

MPI

MEETING PLANNERS INTERNATIONAL®

CURRENT

Meeting Planners International

August 1992

Dallas-Fort Worth Chapter

President's Message

Officers Set Chapter Goals

By Mary W. Cowart
Mary Cowart Meeting Consultants

Get into the ACT! That is exactly what your board of directors has done. At a retreat hosted by the Omni Mandalay Hotel, the creative juices were flowing. Each vice president and board member of the Dallas/Fort Worth chapter of MPI participated, and enthusiasm, commitment and teamwork abounded.



Mary W. Cowart

I look forward to the challenging new educational programs set forth for the upcoming year. Each will allow opportunities for our members to "Get into the ACT."

An active membership is vital to the strength and success of our chapter. We are reinstating programs to make contact with and encourage new and less active members to "Get into the ACT."

We are expanding our job bank program to enhance industry opportunities for our membership.

Our public relations committees continue to aggressively promote MPI's identity in the business, social, and artistic communities.

Our community service committee is finalizing plans for making our community aware of our chapter's eagerness to participate in charitable causes.

(continued on page 2)

D/FW Chapter Well Represented at MPI Conference in Detroit

More than 70 members of the D/FW chapter attended the 1992 Annual Conference of Meeting Planners International in Detroit

recently. The meeting theme was "Education—Fast Track to the Future."

See story and photos on page 7.

MPI

MEETING PLANNERS INTERNATIONAL®

August D/FW Chapter Meeting

Meeting Theme

August 27, Thursday

Big Spur Corral

3094 Stemmons Freeway
Dallas, Texas 75247
(214) 905-0808

Orientation 5:30 p.m.

Registration & Reception 6:00 p.m.

Dinner & Program 7:00 p.m.

R.S.V.P.
by noon, Tuesday, August 25
Sandy or Kim
214-343-0555

Advance Registration \$26
Late Registration \$35
Guest Registration \$30

See page 3 for more details and reservation policy.

This issue of *Current* is sponsored by

Sheraton Park Central

see page 9

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Upcoming MPI Events

August 27, Thursday

Chapter Meeting
The Big Spur Corral
5:30p.m./Dinner

September 24, Thursday

Chapter Meeting
Embassy Suites/LBJ & Central
11 a.m./Luncheon

September 24, Thursday

Executive Workshop
Leadership Seminar
Embassy Suites
2-3:30 p.m.

October 22, Thursday

Chapter Meeting
Dallas Convention Center
West Wing
5:30 p.m./Reception

November 19, Thursday

Chapter Meeting
Grand Kempinski
11 a.m./Luncheon

***December 17, Thursday**

Chapter Meeting
*tentative/TBA
Reception

December 6-9

Professional
Education Conference
Honolulu, HI

Chapter meeting plans are subject to change. Check the *Current* each month to confirm details. *NOTE: December meeting is tentative until venue is set.

President's Message/Mary Cowart *continued from page 1*

The 1992-93 D/FW MPI chapter goals are:

1. Strive to encourage member involvement in MPI.
2. Increase community awareness of MPI.
3. Maintain membership retention at a level of 75 percent.
4. Renew a commitment to the "buddy program" to involve members.
5. Reach out to OUR membership through multiple communication efforts.
6. Redevelop and expand activities of the D/FW job bank, providing effective service and benefits to our members.
7. Continue our involvement and support of charitable organizations including, but not limited to, North Texas Food Bank, Give Kids the World, Love for Kids, and Trinity Ministry for the Poor.
8. Produce a catalog of educational opportunities for our membership.
9. Increase educational opportunities through 12 monthly meetings, four executive workshops, three "how to" breakfasts, Richland College courses, economic "brown bag" series and institute or forum programs.
10. Meet or exceed the individual goals as set forth by each of the vice presidents.

At the inception of the D/FW chapter 15 years ago, the initial goals and endeavors were to get like minded professionals in our industry together on a regular basis to exchange ideas, goals and communicate industry trends. This concept is still a vital part of our organization.

To continue the standard of excellence in Achievement, Contribution and Teamwork, we invite YOU to "Get into the ACT!"

The board joins me in saying a special THANK YOU to the Omni Mandalay Hotel and its staff for going "all out" and making this board retreat a memorable experience. Thanks, too, to Ken-Ran Entertainment and Kelley Promotions for their participation. Each company "Got into the ACT" and made this retreat a success.

