



Skål USA Journeys



2019 Skål USA Journeys, Volume 1

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A Message from the Skål USA President



Lisa Conway

President – Skål USA

Lisa.Conway@Skalusa.org

Dear Skålleagues,

Skål USA has spent the last few years building a solid foundation. We've added additional membership benefits (travel discounts, job board, sponsorships). We've cut expenses. We've partnered with the most well-known travel organizations in the country.

Yet we still have membership issues. This isn't specific to Skål. Every fraternal club in the US, from Rotary to Elks, are having trouble attracting and, more importantly, retaining members. With the increased availability and usage of social media, as well as longer hours, lower pay and smaller expense budgets, travel professionals just aren't seeing value or return on investment.

But we know the truth. In person networking is invaluable, not only to grow business, but to ensure professional development. (Fun fact: 85% of jobs are filled through your existing network).

I joined Skål almost 20 years ago because it helped me network for my business. Therefore, I've asked the SKÅL USA Executive Committee to focus on getting back to Skål basics, or "Friends Doing Business with Friends". We need to get to know the members and potential members again – regionally, nationally and internationally. "Getting Back to Skål Basics" initiatives include (but are not limited to):


- Announcement of New Skål USA Members
- Member Profiles (online, in the newsletter, on social media)
- Industry educational roundtables across clubs (cruise, hotel, tours, Industry Leaders)
- Using new technology for sharing knowledge (local, regional, national)
- PR & Marketing Membership campaigns
- Membership Spotlight Podcast Interviews
- Continue to focus on opening or reactivating clubs

I know there's not a silver bullet for membership, and we welcome your submissions and ideas. But I do know that you, our fellow Skålleagues, are here and want to be active and engaged. And an

active and engaged membership is one that grows.

I look forward to working for you in 2019 and know that we will get back to Skål basics together.

Best regards and Skål!



Lisa Conway

A Message from the Skål USA Vice President of Administration



Jim Dwyer

Vice President of Administration

Jim.Dwyer@skalusa.org

Last year I celebrated my 25th year in Skål. I have been a member of three Skål clubs during that time Skål Toledo, Skål Detroit and Skål Northern New Jersey. Most of you have not belonged for that amount of time and a few of you may not have been around that long. To me Skål is a passion. It means having friends and colleagues not only in your neighborhood or your state or your country but around the world. We have so many opportunities to network with world leaders in tourism and hospitality that very few have. We are all inclusive and are on six continents. We are non-political and non-denominational. With our skal.org data base you can reach out to any member anywhere and ask advice on their country, customs, lodging and more. This is not

just hypothetical. I reach out anytime I travel. Sometimes the message is business related and sometimes personal but I know that the information in their reply will be useful. Often you will get an invitation to a Skål meeting or to lunch with the president of the club. You will come to see Skål, as I do, as an extended family.

In 2004 I suggested to the Northern New Jersey club that we make a trip as a group to visit a club in Europe. Since our president at the time was from the Netherlands he suggested we fly to Amsterdam and meet with the North Holland Skål club. We had 16 participants and our short four day trip was a resounding success. So much so that we've continued the tradition every year since and have visited over 38 Skål clubs during that period.

If you can't travel internationally visit a club in the U.S. We should be living our motto of **"Doing Business Among Friends"** and having fun with friends. If you haven't been to a North American Skål Congress (NASC) or a World Congress you should consider attending. Any Skål member can attend. It's not only for club officers. The relationship you will build will remain with you a long time. And once you've gone you'll want to go again and again. Here in the U.S. we are fortunate enough to have both NASC and the World Congress in 2019. The beautiful island state of Hawaii is hosting NASC from April 25 to 28 and Skål Miami is hosting the 2019 World Congress on board the incredible Symphony of the Seas, Royal Caribbean's newest ship and the largest cruise ship afloat.

So realize that Skål is more than going to dinner with your friend once a month. It's a worldwide family of friends and dinner is waiting to be served. If you need any information about meeting with other Skål clubs or attending NASC or the World Congress, please contact me at jdwyer1144@gmail.com.

A Message from the Skål USA VP of Finance



Alton Hagen

VP Finance- Skål USA

Alton.Hagen@Skålnusa.org

The latest Financial Reports have been finalized and have been posted to the Skål USA website.

[2018 Year -End Report](#)

[January - February 2019](#)

A Message from the Skål USA VP of Membership



David Ryan

VP Membership – Skål USA

David.Ryan@Skålnusa.org

A Letter from the Vice-President of Membership for Skål USA

Greetings Fellow Skålleagues,

I would like to share some things that your membership team is doing to help grow the membership base of Skål USA. Before I do that I would like to introduce you to your Membership Directors and their Clubs of responsibility. Although any of us on the Membership Committee can assist you with questions related to membership, we have divided in regions primarily to assist with getting new memberships approved quickly.

Richard Scinta of Skål Orlando is in his 2nd year of a 2-year term as Director of Membership. Richard brings a wealth of experience in helping to grow the Orlando Club to the status of 2nd largest Club in Skål USA. Richard handles the following Clubs: Arkansas, Atlanta, Austin, Charlotte, Ft. Lauderdale, Fort Worth, Jacksonville, Kansas City, Memphis, Miami, Myrtle Beach, Nashville, New Orleans, Orlando, Puerto Rico, Raleigh Durham, Southwest Florida and Tampa Bay.

William Tullman was elected to a 2-year term as Director of Membership beginning this year. William is a member of Skål Miami and has been a Skål member in good standing for many years. William handles the following Clubs: Albany, Baltimore, Boston, Central PA, Chicago, Columbus, Long Island, Louisville, New York, Northeast PA, Northern New Jersey, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Richmond and Washington, DC.

