

Four-Time Winner—Chapter of the Year Award

MPI

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL*

Committed to Educational Leadership

CURRENT

Meeting Professionals International

February 1999

Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter



The MPI Kids Charity Ball

Produced by Meeting Professionals International
Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter

The MPI Kids Charity Ball

Produced by Meeting Professionals
International

Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter

*May 15

The Fairmont Hotel
"A Festival of Music"

MPI D/FW Mentoring Program Part of Chapter's Education Focus



Pat McCain, CMP (Krisam Hotels & Resorts), second from left, presented "certificates of completion" to Carolyn Harvey (Intelcom), Fred Knieberg, CMP (Knieberg & Associates) and Erin Donohoe (Omni Hotels). McCain presented the certificates on behalf of Lisa South, CMP (CLR Fast-Tax), chair of the the "Connections...A Meeting of the Minds" program—designed to partner professionals who want to learn new and different aspects of the meetings profession.

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MPI Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter Honored with 'Award for Excellence' in Education at Vancouver's PEC North America '99

This honor, denoting "excellence in programs and education" is based on achievements during the 1997-98 chapter year.

D/FW Chapter Meeting • Renaissance Dallas North Hotel • Feb. 25 • 11:30 a.m.

CURRENT MPI

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL®

Committed to Educational Leadership

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MISSION STATEMENT

Meeting Professionals International is the pivotal force in positioning meetings as a primary communication vehicle and a critical component of an organization's success. Meeting Professionals International leads the meetings industry by serving the diverse needs of all people with a direct interest in the outcome of meetings, educating and preparing members for both their changing roles and validating relevant knowledge and skills, as well as demonstrating a commitment to excellence in meetings.

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Upcoming Chapter Meetings

February 25, Thursday
"Tune Up Your Life"
Renaissance Dallas North Hotel
11:30 a.m.

March 25, Thursday
Radisson Plaza Hotel/Fort Worth
6:30 p.m.

April 22, Thursday
"Magic of a Mighty Memory"
Harvey Hotel/Crowne Plaza
11:30 a.m.

May 27, Thursday
TBA
6:30 p.m.

June 24, Thursday
Monthly Meeting
"Annual Awards Gala"
Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center
6:30 p.m.

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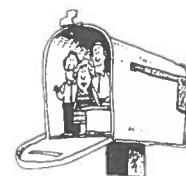
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4455 LBJ Freeway • Suite 1200
Dallas, Texas 75244-5903
972-702-3000
FAX: 972-702-3070
<http://www.mpiweb.org>

New job? address? phone number? e-mail address?

Report those changes to
MPI D/FW Chapter Office
fax 972-506-7485 or rcharnes@msn.com

and

MPI International Headquarters
972-702-3000



Keep your records up to date!

ISSUE	DEADLINE
March inserts due March 8	Feb. 19, Friday
April inserts due April 5	March 19, Friday
May inserts due May 10	April 16, Friday
June inserts due June 7	May 14, Friday

CURRENT Deadlines



E-mail copy (Microsoft Word 7/Windows attachment) to
gracie@eaze.net

President's Message

Personal Temporary Disability Emphasizes Importance of ADA

By Colleen A. Rickenbacher, CMP • Dallas CVB
President, MPI D/FW Chapter

Recently I had surgery on both feet—nothing critical by any means, but still enough to set me back for several months.



At the MPI D/FW December party, Rickenbacher wore orthopedic shoes and sported a cane decked out in holiday decorations.

During my temporary setback, I experienced a situation some people face every day—using a cane, a wheelchair or some disability that can slow you down. My first frustration was that everything takes so much longer to do. I walked more slowly and it took me “forever” to get to my destination.

My surgery took place over the holidays so I encountered the shopping malls in a wheelchair and several airports at their peak periods. Possibly December was not the best time to plan my surgery, but most people with disabilities do not have a choice of the month they can or cannot be challenged.

When in a wheelchair, I had to search for the elevators to get to another floor. They are usually further away and not always that accessible. When I finally got there, the elevators were usually full and I was self-conscious about taking up so much space. It's difficult to get turned around; it's easy to run into people—and it seems that everyone is staring at you!