Big Spur Troupe to Interpret Chapter Goals at August Hoedown

By Gracie H. Hilton
The Write Stuff

"Howdy, y'all! Shine your boots and tuck your jeans in neat and head down yonder where the West is still wild — the Big Spur Corral. You're in for a real Texas hoedown."

That's the invitation to the August MPI meeting as expressed by Debra Williams, owner-manager of this new western-style dinner theatre deep in the heart of Dallas.

On Thursday evening, August 27, Dallas/Fort Worth chapter members, in casual attire — western gear is encouraged! — will convene at the Big Spur for a dramatic presentation of the 1992-93 D/FW MPI chapter goals.

The professional entertainers of the Big Spur Troupe will interpret the goals of the officers, directors and committees in an entertaining theatrical production.

"Get Into the ACT; Make it '3 in '93" — the slogan selected by President Mary Cowart, Meeting Consultants, is the program theme.

"Miss Rose invites y'all MPI folks to join her high-steppin' dance hall girls, the sheriff, and other colorful citizens of Dallas City for non-stop entertainment," says Williams. "Miss Rose is famous for her Texas hospitality and home-cookin' and she'll keep the tables piled high with six courses of western-style, finger-lickin' vittles and all the beer, wine, and iced tea the sheriff will allow."

Carolyn Taylor, director of sales and marketing at Big Spur Corral, is one of four co-chairs for the meeting. Assisting her are Tracy Cain, Cityplace Conference Center; Charlotte Davis, Event Source Professionals; and Michelle Carter, Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau.

To get to the Big Spur from downtown Dallas, go north on I-35; exit at Texas 356 (Irving); continue on

the frontage road 3/10 mile. From north Dallas, go south on I-35; exit on Inwood; make a U-turn under the highway; go north on the frontage road one mile.

Complimentary valet and self parking will be offered.

"So round up your posse — or at least feel obliged to bring your favorite cowboy or cowgirl as a guest to this shindig," says Williams. "We'll see ya' soon, y'hear?!"

D/FW MPI Chapter Meeting Reservation & Attendance Policy

Registration fees will be collected at the door; advance payments are not accepted. If paying by check, please have check completed before approaching registration table.

Reservations must be made by RSVP deadline for advance registration fee to apply. Late reservations and walk-ins will be accepted on a SPACE AVAILABLE basis.

Cancellations must be made by the RSVP deadline. No-shows will be billed. Members are responsible for "no-show" charges for their guests.

Guests are limited to attending three meetings per year. (Spouses are an exception.)

August Host Facility

Head to the Big Spur Corral For a 'Taste of Texas'

The brand-new Big Spur Corral — the corral just opened its doors in May — is a western-style dinner theatre with facilities big enough to accommodate 300 for dinner and 500 for receptions.

"The Big Spur Corral is the perfect place to plan your next get-together, whether it's for two folks or 300 rowdy yahoos," according to the company brochure.

Owner Debra Williams, also owner of the Medieval Inn Dinner Theatre and Pub on Greenville Avenue (site of the February 1991 chapter meeting) explains how the Big Spur Corral came to be:

Meeting planners kept expressing a need for a facility similar to Medieval Inn, but with a country-western theme.

They wanted a "Texas Experience" when they planned meeting and convention entertainment for Dallas visitors.

"I listened to their challenges and decided to open a dinner theatre to give people a true 'Taste of Texas' — a place where Texas tales abound," said Williams.

The Big Spur promotes special events for conventions and tours, corporate parties, and special occasions. The saloon provides a casual setting for meetings and can accommodate breakfast, lunch, dinner, or 'happy hour' events."

Meeting planners can order customized entertainment — scripts specifically written and designed for a target group and performed by the professional entertainers that make up the Big Spur Troupe.

Food at the Big Spur is both tasty and plentiful, says Williams. Listings from the "Feed Bag" menu include six "fixin's" — chips, salsa and cheese; soup of the corral; veggies with dip; roasted chicken and corn on the cob; bar-b-q beef ribs; and Miss Rose's favorite dessert. Meals are served with a choice of beer, wine, or iced tea.

Show time is 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays with a cost of \$29 (gratuity not included). Weekday shows, \$26, are scheduled on request. Reservations are required.

Heard it through the Grapevine...

By Ken Cohen
Cohen's Casino Parties

Greg Elam, vice president of public relations for *Dallas Convention & Visitors Bureau*, was quoted in the *Dallas Business Journal* in June. The newspaper cited a survey in *Texas Highways* magazine indicating that Dallas failed to register as one of the 20 most friendly cities in Texas. Elam offered a strong rebuttal.