Clubs that fall under me are: Anchorage, Boise, Central California, Colorado, Hawaii, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Orange Coast, Phoenix, Portland, Reno-Tahoe, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Fe, Seattle and Tucson.

Our primary objectives are to grow membership of existing Clubs and to find cities to open new Clubs. Some of the cities under consideration to start new Clubs are:

- Houston, Dallas & San Antonio, TX
- Savannah, GA
- Minneapolis, MN
- Detroit, MI
- Cleveland, OH

There are several others under consideration as well. This is where you come in as members of Skål USA – if you know of any travel industry leaders in any of these cities that you think might be willing and able to take the lead on starting a Club in these cities please forward their contact information to one of us. We will help them through the process from start to finish and it's not a lot of work. The biggest challenge is finding the required number of members to get the Club started. We also need your help identifying potential members in these cities – please forward the contact information to any of us. Some of the cities above are cities where we used to have Skål Clubs but they have closed. In those cities if the Club has been deactivated for less than 10 years it takes 15 members to restart the Club. If it is a new city where there never was a Club before the minimum to start the Club is 20 members.

We would like to challenge every Club to grow in 2019 by a minimum of 10% or 5 members whichever is greater. If your Club is not laser focused on growing members, you really should be. Skål USA wants to continue to be the premier organization in the travel industry in the United States and the only way we can accomplish this is to grow our base in existing Clubs and start new Clubs in key markets. The best way to grow your membership is by holding an annual membership drive event. Many Clubs are doing this with great success and this tactic should be something every Club does annually. We are here to help you with tips on how to hold a successful Membership drive event.

In wrapping up my comments I want to encourage every Club to get involved with Skål as much as possible on a Regional, National and International level. We are working very hard as your Executive Committee to improve communication between Skål USA and the individual Clubs. This organization has a worldwide reach unlike any other organization in our industry and the more you take advantage of that the more value Skål brings to you and your Club. Reach out to other Clubs when you travel and enjoy the comradery of Skål around the country and around the world. One of the absolute best ways to truly experience what Skål can do is to attend the North American Skål

Congress to be held in Honolulu, Hawaii April 25-28. Here you will meet fellow Skålleagues from the USA, Canada and Mexico. Attending Congress changed my perception of Skål and I know it will do the same for you. Don't forget that the World Congress will also be held in the USA aboard the Royal Caribbean Symphony of the Seas departing from Miami on September 14th for a 7-night Caribbean cruise. It's been six years since the World Congress was held in the USA so this is another great opportunity to experience a World Congress right in our own backyard.

If any of us can be of help to your Club in any way, please feel free to reach out to us at any time. We are here to serve you the members.

Regards and Skål,

Dave Ryan, CTC
Vice-President Membership
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Richard Scinta
Director Membership
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William Tullmann
Membership Director
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Florimond Volckaert Fund (FVF) Update



What is the Florimond Volckaert Fund?

The Florimond Volckaert Fund (FVF) was set up in 1954, in the name of the acknowledged founder of Skål, to provide assistance to Skålleagues and

their immediate families who are in serious need of assistance, during times of desperation.

If a Skålleague is in need of help, an application should be sent to either the President of your Club or the Skål USA International Councillor, who will convey the application to the three FVF Trustees. They will assess the request and quickly come to a decision.

Policy Change: As previously advised, all donations to the FVF must be received by Skål USA within the calendar year for which the donation is intended. Donations received after the deadline will be considered and recognized for the succeeding year. We can no longer account for pre-payments or accept payments after the deadline based on when the funds are required to be transferred to Skål International.

2019 FVF Donations

Donations from the Club's help make the **FVF** viable and able fulfill its special purpose. We would like to recognize the following for their contributions in 2019 as of March 1, 2019:

- SI Hawaii
- SI New York
- SI Orlando
- SI Louisville (In memory of Rudolph Crowe)
- SI Atlanta
- SI Nashville
- SI San Francisco
- SI New Orleans
- SI Northern New Jersey

A Message from the Skål USA International Councillor



Holly Powers

International Skål Councillor

Holly.Powers@Skalusa.org

Happy New Year!

It is my pleasure to continue to serve as your International Skål Councillor. As I enter the second year of my term of office, I am pleased to advise our membership that I have been asked to Chair the ISC committee to present a proposal for electronic voting on the International level. This will include two proposals, one, to allow clubs around the world to select the location of each World Congress and the other to vote for the Skål International Executive Committee. The purpose of these proposals will be to allow all clubs to have a voice in important decisions of the organization and not just those who are able to attend a World Congress. As Skål International goes forward with Digital Transformation it is the perfect time to modernize the way we vote.

The Florimond Volckaert Fund is so important to our members. I will continue to urge clubs to donate to the fund and advocate for those members in need of financial assistance to receive funds. In the past year it has been my honor and privilege to help members in need apply and receive needed funds. Their gratitude has been heartwarming and seeing how the funds have made a difference in their lives is meaningful.

It is a pleasure serving our great membership and I look forward to working on your behalf.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Holly L. Powers". The script is cursive and fluid.

Holly Powers

A Message from Skål USA VP of Public Relations and Communications



Tom Moulton

*Vice-President Communications & Public
Relations*

Skål International USA

Tom.Moulton@Skalusa.org

2019 New Opportunities, Skål Service and Benefit Programs that Work

Welcome everyone to a new year - 2019. This being our first comprehensive communication to all Skål USA members, I wanted to take the opportunity to share with you some new initiatives we are working on, as well as provide a reminder to some of those services and initiatives launched last year under the leadership of Skål USA executive committee on behalf of the membership.

