

## EventCurrents

### He Loves L.A.

*Excerpt from an article by Marlene Goldman in Meetings West, September 2009*

Veteran DMC ACCESS Destination Services ([www.accessdmc.com](http://www.accessdmc.com)) taps into L.A.'s hot spots to host a kaleidoscope of group events.

"L.A. is huge. You have to think about what area the program is going to be in as to what

to suggest where activities and off-site events should be," says Steve McCleave, DMCP, senior sales manager of ACCESS Destination Services.

One of the most popular areas for hosting events, Hollywood is rife with trendy event spaces, including a

new venue called Playhouse, formerly a theater. The 13,000-square-foot entertainment emporium features a rooftop patio and stage for presentations. There is a 50-seat restaurant available as well as five bars.

"When you think of Hollywood and want to do something that would bring Hollywood to life, groups always ask to do an event at a studio," McCleave says. "We just did an event at Paramount Studios, and used the theater rather than the backlot. We also had the red carpet, paparazzi and look-alikes. We had Lucille Ball, Marilyn Monroe – it brought people back to the golden age of Hollywood."

"For Westside events, we always suggest Pacific Park on the Santa Monica Pier. It's a throwback to a wonderful boardwalk carnival," McCleave continues.

McCleave has also done community outreach services there.

"A few weeks ago, we held an event where guests built playhouses from plywood and decorated them," he says. "Children of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America picked out which ones they wanted. A group of 280 guests donated 28 playhouses to the community."

Downtown is another prime event area. One lofty venue is Elevate, a club on top of a high-rise building that features a wraparound balcony overlooking the city. Another popular downtown club for groups, Edison was designed as a 1920's speakeasy, replete with cocktail waitresses in flapper dresses and serving staff that performs throughout the evening.

The newest addition to downtown, L.A. Live, boasts a variety of event spaces, from museums to nightclubs.

"We're still exploring what we can do," McCleave says. Among the options include Club Nokia, which is connected to the Grammy Museum, also open to events, as well as the Conga Room and ESPN. ●

