



# letter

FROM THE EDITOR \_\_\_\_\_

2001 is really the year that starts the new Millennium. It's only fitting that

*Illinois Meetings & Events* is showing its new, exuberant and polished face at the beginning of 2001, the third Millennium's true beginnings.

Just look at us! You'll notice a new graphics style, some new departments and a lot of new contributors. We're heading into the new Millennium with some very special projects. The Most Admired in the Illinois meetings and events industry is heading your way Spring/Summer 2001 and the "Best of..." in the Illinois meetings and events industry will debut in Fall 2001. We're making some serious choices for these new features and relying on our readers to assist us with the ever-important selection of these winners. Our Web site will be re-launched to provide some new services for meeting planners.

In our Winter 2001 issue we just had to look at the "Future of Meetings." We're pleased to conclude that the "face-to-face" aspect of meetings remains paramount! The techno stuff is great, mind you, but Web, digital and virtual technologies— all helpful tools (or lethal weapons depending

upon how you want to look at it)—are still taking a backseat to that all important face-to-face, flesh-to-flesh, touch-to-touch in-person meeting.

In this current issue, we're putting our finger on the trends with a new wave of articles. Gaming continues to ride the wave for meeting groups. Spas and salons are just beginning to catch the wave. And traffic, unfortunately, is still creating waves. We're looking at some interesting folks that are making waves in the Illinois meetings and events industry— Advance Event Group in themed events, M.A.S.E. in emergency situations, and Chicagoland Golf Outings in the sporting life to name a few. We're taking you to some aged, historic destinations— Galena, Joliet and Chicago neighborhoods— that have picked themselves up, dusted themselves off— and are wowing the business travel market.

*Illinois Meetings & Events* is riding the crest of this new Millennium. We'll be taking you up with us as we continue to identify trends, ferret out the leaders with great stories to tell, and dig up some issues that affect all of us in the Illinois meetings and events industry. Hang Ten!

T. Edward Crain  
Editor