Throughout the past six years I have had the unique opportunity to visit many Skål USA clubs, both large and small. During my remarks, I was often reminded and repeated the words from former Skål USA and Skål International President, Mok Singh. We've all heard them before, however in the context of motivating a Skål Club, the words always seemed timely, no matter what the year.



***“You Only Get Out
What You Put In” and
“Don’t Expect More
Until You Do More”***

couldn't be more appropriate than today as many of the clubs are searching for success,

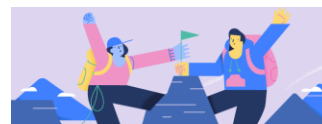
whether in membership development, creating community awareness or seeking the answer to “what exactly is the value of being a Skål member?”

As I introduce and remind fellow Skålleagues of the communication initiatives of Skål USA, I ask you to keep these few words in mind and challenge all of you to give what you can, because *“the achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual* (Vince Lombardi).

Doing Business Among Friends – New Mentorship Program

“Doesn't get any better than this!” We all know how important networking can be, both professionally and personally, while improving our job performance is always on our mind.

Well let's take it to the next level. With over 2,000 members in Skål USA and another 12,000 Skål members throughout the world, we are happy to announce Skål USA and Facebook are partnering in a new mentorship program available to any Skål USA member who is on Facebook, where you can get or give support to another member of our Skål community. I am excited to see all of us build stronger relationships with each other and hope you'll join. It's FREE!



**Here's how the
program works:**

You sign up, match yourself with a partner, and get helpful conversation starters each week so you get to know each other better. It's up to you how much

time you want to spend together and what goals you want to work towards. I signed up and it was very easy, so I am now waiting to assist any fellow Skålleague. Be sure to let us know how its working for you. [Click here](#) and it will take you through the steps of becoming a mentor, whether seeking advice or willing to share with a fellow Skålleague.



Skål USA is a Professional Tourism Organization

Last year Skål USA strengthen its relationship with the premier tourism organizations who support both United States and Global Travel and Tourism. Reaching out to Brand USA, US Travel Association, National Tour Organization, American Bus Association, American Hotel and Lodging Association, to name a few, strengthens our relevance in being part of this strategic travel coalition. Many of these leaders are Skål members or have Skål members within the organization. Skål USA, in partnership with Skål International, will continue to strengthen our ties to these important organizations. As we strive to be even a better "Trusted Voice in Tourism" several new initiatives will be introduced this year to continue our brand development as a professional tourism organization benefiting its membership. The steps initiated in the last couple of years, as well as our new ones, will continue to make Skål more relevant to the national travel industry, better serve our members in terms of career and business growth and find ways to give back to our communities.

New Communications Initiatives

Communication Standards Upgraded

Beginning this March, Skål USA clubs and its members will get to know their leadership through new officer and membership webinars, national and international meetings, expanded social media, one-on-one phone conversations and now, new direct email addresses. Each officer and director of Skål USA executive

committee will begin to use a branded email address ending in SkålUSA.org rather than using their personal email addresses. Additionally, prospective Skål USA members will be able to reach us through a simple and memorable email address info@skålusa.org. This will facilitate a quicker response time to the many inquires we receive at the Skål USA administrative office or



through the Skål USA website, www.skålusa.org. Providing

continuity through uniform email addresses sounds simple enough. We all strive to operate Skål USA in a professional manner, addressing member concerns in a timely manner, providing meaningful programs and services. This small step will improve communications, so stay tuned for a membership wide email announcing the beginning of this new communication standard.

Skål USA Journeys Newsletter

This March issue will be the last quarterly in-depth newsletter for 2019. This is in response to almost 70% of the Skål USA membership does not open the quarterly newsletter. While past editors, dedicated Skål USA staff and volunteers have strived to make the Skål USA newsletter readable and informative, the newsletter had too much information and a lot of the information was being disseminated through other communication channels. Beginning in April, a shorter, easy to read, monthly **eNewsletter** will replace the Skål USA Quarterly Journeys Newsletter. It's the Executive Ccommittee's vision to choose areas of interest and relevance for our members. We will strive to avoid communication duplication and feature articles and stories of Skål USA programs and interest to better serve clubs in membership development, members in terms of career and business growth and new ways to give back to our communities.

Social Media

Facebook serves our members in many ways. Often it communicates what the other Skål USA clubs are doing, especially with their meetings, anniversaries, community support and special

occasions. These stories and images all support Skål USA membership development. These social mediums also introduce prospective members to our organization by seeing the caliber of travel and tourism individuals as members of their local community tourism organization. Skål USA has created a new link to social media by developing an Instagram page. This page can be found by going to the new Instagram page, www.instagram.com/Skål_int_USA/.



We encourage all Skål USA clubs to develop both a local Skål Facebook and Instagram page to share your local Skål experiences and don't forget to like the Skål USA Facebook and Instagram page as we will share many of these stories with the public and other Skål clubs throughout the USA and the world through Skål International digital sites.

Skål USA Member Discount Benefit page

Last year we welcomed the new [Skål USA Member Discount Benefit page](#). All Skål USA members are encouraged to create a new offer for fellow Skålleagues throughout the United States and affiliated clubs by going to the [setup page](#) on the SkålUSA.org website. It's simple to enter the information and will be posted on the [Discount Benefit page](#) within 48 hours.



