

## A PCMA Conference – Seattle 2008

In the middle of January 2008, I boarded an Alaska Airlines flight at Ontario Airport nonstop to Seattle to attend the PCMA (Professional Convention Management Association) annual conference. [as the treasurer of the PCMA Southwest and Pacific Chapter, I was always invited and expected to attend the annual conference which rotated every year among cities in the US and Canada) After takeoff, flight attendants gave everyone a \$20 gift certificate to “McCormick and Schmick’s Restaurant”! As it happened, the elderly lady seated next to me didn’t want hers, so she gave it to me. It wasn’t long before a delicious lunch was served after drinks and snacks. The flight was very pleasant, smooth and uneventful. But when I arrived at SeaTac Airport, I had trouble finding the “Greyline Airporter Downtown Shuttle” desk due to the expansion of the airport since my last visit. And the signage for the shuttle was practically non-existent – very frustrating! But once I located the desk, the ride to downtown Seattle was very nice, in spite of intermittent light showers that are so typical at this time of year.

Thanks to my good friend Ed Smith, VP of Hyatt Hotels, I checked into a beautiful suite in the new Grand Hyatt Hotel just one block from the Seattle Convention Center and next to the Pacific Center Mall and Nordstrom’s. My room on the 24<sup>th</sup> floor had an incredible view of Elliott Bay, the snow-capped Olympic Mountains, and the iconic “Space Needle”.



Grand Hyatt Hotel



View from my hotel room

In addition, to the spectacular view, the room had a huge bathroom tiled with Italian white marble, a Jacuzzi bathtub, and a large walk-in shower! (thanks Ed) After unpacking my bags and settling in, I went down to the lobby bar for a beer and to join everyone watching the NFL playoff game between Green Bay and Seattle, being played in Green Bay. The game was plagued by heavy snow, not “unexpected” in Green Bay during the winter. Unfortunately, Seattle lost the game in the final minutes and its chance to compete in the Super Bowl – much to the dismay of the locals in the bar!

While I was sitting at the bar, I heard someone behind me ask the waiter for a wine list, which wasn’t that unusual. But as I got up to leave the bar, I saw that it was my old friend Ken Fischang from the days when our Esri User Conference was held in Palm Springs. Apparently, Ken had failed to recognize me without my long hair and beard! But as soon as our eyes met, he invited me to join him and a dozen friends for a glass of champagne and a tasting of some of his favorite wines from Sonoma County in celebration of his birthday today! After sampling the wines, we all piled into a couple of taxis for a trip to “Canlis”, one of Seattle’s most famous and celebrated restaurants. We were seated beside a large window overlooking the Lake Union Ship Canal, but only after the maître-de gave Ken a jacket to conform with the restaurant’s evening dress code! When our waiter came to take our orders, I started with a Dungeness crabcake appetizer, followed by the famous “Canlis Prawns” which were heavenly! Later, as we enjoyed an enormous variety of desserts, I shared a “Grand Marnier Souffle” with Marta – truly decadent! Throughout the evening,

dinner was nothing short of fabulous, especially accompanied by the special Sonoma wines that Ken and his colleague Marta had chosen. It was such a wonderful and memorable evening – Ken was the consummate host at his own birthday party. Happy Birthday Ken!

The next morning, I joined a group for a tour of the “Chateau St Michelle Winery” in Woodinville for a wine tasting. Since it was only 8:30am we all thought we would be going to brunch first, so none of us had eaten breakfast yet! [since the tour had been “overbooked”, half of the people went to brunch first, while the other half (us) went to the winetasting first!] The day began with clear skies and bright sunshine, which was perfect for views of the snow-covered Cascade Mountains to the east and the Olympic Mountains on the western horizon – as well as mighty Mt Rainer to the south! (something which is uncommon in the winter) On our way to the winery, we passed lots of new high-rise buildings in the city of Bellevue on the eastern shore of Lake Washington. We saw at least a dozen huge construction cranes among the new buildings. Bellevue was home to offices of Microsoft, Eddie Bauer, Nike, and Amazon!



