

CURRENT

Meeting Planners International

September 1992

Dallas-Fort Worth Chapter

President's Message

Let's Be Member-Friendly!

By Mary W. Cowart
Mary Cowart Meeting Consultants

Get into the **ACT**. That is what a large portion of our D/FW chapter members did by responding to a survey distributed this past May. This survey provided your board of directors vital information pertaining to your wants, needs and expectations for this coming year. The survey also confirmed that each volunteer serving on a committee is doing a fantastic job in the areas of Achievement, Contribution and Teamwork.

One particular item that continually reappears on your survey response is the concern about cliques within our chapter. Due to your concern your board of directors spent quality time at their retreat recently addressing this issue, and our guest speaker, Randy Pennington, at our September chapter

meeting to be held at Embassy Suites Hotel, will address the pros and cons of cliques and how we can use them to create a member-friendly organization.

Diane Smith, CMP, vice president/membership, has already reinstated the "buddy system" for our chapter meetings. Diane also has activated the phone tree which allows members to be involved and keeps everyone informed. We are pleased that our past chapter presidents are participating in the member orientation. Each vice president and board member is actively seeking avenues to allow you to **Get into the ACT** and reach out to meet your needs.

CHALLENGE — At our next meeting go out of your way, find that new member or

(continued on page 6)



Mary W. Cowart

MPI

MEETING PLANNERS INTERNATIONAL®

September D/FW Chapter Meeting

Randy Pennington
Pennington Performance Group

"How to Make Your Organization Member-Friendly"

September 24, Thursday

Embassy Suites/Park Central Area

13131 N. Central Expressway
Dallas, Texas 75243
(214) 234-3300

Orientation 11:00 a.m.
Registration & Trade Show 11:30 a.m.
Lunch & Program 12:15 p.m.
Executive Workshop 2-3:30 p.m.
(immediately after the meeting)

R.S.V.P.
by noon, Tuesday, Sept. 22
Sandy or Kim
214-343-0555

Advance Registration \$22
Late Registration \$30
Guest Registration \$25
Executive Workshop \$15

See page 4 for more details. See page 5 for reservation policy.

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Current

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Upcoming MPI Events

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 14, Wednesday
"Brown Bag" Luncheon
Allianz Financial Center
11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

October 22, Thursday
Chapter Meeting
Dallas Convention Center
West Wing
5:30 p.m./Reception

October 27, Tuesday
"How To" Breakfast
Plaza of the Americas
7-9:30 a.m.

November 13-14, Fri./Sat.
CMP Study Course
Plaza of the Americas
Fri. 1-5 p.m./Sat. 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

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.

D/FW MPI to Help Dallas Get Ready for '94 World Cup Soccer

Dallas will be a part of soccer history in 1994. The United States will host World Cup Soccer for the first time and Dallas was selected as one of nine host cities for games.

As Dallas prepares for this world-class event, the D/FW chapter of MPI is planning an informative program to learn about the economic impact of World Cup Soccer.

On Thursday evening, October 22, a panel of World Cup experts will address issues planners and suppliers should be aware of in order to prepare corporations and businesses for the impact of this once-in-a-lifetime experience! The meeting will take place at the Dallas Convention Center.

World Cup is a 24-team international tournament played once every four years in a single host country. The

projected cumulative worldwide television audience for the 1994 World Cup Final is 30 billion and at least one billion will watch the World Cup Final live on television.

Dallas will host four games in the final round, one game in the round of 16, and one quarter-final game at the Cotton Bowl Stadium in Fair Park.

Dallas will be the official host city for the International Broadcast Center. This is the coordinating facility from which all outgoing television signals will be produced. Some 3,500 broadcasters and technicians will provide pictures and descriptions of the matches to audiences around the world.

It will take an incredible amount of energy to host 3,500 journalists and thousands of visitors from around the world. MPI can help you get started.

Smith Outlines Plans and Programs of '92-'93 Membership Committees

The membership department is initiating several new programs to ensure a successful year for the D/FW chapter of MPI, according to Diane Smith, CMP (Alcon Labs). As vice president/



Diane Smith

membership, Smith will oversee activities of all membership committees.

"We are very enthusiastic about our plans this year," said Smith, as she described activities and goals of the Buddy Program, Member

Orientation, Recruitment, Retention, the Phone Tree, and Prizes and Incentives.

The Buddy Program

"The 'buddy program,' chaired by Mary Cain (Texas Bundles), got off to a rousing start at the July chapter meeting," Smith said. "This new program enabled us to successfully pair 18 new members with 'buddies' who will help new members become acquainted with other chapter members, and introduce them to the many benefits available through their MPI membership." (See related story.)

Orientation

O.D. O'Donnell (Nightlife Talent and Management Agency) will continue his leadership position as committee chair for member orientation.