Skål USA Membership Benefit: Skål USA Job Board

Skål International USA launched a new membership benefit last year, an online job board designed for Skål International USA membership. New for this year, all job placements will be featured on the [Skål USA LinkedIn site](#), increasing the visibility of any job offered by a Skål USA Member. Do you have a career in the hospitality, travel and tourism industry and looking for a new job in tourism or seeking someone for a job? Simply fill out the [new job form](#) if you are seeking a new employee

or view the [Job Board](#) to see what jobs are available. Define your future, and ours today.

Be sure to fill out the form completely and attach a full job description. Then go the Skål USA website section under the membership area and see your listing within 48 hours on the Job Board. Those seeking a new job, be sure to come back often as new jobs will be posted often.

Communications

Finally, as your 2019 Vice President of Communications and PR, I will always be striving to strengthen our collaboration and communicate more effectively and efficiently with you the club leadership or members. If you have any thoughts, comments about any off Skål USA tool, or are interested in serving on the Skål USA Communications Committee, please do not hesitate to contact me either personally through my the new Skål USA email addresses, Tom.Moulton@Skålusa.org or through the new official generic email, info@Skålusa.org. Thank you for your support and your passion for Skål.

Sincerely,

Tom Moulton

Skålleague Spotlight: Kate Heath



By Kate Heath, President, Skål Phoenix

It all started with a desire to network in Phoenix, when Skål International was introduced to me in January of 2018. The power of networking started right then and there. My colleague, Jacquelyn Krueger with Palace Resorts and a Skålleague wanted to introduce me to Dave Ryan, who was looking to start up a Club in Phoenix.

Next thing I know, a plan is being put in place and I was diving in head first. Not only had I never been apart of a networking group, but I had never been on a Board. It was new and exciting, but I also felt like it was a right fit. I was looking for an International reach and Skål had it.

From that moment, I felt the friendship of Skål, in action, in front of me. Which motivated me to see where we could take this!

Burcin Turkkan, Skål USA President, made one call, the venue was set, and we were in full planning mode, for our “Launch Event” in March of 2018. Everyone jumped in and helped. It was a team effort. And the event was a huge success.

From there, I took part in my first NASC, held in Mexico – which is an instrumental event for anyone that wants to get the most out of their Skål membership - Hands down. I was immediately welcomed and taken under the wing of my “mentors” aka; Dave Ryan, Jim Dwyer and Tom Moulton. They introduced me to everyone and made sure I was taken care of. And that I was.

From there, the support never ended. If I had a question, they were there. We made the perfect team – as they guided me through every single step of setting up a new Club.

The icing on the cake was my industry network, through my career with Apple Vacations. For years, I had put on training events, agency appreciation dinners, etc. I took my knowledge from those events and transferred them directly into the formation of Skål International Phoenix.

By August, we were finalizing the details to the relaunch of Skål International Phoenix. We ended the year with 24 members and only expect to continue that success throughout 2019!



Skål Puerto Rico: Weathered the Storm

By Ronald C. Flores-Gunkle

“You Can’t Keep a Good Club Down,” could be the motto for Skål International Puerto Rico. Not that the 2017 hurricane season didn’t try! Three hurricanes battered the Northeastern Caribbean in September, but Hurricane María, the deadliest storm in a century, tried the hardest. It succeeded in destroying Dominica and caused catastrophic damage throughout the region, but especially in Puerto Rico.

Total losses reached almost \$100 billion and more than 3,000 people lost their lives. The power grid was wiped out and a year after the storm more than half a million people were still

without electricity—the longest power outage in US history.

With many businesses closed, tourism was at a virtual standstill and roads and other infrastructure were being repaired at an agonizingly slow rate. Our club struggled to survive.

Many Skålleagues suspended operations to repair their property and assist in the recovery. However, Skålleagues are resilient and throughout the blackouts and the recovery period, a hardy core group managed to meet almost every month.

I was not among them. A few days after Hurricane María, I traveled to India to represent Puerto Rico Skål during the World Congress in Hyderabad. My wife and I decided not to return to the island until conditions improved and power was restored—but after five months in “exile,” we returned to the island to begin repairs on our property and resume contact with my Skålleagues. Power finally was restored two months after our return.

Two things were on our group’s minds: how can we retain our membership until the industry rebounded and how can we continue supporting the charities that now needed us more than ever? From a high of 80 members years ago, our numbers plummeted to barely 20 after the storm—and we feared losing more.

Both fears turned out to be unwarranted. We were Skålleagues and we had friends. The first wave of support came from three fellow clubs in the USA. Through the efforts of Martha McClintock of the Jacksonville club in Florida, who contacted me while I was off the island, its members offered to donate the toys from their annual drive to our children’s charities in Puerto Rico. The Philadelphia and Atlantic City clubs joined Jacksonville and together they sent dozens of boxes of gifts. Skål Puerto Rico President Ivan Puig, VP Robert Rodriguez, Board members Maritza Toste and Sylvia Rivera and Secretary Charlotte Ware presented the gifts at San Jorge Children’s Hospital. Our reward—as I wrote at the time—was miles of smiles!

Another major problem was solved by a GoFundMe campaign suggested to me by the 2018 Executive Committee of Skål International USA. The campaign sought funds to sustain the Puerto Rico club during the critical times after the hurricane. Through the support of a dozen clubs and many generous individual Skålleagues, \$3,000 was raised and the club was able to meet its operating expenses and retain members we may have lost.