Bellevue

When we arrived at the winery, we found it housed in an old farmhouse surrounded by beautiful, landscaped grounds. In the past, it was the site of a large dairy farm. As we entered the old farmhouse, we were offered a chilled glass of Champagne, and we gathered around a warm fire in the huge fireplace. Looking around the spacious room, I marveled at the sight of several large glass sculptures in brilliant colors by the world famous “free blown glass” artist Chihuly!



Chateau St Michelle Winery





Then we were invited to tour the bottling plant where we had a detailed explanation about how the wines were made. The white wines were produced from vines in the cooler climate of the region north of Woodinville, while the reds were made from grapes in the vineyards of eastern Washington, a much warmer climate. Following the explanation of how the two wines were produced, we entered a large room adjacent to the wine and gift shop for a wine tasting. We enjoyed the taste of several wines, both white and red, before exploring the gift shop with its extensive collection of everything associated with wine. I bought a bottle of very special “ice wine” and a spectacular glass wine bottle stopper as a gift for Leslie.



Chateau St Michelle Gift Shop

Leaving the winery, we drove south on the “Fall City Road” to the “Salish Lodge” overlooking spectacular “Snoqualmie Falls”. Here we were treated to a scrumptious brunch featuring ham, bacon, eggs, fresh fruit, roasted potatoes, and their famous oatmeal topped with local honey! After the lovely brunch that we all were looking forward to, I took a short walk to the “overlook” for an incredible view of Snoqualmie Falls under bright sunshine – spectacular!



Salish Lodge



Snoqualmie Falls



Snoqualmie River

As we left the lodge, the route back to the city followed the Snoqualmie River through a thick, deep green forest of huge old trees covered in moss – beautiful! Eventually we crossed the Mercer Island floating bridge to downtown Seattle. When we entered the city, I saw the old “King County Public Hospital” building on top of “First Hill”, and now it’s the headquarters of Amazon. From First Hill we had another beautiful view of the snow-covered Olympic Mountains across Elliott Bay. Later in the afternoon, I joined Lisa and Maryann for a tour of the new Bellevue Convention Center and two new hotels, the Westin and Hyatt. As we approached Bellevue, we saw the massive new construction of several high-rise buildings, and tall construction cranes seemed to be everywhere. The tour of the convention center was very interesting with many new high-tech features. When we reached the top of the new Hyatt Hotel, the view of Seattle and Lake Washington as sunset approached was gorgeous.



Bellevue Convention Center



Downtown Bellevue



Bellevue Hyatt Hotel lobby



Daniel's Bar & Grill – Bellevue Hyatt Hotel

To our surprise, at the end of the tour each of us was given a \$100 gift certificate to use in any of the stores in the Bellevue Square Mall! I found some jeans and a unique “dual time zone” clock at Eddie Bauer that could be clipped to my backpack. Meanwhile, an overweight young woman on our tour was desperately searching for a pair of “skinny jeans”! After I had finished shopping, I stopped at the “Red Robin Restaurant and Bar” for a pint of Pike Place Brewery IPA as I waited for Lisa and Maryann. Then we rode the complimentary limo back to the Seattle Convention Center for more conference activities that evening. We arrived with just enough time for me to rush to the “Fairmont Olympic Hotel” to catch the last 30 minutes of the “PCMA Southwest and Pacific Chapter Reception”. As I entered the room, I ran into DeeAnne, and she introduced me to the widow and daughter of Micheal Polin who had suddenly passed away last year. As a recovering heroin addict, Michael had founded “Narcotics Anonymous” many years ago and led the organization up until his death from cancer. Our Esri User Conference followed his organization’s annual



meeting in San Diego for several years, so we became well acquainted. His passing was felt by almost everyone in PCMA.

Then, we all walked up to the Seattle Convention Center to attend the “Opening Reception” sponsored by the Seattle Visitors Bureau and the Washington State Tourism Office. When we entered the convention center, we discovered the Grand Ballroom had been divided into two different areas, one representing the great outdoor environment, complete with a forest and large waterfall, while next to it was decorated as an urban environment! Throughout the ballroom were “living statues” representing elements of each environment, and they changed every 20 minutes.