I was made acutely aware of how we need to educate children about people with disabilities. Some children had a major fear of me and stared until I smiled at them or waved. Sometimes, their parents grabbed their arms and moved them away.

Remember, I am a person with no experience in a wheelchair and I am only a temporary user. But there are many, many people we encounter everyday for whom this is not a temporary situation. How do you react when you encounter them?

Your first response may be that you do not treat them any differently. Oh, yes you do!

First, you may wonder: Why is he/she walking with a cane? Why is he/she in a wheelchair? Why does that person look a little different?

Your second thought is perhaps one of pity backed by uncertainty. Should you offer to help them or should you just move on, pretending to ignore the situation? I was very surprised at the number of people who completely avoided me, walking out the door, leaving me struggling on the other side.

Because of all of this I decided to call MPI headquarters and the Research Center for information about Americans with Disabilities. I also contacted the ADA office in Houston and received an abundance of materials.

I bought the book, *A Guide To Planning Accessible Meetings* (\$25). It has a wealth of information and shows how far we have come in the past eight years. I also received information on Accessible Stadiums; ADA Guide for Small

continued on page 11

MPI

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL®
Committed to Educational Leadership

Meeting Professionals International is the world's largest association of meetings professionals with more than 14,500 members in 51 countries and 58 chapters and three clubs. MPI serves as the pivotal force in positioning meetings as a primary communication vehicle and a critical component of an organization's success. MPI leads the meeting industry by serving the diverse needs of members and nonmembers alike through its commitment to quality education, continuous improvement and excellence in meetings while upholding high ethical standards.

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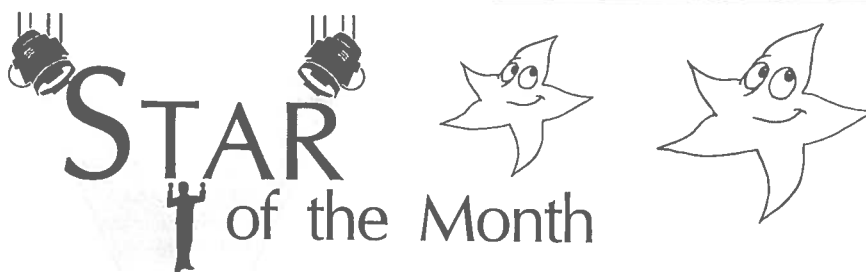
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"Star of the Month" is a recognition program honoring chapter members for involvement in committees and special programs. All Stars of the Month are eligible for a special drawing for two educational scholarship awards to attend the MPI International Conference or other MPI educational opportunities.



Joel Hueske
MPG (Meeting
Planners Guide)

After 23 years in the hospitality industry, you'd think that Joel Hueske would be tired of volunteering—not so. As a member of MPI since 1991, Joel has continued to give of his time year after year, serving on a variety of committees including The MPI Kids Charity Ball and Membership Committee. He is currently chairman of PO'D #9 (Professional Opportunities for Development), and is always willing to assist in any way possible. Hueske started his own business in 1986—MPG (Meeting Planners Guide)—a publication for meeting planners and the hospitality industry. He is known for his dedication, tireless energy and great follow-up.



To nominate a Star of the Month,
send a fax to Ann Stetson (Le Meridien Hotel), 214-855-1735.



**Awards—Almost Around the Corner!
Take Time to Nominate Worthy
Recipients for Annual Chapter Awards**

Each year MPI D/FW selects a Chapter Planner, Chapter Supplier and Chapter Rising Star of the Year.

The Planner and Supplier Awards are for lifetime contributions to the MPI D/FW Chapter, and are the Top Honors recognized at the Chapter level each year.

The Rising Star Award is given to a member who has made a significant contribution to the D/FW Chapter over the course of the year. They must have been a member for three years or less.

MPI D/FW is entering the Nomination phase for our annual Chapter Awards.

Which members of the MPI D/FW chapter do you feel have made significant contributions to the chapter?

Nominations for these prestigious Awards come from the membership. Nomination Forms will be available soon.

Please take a moment and nominate outstanding individuals for Supplier of the Year, Planner of the Year and Rising Star.

Award winners will be recognized at the June Awards Gala.