Carolyn Taylor left Crescent Court Hotel to join the staff at *Big Spur Corral*, the new country & western dinner theater on Stemmons Freeway, as director of marketing.

R. L. "Bob" Berry, *Corporate Communications & Outsourcing*, announced that CC&O received a first place award in the National Association of Exposition Managers' 2nd Annual "Awards in Excellence-Graphics Gallery Contest." The awards recognize excellence in exposition industry promotional materials.

Stan Heller left Canadian Airlines to promote travel destinations and services through his own company, *Silverleaf Marketing*.

Joanne Nichols is back in the hotel business as director of sales and marketing for the *Radisson Hotel Central/Dallas*. She spent the last 2 1/2 years as an owner-operator of an outside catering firm, in which she remains a silent partner.

Paige Garrett left Great American Reserve Insurance Company and is now marketing coordinator for *Dal City Associates, Inc.*, a national insurance brokerage company. Paige will continue to plan meetings and incentives in her new position.

Shelagh Merrill, formerly with Memtek Products, is now project manager for *Four Star Marketing*.

Mary Mallick left IBM to pursue a career as an *independent meeting planner*.

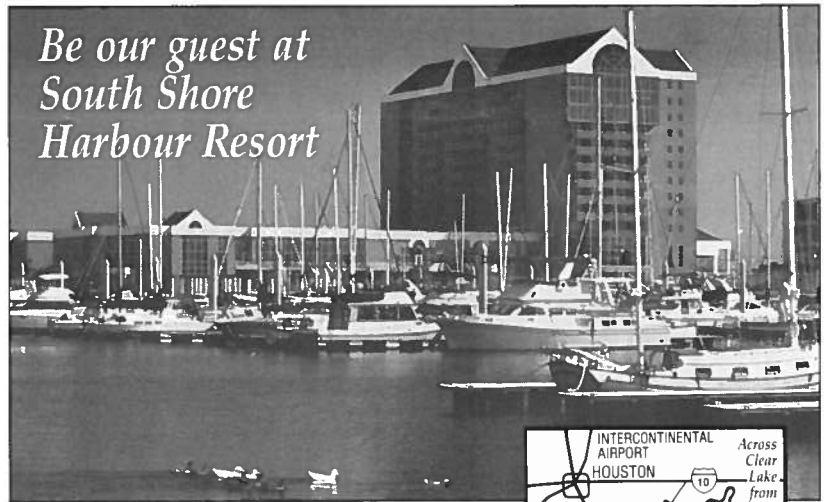
Marilyn Manby, Meeting Planner of the Year, 1991-92, has joined the staff of *Sunbelt Motivation & Travel, Inc.* Her former employer was Maritz Meeting Planners.

Keep up with personal news about fellow MPI chapter members — job changes, promotions, awards or special recognitions, weddings, births, etc. — through "Heard it through the Grapevine." Please contact Ken Cohen (214-276-2998 or FAX 214-276-9725) about items of interest for this column.

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Directory Listings

O.D. O'Donnell, Nightlife Talent and Management Agency, vice-president of administration, asks that all chapter members review their listings in the 1992-93 directory. If there are errors, please phone O.D. at 214-691-4417 and he will see that corrections are made in the mailing list and all master listings.

Directory Update/"New Kids on the Block"**MPI Welcomes 21 New Members!**

Anne E. Albright, CMP
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 U.S. Motivation
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 Fort Worth, TX 76155
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 817-571-3500

Pamela C. Clyma
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 Farmers Branch, TX 75244
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 214-980-5482

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 Dallas, Texas 75240-8911
planner
 214-437-9222

Jeanne P. Eddy
President
 Jeanne Eddy Inc.
 6125 Boca Raton, Ste. I
 Dallas, Texas 70244
planner
 214-363-8617

Hugh Elmore
Director of Conventions
 Stevens Communications
 225 N. New Road
 Waco, Texas 76702
planner
 817-751-5136

Judith H. Gausnell
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 Harvey Hotel Addison
 14315 Midway Road
 Dallas, Texas 75244
supplier
 214-980-8877

Dick Glockner
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 Southland Center Hotel
 400 N. Olive St.
 Dallas, Texas 75201
supplier
 214-922-0379

Andrea L. Greene
Sales Manager
 Loews Anatole Hotel
 2201 Stemmons Frwy.
 Dallas, Texas 75207
supplier
 214-761-7260

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Program Coordinator
 UNM College of Engineering
 Farris Eng. Center #131
 Albuquerque, NM 87131-1387
planner
 505-277-6061

