

# POMS 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference

## Plenary Speaker

### LEE COCKERELL

EXECUTIVE VP OF OPERATIONS (RETIRED)

WALT DISNEY WORLD RESORT®

SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 10:00 – 11:05 AM, TUSCAN A-C

### “YOU CAN CREATE MAGIC TOO”

Lee Cockerell is the first recipient of the prestigious POMS Martin K. Starr Excellence in Production & Operations Management Award (2006). He served on the POMS Board from 2007-2008 as our Vice President Industry. Lee retired as the Executive Vice President of Operations for the WALT DISNEY WORLD® Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Florida. Well-known for his captivating storytelling, Lee will share powerful leadership and operations management strategies he successfully utilized as the senior operating executive at Walt Disney World® Resort for ten years, where he led a team of 40,000 Cast Members and was responsible for the operations of 30 resort hotels, 4 theme parks, 2 water parks, a shopping and entertainment village, and a sports and recreation complex, in addition to other operations which supported the number one vacation destination in the world.



Lee's years of living the Disney principles that established The Walt Disney Company as a world leader in quality, service excellence, and guest satisfaction. One of Lee's major and lasting legacies was the creation of Disney Great Leader Strategies which continues on as the primary resource for developing the 7,000 leaders at Walt Disney World.

Lee joined the Disney organization in July 1990 as Director of Food and Beverage and Quality Assurance for the Disneyland Paris hotels. Prior to joining the Walt Disney World Co., he spent 17 years in various executive positions with the Marriott Corporation and 8 years with Hilton Hotels. He now runs his own consultancy firm, Lee Cockerell, LLC. As Executive Vice President of Operations at Walt Disney World, Mr. Cockerell instituted many innovative and imaginative programs. He used his authority and position to create a workplace environment that provided great leadership at all levels, which focused on what Lee titled the *Four Employee Expectations* which are: 1) *Make Me Feel Special*, 2) *Treat Me as an Individual*, 3) *Respect Me*, 4) *Train and Develop Me*. Please visit Lee's web site for more information: [www.LeeCockerell.com](http://www.LeeCockerell.com).

1. He developed a Time/Life Management course that teaches leadership and a balance between business and personal lives.
2. He led the development of a comprehensive Food and Beverage Operations Strategy that led to Walt Disney World having a billion dollar Food and Beverage business that is known for high quality food and service. By the way, this program also improved profitability substantially.
3. He developed a comprehensive program for recognition and appreciation for operations Cast Members. This program includes a:
  - a. Weekly newsletter "The Main Street Diary" personally written by Lee.
  - b. Certificates and pins for Cast Members when recognized in the newsletter.
  - c. Personally hand written notes from Lee to each Cast Member that is recognized in a note or letter from a Guest. He sent about 500 of these letters each month.
4. He wrote a Career Development document that is the story of his 40 year career in operations management. This document was distributed to approximately 20,000 College Program Cast Members every year to guide them in their own career development.



Based on his extensive leadership experience, Lee has written *Creating Magic*, where he shares the ten practical, common sense leadership principles that guided his own journey from a poor farm boy in Oklahoma to the head of operations for a multibillion dollar enterprise. He demonstrates that we can all become leaders capable of outstanding leadership — the kind that inspires employees, delights customers, and achieves extraordinary business results.

Lee and his wife Priscilla reside in Orlando, Florida. Lee enjoys teaching leadership, management and service excellence seminars, traveling, dining out and most of all spending time with his three grandchildren, Jullian, Margot, and Tristan.