

# SPA HOPPING

By L. Brooks Baldwin

## Oh My Goodness: Part 2

"The smallest good deed is better than the grandest intention." —Anonymous

LAST MONTH, THIS COLUMN WAS DEVOTED TO SPAS that incorporate good deeds into the soul of their existence. This started as a single-column topic but blossomed into something more comprehensive.

What appeals to me about this subject is the hope that it might inspire others to incorporate acts of kindness into their business philosophies. Engaging in charitable endeavors not only benefits those in need but also the spa, as a result of inciting positive feelings.

Those of us within the spa industry understand the concepts of good energy, chi, karma and the like. It's all related to the mind/body/spirit connection that the wellness world advocates. Yet, many practitioners I know admit they don't always practice what they preach. What's ironic is that the time and energy these people devote to encouraging others to embrace a positive, giving lifestyle sometimes prevents them from fully committing to the same.

This lack of commitment is impelling me on a mission: I'm going to educate spa professionals on the benefits guaranteed to accrue if they commit to making worthy causes part of their business plans. Spas that engage in charitable ventures,

good deeds and thoughtful actions are rich in positive energy—something that revenue can't buy, according to Mike Garvey, president of the Las Vegas Spa Association (LVSA) ([lvspas.com](http://lvspas.com)) and one of my heroes in the industry.

Garvey is a master at mixing business, charity and pleasure to create a feel-good potion for everyone involved. Take, for instance, his creation of the LVSA. He analyzed a situation that could've become strained by discovering the group's synergistic "sweet spot." Once it was found, he leveraged the heck out of it to create a unified, supportive and goal-oriented bunch. Huh?

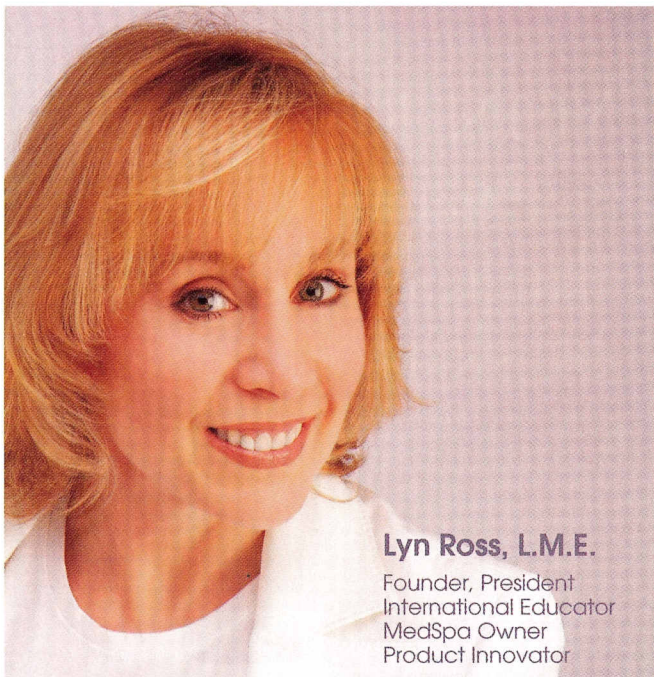
Let me explain. Technically speaking, Garvey isn't even in the spa biz. He's president of The Dumbbell Man Fitness Equipment, a provider of commercial exercise products. The California-based business has a stronghold in Las Vegas, where mega-resort spas and fitness centers stretch the imagination in terms of size and bounty. As a vendor, Garvey became acquainted with scores of the city's spa directors and other industry-associated service providers. He saw this group as



The LVSA supports several charities. Pictured (left) are Mike Garvey, president, and Sherilyn Canady, event coordinator, at a silent auction to benefit cancer treatment and research at the City of Hope Medical Center.

LVSA's Rebecca Hellman (above) went the distance for the Leukemia Society of America. Running in her first Rock 'n' Roll Marathon, she helped raise more than \$10,000 to fight cancer.

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fragmented and competitive, but he felt that it would benefit from joining forces for the purpose of networking—to share insights, ideas and concerns specific to the spa industry. So, with his characteristic zest, Garvey tapped this network, and brought the individuals together as the LVSA.

Part of Garvey's overall vision for the LVSA was to incorporate charitable efforts into its mission. His rationale is that when charity work is combined with running a business, a feeling of purpose and pride fills the workplace. Involvement in charitable causes demonstrates that employers care about more than the bottom line. "Doing good" engenders respect and devotion from a spa's employees, clients and the community, and builds caring and compassion into its business manifesto.

As president, Garvey has the ability to rally the LVSA—a mighty contingent of 32 spas and 55-plus vendors—to rush to the rescue of compelling causes. Based on logistics alone, the scope and speed at which the association can accomplish charitable projects simply can't be duplicated by individuals. And yet, the beauty of the well-oiled LVSA machine is that it enables its members to drive charitable endeavors down to their own staff and customers.

### A Little Goes a Long Way

Here's a look at what a few other spas are doing to give back to the community:

- *Yuvan MedSpa, yuvanmedspa.com*: Celebrates patriotism with Stand Up and Salute packages. One of these is America the Beautiful, which includes a Corrective Facial and VibraDermabrasion treatments. Anyone enlisted in the military or relatives of active military get an additional 10% off.
- *The Spa at South Coast Plaza, thespaandfitnessclub.com*: Developed a strong relationship with Ability First, which provides programs and services to help people with physical and developmental disabilities reach their full potential. The spa hosts an annual auction, as well as a fashion show in which Ability First kids are "models" and are given VIP runway treatment, complete with hair and makeup services.
- *Preston Spa Business Solutions (PSBS), prestoninc.net*: Launched a corporate marketing campaign for the humanitarian organization CARE that raised awareness in the spa and wellness industries about the organization's efforts to empower women in the fight against poverty. PSBS produced a fundraising CD called "I Am Powerful: Music to Empower Women." They'll also be collaborating with day spas in major U.S. cities to host invitation-only parties with celebrity guests; proceeds will be donated to CARE.