

show safety

We all know that according to Murphy's law, any number of things can

(and probably will) go wrong down in Orlando. Airline reservations will get screwed up, you'll be hungover, you'll lose some tickets or forget your business cards.

With that in mind, here's a crash course on surviving this year's GCSAA show.

It's gotta be the shoes

If you could somehow turn Chicago's Sears Tower sideways, it would fit — with plenty of space to spare — inside the Orange County Convention Center, site of the show. For the closet contractors out there, that figures out to precisely 1,103,538 square feet of convention madness.

That's big, baby, and your dogs are going to be walking all over that sucker for a week. Technically, you could walk a full 10 miles in the building without walking over the same space.

So how do you avoid killing your feet on this adventure? Simple: Get a pair of comfortable shoes. If you are a traditionalist, track down some Rockports, the Cadillacs of walking shoes. If you want to be "edgy," grab some Vans or Airwalks, which are not only extremely comfortable, but will score you style points with the kids.

WEAR THE RIGHT SHOES AND WATCH HOW MUCH YOU DRINK, AMONG OTHER THINGS

BY MARK LUCE

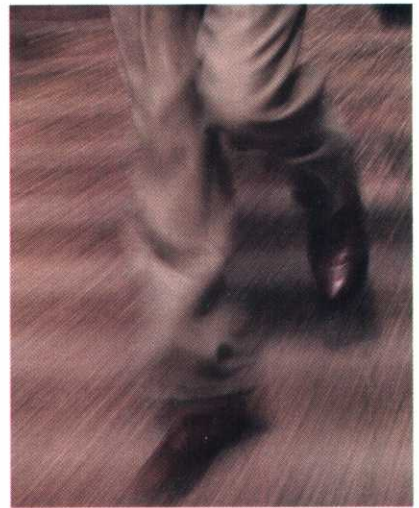
Strap it on

I know what fashion horses superintendents are, but let me offer the following advice: Take a backpack or a satchel you can hang off your shoulder. You're going to get free stuff — lots of it. You are going to (supposedly) take notes at seminars. A pack may cramp that "look" you're cultivating, but as the Boy Scouts taught us, be prepared. Fanny packs, however, should be avoided. Frankly, they're dorky.

Pack a soda

When you consider that the GCSAA isn't offering complementary soft drinks after the educational seminars "in an effort to meet the members' requests to keep costs down," that backpack idea seems even more ingenious, since you can store sodas, water and snacks in it.

Here's a note to planners of this shindig: Someone shelling out 240 smackers for a two-day seminar isn't going to complain if it's \$242 and they get a couple of cokes at break time.



Let's have another round

The convention is a time to unwind and maybe toss a few back, but you're not 18 anymore. Your body doesn't always respond well to a jug of scotch followed by some wine and then a few beers. Keep the following in mind:

- Drink a glass of water for every drink you have.
- Know when to say when.
- Wash a good multivitamin with a bunch of water after a night of carousing (it will do wonders for your head in the morning).

Finally

I couldn't let a January column pass without my annual Super Bowl prediction: Steelers over Bears.

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