

MPI EYE

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PHILADELPHIA AREA CHAPTER

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President's Message

Kelley Thwaite, CMP

As I sit here in my home office writing this issue's President's Message, I'm really trying to focus on the theme of technology and what impact it's had on our industry.

My first thoughts are to go back when I first started out in the industry and the fax machine was my best friend. Since I worked often with contracts, deadlines and proprietary information, I would have to stand at the fax machine and make sure all pages went through to the receiver. Picking up the phone and calling someone was more widely used than e-mail and I certainly can't forget the late nights spent stuffing envelopes with invitations, putting postage on them and scrambling to take them directly to a mail sort facility to get those invitations mailed out.

When I traveled to my meetings, from the time I left my house until I was at the hotel, I really was "out of pocket" and couldn't receive any updates, urgent requests or e-mails.

Now, if I receive a fax more than once in two weeks, I consider it to be a busy week for the almost obsolete form of communication. Almost everything is done by e-mail, with encryption being an option for top-secret information. Most invitations are sent via e-mail and registrations happen online. And, unless we are flying (and sometimes even then), we are always reachable and able to check e-mails.

One of the biggest advances in technology for me is that I am able to work from home. I stay connected with

my managers and colleagues via, email, phone and IM. I go through all kinds of security checks in order to log into my work computer and attach to my company's network, but it beats sitting in rush hour traffic.

Add into this mix the wonders of social media, and I could go for days without seeing anyone but my husband (Lucky for him, I do make a habit of ensuring I shower every day!), but I will have "touched" hundreds of people.

It truly is amazing how far we've come in what I consider a short span of time. There are many members out there that have been in the industry much longer than I have, so I can only imagine the changes they've seen in their travels. How has technology changed for you over the years? Which "advances" do you embrace and are there others that you wish never existed? Feel free to use social media to tell me your thoughts. I would love to hear from you!

On a different note, I'm very excited to let you all know that the PAMPI board has approved the promotion of Laura Lee Wren, CHSE, to the open President-Elect position. I am so excited and happy for her as she takes on this role. Please join me in congratulating her and look for more information regarding the June Gala where I get to turn the gavel over to her, as she becomes your President for 2012-2013.

November Monthly Program: Silent Auction Success!

Kristine G. Plourde, Glenmede

There was a buzz of excitement on Wednesday November 16, 2011 at PAMPI's Annual Fall Fundraiser. The Hub City View hosted our Silent Auction that gathered members from all over the tri-state area and beyond!

Event Chair Meg Torpey of Starr Restaurants, and Vice Chair, Cathy DosSantos, CMP, of MaxVantage, led the charge. The Hub City View was the venue sponsor, with owner John New on site to greet guests to showcase the recently renovated meeting spaces.

This year's auction was a financial success for the Philadelphia chapter, with a net profit estimated at \$18,600! This was the highest grossing profit since 2008. The auction included ticketed raffle prizes, a silent auction, and a live auction emceed by Gary Miller of Cenero. Five luxury prizes were up for grabs including hotel accommodations, tickets and airfare – all in one.

The items up for auction were donated by generous supporters of PAMPI. "We are excited to participate," said Paige Hansen of Landsdowne Resort. "It's a great turn out, and it's great connecting with old and new friends."



Bidding on items

The venue sponsor, The Hub, provided a great array of hors d'oeuvres: from chicken satay to sushi to a live action pasta station and dessert. Guests also enjoyed wine selections from Constellation Wines US, and local beers from Flying Fish Brewing Company of Cherry Hill.



Tisha Davis, Audrey Muse and Jonathan Hogan

PAMPI members and guests raced to get their bids in for some great auction items. "There were some truly amazing items this year," Torpey said. "The companies donating items were very generous."

With a list of nearly a hundred prizes, the program books were printed by Contemporary Graphics of Pennsauken. Paddle numbers were distributed at random, but the number "110" appeared on several bid sheets. Many guests



Victoria Rogers, Alyssa Ryan, Laurent Bass and Danielle Rion-Bass

were wondering how to get on the gift list of this mystery guest, but it was all for a good cause.

“Everyone is so welcoming,” said new member Kathry Bayer, CTA, of the Hyatt Regency Baltimore. “It’s like I’ve been a member for years.”

“My favorite part was the live auction,” said Director of Special Events, Anne Madden of Hilton Anaheim. “It got people engaged and brought excitement to the room! Cathy and Meg did a phenomenal job.”



Maya Northen, Ned Blair, Kristine Plourde and Paige Hansen

Eye on Advocacy: Drop It Like It’s Hot

Ryan Derfler, Mural Arts Program

Once I have “learned the ropes” in a job, I start to look for ways to eliminate the actual work involved.

When I know I will never again have to do something I don’t like doing, it brings me great satisfaction. For example, two years ago I (as well as the rest of my team) became tired of faxing contracts to a key transportation partner. I challenged an intern: find a way for us to never have to fax another contract. Thirty minutes later, we discovered that with a small upgrade to our Adobe software, we could sign contracts electronically, save the documents in a searchable database, and reduce our paper use and cost by about 1,500 sheets per year.

It was cause for a “wine-thirty,” a time to pull out a bottle of wine and toast the office mates for making our work life easier!

On another occasion, we were dismayed that we could not afford to produce a promotional video, and none of us had the ability to make one. So we Googled: “how to make a free promotional video,” and learned about a cool software called Animoto, which we have used now for two years and have made scores of slick videos. One of our little homemade videos even won a contest by Comcast and is now aired nationally. We cut out the work of finding, paying, and waiting for an agency to get the job done.