Opening Reception

Huge buffets and bars were everywhere, and the food was fantastic, including Kobe beef hamburgers, shrimp and Dungeness crabcakes, as well as an amazing selection of Pacific Northwest craft beers and wines! The Opening Reception definitely highlighted the very best of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest. As the Opening Reception concluded at 9pm, the Seattle Police had blocked off two major streets downtown so that conference attendees could walk down to Nordstrom’s flagship store for desserts and champagne. (Nordstrom’s had closed their store early that day just to allow PCMA attendees to enjoy the amenities and have an opportunity to shop privately!) As we entered the store, Lisa and Maryann headed straight to the women’s shoe department, while Ed and I went downstairs to the men’s department. Ed found a gorgeous designer shirt “on sale” for \$175! Later, Ed and I met up with Lisa and Maryann as they were trying on several pairs of designer shoes, also “on sale” for \$500!



Opening Reception at Nordstrom’s

After enjoying the delicious desserts and chilled glasses of champagne in Nordstrom's, we boarded a shuttle bus that took us to the "Ibiza Nightclub" in historic Pioneer Square to join Ken and Marta for the "San Francisco After Dark Reception". Ken and Marta invited us to do a tasting of 12 Sonoma County wines they had selected from over 300 that had been offered for the event. All the wines were excellent, with one being most unusual, a Merlot from the "Jacuzzi Winery" in the shape of a brandy bottle. The winery remains in the same family that is so famous as the world standard of spas and hot tubs – who would have known! Throughout the evening, we enjoyed superb wines and fine foods, and it wasn't long before two "drag queens" showed up and insisted upon having their photos with Ken and Maryann – "Sylvia" was Ken's favorite! Not long after the drag queens appeared, two "exotic dancers" in see through painted body suits took the small stage. At that moment, Maryann insisted on taking a photo of me with them! Considering the weird scene around us, it seemed to be an appropriate way to remember the event! We all had a very fun time – thanks again Ken!



"San Francisco After Dark" party

The next morning, I met up with Ed, Lisa, and Maryann at Starbucks before we all went to the Opening Plenary Session. At the lunch break, we joined our chapter group for the Awards Luncheon, and during the ceremony, a special "Posthumous Award" honoring Michael Polin was accepted by his widow as there was a standing ovation – very emotional!



PCMA Luncheon & Awards Ceremony

After the luncheon, I attended a very interesting session about Web 2.0 technology where we saw an amazing demonstration of "Second Life", a virtual conference web site using "Avatars"! Later, Lisa, Maryann, and I had drinks with the Los Angeles Convention Center staff – both Michael and Jeff were as

“entertaining” as ever, despite the fact that we had turned down their bid to move our annual user conference from San Diego to LA! From our meeting with Michael and Jeff, we went to the “Tampa Bay Reception” at the Grand Hyatt Hotel for an event billed as “Tini’s with Tampa” where each of us was handed a martini glass as soon as we entered the room. The “menu” of martinis was extensive and very creative. The staff passed out small pins of blinking lights in the shape of a martini glass. When Ralph, a friend of one of the Tampa Bay Visitors Bureau staff, and very drunk became obnoxious around Lisa and Maryann trying to pin them on, the ladies decided it was time to leave!

From the Tampa Bay reception, we boarded a shuttle bus that would take us to the PCMA Networking Reception being held in the new Cruise Ship Terminal on the waterfront. But, as we sat on the bus, heavy snow and sleet began to fall! Once we arrived at the Networking Reception, we were amazed at the enormous array of delicious Pacific Northwest food and wine that greeted us. The entire terminal building was decorated in a nautical theme representing the historical importance of Seattle as a seaport for trade with Asia and the jumping off point for the famous stampede to the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898! It was a lot of fun to explore the historical displays and sample the wonderful food and wine. Later in the evening, we joined Maureen and Brad from the San Diego Convention Center and Sheila, the manager of the San Diego Hard Rock Hotel, for dinner at nearby “Cutter’s Bayhouse” overlooking Elliott Bay. My order of Thai crab cakes, followed by fresh King Salmon roasted on a Cedar plank was exceptional, as well as the chilled glass of St Michelle Cabernet Sauvignon. (Thanks Maureen and Brad)