"It is our goal to have every new — or not so new — member experience our orientation program," O'Donnell said. "This is an excellent opportunity to share important information about MPI in general, as well as specific details about our chapter programs. We stress that one of the best ways to derive benefits of membership is get involved through committee work."

O'Donnell is seeking assistance to better facilitate the orientation program. Call him at 214-601-4417 to volunteer your services.

Recruitment

Catherine Mason (USMotivation) will serve as chair of the member recruitment committee. Utilizing all leads available, this committee will actively pursue new members for the D/FW chapter. It is also this committee's job to monitor the

planner/supplier ratio and assist in supplier/planner matchups when possible.

"Although we strongly encourage suppliers to find their own planner partner, we do our best to assist in this search. We currently have approximately 10 applications in our supplier pool needing a planner match," Smith said.

To abbreviate application processing time, all membership applications will be funneled through the vice president/membership and/or the recruitment committee.

Retention

Programs aimed at improving member retention will be the responsibility of Stan Heller (Silverleaf Marketing), chair of the retention committee.

"Stan, who served as vice president/membership last year, certainly understands the challenges we face in this important area. It is the goal of this committee to reach the membership through direct mail, phone contact, and special programs to ensure that we are serving their needs," Smith said.

Phone Tree

In an effort to boost meeting attendance, the "phone tree" program has been revitalized. Through the phone tree, all chapter members will be contacted monthly to remind them of upcoming chapter meetings and other scheduled educational opportunities.

"Alice Roberts (Worthington Hotel), phone tree chair, and her committee face a challenging job. In order to contact all of our 480+ members every month, they are going to need a lot more help," Smith said. "If you can assist this important committee, please contact Alice at 817-882-1667 right away," Smith urged.

Prizes & Incentives

"Prize committee co-chairs, Charlotte Merrill-Davis (Event Source Professionals) and Bettie Smith (TI Product Center) have worked hard to come up with an outstanding program for the annual recruitment drive — incentives that will really mean something to our members," Smith said.

Membership incentive awards and grand prize awards will be announced at the November chapter meeting, when the annual membership drive is launched.

"Although I cannot yet divulge specific details regarding the membership drive or the grand prizes selected for Planner, Supplier, and Recruiter of the Year, rest assured that these incentives and prizes will definitely motivate our members," Smith said.

Even though the various membership committees face challenges and "certainly have their work cut out for them," Smith feels confident that all goals are achievable.

"Membership does have its privileges, but the benefits can only be enjoyed by those who participate, so I encourage everyone to be mindful of the chapter slogan and 'Get involved! Get into the ACT!'" Smith said.

'Buddy Program' — a "Welcome" Addition!

The "buddy program," which pairs an experienced, actively involved MPI member with a newcomer, calls for the experienced half of the team to stay in contact with the newcomer buddy for several months to keep him or her up-to-date on all chapter events and activities.

"We hope this buddy system will make new members feel more welcome at chapter meetings, and we see it as a valuable aid in improving our retention rate," said Mary Cain (Texas Bundles), buddy program chair.

"Having a buddy at my first meeting made me feel so welcome," said new member Rebecca Whitehead (Festivities). "It was nice to have someone introduce me to other members and to 'take care' of me."

July's member orientation program had the largest attendance in recent history. Diane Smith, CMP (Alcon Labs), vice president/membership, attributes this success to the work of the member orientation committee, chaired by O.D. O'Donnell (Nightlife Talent and Management Agency). The committee made personal phone calls to new members, encouraging them to attend.

Cain hopes to see more members involved in the buddy program, and encourages interested persons to call her at 214-826-0184 to volunteer.

MPI 'Natural Resources' Trade Show, Leadership Skills in Working with Volunteers are September Features

By Gracie H. Hilton
The Write Stuff

Several educational and service opportunities await members of the Dallas/Fort Worth chapter of MPI in September.

After the Third Annual MPI Resource Trade Show, Randy Pennington, president of Dallas-based



R. Pennington

Pennington Performance Group, will discuss "How to Make Your Organization Member-Friendly," a topic he will expand upon during an extended leadership seminar after the meeting.

Pennington first came to the attention of MPI leadership when 1991-92 President Lisa South, CMP (Ducky Bob's Party Rentals), invited him to address the officers and committee chairs earlier this year on the topic, "Working with Volunteers."

The presentation of this noted lecturer/educator/writer/radio commentator won "rave reviews" and led to the invitation to address the entire MPI membership.

"Members and volunteers are the lifeblood of every non-profit association," Pennington says. "An active, committed membership insures ongoing growth; member apathy leads to mediocrity and eventual decline."