There are countless examples like this in our office. We ask ourselves and each other, how can we eliminate doing each

aspect of our work that we don’t like to do? Regularly make time to ask this question, tune in to your employees and your own “pain points” in your work, and spend just 30 minutes searching for a solution. Nine times out of ten there’s a way to do it, often using a free technology tool.

The hottest technology is the one that helps you work less so you can focus on what you enjoy and what’s most beneficial to the organization. In closing, here are technology tools I’ve leveraged recently to eliminate work I don’t like:

Google Docs & Sites – Information portal and document sharing for groups I manage

Survey Monkey – getting and analyzing feedback from internal & external partners

Doodle – finding the best date for a meeting with a bunch of people

Adobe – electronic document signing and storage – eliminate paper files

Square – take credit card payments anywhere for fraction of the price of traditional processors

www.99designs.com – submit a concept for a design you want (logo, graphic, etc.) and have 50 designs to choose from in 24 hours

“The Four-Hour Work Week” – Good book to read to get into the “eliminate, automate” mindset

December Monthly Program

Legal Issues in Today's Environment

Jessica Dixon, AACR

On December 7, 2011, a PAMPI educational program was showcased at two different locations: Maggiano's Little Italy in King of Prussia for a breakfast in the 'burbs and the Hampton Inn Center City for a city-dwellers luncheon. Being amongst the PAMPI urbanites, I attended the luncheon and was highly impressed with the experience. The featured speaker was Tyra W. Hilliard, PhD., JD, CMP. No, that is not a typo; Dr. Hilliard does indeed hold all three listed esteemed credentials, making her quite an asset in our industry, and very frankly, one heck of a smart lady. With her credentials and experience, I had anticipated that she must have something useful to share with an eager, well-fed, and captive audience, and non-surprisingly enough, she did!

The program was held at the conveniently located Hampton Inn Center City, in the Liberty Room situated on the hotel's lower level. Upon arrival, guests were cheerfully welcomed out of the miserably cold and rainy weather by Lou Marrocco and invited to partake of an excellent buffet-style lunch consisting of assorted gourmet sandwiches, salads, and desserts. After the ample time allotted for feasting, socializing, and the wringing out of soaking wet socks, immediate Past President David Jackson, CMP, gave a brief introduction to Past President Judy Flanagan, CMP, CMM, who eloquently introduced Dr. Hilliard. After first surveying her audience and taking careful note of the collection of planners, hoteliers and the few that classified themselves as "other", Dr. Hilliard skillfully delivered a presentation that not only catered to all groups present, but that captured everyone's attention, and didn't release it until the conclusion.

In an exciting introduction, Dr. Hilliard shared projections for the future of contracting with meeting venues, spelling out



Speaker Tyra Hilliard at the breakfast meeting at Maggiano's in King of Prussia

the good and the bad for those on both sides of the process, and encouraged questions throughout her presentation. She went on to cover the legal issues of most importance to those in attendance, focusing mainly on contractual clauses, such as those relating to no-cancellation, the ADA, surcharges, and bed bugs. She also gave tips on negotiation strategy, as well as simple ways in which to make meetings "greener". In conclusion, she circled back to share very specific predictions for the industry market in the upcoming year, along with advice on how to best handle the new challenges it will bring.

Following Dr. Hilliard's presentation, she was warmly thanked, as was the Hampton Inn Center City, and the other generous sponsors of the program for contributing to its great success!



Amanda Schirk, Colleen Goldrick and Alison Dufner



Questions from the audience at the luncheon program

Eye on AV: Why It's Important

Cameron Wicks, Visual Sound

Sitting on the top shelf of my desk is a Moviegraph, a hand-cranked film projector produced in the 1920's by a company called Keystone. According to an old Popular Mechanics advertisement, it cost \$6.95 and was shipped with a reel of Charlie Chaplin's Golf. It was a gift from my aunt when I graduated college. Since I ended up working in audiovisual services, it seems like an appropriate gift. I like to keep it in my office because it reminds me of the importance of AV in the meetings and events industry, and how far we've progressed in regards to technology.

Now, I know what's going through your head: "This guy works for an AV company. Of course he's going to say AV is important."

Think about it, though: Projection was invented in the 1890's. Overhead projectors were used during World War II, and carousel slide projectors became popular in the 60's. Fastfold screens appeared in the 70's, and were operated exactly the same way as the ones used at major conferences today. It isn't just projection, either. The same goes for lighting, sound, staging and décor. If presentation technology was deemed essential for meetings 50 years ago, then they must be absolutely indispensable in this day and age.

"You cannot disseminate the necessary information from host to guest without audio visual coming into play," says David Krakow, CMP, Sales Manager for Swank AV, "It's flipcharts, lightweight projectors and other technologies that allow hosts to throw an event that sounds like information but almost tastes like entertainment."

Today, information is at our fingertips, and distractions are everywhere. On phones, tablets and laptops, we can pull up anything, anytime, anywhere. That's why it's important to ensure that the dissemination of information at an event

is clear and engaging. In addition to the viability and entertainment of content, speeches must be easily heard and presentations need to be visually appealing and portrayed in such a way as to maximize interest.

According to David Kerr, VP of Operations for Rental & Staging at Visual Sound, successful organizations are following suit: "Companies are relying more and more on multimedia

to communicate with their customers and staff due to the commercially accessible devices and software that are so widely available," says Kerr, "This produces a large demand for presentation support technology."

Above all else, companies have found that high-end

audiovisual increases the ROI of both hosting and attending meetings. Krakow says that gathering the information that's disseminated via AV "is why your company is paying for you to attend. The only verifiable ROI is by having people network and gather information."