After dinner, as the shuttle van, courtesy of the restaurant, took us back to the Grand Hyatt Hotel, Lisa and Maryann decided to give their complimentary John Maher concert tickets to Maureen and Sheila. So, after dropping off Lisa and Maryann at the hotel, the shuttle van driver offered to take us to Seattle Center where the concert was being held in the EMP (Experimental Music Project) – a very unique museum/concert hall dedicated to legendary rock musicians and designed in the shape of a broken guitar by Paul Allen, co-founder of Microsoft! We were fortunate to be able to stand at the side of the stage with unobstructed views of John Maher as he performed beautiful old ballads, as well as his own compositions – amazing! I took some photos of Maureen and Sheila by the stage. And then at the end of the concert, one of the young guys in a group of young girls next to us tried in vain to get the attention of the stage crew to “buy” John Maher’s sweaty towel. Meanwhile, his friend suddenly showed up with the towel that he got for free! And of course, there were more photos to be taken of the towel! It was a very enjoyable evening to be sure!



John Maher Concert

I spent the next morning catching up on my office email before going to the Plenary Session luncheon where the keynote speaker gave a fascinating presentation about the recent changes forced on the travel and hospitality industry by the evolution of “online bookings”. That afternoon, I walked down to the “Pike Place Market” to enjoy its wonderful atmosphere with fresh fruits, vegetable, and flowers on display everywhere and the famous “throwing of the fish” – a time honored tradition where fishmongers threw



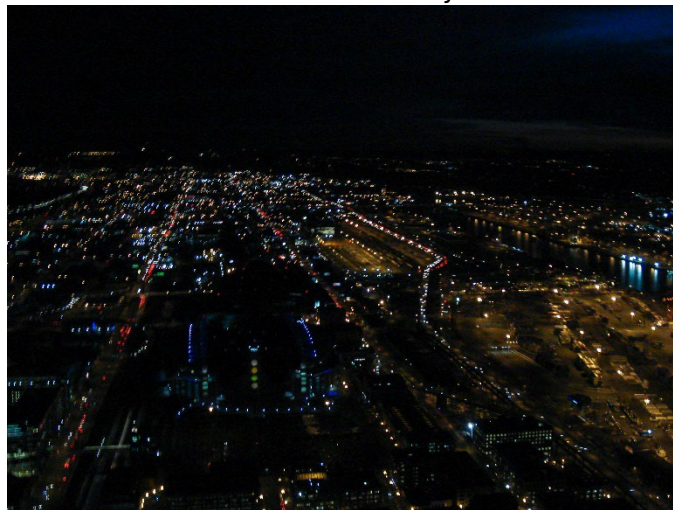
whole fish to each other as customers pointed out the fish they wanted to buy. It always draws a big crowd to watch, and once in a while, they will throw a fake rubber fish into the crowd, just to scare them!



Pike Place Farmers Market

After taking some photos of the market, I went downstairs to the Pike Place Brewery for a cold pint of their “Pike Place Pale Ale”. Then I walked down 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to historic Pioneer Square with its many original buildings from the founding of Seattle in 1851 before I headed up the steep hill that was once known as “skid road”, which got its name from the days when huge logs from the forest were “skidded” down to the waterfront to be loaded on to ships. Now the street is known as “Yesler Way” that extends across the heart of the city from Elliott Bay to Lake Washington. As I walked along 3<sup>rd</sup> avenue, I encountered a young couple who appeared to be lost. When I asked if they needed directions, they said they were walking to Green Lake, a distance of more than 6 miles! I suggested that they consider taking a bus instead.

I was on my way to a reception hosted by the Florida Tourist Bureau in the “Tower Club” at the top of “Columbia Tower”, the tallest building in Seattle, and to reach the top floor, I had to use 3 sets of elevators! As I stepped off the elevator at the 76<sup>th</sup> floor, I was greeted by several members of the bureau, and once again, lots of great food and drink was served as we chatted about my recent trip to Florida for Christmas. The views of the city at night from the top of the Columbia Tower were spectacular! At one point, as I gazed north, I decided to call Lisa who was attending the Hilton Hotels/American Airlines dinner atop the Space Needle which I could see clearly shining in the dark night sky. When she answered, I said “I’m looking at you”, to which she replied, “where are you, I don’t see you here”. So, I told her to go to the south window of the Space Needle Restaurant and “tell me if you can see the tallest building – I’m on top of it and looking at the Space Needle”! Her response was “OMG”! As the reception came to a close, I called Maryann to say that I would arrive late for dinner with her and Ed at the Grand Hyatt.



