



Different Jokes for Different Folks



THE GOAL: Find the most effective means of communicating with, and getting constructive feedback from, each segment of the membership at Addison Reserve Country Club, as well as from employee groups.

THE PLAN: Hold a series of regular sessions for small groups, each with a distinctive format and atmosphere that will create the greatest comfort levels and generate free-flowing exchanges.

THE PAYOFF: No one feels left out, and everyone gets plenty of what they really like (and not just because of the different menus).

Michael McCarthy has had a successful career in club management in large part because he's learned how to listen to, and connect with, a wide variety of people from both the membership and employee segments.

After moving in 2006 from a highly successful eight-year tenure as Chief Operating Officer/General Manager at BalenIsles Country Club in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. to become Chief Executive Officer/General Manager of Addison Reserve Country Club in Delray Beach, Fla. ("New Address, Same Delivery," *C&RB*, July 2007), McCarthy immediately began to make his mark at the new property by revamping the committee system and instituting new principles and guidelines.

And the variety of communications techniques that McCarthy now uses at Addison Reserve to give everyone an opportunity to understand, comment on, and buy into the changes once again demonstrates his talent for making sure all precincts are being heard from.

McCarthy began by creating "Hey, Mike," an open invitation for anyone to bring him suggestions, opinions, complaints or comments while he held regular dining room hours on Wednesdays during lunch. During these sessions, he quickly picked up signals that female members of Addison Reserve would prefer to have the opportunity to meet with him in a quieter setting, as part of smaller groups. So, "Tea and Topics" was created—a formal tea party restricted to the first 10 women who sign up.

That led to the men of Addison Reserve wondering if they could get some equal time, too. McCarthy quickly set up "Beer and Brats," with a similar sign-up structure. Now, he alternates between the two formats each week.

McCarthy doesn't forget the employee base, either, holding a monthly Feedback Breakfast restricted to one different representative each time from Addison Reserve's 12 departments.

Michael McCarthy (second from left) has transferred his knack for finding ways to listen to, and connect with, a wide variety of members and employee segments to his new club, Addison Reserve CC.