Mark Steinmetz, an Account Representative with IMS AV, agrees: "ROI is such an important component of the decision to have a meeting that AV technology must be used to deliver the message in the most efficient and effective way possible."

Regardless of the reason, the verdict is the same: High-end AV equipment and services are an absolute necessity for today's meetings and events.

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Eye on PAMPI Students:

How to use Social Media to Benefit Your Meeting

Jasmine Cabral

Today, social media is a staple of most people's personal lives. We use it to connect with friends, family and to stay-up-to-date on current events. As we all know, the benefits of the social networks do not cease with its personal uses. Increasingly, companies have adopted social media to create brand awareness and encourage the interaction between company and customer. Many companies are focusing their marketing efforts on their social media plan, with good pay off.

In order for any business to be successful, it needs to keep their customers "in-the-know" about what is going on and they need to hear from its customers and make them feel involved. The same can be said for meetings and other events. Social media offers a variety of benefits for meeting planners and can be used before the event, during, and post.

Prior to the event, social media networks can be used to make attendees aware of the event. Using Facebook, the meeting planner can create events to invite potential attendees. People generally check their Facebook accounts regularly so this is an effective way to make them aware. However, the amount of responses may not reflect the amount of actual attendees. Therefore, it is important for the meeting planner to continually remind attendees about the event by creating status updates and sending event messages. You can also use Twitter to update your followers about the upcoming event. Twitter moves more quickly than Facebook. Thus, Twitter posts need to be more frequent because it is easier for a post to be missed.

Social media is excellent when used during an event. Meeting planners should encourage attendees to post comments

about what is going on. During a presentation, the speaker can suggest a topic to be discussed and have the attendees respond via twitter using a hashtag (#). The responses can then be discussed and possibly viewed on a large screen. In order to create excitement about the event, meeting planners

can have attendees post the pictures taken at the event on the company's Facebook page for others to see. This could increase the chance for others to attend the next meeting if it is a repeated event.

Like creating awareness and as part of involving the attendee, receiving feedback is equally as important. Feedback is crucial for improvement of events and social media provides an outlet to receive that information. Meeting planners can create groups on Facebook solely to discuss suggestions, which allows open conversation. Online surveys can also be posted on social media websites.

So, if you decide to use social media as part of your meetings, make sure you make the most out of it by continually

keeping in contact with your followers as well as generating new followers. The benefits to social media are endless and can add an extra element to your meeting, making it that much more enjoyable.



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eye on philadelphia

*David M. Krakow, CMP,
Swank Audio Visuals*



MEETING MANAGER APPLICATION

Scenario. You are a meeting planner, hosting a conference. You have a heavy-hitter flying in to present at an afternoon session, but danger is on the horizon, a danger you can in no way control: the weather. And danger wins. There are delays. Your speaker, who was scheduled to arrive only two hours before his presentation, will not arrive on time. The session will still take place, but you have an obligation to notify your attendees, who have other options, now that the speaker has canceled.

What to do? Well, you can put a sign on the door. You can post one of your staff outside the room, or make an announcement during a break or meal. Or, in 2012, you can send a real-time electronic update that will alert your attendees on their smartphones or tablets.

Swank Audio Visuals has unveiled at multiple locations in Philadelphia and nationwide a mobile meeting app that will allow meeting planners to create and, most importantly, modify, event profiles. (Full disclosure: I am a sales manager for Swank's office at the Four Seasons). This proprietary app provides hotel partners and customers a full profile of the property and event – accessible on smartphones and tablets.

Once the service is sold, a fact sheet is sent to a dedicated Mobile Meeting Manager (M3) customer service rep at Swank's St. Louis corporate headquarters who then builds the site and distributes to the client an URL and QR code. The app contains tabs for sessions, attendees, speakers and exhibitors. Any information from those tabs can be grouped by each individual into a personalized "favorites" folder for quick reference. There are sponsor pages with links to their websites, and the ability to link Twitter feeds that will allow for comments to be posted and read. Changes can be made simply by contacting the M3 rep; coming soon, planners will

be able to make changes on their own via a web login. Also included is a hotel landing page that will contain venue information, menus and specials which can also be updated at any time, administered by the hotel itself.

"The ability for meeting planners to be able to deliver important meeting details to their attendees through a web app is a great enhancement," noted Craig Putnam, Swank's Northeast Divisional Sales Manager.

"Better yet, it's easily integrated, cost-effective and always up-to-date."

Security is provided by an event access code specific to that event. And unlike most apps, this can be built in a matter of days, or slightly longer for larger events, such as those at larger headquarter hotels and convention centers. Most important, this app is mobile, not native, which allows cross-platform capability. It is compatible with iPhones and iPads; Android and Droid devices using Android 1.5 or higher; Blackberry, version 6.0 and higher, as well as Windows Mobile, HP/Palm WebOS and other devices. This also means that M3 is available via the Web, eliminating the hassle of downloading.

Oh, and by the way, it's green. Imagine a day when printed conference handouts go the way of 35mm slide projectors.

For more information on M3, please visit http://www.swankav.com/technical_expertise/mobile_meeting_manager/.

“Hot Technologies in the Meetings Industry” presented by Jim Spellos

David Hughes, Highgate Hotels' Hilton Cluster Sales Office, New York City

On January 25, with a smile on my face, I once again embarked on a journey from NYC to Philly to attend another PAMPI monthly education program. This time the smile was because I was familiar with the speaker, Jim Spellos, having attended Jim's sessions several times previously. I didn't know yet exactly what I was going to learn, but I was confident that one thing was certain – I would be returning home knowing at least a few things I didn't know before!