In designing the September program, Pennington draws from his extensive experience in working with organizations — large and small, public and private, for profit and not-for-profit — to establish trust and build commitment. A long-time volunteer, leader and officer for the American Heart Association, Pennington knows what it takes to attract, retain and keep volunteers motivated.

During registration, the Third Annual MPI Resource Trade Show will be held in the atrium area of the Embassy Suites hotel, offering opportunities to volunteer for committees and areas of interest.

After the luncheon Pennington will conduct an executive workshop on leadership skills. In this fast-paced session participants will learn: the secret to getting volunteers involved; how to build volunteer commitment; how to insure ongoing and effective leadership; how to avoid cliques (and how to destroy them if they occur); and how to get the most from your membership.

"During the MPI Resource Trade Show, the vice presidents of each area, plus directors or committee chairs, will exhibit in a trade show format," said Marilyn Manby (Sunbelt Motivation &

Travel), one of the co-chairs for the September meeting. "It's a great opportunity to volunteer for service in the areas that most interest you."

Joining Manby in co-chairing the meeting are Gail Lemaire (Adolphus Hotel), Marsha Singer (The Executive Connection, Inc.), and Mary Cain (Texas Bundles).

Registration for the workshop is \$15 per person. For registration information contact Phyllis Tackitt (Canadian Consulate General), 214-992-9806 or Lisa Stedman (Four Seasons National Sales Office), 214-717-2562.

about Randy Pennington...

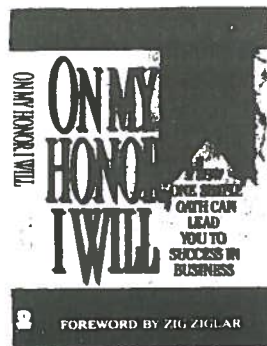
Best Selling Book Addresses Business Ethics

Randy Pennington, featured speaker at the September chapter meeting, is president of Dallas-based Pennington Performance Group, a training and consulting firm "that helps organizations and their people unleash the positive power of integrity, commitment and change."

Pennington has worked with many of the country's best-managed organizations, including Shell, Procter & Gamble, and *The Washington Post*, to develop practical solutions to complex human resource and business issues.

An instructor in the Edwin L. Cox Business Leadership Center at Southern Methodist University, Pennington is also a radio commentator for the program, "Ninety Seconds for the '90s." A prolific writer, he has published 22 articles during the last 18 months.

His first book, *On My Honor, I Will: How One Simple Oath Can Lead You to Success in Business*, co-authored with Marc Bockmon, was released by Warner Books this past spring and quickly made the area best-seller list in the non-fiction category.



The book, which former U.S. President Gerald Ford describes as "a blueprint of how leaders became successful by following the path of honor and integrity," has been widely reviewed and praised by a number of noted critics and publications.

On My Honor, I Will... was previewed in *Executive Excellence*, published monthly by the Institute for Principle-Centered Leadership; the institute is chaired by Stephen Covey, perhaps best known for his long-time best-selling *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*.

Pennington has worked with numerous non-profit organizations such as the American Heart Association, the American Diabetes Association, the Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Centers, the Dallas Science Place, and the Texas Society of Association Executives. He has more than 12 years experience in volunteer and association leadership roles.

September Host Facility Embassy Suites/ Park Central Area— 'Suite' on Guests

Embassy Suites Hotel in the Dallas Park Central area, host facility for the September chapter meeting of the D/FW chapter of MPI, offers the luxury of a suite to each and every guest.

"We have 280 beautifully appointed two-room suites to spoil our guests," says Diane Bower, sales manager. "Suite amenities include a refrigerator, microwave, coffee maker, blow dryer, two television sets with remote controls, plus two telephones with voice mail."

Other complimentary amenities include a "cook to order" breakfast, two hours of cocktails, racquetball courts, an exercise facility, pool, jacuzzi, a wet and dry sauna, an atrium restaurant, plus van transportation within a five-mile radius.

Bower pointed out the great meeting facilities available at the Embassy Suites: "Our Regency Ballroom has 5,000 square feet, and we have a brand-new 'junior' ballroom with 1,700 square feet," she said.

The Embassy Suites/Park Central area also has a boardroom, second floor conference suites, plus atrium function space for breaks or meals.

Embassy Suites/Park Central is situated at 13131 North Central Expressway. Explicit directions make getting there easy.

Southbound travelers on Central: exit at Coit; the hotel entrance is on the frontage road. **Northbound travelers on Central:** exit at Midpark and make a U-turn onto the frontage road.

Eastbound travelers on LBJ: exit at Coit; go left on Coit; make first right on Emily, and follow road to hotel.

Westbound travelers on LBJ: exit at Coit; go right on Coit; make first right on Emily, and follow road to hotel. (NOTE: Westbound Alpha Road becomes Emily at Coit.)