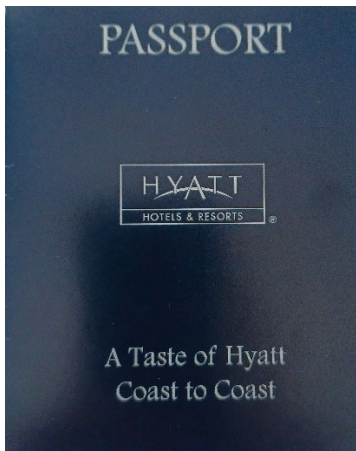
View of downtown Seattle from the Columbia Tower Club



I left the Tower Club and walked up to the Grand Hyatt Hotel where “dinner” was held in the huge ballroom that had been divided into five different rooms, one of which was a portion of the hotel’s kitchen. Each room had the executive chef from five Hyatt hotels around the country, including Philadelphia, Scottsdale, Tampa Bay, Maui, Waikiki, and of course Seattle. The chefs prepared signature dishes from their region of the country and the event was titled “A Taste of Hyatt – Coast to Coast”. As I entered the first room, I was handed a glass of champagne and a small black leather case containing a “passport” that listed the menu for the evening, including main dishes, side dishes, and desserts as well as special drinks. Besides the music and entertainment typical of each region, one very unique feature was the “interactive food stations” where one could prepare your own sushi, fry your own conch fritters, or fix your own Mango Mojitos! All the food and drinks were fabulous, and a few of my favorites were:

- Cedar plank roasted King salmon with apple and fennel slaw
- Grilled Kobe beef tenderloin in a spicy tamale and mole sauce
- Key West pink shrimp served on “Johnny Cakes” topped with guava BBQ butter
- Deep fried conch fritters
- Roasted lamb with risotto
- Key lime parfaits
- Mango mojitos
- Douglas Fir pine sorbet

The theme of the dinner was fascinating, totally unique, and one of the best dining experiences I’ve ever had! Together with Ed, Lisa, and Maryann we ended the evening relaxing on comfortable sofas enjoying luscious desserts and after dinner drinks as we listened to soft music from the piano player. It was an evening to remember for sure!



Juan Solorio, Chef De Cuisine Nicole Pienta, Culinary CMT Hyatt Regency Scottsdale, SWB		Kenny Hunsberger, Chef De Cuisine Grand Hyatt Tampa Bay, Oystercatchers	
Near the Border Lobster ceviche with fried plantain chips and chile de arbol oil Grilled beef tenderloin with corn tamale and mole sauce		From the Ocean Key west pink shrimp with johnny cakes & guava bbq butter	
Seasonal roasted fruits with jalapeno lime syrup, cinnamon fry bread and lemon sorbet Strolling spanish guitarist		INTERACTIVE STATION Conch fritters with burnt orange sauce - Scoop and fry your own fritter! Key lime parfaits	
Tequila bar & margaritas Southwest - Leonesa		Oystercatchers signature Mango mojitos Southeast - Leonesa	



Hyatt Dinner

Around 11pm when everyone else was headed to bed, I decided to walk down to Seattle Center to catch the final set of the “Party with a Purpose” in the “EMP Skychurch”. Just by chance, as I entered the concert hall I ran into Shelia again, along with her friend. Over the next hour, we enjoyed dancing to the 80’s retro music of a band from Austin, Texas who called themselves “The Spazmatics”! It’s an amazing band that has performed at many PCMA conferences and is always a favorite among attendees. At the end of the concert, Shelia suggested that we finish the evening at “Kell’s Irish Pub” downtown near Pike Place Market for a “nightcap”. Suddenly, as we walked outside the concert hall, one of the “street people” hailed a taxi for us – most unexpected, but very appreciated! When we arrived at the pub, we celebrated the evening with a pint of Guinness as we recalled the wonderful time together.