The evening started off at the Hilton Inn at Penn with introductory remarks from PAMPI President Kelley Thwaite, CMP. Award winners were recognized including Ilene Kirby,

CMP, in commemoration of her status as a 15-year member of MPI. Congratulations, Ilene!

Monthly Programs Committee co-chair Judy Flanagan, CMP, CMM introduced the evening's featured speaker. Jim Spellos is President of Meeting U. a company specializing in helping people become more productive and comfortable with technology. Jim hit the ground running, primed and ready to condense significant coursework into the limited time together.

The next hour flew by, as Jim was able to cover the basics of a wide variety of technology topics and kept the audience



A full house at the education program



Our speaker, Jim Spellos, CMP



Warren Abraham, Caryn Taylor-Lucia, CMP and John Sweeney



Nancy Barag, Ann Marie Urban and Brendan Morrissey

enthusiastic, engaged, and excited. This summary does not do justice to his expertise, enthusiasm and ability to engage his audience. Everyone agreed it was incredible! Listed below are a few of the highlights:

- YouTube is valuable for much more than cute kitty videos; it is the home of “how to” videos” on a stunning variety of topics.
- Articulated Naturality may give us the ability to point a web-enabled phone at a hotel and determine what rooms are available, book one, check in from your phone in the lobby, and to use your phone as your room key...science fiction meets reality!
- Jim upset the traditional meetings apple-cart by instruction everyone to have Smartphones on! Yeah, ringers should still be off, but attendees should be able to be “connected” at all times.
- He tipped his hat to our host Hilton Inn at Penn for being a trend-setter in having iPads installed in every guestroom.
- Businesses using Facebook should develop relationships (like more traditional networking) as opposed to being a place to just blast out discounts and special offers
- Twitter provides real-time content and is a great news source. Use hash-tags to start and engage in conversations relevant to our industry and to our meetings.
- Jim introduced us to the idea of “Social Curation” which in its simplest form is finding content by following the right people...a zero cost proposition.
- He gave us a quick history lesson on presentation tools from 35mm slide projectors through PowerPoint and beyond. Next generation tools like Prezi (a cloud-based

storytelling technology), PechaKucha (a presentation methodology in which 20 slides are shown for 20 seconds each), and Tumblecloud (collaborative digital storytelling) will enhance presentations.

- Jim demonstrated some cool applications that are available now, including Word Lens which allows you to instantly translate foreign text on your smartphone without an internet connection.
- Other killer apps Jim suggested were Bump, Zite, Evernote, Airport Remote, Spotify, Super Planner, AudioNote, Dragon Dictation, and Swype.

Jim effortlessly managed to be engaging, witty and fun while showing the relevance of emerging technologies to our careers, our industry and the meetings we produce. After the educational program, the guests gathered in the Hilton Inn at Penn’s ballroom to enjoy refreshing drinks and a delicious buffet. On my way back home to NYC, I started trying out these new apps right away. I HAD learned some things I hadn’t known before. Thank you, Jim Spellos!

Save the Date

The 2012 Education Institute will be held on May 17th at the Desmond Hotel in Malvern, PA. Additional information will be available on line.

We Want to Hear From You!

Recently promoted, married, gave birth, started a new business, expanded your current property, partnered with a new company?

Share your news with the PAMPI MPI to Eye team, so we can highlight it in the quarterly magazine.

eye on community service

Susan Paschkes, CMP, Gray Consulting, Inc.



Community Outreach: Philadelphia Marathon

The day dawned clear and cool, perfect weather for the annual Philadelphia Marathon. But even before the sun rose, runners, volunteers and spectators were making their way into the city. They came by car, by bus, by train, by bicycle, and on foot – hordes of individuals with a common destination.

The Philadelphia Marathon, founded in 1954, is an annual sporting event hosted by the city of Philadelphia on the third Sunday of November each year. The marathon is actually four events in one: the Marathon, the Half Marathon, the Rothman Institute Marathon, and the Arctic Ease Kids Fun Run. Organizers say that over 27,000 runners competed in the races this weekend and over 60,000 spectators were on hand to cheer them on.

Folisho Tuko of the USA was the first man across the finish line with a time of 2:19; Mariska Kramer of the Netherlands was the first woman to cross the finish line with a time of 2:35; the last person to finish took 7:50 to complete the race.



Beverly Wise, Wendy Sutkowski, Ned Blair and other volunteers preparing water cups for the racers.

The Philadelphia Marathon supports over 20 charity partners, including Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, Children's Tumor Foundations, Magee Rehabilitation Hospital, and the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House. Marathon participants can choose to run for these causes, which benefit people in the Philadelphia region, nationally, and around the world.

For the second year in a row, PAMPI's Community Outreach Committee set up and staffed a cheering and water station along the Marathon route. This year, eighteen members of the committee participated in the event. First, we unloaded trucks filled with tables, water bottles, cups and shovels. Then we erected amazing pyramids of water – layers of cups with water separated by boards, which was the ingenious way to prepare many thousands of drinks for the thirsty runners. We worked in unison, and with great enthusiasm. Then, the lesson... Allen Anderson, a successful veteran in the art of the water cup relay, demonstrated the art of the hand-off. With great



Clean-up completed, smiling PAMPI volunteers still "Feel The Rush!"



The committee hands out water to the Marathon runners.

alacrity and grace, he showed us how to pace ourselves for a moment in time with the runner so the cup moves in their direction. This one tip paid off very well; moving toward a runner's hand with a cup of water guarantees quite a splash!