Plenty of free parking is available in the underground garage, accessible by the ramp on the south side of the hotel.

1 9 9 2

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D/FW Chapter / MPI 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.)

Heard it through the Grapevine...

By Ken Cohen
Cohen's Casino Parties

Deanna Bright has been promoted to regional marketing manager for *Club Corporation of America (CCA)*. She supervises 89 people from her office in Kingwood, just outside of Houston. Deanna was formerly with the Tower Club, another CCA club.

Connie Sandifer left Dallas for a position in Seattle. She will be program manager for *Seattle VIP Services*. Connie's desire to return to her home in the Pacific Northwest was a big factor in the move. She was formerly with Dallas Fan Fares.

Barbara Rathwick, *Journey House Travel*, was selected to participate in the National MPI Travel & Incentive Special Interest Group (SIG).

Susan Saulter was promoted to marketing manager at *HD Vest Financial Services*. **Bitsy Burns**, also with *HD Vest*, assumed Susan's duties as meeting, planning and travel services manager.

Kevin McMahon is vice president of sales for the *Registry Hotel Corp.* in Dallas. He was formerly with the Adolphus Hotel.

Dana Nickerson, CMP, RMP, has formed her own company, *Square One Productions*, a full-service destination management company. Dana was formerly with Journey House Meetings & Incentives.

Paige Garrett is working with *DalCity Associates, Inc.* She was formerly with Great American Reserve Insurance Company.

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.

'How To' Breakfast Series Begins Differences in 21st Century Workplace, Handling Stress on the Job Now are Themes

Men and women in today's workplace work long hours, take little vacation time, and suffer from high levels of stress. The future, however, looks to be quite different. An international survey completed by Priority Management indicates that workers in "The 21st Century Workplace" will work fewer hours, take more time off, and be less concerned with salary.

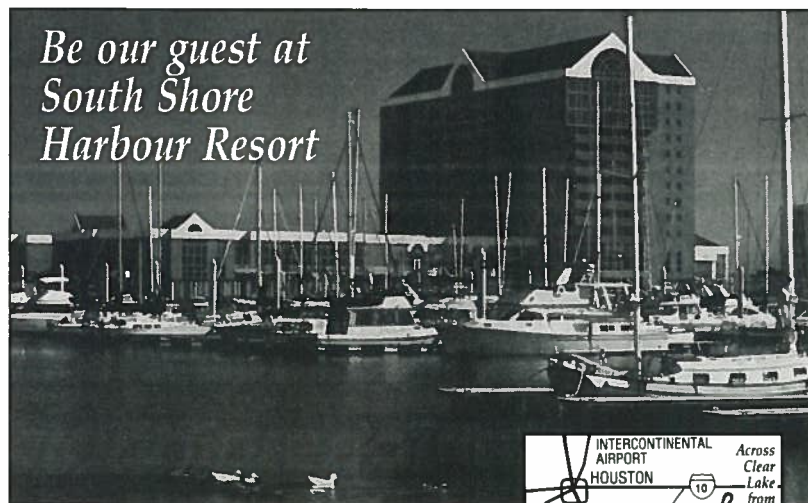
Come hear about this revolutionary new workplace concept at a "How To" breakfast on Tuesday, October 27, at the Plaza of the Americas.

Thomas E. Acker, president of Priority Management, will discuss how to prepare for and create an ideal work environment in the 21st Century. For the present, he will discuss how to survive the '90's with a healthy balance between personal life and work.

This D/FW MPI-sponsored educational breakfast will take place from 7-9:30 a.m. Registration is \$13 per person. For more information call Pam Power, Dallas Fan Fares (214) 239-9969 or Cathy Mason, USMotivation (817) 540-9845.

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

guest or maybe a member you don't know and introduce yourself. This is called networking. You make a friend, they make a friend and it is a win/win situation for both members and guests. Let's **Get into the ACT** and make each meeting not only a learning experience, but a growing experience, expanding your professional circle of influence.



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Directory Update/"New Kids on the Block"**MPI Welcomes 13 New Members!**

Jana K. Carmichael
Sales Representative
Richardson CVB
411 Belle Grove
Richardson, TX 75080
supplier
214-234-4141

Bryan Clark
Account Executive
Tiffany & Company
13350 Dallas Parkway
Dallas, TX 75240
supplier
214-458-9800

Dedra S. Coffee
Harpist
Harpist Dedra Coffee
1202 Cedar Ridge Rd.
Rockwall, TX 75087
supplier
214-771-8531

Helen J. Gatewood
Director Special Projects
World Assn.
Alcohol Bev. Ind. Inc.
7409 Wellcrest
Dallas, Texas 75230
planner
214-692-0402