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Sales Manager
 Medieval Times
 1812 Market Ctr. Blvd.
 Dallas, TX 75207
supplier
 214-761-1801

Katherine T. Love
Workshop Coordinator
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 Albuquerque, NM 87131-1387
planner
 505-277-5875

Janet L. Martin
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 Fort Worth, TX 76155
supplier
 817-540-9845

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 CTM Planners, Inc.
 25 Highland Park Vlg. 100-304
 Dallas, TX 75202
planner
 214-520-7690

Pamela S. Power
Sales Associate
 Dallas Fan Fares, Inc.
 5485 Beltline Rd. #270
 Dallas, TX 75240
planner
 214-239-9969

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 Baylor College of Dentistry
 3302 Gaston Ave.
 Dallas, TX 75246
planner
 214-827-8318

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 Shreveport, LA 71105-2355
 318-861-0629

Kathi M. Thompson
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 Inn on the River
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 214-424-7119

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 Meeting Mgt. Assoc./Festivities
 4100 McEwen #101
 Dallas, TX 75244
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 Dallas, TX 75244
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 MCI Planners
 2245 Keller Way
 Carrollton, TX 75019
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 214-417-3204

This list is from MPI of Dallas/Ft. Worth Membership Information as of 6/30/92.

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Member Profile

Mary Cowart Plans 'Presidentially'

By Gracie H. Hilton
The Write Stuff

Mary Cowart, 1992-93 president of the Dallas/Fort Worth chapter of MPI, definitely has her new leadership position on her mind. When asked to make a few notes about one of her current involvements, she inadvertently wrote, "I presidentially am planning..."

And plan she does! From her "home office away from home," a backyard poolside structure that is a full-scale business office, Cowart plans 50-80 meetings a year — meetings that take place all over the country.



Chapter President Mary Cowart takes a break from meeting planning and spends some time with a few of her adopted cats.

Prior to opening her own meeting management company five years ago, Mary was a planner for 15 years with UCCEL, a computer software company. When UCCEL merged with another computer company, it was a natural for Mary to open her own business.

The owner-operator of Mary Cowart Meeting Consultants describes the journey from her UCCEL days to the point where she is today as "kind of a fairytale."

"I've never used anything more than

business cards to promote my business," says Mary, who explains that all of her clients have come "word-of-mouth" from other satisfied clients.

Her first project as an independent meeting planner was the Andy Williams Open Golf Tournament through American Express. One thing led to another and she now has five major clients on retainer and that keeps her as busy as she wants to be.

Most of her corporate clients are in the computer industry. Known in the marketplace as a specialist in user conferences, she has clients on both coasts and manages meetings for groups that range in size from 20 to 900.

This active businesswoman believes in the value of a rich family life. She and her husband of 15 years entered their marriage with a son each, both of whom are married. Mary's son, Gary, has a toddler-size daughter, Amber Lynn.

"She is 16 months old and beautiful and precious, and I am not prejudiced!" says this doting grandmother.

Mary and Larry are both active in their church, Preston Highlands Baptist. "We both sing in the choir, but we are not the ones called on to sing solos," Mary says with a smile.

Once upon a time Mary was an enthusiastic tennis buff but chooses to spend her free time in other ways these days, reserving most of that time for her family, her pets, and her garden.

An avid collector of homeless cats — she now oversees 12 adult cats and three litters — she also has a springer spaniel puppy and three turtles.

She's a gardening enthusiast, too. "When work gets frustrating, I buy flowers and dig in the dirt!" says this

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enthusiastic lady who rarely appears stressed.

Cowart credits MPI's strong emphasis on education and networking for opening a lot of doors for her. In four years of board service, she has been vice president of finance and editor of the *Current*. She has served on and chaired several committees and was named Meeting Planner of the Year in 1988.

"MPI has enabled me to spread my wings and grow myself," says Mary.

Presently as well as "presidentially," the Dallas/Fort Worth chapter of MPI will be well led with Mary Cowart at the helm.

MPI Annual Conference in Detroit Good Engine Starter for D/FW Chapter Members on 'Fast Track to the Future'

By Anita Slegers
The Adolphus Hotel

Detroit was the first stop on the way to the future with the 1992 Annual Conference of Meeting Planners International.

More than 1250 registrants — suppliers outnumbering planners two to one — converged on the city in late June. More than 70 of the attendees were from the D/FW chapter.

From the opening general session at Cobo Conference Center, to the final Motown sounds at the Westin Hotel, Detroit showed MPI its finest.