After a brief rest in anticipation of the rolling wave of runners, we were rewarded with the sight of the first Marathoners – disabled athletes in racing wheelchairs – silent except for our cheers of support. They were followed quickly by the front-runners, the elite athletes who were to finish first. Then the mighty wave of amateur running enthusiasts came surging by, too many to count, all ages, shapes, genders and ethnicities racing past. Eye contact was made in an instant; hands reaching out for water; the connection for a moment as the cup was exchanged. It felt like a dance, swirling to meet so many partners, stepping in unison for a moment and then done. The hollow popping of empty cups being trodden by hundreds of feet sounds like horse hooves clopping on cobblestone streets.

Almost as quickly as it started, the human wave had passed. After we swept the street, it looked as if nothing at all had happened. But something awe-inspiring had happened. Being able to participate even in this small way gave each of us a profound feeling of connection, grace, and wonder. And the time and effort of our PAMPI volunteers was essential to make it happen successfully.

The PAMPI Community Outreach Committee is responsible for identifying and facilitating opportunities for the membership to involve themselves in activities benefiting Philadelphia area charities and institutions. The Committee's next outreach activity is scheduled for Friday afternoon, January 27th with an organization called Cradles to Crayons. The spring event will be with Art Reach, in support of a local arts event in celebration of the organization's 25th Anniversary.

Three Meeting Professional International Membership Scholarships Awarded Monthly

Diana Voto, Disney Destinations

Disney Destinations, in support of the MPI Foundation, has made it possible for MPI to sponsor memberships for a select number of meeting professionals. Through its generous donation to the Foundation, Disney Destinations is committed to elevating the stature and successful future of the meetings industry.

Award recipients will gain full membership privileges to MPI, as well as the opportunity to join their local chapters. They will have access to national events and local chapter monthly meetings, leadership and committee involvement, industry tools, and peer-to-peer networking with professional colleagues who share similar challenges.

This one year sponsorship through Disney Destinations will open doors and experiences that will undoubtedly enrich meetings professionals' careers and help recipients deliver strategic value and quantifiable impact to their organizations. To apply for the Disney Destinations scholarship, you must be a meetings professional joining MPI for the first time. Applications are available now and can be found on the MPI website: <http://www.mpiweb.org/Foundation/About/Scholarships/DisneyDestinationsScholarshipProgram>

Volunteer Awards Recipients

Congratulations to our Rising Star!

Although new to the Fall Fundraiser committee, Vice Chair **Cathy DosSantos, CMP, SMMC** of Maxvantage took full charge and ownership of donation solicitation. Her leadership skills and industry contacts resulted in tremendous contributions from supplier partners, enabling the chapter to have one of the most successful Fall Fundraisers in years and exceeding the financial goals of the event.

Applause for our Shining Star!

For her dedication and commitment to the Fall Fundraiser, **Meg Torpey**, Director of Events for STARR Restaurants, earns accolades as our Shining Star. Meg's leadership skills and logistical knowledge contributed to the overall success of the event, and her "can-do" attitude, dependability, and willingness to take on tasks outside her job responsibilities makes her a true asset to the Special Events team and our chapter.



Meg Torpey and Cathy DosSantos, CMP, SMMC



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Peggy Cummings, CPM, OnSite Meeting and Event Management LLC



Paul L. Lee, CHA, CFBE, Independent Hotel Operation Specialist

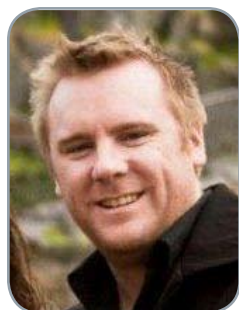
Starwood's Asia Pacific General Manager, Paul Lee, after spending several years in China, opening three Four Points Hotels in the cities of Changshu, Taicang and Qingdao, returned to Philadelphia. It was an eye opener! Paul witnessed the tremendous growth and excitement the city of Philadelphia was experiencing. He and his lovely wife of 29 years particularly enjoy the late night scene in the Rittenhouse Square area with its abundance of fabulous restaurants.

After settling into the area, one of his first thoughts was joining MPI, the perfect vehicle to reconnect with the world of suppliers and planners. PAMPI presents a market, where buyer and sellers of services come together, and also a perfect way to reconnect with people in the Industry that he so loves!

While Vice President for GF Management, Paul directed operations at the Valley Forge Convention Center back in the 1990s. He describes his position as energizing. In 2006, this Indonesia native, who immigrated to the United States at the age of 13, returned to China, which enabled him to gain a tremendous understanding of the Chinese market, consumer habits and culture.

Presently, he is developing a seminar, which he hopes to present to his industry, educating members on the hospitality related issues which are arising as a result of the influx of Chinese consumers coming to the United States for business and pleasure trips. His vast experience certainly provides him the credentials needed for such an undertaking.

For leisure, Paul enjoys painting, golf and public speaking; he is currently an active member of Toastmasters International.



Cameron Wicks, Account Manager, Visual Sound

Although he's new to PAMPI, Cameron Wicks has been involved in MPI for more than two years. He first joined while working at an AV company in Virginia, so he was a member of the Potomac MPI chapter until work brought him back to Philadelphia about a year ago. An Account Manager with Visual Sound, an AV company in Broomall, he recently switched his membership to PAMPI.

Originally from Cape Cod, Cameron moved to Philadelphia in 2002 to study film at Drexel University. After he graduated in 2006, he worked at Videosmith, a video equipment rental company, for a year and a half, before becoming a video freelancer. When the economy made finding work tough, he expanded his horizons and started freelancing for local AV companies.

In 2009, while interviewing to be a technician at American AV in Falls Church, VA, he was offered a sales and marketing position. Cameron is a "people person," and he knew that he could be successful if he combined those skills with his AV knowledge. He took the job, and spent a wonderful year and a half in Virginia. In early 2011, he moved back to the area to be closer to his girlfriend, and took a job with Skyline, a trade show exhibit company.