Ronald L. Grayson
President
Grayson Hollingsworth Comm
2015 McKenzie #115
Carrollton, TX 75006
supplier
214-620-1285

Kenneth H. Gwyn
Director
Gwyn and Associates
3423 Boulder St.
Dallas, TX 75233
supplier
214-467-0925

Martin W. Holmes
Executive Director
Southwest Meat Assn.
2401 Ave J #211
Arlington, TX 76006
planner
817-640-7728

Victoria Mazurek
Event Coordinator
Chaparral Club
400 N. Olive
LB252 Ste. 3600
Dallas, TX 75201
planner
214-979-0435

Judy Moe Myers
Travel Accounting Specialist
Judy Moe Myers
6136 Copperhill Dr.
Dallas, TX 75248
planner
214-233-0040

Wanda S. Parten
Manager Scientific Meetings
American Heart Association
7272 Greenville Ave.
Dallas, TX 75231
planner
214-706-1595

Pat Skistimas
Event Decorator
The Balloon House
102 Tuesday Haus Lane
Highland Vlg., TX 75067
supplier
214-317-1965

Robbi S. Swafford-Lee
Group Travel Planner
Amer Express/Dr Pepper-7Up
8144 Walnut Hill Ln
Dallas, TX 75231
planner
214-360-7000

Linda G. Tibbets
Sales Manager Hotel Services
AVW Audio Visual
2233 Irving Blvd.
Dallas, TX 75207
supplier
214-638-0024

*This list
of new members
is from MPI
of Dallas/Ft. Worth
Membership Information
as of 7/31/92.*

**ADDRESS
CORRECTION***

Shivaun M. Wilson
Manager Customer Relations
General Dynamics
Mail Zone 1635
Fort Worth, TX 76101
supplier
817-777-1430

**Wilson's address was
incorrect in the August
issue of Current.*

C. W. Kendall has spent twenty-five years as an entertainment agent in the Dallas area. Offering the finest in live entertainment. Whatever your needs may be, C. W. and his staff of professionals will work with you to find just the right performers to fit your theme and budget. Ken Ran is dedicated to making your event a success through experience, dependability, and quality entertainment.

Ken-Ran
Entertainment
Agency
C.W. Kendall
president
349-3025

DOLLAR\$ & CENT\$

For the month ending July 31, 1992:

Beginning of the Month	\$29,153.19
Receipts	\$6,284.50
Disbursements	(\$7,984.89)
EOM Balance	\$30,684.48*

*EOM Balance includes Gives Kids the World Reserve Account and PGA.

Report submitted by Alan Powdermaker (Circle R Ranch), vice president/finance.

MPI

MEETING PLANNERS INTERNATIONAL®

Member Profile/Diane Smith

Kansan's Path to Meeting Planning Not by Way of 'Yellow Brick Road'

By Gracie H. Hilton
The Write Stuff

For Kansas native and ace meeting planner Diane Smith, CMP (Alcon Laboratories, Inc.), D/FW MPI's vice-president/membership, meeting planning was never a goal, but a vocation that evolved after various intermediate career involvements.

Diane's journey to a career in meeting planning was "not by way of a yellow brick road," she says, alluding to another girl's famous journey from Kansas in *The Wizard of Oz*, but a magical journey of her own that took her from Kansas to Fort Worth with several stops — and a few bumps — along the way.

A youthful foray to Los Angeles — the goal of a teenager wrapped up in the music of the Beach Boys and "too much fantasy" — resulted in a short-lived marriage and "the best thing that ever happened to me — my daughter, Lisa Marie," Diane said.

Back home in Wichita, Diane worked in real estate development and met a "good 'ole Texas boy" with an appropriate Texas name. Soon, Diane was Mrs. Jerry Don Smith.

Her work in real estate development led to a career in construction in Overland Park — a job for which she says her childhood role as the oldest of five siblings was great preparation.

"All those years of telling my younger brothers and sisters what to do were great preparation for this job," she says with a smile. "Now I had several teams of construction workers to boss around!"

It took time, but she finally gained the confidence of all the woodworkers, electricians, plumbers, sheetrockers, and other construction specialists, and together they built housing projects throughout the greater Kansas City area.

"My 'dress for success' outfit was boots, jeans and a hard hat, and I loved it!" says Diane.

Life never has a dull moment for this foreman-cum-meeting planner. During those days of building housing projects for

others, Diane was building a "home model" — popularly known today as the "blended family" — of her own. Marriage to Jerry Don ("Smitty") brought three males into the lives of Diane and Lisa, with the addition of Smitty's sons, Keith and Craig.

A career opportunity for Smitty eventually brought the Smith family to Fort Worth. Diane worked for a while in construction with her Kansas contact but "the timing was lousy," and soon she was working a "temporary job" through Kelly Services.

