IDDBA President Carol Christison Dies

International Dairy-Deli-Bakery Association

MADISON, Wis. (IDBBA) — Carol L. Christison, longtime president of the International Dairy-Deli-Bakery Association, died Tuesday.

Christison replaced retiring International Cheese & Deli Association Executive Director, Willard T. Reese, in December 1982 at the Madison, Wisconsin-based organization that later became known as the IDDBA. Over the next 31 years, she built the IDDBA into the leading organization in the industry.

Carol had left an executive position with The American College of Sports Medicine to avoid relocating her family and quickly embraced the vision of the IDDBA: to be the

essential resource for relevant information and services that add value to all food channels for the dairy, deli, and bakery categories.

"Back in the '80s, Carol Christison added a real spark to the association, including our annual business meetings in Door County, where a mixture of business and fun was the order of the day," said a former IDDBA executive board chair. Starting with only a part-time bookkeeper, the organization has grown to a staff of nearly 30 employees; from 100 corporate members to 1,500, and from less than 1,000 attendees to nearly 9,000 at the Annual Seminar & Expo. Having served on industry committees, including Random-Weight UPC and Traceability, these voluntary roles were true testaments to Carol's dedication and commitment to food retailers, distributors, brokers, manufacturers and others who share a common purpose to better the industry.

Christison expanded and changed the organization's structure to meet new demands and opportunities and to be more self-sufficient. She was also well known for her creativity, her annual industry trends presentation, and her abilities in creating a top-notch program for the annual seminar. Christison was also responsible for writing key promotional pieces and leading the annual research study.

Lucie Arendt, senior vice-president and one of the first employees of the IDDBA said, "Carol has built an effective, committed team and our operations have grown and improved every year, thanks to her inspiring, innovative leadership. We will miss Carol’s professionalism, creative mind and friendship."

Voni Woods, 2013 board chair and senior director of deli at Giant Eagle Supermarkets, addressed Carol in this introduction at last year’s annual meeting, "You are a leader and visionary and disciplined strategic thinker. You are amazingly perceptive about people and talent. You are a woman to reckon with in the industry of leaders and you do it with such grace and confidence…always with that humor of yours, which is scaring me because I get it. You have been a mentor and role model and such an inspiration to many, including me. I am grateful to know you, thankful that the Lord has watched over you, and look forward to your next thirty years."

"We will most assuredly miss her professionalism and her friendship," echoed William Klump, current chairman of the board and senior VP of marketing at Butterball. In a previous letter to the board, Klump stated, "We are grateful for all that Carol has accomplished in her thirty years of service. She has been a key factor in the growth and success of the association. Carol has been at the center of the IDDBA’s transformation into a leading organization, benefitting the whole industry."

Carol is survived by daughter, Lucie (Norm) Arendt, and son David; eldest son Jim passed away in 2013. Visitation is set for Wednesday, March 12 with a Celebration of Life service on Thursday March 13. Details may be found at www.gundersonfh.com/ [1]

Carol and her family suggest, in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions be made to the UW-Madison’s Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology research fund, which

supports research in gynecologic cancers. Contributions to this fund significantly help advance cutting-edge research to find new ways to detect the cancer earlier, as well as improve the outcomes and quality of life for women and their families who face these cancers. UW Foundation Fund #12902096, Lock Box 78807, Milwaukee, WI 53278-0807.
www.obgyn.wisc.edu/division/gynecology-oncology/default.aspx [2]

About IDDBA: IDDBA is a nonprofit membership organization serving the dairy, deli, bakery, cheese, and supermarket foodservice industries. Member companies enjoy many benefits and services including the annual seminar and expo, leading-edge research, training programs, management tools, and an annual trends report. IDDBA celebrates 50 years of service in 2014. For more information, contact IDDBA at 608.310.5000 or visit our website, www.iddba.org [3].

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