In August 2011, he was contacted by a representative of Visual Sound, who wanted to interview him

[continued on page 17](#)

❖ If you see Paul or Cameron at a future meeting, please introduce yourself and welcome them to the chapter!

Eye on Professionalism: Fighting for Every Opportunity

Cameron Wicks, Visual Sound

“Opportunities multiply as they are seized.”

Those are the words of Sun Tzu, a great Chinese general and philosopher who lived 2500 years ago. His masterpiece, *The Art of War*, has been studied by kings, generals, CEO's and coaches trying to establish a strategic advantage over their opponents. What Sun Tzu is saying, of course, is that the more opportunities you take advantage of, and the more effort you put into making each opportunity your own, the more opportunities and chances will present themselves. In no industry is this principle truer than in meetings and events.

Opportunities are scarce at times. Our industry is very seasonal, with only 7-8 months out of the year being very busy. Often, the heart of winter and the middle of summer are dead for event professionals, meant for vacations instead of conferences. The industry also relies heavily on long-term partnerships. Companies, associations and other organizations often work with the same planner or vendor year after year. Likewise, planners may have a pool of just a few caterers, audiovisual companies and venues that they use over and over again.

It's important, then, that we follow Sun Tzu's advice and jump on these opportunities when we do get them. We need to pursue them with a ferocious tenacity to ensure that they don't slip through our fingers, or worse. What if the opportunity falls into the hands of our competition? Everyone knows how it feels to lose potential business to

a rival company. We need to approach opportunities and potential clients with measured, thoughtful and well-designed plans in order to win their business, while remaining fair and ethical.

As Sun Tzu points out in his quote, the more business we win, and the more clients we bring in, the more prospective business will crop up. With more business comes more experience, and experience is priceless. Not only does it allow us and our colleagues the chance to hone our skills, but it serves as a pipeline for more opportunity. Working

in AV, for Visual Sound, I see it all the time. A first-time client likes our work on a particular event, and gives us the chance to provide AV for all of their events. Sometimes, they decide they're going to recommend us

to a colleague, and we find more business that way. And there is no sales pitch more powerful than telling a planner about our forty years of working in this region, or about all the high profile events that we've serviced in that time.

Sun Tzu was right. Seizing business opportunities does, in fact, multiply the amount of opportunities available to us. Done correctly, time and again, this can lead to exponential growth of our respective businesses, and the meetings and events industry as a whole. We may not be leading armies into battle, or running in an election, or coaching in a Super Bowl, but we can take wisdom and strength from the advice left by the General all the same.

“Opportunities multiply
as they are seized.”



welcome
new members!

Kellie Brielmaier

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National Constitution Center
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Barbara Cacoulidis

National Director of Sales
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Tisha E. Davis

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Michael Whipple

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Christopher S. Works

National Sales Manager
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cworks@grandover.com

eye on new members continued

for an AV sales position similar to his job in Virginia. He took the position and has been with Visual Sound for four months, enjoying every minute of it. He reaches out to local and national meeting planners to offer them Visual Sound's services as an event audiovisual production company. He also helps manage the production of events, as well as miscellaneous equipment rentals.

Cameron is an avid sports fan, and will go out of his way to watch the Patriots, Red Sox, Bruins or Celtics. He will also read basically anything you put in front of him, fiction or nonfiction. Furthermore, he's a self-proclaimed geek who

loves Star Wars, Lord of the Rings and The X Files, much to the chagrin of his fiancée, Andrea. She's an Allentown native, and they're getting married in May.

He says that his favorite things about PAMPI are the networking and the camaraderie. He's appreciative that everyone has been so helpful and welcoming so far, and he looks forward to meeting more members this year, and, hopefully, working with them on events. He has hit the ground running by penning articles for this magazine, which he says allows him to write and be creative while also educating people about AV.

Eye on PAMPI Membership

Maya Northen, Chimera Travel

It seemed like just a few short years ago, or maybe even more recently for many people, Facebook was a tool that teenagers used to keep up with their friends, Twitter appeared to be a confusing waste of time, and LinkedIn represented a glorified online resume. Now, one is hard-pressed to find a company or individual who doesn't utilize at least one of these social media sources. While much of the general public (those not involved in technology for a living) is still feeling out how each of these medium can be best used, these methods of communicating, interacting and marketing are becoming more and more integral in the business world in general and within the meetings and events industry specifically.

MPI and the Philadelphia Area Chapter (PAMPI) have increasingly used these technologies to reach out and involve their members. Via the PAMPI Facebook page (www.Facebook.com/Philadelphia MPI) and group, members and

hashtag.

LinkedIn might be the most helpful social media tool for connecting with PAMPI. Our LinkedIn group focuses on discussions about the industry and the organization. It's a great place to get respected referrals for planners/suppliers as well as to talk about industry trends, concerns and news. To find the PAMPI group, go to the groups tab and search for MPI Philadelphia Area Chapter. There's also MPI's Meetings and Events Discussion Group which serves MPI members as a whole.

In addition to social media, MPI Headquarters offers a number of mobile applications for iPhone/iPad and Android (some also available for Blackberry) to help members stay connected. The MPI Membership/Content Portal app provides members with mobile access to MPI membership directory as well as MPI content and calendar of upcoming industry



potential members can learn not only about upcoming meetings and events, but find articles about the industry, interesting facts about area venues, speaker details and more. Members can also utilize this page to ask questions about the industry or PAMPI/MPI as a whole.