That "temporary" job at Alcon Labs six years ago led to her current position and a career in meeting planning. Her immediate superior, Jack Weightman, convinced Diane that Alcon, a pharmaceutical company and international leader in ophthalmic research, was the place for her.

"Soon, I was planning meetings for the Vision Care Group and, again, I was able to do what I enjoy most — telling people what to do!" Diane says. "I have always been the designated planner for family reunions, ski trips, and other get-togethers, so this was a natural for me."

Diane attributes much of her success to Weightman, who "provided me the opportunity to soar." She recently moved into the area of Professional Relations at Alcon, handling a myriad of programs the company provides to schools of optometry and ophthalmology all over the country. Alcon's leadership in eye care research and worldwide sales mean that she is planning meetings on the international level, too.

It was Weightman who got Diane involved in MPI, and he is credited for recruiting a volunteer with much enthusi-

asm for and devotion to the organization. During the past several years Diane has served as director of education, interim board member, and vice president/administration. Currently serving as vice president/membership, Diane earned her Certified Meeting Planner designation in January.

In her "spare time" Diane takes classes in photographic techniques and reporting, disciplines she finds helpful with her responsibilities as a contributor to various Alcon publications.

Recently, Diane, with the assistance of many MPI friends — "my best friends are those I met through MPI," says Diane — created a really special event when she planned "the wedding of the decade" for daughter Lisa. Soon Lisa — who also works at Alcon Labs — and her husband, Jeff, will present Diane and Smitty with a grandchild.

A perky, pretty, blonde, Diane hardly fits the image of the stereotypical "Granny," but she has experience in that area already. One of her two "wonderful daughters-in-law" has a two-year old



Surrounding Vice President/Membership Diane Smith (Alcon Labs), wearing "Grandmas aren't always this sexy" t-shirt, are, left to right, husband Smitty, son-in-law Jeff Seymour, and expectant daughter Lisa.

daughter who is calling Diane by that name.

"I feel very lucky and privileged to have such a wonderful family, an equally wonderful host of friends, and a fulfilling career," says Diane, "and I didn't even need Dorothy's magical ruby slippers!"

'Brown Bag' Educational Series Begins

CMP University Program Seeks to 'Demystify' Preparations for Exam

By Gracie H. Hilton
The Write Staff

Helping prepare meeting professionals for the important Certified Meeting Planner (CMP) designation is the role of CMP University, an education committee program of the D/FW chapter of MPI. That committee has two important events planned this fall, according to Patricia Tripp, CMP (Princess Cruises & Tours), CMP University chair.

"Demystifying the CMP" is the theme for an educational luncheon meeting designed to enlighten and encourage D/FW members of MPI about preparation for the CMP exam and designation.

"Adequate preparation for the CMP is important, but it is not something that should be feared or dreaded. The CMP exam is not the LSAT, the MCAT, or the CPA qualifier," said Tripp, referring to the well-known exams to qualify prospective law school and medical school students, and the official Certified Public Accountant designation.

Bill Boyd, CMP, president of Sunbelt Motivation & Travel, will address the demystification of the CMP at a "Brown Bag" luncheon Wednesday, October 14, at Allianz Financial Center in Dallas, from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

The "Brown Bag" luncheon series is the result of the needs assessment survey, according to Sue Ferguson-Fry (Cityplace Conference Center), vice president/education.

"Our membership expressed a need for more emphasis on cost-defrayed, quality educational programs. This cost-free series is the result," said Ferguson-Fry. "Bring your own culinary delights in a brown bag to enjoy while gathering knowledge in an informal atmosphere."

Allianz Financial Center is situated in the Fidelity Union Life Conference Center, 2323 Bryan Street. On-site conference coordinator is Carolyn Carey.

A second educational opportunity for would-be CMP designates is the one and one-half day study course November 13-14 at Plaza of the Americas Hotel.

"The course, directed by 25 meeting professionals — all with CMP designations, of course — will cover the 25

meeting planning disciplines that are included on the exam," Tripp said.

The course is scheduled from 1-5 p.m. Friday, November 13, and 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, November 14.

Registration for the workshop is \$25 for D/FW members of MPI, \$50 for MPI members from other chapters, and \$100 for non-MPI members. The fee includes lunch on Saturday. Refreshment breaks will be hosted by the Plaza of the Americas.

For more information, contact Tripp, 214-230-6994, or Ferguson-Fry, 214-841-6577.

Why should you work towards the CMP?