—Peg Wolschon
(Kerrville Bus Co./Coach USA)

LaDonna Gatlin: Tune Up Your Life with DO-RE-MI



By Anna Squire
Hackberry Creek Country Club

At the February 25 MPI D/FW Chapter meeting, tune up your life by listening to the "Do-Re-Mi's of Life" with LaDonna Gatlin, provided by Garrett Speakers International.

Enjoy her high-content keynote presentation using the musical alphabet to illustrate seven life-balancing principles:

- DO** DO the right thing
 - RE** REalize the potential of others
 - MI** MInd your mind.
 - FA** FAilures can be turned into life experiences
 - SO** SOlutions begin with me
 - LA** LAugh benefits us both mentally and physically
 - TI** TIme is our most precious resource. Use it wisely.
- ... and that brings us back to
- DO** We end where we begin by DOing the right thing because everything is based on character and integrity.

LaDonna is the sister of country music's famous Gatlin Brothers. She literally grew up on stage singing with her family. LaDonna is also a Grammy and Dove award winner. Certainly, the Gatlin name ensures great music, but her presentations go far beyond the music to deliver a powerful message.

Touring all over the world puts LaDonna on the road more than 100 days for conferences, concerts, retreats and corporate event presentations. Several years ago, she spent more than 60 days in prisons of Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas ministering to female as well as male inmates.

A Dallas resident, LaDonna has been married more than 20 years to Tim Johnson. They have two teenagers, Caleb and Annie.

Sponsorship

Think "tropical thoughts" while visiting with vendors from Puerto Vallarta. Puerto Vallarta Tourism Trust and their hoteliers are sponsors of the February meeting.

Visit with representatives from The Fiesta American Hotels, The Westin, The Sheraton, The Krystal Hotel, The Presi-



LaDonna Gatlin

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MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL®
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February MPI D/FW Chapter Meeting

"Tune Up Your Life"

—featuring LaDonna Gatlin—

Sponsor: Puerto Vallarta Tourism Trust; Featuring: Fiesta Americana, Westin, Sheraton, The Krystal Hotel, The Presidente Hotel, and La Joya de Mismaloya



Thursday, February 25

Renaissance Dallas North Hotel
4099 Valley View Lane, Dallas, TX 75244
Phone: (972) 985-9000

11:00 am Chapter Orientation—Acacia Room
11:30 am Registration—Cypress Room
12:00 p.m. Lunch and Program—Terrace Garden

—Complimentary Parking—

R.S.V.P. to Randie
by noon, Tuesday, Feb. 23
Reservations rec'd after the deadline
will be placed on waiting list.
•FAX 972-506-7485 (see fax insert)
•rcharnes@msn.com

Advance Registration \$24
Onsite Registration \$32
Guest Registration \$30



dente Hotel and La Joya Mismaloya.

The Tourism Trust/Aero Mexico will raffle off a 6-day, 5-night trip to the Fiesta Americana Puerto Vallarta hotel with round trip air via Aero Mexico.

Sponsor Representatives are Alex Zubieta, Director of Sales with Fiesta Americana Puerto Villarta, and Maria Escarfullery, Regional Sales Manager, Fiesta Americana Hotels.

The February meeting will be filled with tropical treats and tips to tune up your life!

February committee members are: O.D. O'Donnell, (Nightlife Talent), Anna Squire (Hackberry Creek Country Club), and Kerri Atterberry (Wyndham Anatole).

Facilities hosts are: Sherri Fahnentiel, Director of Catering, and Robin Wides, Senior Catering Manager.

February Host Facility

Renaissance Dallas North Hotel

The Renaissance Dallas North is situated in the prestigious and convenient North Dallas corridor, with its upscale business, shopping and entertainment district. Business centers such as Las Colinas, Park Central and Addison are nearby.

The hotel has 289 deluxe guest rooms as well as five deluxe suites and parlors.

Square footage of functional banquet and meeting facilities exceed 25,000 feet. The 7,500-square-foot Plaza Ballroom, the Terrace Garden and the Gazebo provide an exotic and beautiful lush atrium to make an event a memorable experience.