The awards gala at the recently renovated Fox Theatre was just the right engine starter. The high level of enthusiasm created by the presentation of our top industry awards, combined with the fabulous music of the equally fabulous Temptations, made for a delightful evening.

For two days general sessions and seminars presented under the theme "Education — Fast Track to the Future," provided educational opportunities designed to heighten professional knowledge and increase productivity.

"Be Aware and Care," an enlightening presentation by three professional speakers each physically challenged in his own way, provided new insights to our sensitivity to and understanding of our responsibilities regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act.

On closing night the Westin Hotel, interpreting the automotive theme of the conference, shined like a brand-new car off the assembly line. After a gourmet meal beyond anyone's expectation, Andy Childs and the Drifters supplied the tunes with the "Motown Sound" for which Detroit is so well known.

If you missed out on this fast track, you missed some truly spectacular times. But hold on, the Professional Education Conference is just around the corner!



LEFT: Several D/FW chapter CMPs attending the MPI Annual Conference gather to discuss the importance of education in meeting planning. Front row, left to right: Connie Sandifer, Dallas Fan Fares; Lisa South, Ducky-Bob's Party Rentals; second row, Bill Boyd, Sunbelt Motivation & Travel, Inc.; Patricia Tripp, Princess Cruises and Tours; and John Nowak, Promus Companies, Inc. BELOW: Approximately half the representatives from the D/FW chapter gather in the lobby of the Westin Hotel.



Leadership Seminar Set September 24

Enhance leadership skills by participating in an executive workshop session on September 24. Randy Pennington, president of Pennington Performance Group, a Dallas-based training and consulting firm, will direct the seminar. Registration is \$15 per person. For more information contact Phyllis Tackitt, Canadian Consulate General, 214-992-9806 or Lisa Stedman, Four Seasons National Sales Office, 214-717-2562.

Last Month's Meeting Review

D/FW MPI Extends Helping Hand to Many in Need

By Kim Kelley, CMP
The Tower Club

The July meeting of the Dallas/Fort Worth chapter of MPI focused on philanthropies.

"To make a contribution, teamwork is required. Combine contribution and teamwork, and the result is achievement," said Bill Boyd, CMP, Sunbelt Motivation & Travel, Inc., moderator of a panel discussion about philanthropies.

Boyd's emphasis on the words Achievement, Contribution and Teamwork underscored the theme of the D/FW chapter of MPI as addressed by President Mary Cowart, Meeting Consultants.

While we enjoyed the Sheraton Grand's delightful salad and main course, video presentations spotlighted the work of Love for Kids and Give Kids the World. Over dessert, we heard spokespersons for these organizations, as well as from representatives from Trinity Ministry for the Poor, and North Texas Food Bank.

As a professional organization with a long history of community service, MPI can be proud of the contributions made by our chapter. Through projects such as food drives, Meals on Wheels, and assisting with events for senior citizens or disadvantaged children, we touch the lives of people we will never meet. And the world is a better place as a result.



Julie Browning, The Lancers Club, attended the pre-meeting reception at the Sheraton Grand.



MPI officer Alan Powdermaker, Circle R Ranch, is a founder of Love for Kids.



LEFT: MPI member Dawn Weightman, ITT Sheraton, discussed Give Kids the World. Through the efforts and dedication of Dawn and her committee, our chapter contributed \$27,000 to this deserving cause in 1991.

BELOW: Sue Ferguson-Fry, Cityplace Conference Center, vice president/education, introduces the program on philanthropies. **Bill Boyd, CMP, Sunbelt Motivation & Travel, Inc.,** served as moderator for the panel of philanthropists.



Philanthropy Panelists

Margie Smith cited a meaningful case study to illustrate the needs of Trinity Ministry to the Poor. **Alan Powdermaker, Circle R Ranch,** expanded on the work of Love for Kids, an organization that works to see that underprivileged children in the Dallas/Fort Worth area experience some of the joys of childhood. **ITT Sheraton's Dawn Weightman** discussed Give Kids the World, an organization that sends terminally ill children and their families to the Disney entertainment complexes, in search of "a memory and a bond." **Paula Fadke, North Texas Food Bank,** described the Dallas Hunger Link, a program through which food left over from meetings can be diverted to those in need.





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Meeting Planners International is the industry's leading educational and networking resource in meetings management. MPI promotes professional growth through its educational programs and provides an excellent forum for networking to keep members abreast of industry trends and expanding career opportunities.

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