- Personal satisfaction
- Peer recognition
- High visibility
- To become a better meeting planner
- Advancement
- Possibility of increased salary
- Jump-start in securing a new position

Knieberg First D/FW Chapter Member Granted New 'Retired Member' Status

By Judy Love Rondeau
Canadian Consulate General

Fred Knieberg, CMP, a meeting planner with more than 40 years experience, and a valued member of the D/FW chapter of Meeting Planners International since 1984, was granted "retired membership" status in August.



Fred Knieberg

"Retired Member" is a new membership category recently approved by the International Board of Directors. Fred is the first member of our chapter to be granted this status.

According to International Policies and Procedures, "...RETIRED MEMBERSHIP status shall be available to those individuals no longer employed in the meetings industry. The candidate must have been an MPI member in good standing for the past five years or more, prior to their retirement status. The request for consideration must be submitted to MPI International in writing with documentation confirming the candidate's retired status."

Knieberg began his career in the

meetings industry in 1947 and planned numerous sales meetings for his employer, Eutetic Welding Alloys Corporation. From there he entered the apparel industry, planning sales meetings for several different corporations.

In 1986 Knieberg started his own company, "The Me'ting Place." As an independent meeting planner, Fred continued to plan meetings for various corporations in the apparel industry until 1991 when he retired from the meetings industry.

Fred joined the D/FW chapter in 1984 and has been an active member ever since. He served on the education/programming committee for more than five years and chaired many of our monthly chapter meetings.

After earning his CMP designation in 1988 he helped many other MPI members earn this designation by assisting with the chapter-sponsored CMP study courses. He was the chairperson of our chapter's MENTOR subcommittee in 1990-91.

Fred's knowledge and expertise has been invaluable. He has contributed in many ways to the success of our chapter and we are glad he can remain active under this new membership category.

MPI at the Big Spur!

By Kim Kelley
The Tower Club

Big Spur Corral, Dallas' only western-style dinner theater, presented our mission statement in dramatic format at the August chapter meeting.

The Big Spur troupe got right to work as the evening's "hostess," Miss Rose, opened the playful yet informative show with a song and a big "HOW-DY," encouraging everyone to join in the fun. The show, customized for MPI, emphasized volunteer opportunities. Between acts, Miss Rose's "girls" served course after course to MPI diners.

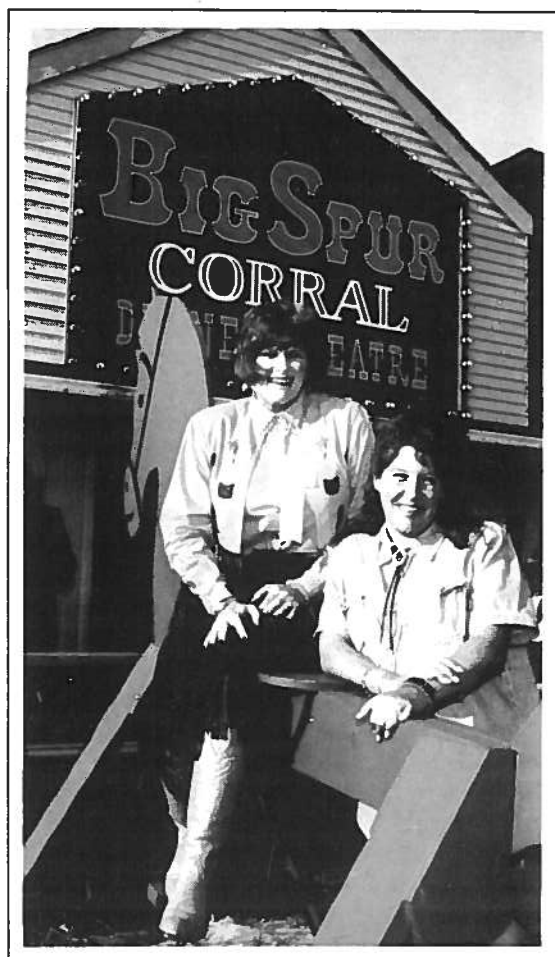
Many thanks to Debra Williams, Big Spur owner, for a rollicking good time. Thanks, too, to Charlotte Merrill-Davis and Event Source Professionals for the special name-badge ribbons emphasizing the evening's theme.

For those with a "hitch in their git-a-long," the program carried a not-so-subtle hint: To benefit from MPI membership, GET INVOLVED! Join a committee and "Get into the ACT!"



FAR LEFT: Sandra Moten (Mobil Oil) and Carol Durden (Holiday Inn Brook Hollow) chat at the pre-meeting reception.

LEFT: Lesley Meyer (Sunbelt Motivation & Travel) and Lisa South (Ducky Bob's Party Rentals) were among the officers "jailed" by the Big Spur troupe.



Carolyn Taylor, marketing director, and Debra Williams, owner, were excellent hosts for a lively MPI crowd at the Big Spur Corral, deep in the heart of Dallas.