With the success of this campaign, president-elect Robert Rodriguez and I decided to launch one final GoFundMe effort to benefit Hogar el Pequeño Joshua, a home for infants and toddlers in the mountains of Puerto Rico that Skål Puerto Rico Past President Maritza Toste was instrumental in having the club “adopt” many years before.

During a visit to my home, the former Skål New York President and my good friend Peter Lintner began the fund with his personal contribution and offered to present the concept to the New York club. Soon thereafter we received a generous cheque from New York Skål!

The children at the home received many gifts of toys—including a dozen wooden trucks my brother Robert Flores handcrafted in Indiana and donated for them—but the home was also in need of funds for storm-related repairs. As of this writing, some 31 Skålleagues and friends have donated \$2,705 and we hope to make our \$3,000 goal before the campaign ends on March 15. There is lots of good news from Puerto Rico. Our club has endured and will celebrate its 60th anniversary this year. Our island is in full recovery, nearly all our hotels and resorts have reopened and are helping visitors discover or rediscover the glory that is Puerto Rico, business in general has improved and—most important to us—we have been able to continue bring smiles to many needy children. No hurricane could take that away from us.

Skål USA Members 2019 In Memoriam

Schuyler Lininger – Tucson
Robert Vaughn – Washington
Gordon Horsley – Reno/Tahoe
Anita Peck – Albany
Mike Evans – Austin
James Peluso – Atlanta
Tom Andrews- Tucson
Sharon Nuuiwa – Sacramento
Phil Henderson – Tampa Bay
Richard Wallace – New Orleans
Stepan Merdinian – Washington
Jack Freed – Washington
Robert Halcro - Hawaii

Website Update: Member Communications Is Found in the Members Area

[Click Here](#) to find the new landing spot for recent member communications from Skål USA. Share the communication with your fellow Skålleagues.

Skål USA Resource Center

How to Find the Skål USA Website:

- Go to www.Skålusa.org.
 - Click on the “Member Area”
 - Your user name is: **skålusa**
 - Enter your password – **skålusa@123**
 - If this does not work for you, please contact either Jim Dwyer at Jim.Dwyer@Skålusa.org or Tom Moulton at Tom.Moulton@Skålusa.org
-

Membership Benefit Reminder: Skål Strategic PR Partnership with PR Newswire

Skål USA has asked our strategic partner in PR, the PR Newswire, to offer their news feed services to Skål USA clubs at no cost. The news feed will be customized to fit your audience and built to match your site’s look and feel. In exchange for placing the PR Newswire feed on your site you will receive up to 3 free nationwide Press Releases for a year. This will allow Clubs to promote their local Skål events and promote Skål brand/ club in their local community. Interested clubs should contact Jeanette Jirau at PRNewswire. Jeanette.Jirau@prnewswire.com.

Incorporating New Members Into SI Database

If you have new members to incorporate to our database, or members who do not wish to renew, transferring to other Clubs or who need to update their details, please use the forms that are available in the Members Area of the Skål International website, Skål.org in the “Forms” section.

Skål USA Communications

- March 7, 2019: [Welcoming Our Newest Skål USA Members from February](#)
- February 6, 2019: [Welcoming Our Newest Skål USA Members from January](#)
- February 5, 2019: [SI Miami Invites You to IWC 2019](#)
- January 29, 2019: [NASC 2019 Hawaii](#)
- January 28, 2019: [Skål USA Honors Boston Club – Plans for the Future](#)

Upcoming Skål Meetings & Event Information

NASC 2019

April 25-28



SKÅL International Hawaii is extremely excited to be hosting the 2019 North American SKÅL Congress (NASC) on the beautiful island of Oahu!

The 2019 NASC will be held at the beautiful [Sheraton Waikiki hotel](#). Visit the conference website, hawaii2019nasc.com, and you will find links to Register, and book your hotel room at our negotiated rates at the Sheraton Waikiki hotel. Keep checking the conference website often, as we will continually update it with special discounts for pre and post tours, airline promo codes and more as the Congress gets closer.

SI Hawaii is thrilled to have partnered with the Hawaii Food & Wine Festival so that all Congress attendees can take part in this illustrious launch event at [The Kahala Hotel & Resort](#) on Friday evening. They have also put together a special discounted rate so that any plus ones (+1) that you may bring with you to the Congress may join you at this special event. [Register Now](#)

NASC SKÅL USA Meetings

Meeting Information

AGM

April 27, 2019

8:30 am

Sheraton Waikiki, Honolulu, HI

NCM

April 27, 2019

11:00 am

Sheraton Waikiki, Honolulu, HI

Important News!

Please note the host hotel, Sheraton Waikiki, NASC room block ends on March 24. Please book now or run the risk of increased room charges or unavailability.

Special Conference Program at NASC – Young Skål Workshop

The upcoming NASC - North American Skål Congress in Hawaii will offer a Young Skål Workshop on Thursday afternoon. This will give attendees including Young Skål members from the mainland as well as from Hawaii an opportunity to have an open discussion and share their experiences with this exciting program.

Special Article by Tom Anusewicz

Hawaii 2019 NASC Coordinator

Young Skål Hawaii Program Celebrates 10 Years

Various initiatives and programs are developed with the hopes of them working out well. I believe that Skål International's Young Skål Program introduced in 1999 was a great program at the right time. 'Young Skål was set up with the

aim of creating a greater awareness of Skål International by those young people studying for or training in the various sectors of the travel and tourism industry, enabling them to join Skål.” The program is now in its 20th year.

Skål Hawaii initiated its Young Skål program in 2008. It started with the Skål USA Board of Directors meeting in Honolulu that same year. Both the Skål USA and Hawaii officers and directors met with two local university and college students to talk about Skål and the opportunity of membership.