I spent the next morning responding to my office email before joining Lisa, Maryann, and Ed at the “Networking Luncheon” where the keynote speaker was none other than Jason Alexander, more well known as the character “George” on the very popular TV series “Seinfeld”. His presentation was about the importance of clear communications, which he demonstrated very effectively with several hilarious skits of what **not** to do! He also showed a few video clips of famous stars and their mistakes, as well as a couple of short live skits on stage with PCMA staff – very funny! Then, most unexpectedly, he appeared on stage in an overcoat and suddenly “flashed” it open to reveal himself in a nude-colored body suit! (It was meant to relate to the best seller book about public speaking titled “I Can See You Naked”) But what was **most** impressive was when he donned a genuine straight jacket, just as Houdini had done so many times, and proceeded to “escape” from it! Everyone in the audience was absolutely stunned, amazed, and rolling with laughter – it was definitely a highlight of the conference!

After the luncheon, I joined a small group for a tour of the Pike Place Brewery for an event called “pairing of beer with food”. The owner of the brewery took us on a short walk through the facility and gave us a detailed explanation of the brewing process. The Pike Place Brewery used the “bottom fermentation” process to produce its traditional style ales and stouts, as opposed to “top fermentation” which is used for lagers and pilsners.



Pike Place Brewery tour

Then he invited us to have a seat at the tables in the tasting room/beer museum for a fascinating and enjoyable “pairing” experience that included:

- “Naughty Nellie” (a golden ale) paired with fresh radishes, truffle salt, pita bread, and hummus
- “Pike Pale Ale” paired with German bratwurst, apple sauerkraut, and pale ale grain mustard
- “India Pale Ale” paired with Cedar plank roasted King salmon and a spicy coconut sauce
- “Barley Wine” paired with four Pacific Northwest cheeses
- “5X Stout” (a porter) paired with a 5X Stout chocolate brownie which had a delicious taste of coffee with luscious deep chocolate flavor
- Our tasting finished with a chilled pint of their famous “Kilt Lifter Irish Ale”



Each pairing of beer and food was introduced by the owner who explained in great detail why it was a good pairing and what “tastes” we should look for. In addition, all the food came from their own kitchen menu. As I finished my glass of beer, I walked around the “beer museum” which was filled with fascinating historical information and artifacts. In one of the display cases were beer bottles from old Washington breweries, and I discovered a bottle of “Republic Pale Ale”. Having lived in the small gold mining town of Republic, Washington many years ago, I never would have guessed it once had a brewery!

I really enjoyed the tour and tasting experience of the Pike Place Brewery, but it was time to head back to the convention center and join Lisa and Maryann for the Closing Reception in the Grand Ballroom of the Sheraton Hotel next door. As we entered the ballroom, the entire space had been turned into a collection of different areas featuring all sorts of activities and different decor, with beautiful lighting everywhere! And, as usual for a PCMA event, there was an abundance of great food and drink! One of the areas had a large buffet of fresh seafood, including Alaskan King Crab legs and huge Gulf shrimp! I could have spent the rest of the evening there. Meanwhile, the rest of the ballroom was filled with entertainers and musicians. In the center of the ballroom was a small stage “in the round” where two teams of audience members were given the task of “acting out” some unusual problem that a meeting planner might face in managing an event, all without speaking! When asked to suggest problems for the teams, Maryann contributed the problem of electrical power suddenly going out at the start of the Awards Ceremony! All the “skits” were spontaneous and hilarious to watch. A “referee” sat on a tall stool in one corner and rendered a decision as to which of the two teams had won the competition – much like one would see at a championship tennis match. It was a lot of fun to watch, especially as the audience cheered on the teams! During the evening, one of the most unusual entertainers I saw was a beautiful young woman dressed in a colorful outfit that resembled that of the classic “cigarette girl” of the 1940’s! But instead of dispensing packets of cigarettes, she was handing out delicious cupcakes, which she decorated for us! All in all, it was a fantastic and very enjoyable party, and a fitting close to the conference.



