

# 13th Nail Tech Event of the Smokies slays

**T**he Nail Tech Event of the Smokies Show began as an idea in 2007 to bring affordable nail education to the South. The resort town of Gatlinburg, TN, was chosen because it's a fun family vacation destination within a day's drive for more than 50% of the population living east of the Mississippi. The first event was launched in 2008 as a small networking event in a hotel ballroom for 50 nail techs and six educators, with the late nail icon **Vicki Peters** as the guest speaker. Within three years, the show became the largest nail tech networking event in the United States. After outgrowing two venues within four years, the event moved to the Gatlinburg Convention Center.

Given that spunky grassroots history, even a pandemic was not going to stop powerhouse **Jill Wright**, event founder and coordinator; plus more than 400 attendees, including 22 sponsors, from gathering for the 13th annual show in July.

"Everything went so incredibly smoothly!" says Jill, a successful nail tech from Kentucky, who has cut back to doing nails part-time in a private studio in order to work online full-



Show founder and event coordinator Jill Wright (left) greets Artistic Nail Design Educator Michelle Ann Whitaker (right).

time growing the Smokies Nail Show.

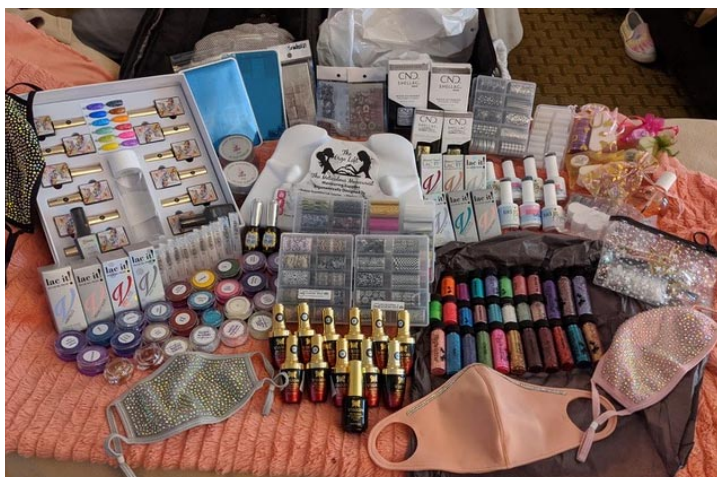
"I have followed up with attendees and am extremely happy to report that out of 400-plus people, nobody got the virus at the show, nor while in Gatlinburg," she adds. "While locked down, I spent my time researching news articles from other countries (Sweden, Italy & Great Britain). From what I learned, I felt confident proceeding with the show. In addition, the Gatlinburg Convention Center

reopened June 1, so the contract I had with them for July was legally and financially binding. Since the GCC had moved all scheduled shows from April and May when they were closed to the latter part of this year, there weren't any other weekends open in 2020 to reschedule. All the attending nail techs and the 22 company owners who believed that the benefits outweighed the risks came to support the show, and those who felt otherwise didn't. The rest is history.

"In addition, surrounding states had reopened and techs craved the normalcy of this yearly nails-only show to shop for supplies, plus receive nail education and enjoy camaraderie with all their friends. Many brought their families and stayed

longer on a tax write-off vacation for a much-needed escape.

"Everyone was so happy to be there! Techs were filling their big rolling bags with a year's worth of supplies, receiving nail education, meeting old friends and making new ones, plus having BIG fun in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park and Gatlinburg, TN. There were people who didn't think we could do it, nor that we should even try to do it. So



left: Chrissy Kramer's Smokies' haul. She's from Fond du Lac, WI. right: So many prizes for nail techs to win!



left: The Grand Prize winner was Virginia Moya, a young nail tech from Candler, NC, who is just starting her career and can really use the \$2,500 gift certificate sponsored by American International Industries for a shopping spree with their TN Distributor AML Beauty! Plus, this is her first appearance in an international magazine! right: The show floor featured shopping, demos, education and networking.

bravo to us nail techs who held the first and only beauty industry show since the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020.”

Sponsors included **Baby Foot, Centre for Beauty Salon Supply (LCN Urea Foot Care and PodoSafe), Creative Ballance (Daily Charme, En Vogue Sculptured Nail Systems Inc.—Official), Erica’s ATA (Allpresan Pro), Famous Names, Glitterati Beauty Supply,**

**Imperial Feet USA, Light Elegance, Magpie Beauty, MediNail Learning Center, Nail Alliance (Artistic Nail Design Gelish, Morgan Taylor Lacquer), Nail Flight (Glam Up Nail Products, Vision Gel Systems), The Meticulous Manicurist, North American School of Podology, Pink Pro Beauty Supply (CND), Profiles (Akzentz), Shine And Design, SO Gel Nails, Visage Prof. Supply (LCN Gel Nails and Footlogix) and Xtens.**

**Why exhibit at the event?** “The Nail Tech Event of the Smokies is the only professional nail show held strictly for licensed beauty pros in the entire United States,” explains Jill. “It is not open to nail lovers, influencers or the general public. That means no wasted time, effort or

money on your part spent on people who will never place future sales orders. This trusted event invites you to get your products in front of the nail techs, salon/spa owners, beauty school students and instructors who buy in bulk, make repeat online purchases and spread the word to all their nail tech friends, too!

“The companies sent awesome educators, each who represented their brands excellently and the nail techs loved them! The majority reported great sales (20% to 35% higher than last year despite fewer attendees), which always factors into their decision to join us again,” Jill concludes.

**See you next year!** *The 14th Nail Tech Event of the Smokies is scheduled for July 11, 2021, with workshops on July 9, 10 and 12. Tickets go on sale online on January 1, 2021 (12:01 a.m. New Year’s Day). Sponsorships are almost sold out, so if you’d like to get in front of this passionate audience, contact Jill Wright at [info@nailtechevent.com](mailto:info@nailtechevent.com) to reserve your space today. For more information, visit [www.nailtechevent.com](http://www.nailtechevent.com) and connect on the event’s Facebook page.*



Education was the hallmark of the show. Check out the exquisite designs worn by Light Elegance Educator Madison Jones.