Immediately following our initial discussions, we started working on how Skål Hawaii would proceed. USA did not have any Young Skål members at that time, so we contacted international clubs to gather information. It would seem each club had their own dynamics on how they managed the program.

With information in hand we began visiting campuses once again. We started with 10 students in 2009. The first years were certainly a learning curve. Even though Skål International had Young Skål minimum age at 18, Skål Hawaii had it at 21. We had found that the minimum age of 18 opened the door to wide for membership which would translate to as many as 80 students. Skål Hawaii could not offer the proper value to so many and it could also change the dynamics of our club. We proceed with caution to ensure success

Over the subsequent years we continued to offer value to students with opportunities in networking, mentoring and internships. Even though the number of Young Skål members were manageable we also recognized that we needed to open the door a little wider. Our minimum age being 21 captured mostly seniors or graduate students. There were pros and cons about these limitations, but one concern was we didn't have them long enough. Time in many cases was an issue. Time moved quickly. Semesters seemed to be over just after starting, school out-start again, school year vs. Skål

calendar year all area of discussion with students.

Because we recognized that the school year moves so quickly it was imperative to be ready for that year before it starts. If you're not ready in August, you're too late.

In 2018, Skål Hawaii lowered the minimum age from 21 to 20. After ten years we decided to open the door a little more. We also approved Skål Hawaii scholarship recipients (10) would receive a one-year YS membership. We waived the Skål Hawaii minimum age for scholarship recipients but not the maximum age which allowed for those 18 and 19-year-olds. We also developed a new presentation to be given at five college/university campuses to share an overview of Skål International and the value of membership in Young Skål.

After last year's initiative we grew Young Skål to 24 Young Skål members for 2019. Seven of those members are Young Skål professionals. The Young Skål participation has grown dramatically. We have offered industry tours and special events for our students. As of this year, Skål Hawaii has had more than 60 students and young professionals come through the program. We continue to learn about what works and what doesn't, and we are truly excited about where we are going.

Skål Orange Coast Invites Skålleagues to IPW June Reception

The Club is pleased to announce, in conjunction with the **U.S. Travel Association's IPW Conference**, June 1-5, Anaheim, CA., will be hosting a Cocktail Reception on **Tuesday, June 4**, for all attending Skålleagues, tentatively slated to be held at the Sheraton Park Hotel, nearby the Anaheim Convention Center.

Please advise us on how many members of your club might be able to attend by email to jmavros@preferredhotel.com.

SKÅL USA'S 2019 FALL NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING (NCM)

The 2019 NCM will again be conducted via Video Conference in September 2019. The exact date will be communicated soon.

2. Click the “Photos” tab near the top of the page, under the board photo. You will now see a compilation of photos sorted.
 3. Click the “Albums” tab below the “Photos” tab. You will now be able to view albums of photos that have been uploaded, sorted by the date posted.
 4. From here, you can create a new album for a particular event by clicking “Create Album” or add photos to an existing album by selecting that album and clicking “Add Photos” at the top.
-

Skål International World Congress 2019 Hosted by Skål Miami

September 14 - September 19, 2019
Embarkation/ Disembarkation at the Port of
Miami

[Click Here for Information
Regarding IWC](#)

Share Club Event Information and Photos with Fellow Skålleagues!

Skålleagues are encouraged to share photos from Skål USA and club events as well as information on upcoming meetings of clubs and the travel and tourism industry on the Skål USA Facebook page. The Facebook page is open to members and interested non-members alike. To view or share photos on our page:

1. Visit the Skål USA Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/SKÅLUSA/> (you may need to log in to Facebook and/or click “Join Group”)

Skål USA Shop



All Skål USA items are shipped from Washington DC, via US Mail within 2 business days of receipt, pending availability. Unless otherwise directed, invoices are sent to the Clubs for payment.

Visit us online at www.skålusa.org/skål-usa-shop/ for all your Skål jewelry and pin needs.

Submit your order online or via email to Skålusa@buses.org

Additional Skål jewelry, pins and other items can be found on the Skål International Website within the “[Boutique](#)”.

****COMING SOON****
NEW SKÅL USA SHIRTS

Skål USA is researching new shirts to be available for purchase in time for the Skål World Congress. Samples in both Men’s and Women’s sizes will be available to see during NASC.

Club News

Skål Boston 80th Anniversary Celebration



Hotel Commonwealth graciously hosted a wonderful night celebrating 80 years of Skål Boston. Members from Skål USA and International Skål guests joined the festivities. It was a wonderful night among friends and a perfect way to welcome in the new 2019 Board.



Photo Credit: Person + Killian Photography

[See More Pictures from Boston's 80th Anniversary Celebration](#)

Skål Club of Washington DC Welcomes Youngest Female President of a Skål Club



Skål DC is very proud of its 2019 President, Morgan Maravich, as she is the youngest female Skål President in the organization.

Skål Orange Coast Installs Its Youngest OC Club President

The Skål Orange Coast Club installed our youngest OC Skål President ever, Mr. Julius Valino (37), COO of Aarius International, during our monthly dinner meeting, January 09, at 5-star Resort at Pelican Hill, Newport Beach. Also installed as Vice President was Skål veteran of 30 years, Mr. James Ferguson, Travel Advisor, affiliated with Travel Edge.

Skål Sacramento Hosts Gekkeikan Sake and Japan Consulate General

The February meeting of Skål International Sacramento was a true cultural experience. Oshima Sushi in Natomas, CA was the site of the February dinner and networking meeting. This month the focus was on Japan with special presentations on travel to this vibrant country and a journey through the history and cultural

significance of the iconic Japanese beverage: Sake.