Closing Reception

As I was leaving the reception, I suddenly felt hungry for a hamburger, believe it or not! But I quickly discovered there was nothing open downtown which served hamburgers that late at night. So, I began walking north toward Seattle Center and unexpectedly came upon a classic old 24-hour diner called “Hurricane Café”. Here is where I found a huge bacon cheeseburger that really filled me up as I watched a group of locals playing pool. It was a nice ending to the evening, but not the one I had expected. (The 24-hour diner had been a classic in Seattle for over 100 years, though it changed it’s name a couple of times in the past. Unfortunately, last year it closed after losing its lease during the development of South Lake Union Park.)

The next morning, after completing my office email correspondence, I packed my bags, checked out of my hotel room, and stored my bags with the bell desk. (I had quite a hard time trying to pack all the gifts I had received during the conference, however, I finally managed to do so without leaving any gifts behind) Then I picked up a Starbucks coffee, and with my camera in hand, I walked down to the new South Lake Union Park, part of a very large, ambitious redevelopment project financed by Paul Allen and designed to transform the area from downtown Seattle all the way to Lake Union with many new shops, restaurants, bars, and condos – like an “urban oasis”. Included in the project was a new streetcar line connecting the Eastlake neighborhood with downtown. As I explored the area, I discovered the “Historic Ships Wharf” that was once the US Naval Reserve Base on the shore of Lake Union. Among the old ships docked at the wharf were some famous ocean-going tugboats, including the “Arthur Foss”, as well as the last remaining “lightship” in service that is still steam powered!



“Arthur Foss” tugboat



“Lightship”

Some really fascinating maritime history of Seattle. Nearby was the “Wooden Ship Building Society” that was restoring an old wooden clipper ship that once transported huge logs from the forests of the Pacific Northwest to Asia. Today, logs are still shipped from Seattle to Asia aboard huge cargo freighters powered by enormous diesel engines.



Historic old Clipper Ship being restored



“Houseboat” on Lake Union

As I walked along the shore of Lake Union toward Eastlake, I came upon some new shops and restaurants overlooking the lake. “Dukes Chowder House” looked particularly inviting, especially in the chilly wind off the lake, so I stopped in for lunch at the bar where I had a fabulous “Bleu Cheese crusted Halibut filet, together with chips and hot sourdough bread, along with a chilled glass of IPA from the local Fremont Brewery. After lunch, I visited the small, but very interesting “Puget Sound Maritime Museum” which had several beautiful scale models of old sailing ships, as well as many old historical photographs of Seattle’s shipping industry. By the time I reached Eastlake, it was time to head back to the hotel, pick up my



bags, and go to the airport. So, I decided to ride the new streetcar to downtown, and it was a most enjoyable ride.

It was a quick trip with the hotel shuttle to SeaTac Airport, but once I arrived, I found it to be **very** busy, with long lines going through the security checkpoint. Finally, having passed through security, I went straight to the Alaska Airlines Board Room lounge, which was also a bit crowded, but I was able to find a seat at the bar and a cold glass of Alaskan Amber beer – very relaxing!



"Pacific Market Place" – SeaTac Airport



"Alaska Lodge Bar" – SeaTac Airport

Not long after, boarding was announced for the flight to Ontario, and I settled into a comfortable first-class seat. After takeoff, a very tasty dinner of grilled chicken and marinara pasta was served, along with a glass of Chateau St Michelle Cabernet Sauvignon wine. While I enjoyed the delicious dinner, we flew over the snow-covered Oregon Cascade Mountains, and I had to conclude that this PCMA conference was one of the very best – thank you Seattle! (next year the conference will be held in New Orleans, also in January – stay tuned!)

## Photo Gallery



View of the Olympic Mountains from my hotel room



Amenities in my room



Seattle Convention Center



Smith Tower – oldest high rise building in Seattle



Seattle at night





Pacific Center Mall – Seattle



Pike Place Brewery



Overlook – Snoqualmie Falls



Maryann, Ed, & Lisa – Closing Reception



Iced Mojitos – Closing Reception