The PAMPI twitter page (@PhiladelphiaMPI) also helps members, potential members and other industry professionals to interact. Similar to Facebook, by following the PAMPI twitter account you'll see industry information, PAMPI news, and have the ability to ask questions directly to the PAMPI account. In addition, hashtags (the # symbol plus a word/phrase) allow tweeters to mark their tweets as industry-specific, and to search for all tweets that pertain to a certain topic. For instance, utilizing the hashtag "#eventprofs" marks ones tweet as specific to the meetings/events industry, and "#mpi" and "#pampi" mark tweets as specific to MPI and the Philadelphia Area Chapter, respectively. Those looking for information specifically related to PAMPI can search for "#pampi" and see all tweets marked, not just those of followers, which (instead of that) are marked with this

events. MPI's magazine, One+, is also available on iPad and Android via a mobile app. Apps are available for participants of several MPI-hosted conferences. Both European Meetings & Events Conference 2012 and last year's World Education Congress have/had apps available for download. These mobile apps can all be found at <http://www.mpiweb.org/apps>.

With all of these options for interaction with MPI and PAMPI, there is one key ingredient that truly determines the successfulness of them – the members. These technologies are only as useful as we make them. Without our members starting discussion, asking questions and sharing industry news, the social media sources aren't being used to their full potential. Without members using these mobile apps, MPI cannot receive feedback on them. So please, try them out, get involved. If you have questions about using them, we have a whole Communications team that can help you out, and you can always ask other members already using these media – that's the beauty of them being social.

Mark Your Calendar: Upcoming Monthly Events

On **Wednesday, March 21** join PAMPI at the corporate headquarters office of the SEI Corporation located in OAKS, PA. Visit this unique location and come hear Joel Zeff, author of *"Make the Right Choice: Creating a Positive, Innovative, and Productive Work Life."*

On **April 23**, join us for PAMPI's Inaugural Golf Outing with something for everyone – golf, a golf clinic, an education program and networking! Have fun on and off the course with old friends and new. The course at Talamore offers breathtaking views and exciting shots, with a championship layout to challenge low handicappers and plenty of fun for golfers of all levels. An education session will be available. Watch for more information!

Go to PAMPI.org for more details on each program.

CMP Update

Looking to obtain your CMP designation in 2012?

If you have resolved to earn the CMP designation in 2012, then joining PAMPI's CMP Study Group is the next step you need to take. Preparing for and successfully earning the CMP designation is not an easy task. However, this undertaking can be a very rewarding experience when you have the support of fellow candidates and class facilitators. Beginning in the 2nd quarter of 2012, the CIC will be transitioning to computer based testing and the first exam period will be between July 12 and July 21. The spring study group session, which kicks-off on Saturday, April 14, is scheduled to coincide with preparations for the July exam. The CIC has not released all of the details about the computer-based exam, so look for more information in the coming months. In the meantime, here are some important dates to keep in mind:

Application Submission Period:
January 9 - March 27, 2012

CIC Exam Registration:
April 19 - May 14, 2012

Exam Appointment Scheduling:
May 28 - July 11, 2012

Exam Period:
July 12 - July 21, 2012

source: www.conventionindustry.org

CMP Study Group (All dates are Saturdays and all classes are held at the Loews Philadelphia)

April 14

April 21

April 28

May 5

May 12

May 19

June 2

June 9

June 23 (practice exam)

Note: dates subject to change

Buy MPI: Promoting Your Business to Members

Kristine G. Plourde, Glenmede

Membership in PAMPI can be a vehicle to promote your business in more ways than one. Suppliers and planners should take advantage of exclusive opportunities for consistent recognition of your company, product or service specialty through event sponsorship.

Event sponsorship in PAMPI is two-fold. First, it includes the opportunity to showcase a property, product or service. Members arrive at the event to experience a property just as their meeting attendees would. Second, it allows for members to learn and interact with the sponsor directly. Sponsors can meet and greet individually with attendees to learn more about their meetings.

"There is no better way to show a prospective client what your quality is than letting them experience it first hand," said September 2011 catering sponsor Dan Love of Catering by Design. "No marketing is as effective."

Monthly Education Programs are a great example of high-level recognition of event sponsors. With an average attendance of nearly 100 participants, sponsoring a Monthly Educational Program provides an effective opportunity to showcase a property, product or service and increase your visibility with hundreds members!

Catering by Design believes that "you eat with your eyes first," and at the September 2011 meeting at WHY Studios they delighted attendees with stunning table-scapes and elegant

food presentations that piqued everyone's interest.

Some sponsors may see an internal cost associated with even in-kind donations. Many companies partner with other properties, attractions or suppliers in their area to lower their costs and increase the value per partner. In return, event sponsors are provided a list of exclusive benefits that recognize the event sponsor before, during and after the event.

As the Director of Venue Procurement, I feel especially privileged to help create synergies for event sponsors and PAMPI, and even from event sponsors to buyers! Each interested event sponsor works with the Venue Procurement Committee to determine what event would be best suited to their needs or their goals. There are many other events to choose from, such as: MPI after 5, Backpacks to Briefcases, the Fall Fundraiser, and the

Awards Gala - just to name a few.

If you are interested in learning more about how you, or your property, can take advantage of the exclusive event sponsorship opportunities, please contact Chairperson Lauren Sapita at lauren.sapita@aberdeen-asset.com.

Monthly Education Programs
are a great example of
high-level recognition
of event sponsors.

Member News

Your tool kit just got larger. Supplier members now have free access to the sustainable-minded community that uses the Sustainable Event Measurement Tool (SEMT) to evaluate meeting performance management process. The SEMT, which launched at WEC 2010, has helped professionals around the

world, and now can help you design socially, economically and environmentally conscious meetings and events. The SEMT can be found at <http://mpi.sustainableeventtool.com/>.