Representatives from the Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco were on site to share information about Japanese culture and touring opportunities for the US traveler. Consul Ayumu Kashiwagi spoke about the vibrant trade in Japanese products and services in our region which is supported by the Consulate General. Vice Consul, Keisuke Fukuma is tasked with promoting Japan as a tourist destination that features urban, resort and outdoor experiences for travelers looking for luxury or traveling on a budget.

The main event of the evening was a presentation by Gekkeikan Sake General Manager Koichi Murakami explaining the history and cultural significance of sake. Gekkeikan Sake Company was established over 300 years ago and has a brewery in Folsom, California. It is the company's only brewery outside of Japan. This location was chosen because of the superior quality of the local water and access to California's rice growers who supply the special rice variety needed for brewing sake. The club was privileged to welcome Mr. Yousuke Kawase, their award winning Brewmaster who, at age 31, is internationally recognized for his expertise. He conducted a tasting of three different sakes with tips on presentation and pairing with different foods.

Skål Sacramento board members, Carol Fox, President, Connie Risse, Treasurer, Cindy MacCormack, Secretary, Carol Siegner, Meeting/Events and Dave Ryan, VP of Membership Skål USA, along with many of club members were on hand to support this initiative to bring new venues and learning experiences to the monthly meetings.

For Additional Information Contact Carol Fox:
crtcfax@aol.com

Skål Las Vegas Awards Five Scholarships to Area Students



Skål International Las Vegas, a tourism organization of hospitality professionals, awarded an unprecedented five (5) scholarships of \$750.00 each to area students at their January meeting at PBR Rock Bar in Las Vegas. SKÅL International Las Vegas has instituted a scholarship to support their members and families with higher education aspirations. 2018 brought many applications of qualified students of which the organization selected the following:

- **Ashley Allen**, student at University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV), daughter of member Chris Allen, General Manager, Hampton Inn & Suite Las Vegas Airport
- **Todd Cramer**, student at College of Southern Nevada (CSN), son of member Rose Vandenberg, Vice President of Sales, Fine Entertainment Management
- **Brian Lopez**, student at University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV), son of member Cristina Lopez, Director of Sales, Embassy Suites Convention Center Las Vegas
- **Alexandra Meyer**, student at University of California at Davis, daughter of member Chris Meyer, Vice President Global Business Sales at Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority - LVCVA
- **Genevieve Velez**, student at University of Nevada Reno (UNR), daughter of member Victor Fernandez, Sales

Executive at Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority - LVCVA

Each applicant met a myriad of criteria to qualify for the SKÅL International Las Vegas Member Scholarship including academic excellence, activities, and personal recommendations. Their future goals include hospitality management, hospitality architectural design, education, global sustainability, healthcare and medical tourism, and veterinary science including a niche market of pet-friendly tourism. “We are so pleased to be able to support our SKÅL members with a scholarship to help defray the cost of college and support students that show a desire to achieve their dreams while also taking time to volunteer and give back in the community”, said Ann Parsons, SKÅL Las Vegas President. “While SKÅL International is a global tourism organization, we feel that tourism has become so broad that all of our scholarship recipients either will have a direct effect on the tourism market or an indirect effect being a part of emerging markets.”

SKÅL International is a professional organization of tourism leaders around the world, promoting global tourism and friendship. It is the only international group uniting all branches of the [travel and tourism](#) industry. Its members, the industry’s managers and executives, meet at local, national, regional and international levels to discuss and pursue topics of common interest. With strong leadership and direction, the SKÅL International Las Vegas Chapter, which began 55 years ago, remains very active in the pursuit of tourism and the organization’s objectives. For more information visit www.lasvegasSkål.com or www.Skål.org.

Skål San Francisco Congratulates Incoming President, Robin Morales



January 2019- Outgoing SF Skål President Krishan Miglani congratulates incoming Skål President Robin Morales.

Skål Colorado Conducts February Meeting with a Dinner at Fogo De Chao



President Olga Hellweg, Exec. Director Bruce Whitaker & MSU of Denver Scholarship Recipient, Tera Miligan.

Congratulations to Skål DC Member Elliot L. Ferguson



Congratulations to Skål DC member Elliott L. Ferguson 11, Destination DC President &CEO. Elliott has been elected Chairman of US. Travel Association. Elliott is eager to work with the US board to advocate for policies that will support U.S. Travel's mission and position, and is honored to have the opportunity to connect further with the industry. We are very proud of our valued Skål DC member.

Orlando Young Skål Club Off to a Strong 2019

The Orlando Young Skål Club is off to a strong 2019, with the launch of new initiatives to further engage our youngest Skål members with the organization and to create new opportunities for them. It started with a brainstorming session in early December where a few board members met with our Young Skål Students and Professionals to brainstorm on future Skål activities. As a result, we agreed on establishing a mentorship program, hosting quarterly educational events and providing at least one Young Skålleagues with the opportunity to participate at a national Skål event.

In order to accomplish this third and very ambitious goal, the Orlando Young Skål team worked together and planned the “Share the Love with Young Skål” silent auction for our February meeting. With the funds raised at this silent auction, the Orlando Young Skål club is able to cover travel costs, accommodation and conference registration for at least one member to attend the NASC Congress in Honolulu in April.

