach music for the “shaggers” as well as contemporary pop for everyone to enjoy. Four hundred

customers, their families and employees enjoyed a delightful full course meal.

Sunday was the last day of the event with two CE programs held in the morning. Everything happened with precision and professionalism but also with fun and a family atmosphere.

Next year’s meeting will be held at

the Marriott in historic Charleston, S.C. The Marriott has a new convention center which just opened this summer.

Thanks to all of our customers and vendors making this year’s show the best ever for Smith Drug Company.

*Christa Hampton is Smith Drug Company’s Director of Marketing.*

## *In The Exhibit Hall*