Connie Sandifer, second from left, is the recipient of a farewell serenade by the Big Spur troupe. Connie, who is moving to Seattle, will be missed by many friends in our chapter. (See "Heard it through the Grapevine" on page 3.)



At the editor's request, Current photographer Mark Lazarow, second from left, (Lazarow Photography), set up this photo, which was shot by a volunteer. Lazarow joined Barbara Bigham (Compass Bank), Susan Abbondante (guest) and Marta Lilly (Young Presidents Organization) at the pre-meeting reception. A dedicated and generous volunteer, Lazarow cheerfully records MPI meetings and activities and rushes his excellent photos to the editor in time to meet tight deadlines. He exemplifies our chapter theme by constantly being in the "ACT" with Achievement, Contribution and Teamwork! Thanks, Mark!

D/FW Job Bank Initiates Aggressive New Program

By Gracie H. Hilton
The Write Stuff

Out of a job? Looking for a new challenge? Your first stop should be the job bank operated by the Dallas/Fort Worth chapter of Meeting Planners International.

Organized and staffed by a volunteer committee, the job bank is undertaking aggressive new programs to actively assist MPI members and others in the hospitality industry to gain greater access to job possibilities.

The job bank will accept applications from MPI members, and will actively seek information about job openings from companies, firms, and associations looking for meeting planning professionals.

"We encourage all sectors of the meeting planning and hospitality industry to post job openings. We will make every effort to match qualifications with job specifications, and will maintain a high level of confidentiality while doing so," said Marilyn McGuire, CMP (National Athletic Trainers Association), chair of the job bank committee.

The job bank, a program that has been operational for a number of years, operates under the direction of Alan Powdermaker (Circle R Ranch), vice president/finance, with the assistance of board member Carolyn Carey (Fidelity Union Life Insurance Company). Serving with McGuire are committee members Leigh Ann Rawls (American Heart Association), Barbara Rathwick (Journey House Travel), and Amanda Oglesby (The Aerobics Center).

New communications programs designed to encourage broader and more in-depth use of the job bank include publicizing the service regularly in the *Current*, by direct mail, and special handouts.

"We will also set up a special job bank table at every MPI meeting to display job openings," McGuire said. "It will be easy to find someone at every meeting to explain the procedures and activities of the job bank to potential users."

"The job bank committee is working actively to establish job bank awareness with companies, firms and associations needing employees in the meeting planning industry," said President Mary Cowart (Meeting Consultants).

MPI members wishing to register with the job bank should send a minimum of five typed resumes, along with a notation of any restrictions relative to distributing resumes, directly to McGuire.

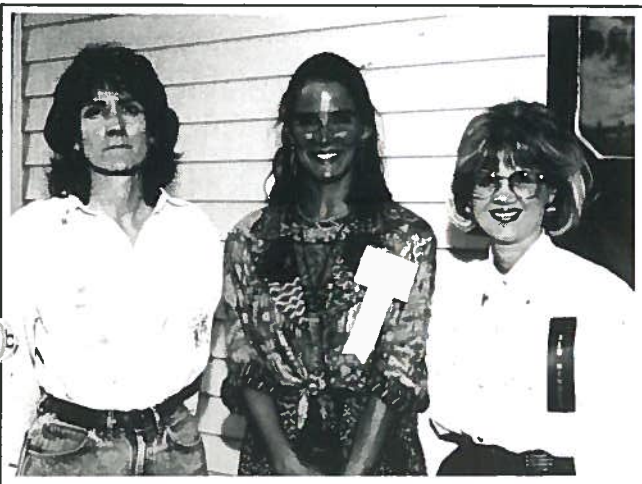
The applications will remain "active" for eight months. The job bank will, within five days of receiving a job opening, send out all pertinent and qualified resumes in the active file. New resumes meeting the minimum job specifications will be forwarded until the job opening is filled.

The processing fee for MPI members is \$15. Non-members may use the service for a \$25 fee.

For more information about the job bank, contact McGuire at 214-637-6282, or any committee member.



Phares Corder (Phares Corder Orchestras), **Luana Stoutmeyer** (Center Stage Band) and **Ken Cohen** (Cohen's Casino Parties) enjoy a visit in the lobby of the Big Spur Corral.



MPI "Buddies"

ABOVE: **Mary Quirk** (MS² Enterprises), **Cathy Mason** (USMotivation), and **Judy Noe Myers** (Travel Accounting) are "buddies" through the membership committee's "buddy program."

BELOW: New member **Linda Tibbets** (AVW Audio Visual, Inc.) and "buddy" **Tracy Cain** (Cityplace Conference Center) welcome **Lianne Pereira** (guest). See related story about the buddy program on page 3.



MPI

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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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