Nicole Benner
Blank Rome LLP



Amy Drum Caruso, CMP,
CAE, Drum Meeting
Planning & Event
Consultants, LLC

From the Editors

Nicole I'm in the process of planning a hybrid live/webcast meeting in New Orleans. I've never planned an event in New Orleans, and I needed to find a venue that will satisfy not only the live component of the event, but also has the technological capabilities necessary to reliably stream content via the web.

Technology helped me in two ways – first, having no experience with venues in New Orleans, I took to LinkedIn and started a discussion asking for venue ideas. Second, I searched a portal website, using their search tools to narrow my needs and identify venues that could accommodate the space requirements of the event. Both avenues were fruitful, and I was able to create a short-list of venues that I knew would meet my meeting requirements.

This event, focusing on recent developments in maritime and tax laws, is relevant to a global audience. The ability to stream the event live and record it for on-demand replay allows people who cannot attend due to time differences and travel expenses are still able to receive this valuable information.

Technology puts information at our fingertips – the ability to crowdsource and get help from experts around the world through social networking sites like LinkedIn puts infinite resources and expertise at our fingertips. Search engines and specialty search sites allow us to weed out venues that don't fit our specific needs before we contact the sales office of a venue, saving both our time and theirs. By conversing via email with properties to discover whether preferred dates were available saved time as well; I only initiated discussions

with venues that had appropriate meeting space on my preferred dates.

Technology allows us to virtually attend meetings, learning things from presenters we never would have had the opportunity to experience. We can then share our experiences through Twitter or LinkedIn with likewise interested people instantaneously. YouTube videos of TED talks inform us without the expense of travel or conference fees. I've been able to learn from Guy Kawasaki in Los Angeles at lunch with no interruption to my work day. Colleagues can confer in real time, regardless of their location, co-editing documents without fear of multiple (outdated) versions clogging email in-boxes.

And technology brings us closer together, allowing us to share our lives with our colleagues, friends, and family, regardless of distance. My son's godfather, who lives in northern Virginia, can keep abreast of Jackson's development through photos and videos posted to Facebook. My husband, who freelances as a tabletop role playing game designer, can Skype in to gaming sessions with his friends in Los Angeles. I can stay in touch with former coworkers and follow their careers through LinkedIn.

Face to face meetings will never go away. It's been my personal experience that technology does not replace in-person contact but enhances those interactions, making it easier to grow a friendship or professional relationship and stay in touch.

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Amy While no stranger to PAMPI, I recently joined the MPI To Eye team. For years I've wanted to increase my writing activities and this seemed like the perfect opportunity. I have been busy over the last few months getting ready to move with my family to the 'burbs! (As some of you may know, I've been "working" on this for YEARS while yearning for grass and lots of room for my kids to explore). As the renovations slowed and slowed and we continued to run out of moving boxes, tape and newspaper, the calendar got later and later.

Alas, December came and we lucked out with a balmy weathered weekend. Only a meeting planner would accept the challenge of moving before Christmas and the year-end holidays with a smile and a "no problem" approach! Moving, getting a new job.....everyone always says, these are the biggest life changing events. So, what does this all have to do with technology? We have the luxury of keeping in touch, regardless of where we live, where we work, where our boxes of photos and favorite jeans are or where we put the coffee pot! It makes our lives easier and lets us stay in touch. We've all come to rely on the wonders of email, pdf's, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and my favorite....texting. During my

more recent professional years as an independent planner, technology has followed me, like it or not. And, fortunately it did the same throughout this recent move too. Despite a faulty router, a ruthless Outlook, a home phone with no dial tone (hey we all need a few dinosaurs in our lives, right?), I've survived! Even the broken coffeepot didn't get me down! And the last dozen or so boxes will have to wait.

Technology has made our lives easier and lets us stay in touch. I got fewer holiday cards this year and even fewer photos! I guess we have easier ways to keep in touch and send a recent shot of where we've been in our lives. I've come to rely on my Blackberry now more than ever. But the holiday season did remind me that a little face to face goes a long way, too, and that really keeps us all going and brings things full circle in the end. So mix a little face to face with your tweets this New Year and come out to see your PAMPI friends, old and new, as we have great events and programs planned in 2012. Continue to support the chapter and I hope to see you soon!

events calendar

register online at pampi.org



Wednesday, March 21, 2012

Educational Program

5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Topic: *"The Tao of a Ta-Da"*

Watch *What Happens When Work Becomes Play*

Speaker: Joel Zeff

SEI's Wetlands Conference Center

One Freedom Valley Drive

Oaks, PA 19456

2012 GOLF OUTING

Monday, April 23, 2012

Talamore Country Club

723 Talamore Drive

Ambler, PA

11:00 – 12:30 p.m. Registration/Lunch

12:30 – 4:30 p.m. Shotgun Start

4:00 – 5:00 p.m. Educational Program

5:15 p.m. – Reception/Dinner

Thursday, May 17, 2012

EDUCATION INSTITUTE

8:00 – 4:00 p.m.

The Desmond Hotel & Conference Center

One Liberty Boulevard

Malvern, PA 19355

34TH ANNUAL AWARDS GALA

Wednesday, June 13, 2012

6:00 - 10:00 p.m.

Hilton Philadelphia Airport

4509 Island Avenue

Philadelphia, PA

MPI WORLD EDUCATION CONGRESS (WEC)

July 28-31, 2012

St. Louis, MO

Register at www.mpiweb.org