We are so proud to share, thanks to the generous support of our active Skål members and the hard work of our Young Skålleagues, that we were able to raise \$4,000 with this initiative. We are excited to announce that our Young Skål students Tania Imani and Kiara Miranda Berrios, both students at the University of Central Florida (UCF) Rosen College of Hospitality Management, have been chosen to attend the NASC Congress in April.

We hope to inspire other Skål clubs with this initiative and together we will grow the next generation of Skålleagues.

For all of you attending NASC, please offer our YS representatives a warm welcome in Hawaii.

Skål!

Stefanie Zambelli
Orlando Young Skål Chairperson

Skål International Arkansas President Receives Prestigious Tourism Award



Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau (LRCVB) President and CEO Gretchen Hall was awarded the 2019 Arkansas Tourism Person of the Year honor at the 45th Governor's Conference on Tourism February 26, 2019, in Hot Springs, Arkansas. During the annual Henry Awards ceremony, Hall was recognized as an individual who has been actively involved in tourism and has made a substantial contribution to the betterment of the industry as a whole.

From 2014-2016, Hall supervised the \$70 million renovation and grand re-opening of Robinson Performance Hall and Conference Center. Robinson Center today is the crown gem and western-most anchor of the thriving River Market District of Little Rock. It continues to bring net gains and hit productions. In 2018, Disney's *The Lion King* brought 23 performances, making it Little Rock's longest running Broadway production to date.

With the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau, Hall provided critical leadership during what many have termed the key turnaround point for downtown Little Rock—the 2004 Grand Opening of the William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park, as well as the 50th anniversary of the integration of Little Rock Central High School.

Gretchen Hall came to the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau (LRCVB) in 2001, beginning in the Operations division. She later became the Director of Merchandising and Communications and managed the public relations, communications and marketing initiatives. She was named the bureau's President and CEO in May 2011. Today, Hall supervises all aspects of the 125-employee, multi-million dollar destination marketing organization.

In 2017, Little Rock and Pulaski County welcomed more than 6.4 million visitors who spent \$1.95 billion. Those expenditures generated more than \$107 million in local and state tax revenue. Recently, the LRCVB issued its 2018 [annual report](#) with more destination details.

A force to be reckoned with in the tourism and hospitality industry, Hall serves on the board of directors for Destinations International, is the President of the Heart of Arkansas Regional Tourism Association, President of the Arkansas Travel Council, President of Skål International Arkansas, Chair of the Arkansas Association of CVBs, an executive committee member of the Downtown Little Rock Partnership, serves on the board of directors for the Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the Global Leadership Committee for Destinations International. She is also a member of the US Travel Association and Little Rock Rotary – Club 99.

Hall is a Certified Meeting Professional, Certified Destination Management Executive and a published author, as the co-author of *100 Things to do in Little Rock Before You Die – 2nd Edition*. Hall was a scholarship athlete in basketball while earning a Bachelor of Arts degree from Lyon College and later a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Arkansas Little Rock.

ABOUT HENRY AWARDS

The Henry Awards have been a feature of the annual Arkansas Governor's Conference on Tourism since their debut in 1981. The awards are

named for Henri de Tonti, founder of Arkansas Post in 1686, and who is often hailed as the first “Arkansas Traveler.” Each year the Henry Awards program recognizes individuals, communities and organizations that have performed above and beyond the call of duty in their contribution to the success of Arkansas’s tourism industry.

THANK YOU AND SEE YOU IN HAWAII. (Skål USA Journey Editors and the Executive Committee.



NORTH AMERICAN SKÅL CONGRESS



On the beach in Waikiki | April 25-28, 2019

Are you coming to NASC in Hawaii?

Check out some of the exciting things we have planned for you

NASC 2019 is coming up in two months. Have you registered yet? We wanted to give everyone who has registered, and those of you who have not, a sneak peek of what we have planned.

We have an exciting lineup of speakers for our delegates. We have lined up an educational panel of experts to discuss Cultural Tourism, Voluntourism and Eco-Tourism, as well as set up a couple of exceptional keynote speakers to discuss Culinary and Film Tourism.

Keynote Speakers



Culinary Tourism
Denise Hayashi Yamaguchi is the Founder & CEO of the Hawaii Food & Wine Festival and the Executive

Director of the Hawaii Agricultural Foundation. Learn how she turned her vision of ways to promote locally grown produce nine years ago into what has become one of the top Food & Wine events in the country, bringing millions of dollars of exposure to our island.



Film Tourism

Donne Dawson, Hawaii's Film Commissioner will speak about how filming movies and TV's on island adds up to

bringing millions of dollars into Hawaii's economy. Do you capitalize and take advantage of the tourism your state offers? Learn how Hawaii has built up this industry to benefit the tourism market and job market in the state.

Explore the Island



Hawaii is home to the only Royal Palace on US soil and is the somber final resting place of the Arizona Memorial. SKÅL Hawaii has set up tours to both for those interested. If there are other tours you are interested in? We've partnered with Expedia to offer you personal concierge service during NASC.

Events

Leave the tux and tie at home. We want to show SKÅL how to celebrate Hawaiian-style!



Our **Opening Ceremony** will be held at the ocean's edge at sunset.

The following evening, you will be amongst the first in the country to learn about the line-up of the 9th annual **Hawaii Food & Wine Ceremony** this October while grazing thru dozens of dishes and drinks from the world's best.



Our **Closing Ceremony** will be a private luau at Sea Life Park, Hawaii's marine mammal park, bird sanctuary and aquarium in Waimānalo as we end the Congress the island way!

Registration still open!

Register today at hawaii2019nasc.com... but hurry... **Hotel Prices go up March 24**

Come Share our Aloha!

#nasc-hawaii2019