

Faithful readers will recall that I always return from the GCSAA show with my pockets stuffed with illegible notes on matchbooks and cocktail napkins (a typical example:

“Call Mugbyfrumph ASAP about new gibblymintrow!!”).

The problem is not my ability to take notes. The problem is that every time you turn around at the show, someone is placing another drink in your hand, and (say it with me now) beer and journalism just don't mix. However, with the help of a former CIA cryptologist, I deciphered enough of my scribbles to deliver this report on the big show.

D as in Dreadful

In our show preview, I characterized Dallas as “dull” and “hard to get around.” In hindsight, I realize that those descriptions didn't do the city justice. After spending a week there, my revised assessment is this: Dallas sucks.

Sure, there were a few positives. The shuttle system was so speedy that – even six weeks later – there are probably a few attendees *still* enjoying a never-ending ride around the city. And wasn't it cool that they designed all of those great downtown restaurants and bars to look like boarded-up buildings and vacant lots? Oh, and the weather — I can't get enough of that delightful combination of cloudy, wet and cold.

A friend of mine summed it up perfectly: “The best thing about Dallas was seeing it gradually shrink in my rearview mirror on the way back home.”

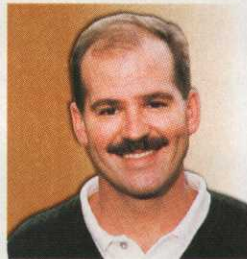
D as in Dollars

Curiously, the same factors that made Dallas a little slice of hell for attendees made it heavenly for exhibitors. Lousy weather and the daunting prospect of getting back on the shuttles kept people on the show floor in droves. Even the final half-day – which historically has been a good time for exhibitors to catch up on their reading or learn how to knit – was busy. I didn't talk with a single vendor who wasn't happy about the strong, steady traffic at the show.

Hmmm ... maybe this ironic success will inspire the association to consider other loca-

Beer and Scribbles from the Big D

BY PAT JONES



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tions comparable in climate and atmosphere to Dallas. Like, say, Fargo.

Pretty Darned Impressive

After nearly two years of debate and recent claims by opponents that the measure would be defeated, the bylaws changes behind the GCSAA Professional Development Initiative passed handily. Say what you will about the pros and cons of the delegate voting system, but passage by 75 percent to 25 percent is a *mandate* by anyone's yardstick.

The committed superintendents on both sides of PDI should be commended for their efforts. The intensity of the discussion is the sign of a healthy profession.

The question now is how GCSAA and its leadership use the mandate to implement the program and achieve the stated goals. The bylaws vote was not the end of the process; on the contrary, it was only the beginning.

More on Walter

Finally, I was grateful to all of those in Dallas who shared memories about the life and death of Walter Mattison (see “Flagstick,” February). Here's the one that moved me most:

An unknown individual showed up at the memorial benefit tournament held in Walter's honor and handed organizers a check for several thousand dollars. He wasn't in the golf business and had never even actually met Walter. He explained that his daughter was in a church group with Walter and that Walter would unfailingly call after every meeting just to see if the girl had arrived home safely. In short, he had been deeply touched by a man on whom he'd never laid eyes.

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