EDUCATION NEWS



Educational Opportunities & Upcoming Industry Meetings at a glance

February 15
CMP Committee
Spring Organizational Meeting
6:00 p.m.
Sterling Hotels & Resorts office
8222 Douglas Avenue, Suite 810
Contact: Mary Lynn Novelli, CMP
214-346-1886

February 22
Richland College
Information Session
"Travel, Exposition & Meeting Management"
7:00 -9:00 p.m.
Richland College
North of I-635 (LBJ) & Abrams Road
Contact: M. T. Hickman
972-238-6097

March 1
CMP Study Group Information Session
"How to Become a CMP"
6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
"How to Complete the CMP Application"
7:30 p.m. - 9:00 PM
Harvey Hotel DFW Airport
Fee: \$15 one session • \$25 for both sessions
Contact: Dana Nickerson, CMP
214-343-8067

March 9
Walk-a-While
see details at right

April 5-May 10
CMP Study Group Sessions
Mondays, 6:00 - 8:00 PM
Harvey Hotel DFW Airport
4545 W. John Carpenter Frwy (Hwy 114)
Fee: \$45 members
Contact: Dana Nickerson, CMP
214-343-8067

April 11-17 & 18-20
Gemelli 1999 Seminar & PEC Europe
Milan, Italy
Delta Air: \$638.87
Ground: TBD
Contact: Bobby Bulger
214-341-5876

For more information about any of these educational opportunities call
Marti Fox, CTC (BTI Americas) 214-905-8550

Walk-A-While in My Shoes

March 9 (Tuesday)
6-8 p.m.

"Putting it All Together—
The Specifics"

Hickory Street Annex

Fee: \$15 for members

*The dynamic "Walk-A-While" (WAW)
program is underway!
Mark your calendars for these sessions of
information, communication and fun!*



*remaining
sessions
March 9
April 13
May 11*

for more information: Patty Stern (Carey DFW and Five Star Limousines) 972-234-5466

Jan Pollard Award for Professional Growth



Having a problem funding the
WEC or another important
professional education event?
Apply for MPI D/FW's Jan Pollard
Award for Professional Growth.

*To participate on the JPA committee, apply for scholarship funds, or donate
prizes for monthly drawings, contact Gail Lemaire
(Hotel Inter•Continental Dallas), 972-789-3037.*

When longtime MPI D/FW Chapter contributor and previous board member Jan Pollard died in February 1998, MPI D/FW renamed the Professional Growth Award program—benefiting ongoing professional educational needs of chapter members—the Jan Pollard Award for Professional Growth.

Instructor Needed for Richland College

Introductory Access instructor needed for the four-hour Access segment of the Industry Automation course scheduled for April 17, 1999. The instructor must currently use Access in travel plans and have presentation/teaching experience. If interested contact M.T. Hickman, Program Coordinator, Travel, Exposition & Meeting Management, Richland College, 972-238-6097.

EDUCATION NEWS

Do You Want to Be a CMP?



By Mary Lynn Novelli, CMP • Sterling/Summit/Golden Tulip Hotels & Resorts
Chair, CMP Study Group Committee

If your dream is to be a Certified Meeting Professional (CMP), the MPID/FW Chapter can help you reach this goal!

A spring semester CMP Study Group is available for those planning to take the CMP exam July 10.

This is the only test date in 1999 so don't delay. Complete the enclosed insert and begin your plan to have CMP after your name.

The CMP designation, along with the CMM designation, is the highest recognition in the meetings profession.

CMPs are identified with a distinguished group who have demonstrated the experience and determination to be at the top of the meetings field.

CMPs are highly visible as they raise industry standards and increase respect and prestige of the meeting profession.

Are you qualified? You can be a CMP, if:

- You are currently employed in meeting management and have responsibility and accountability for successful completion of meetings.
- You have at least three years of meeting management experience.
- You successfully complete the application and examination process.

More information will be available March 1 at the "How to become a CMP

Information Session" and "How to Complete the CMP Application."

Then—on to a terrific six-week CMP study program April 5-May 10.

The final course will be the CMP University May 22-23, hosted by Harvey Hotel DFW.

For more information or to enroll, please see the enclosed CMP insert or call Mary Lynn Novelli, CMP, at 214-346-1886 or Dana Nickerson, CMP, at 214-343-8067.



CLC Deadlines:

Application Deadline: March 22
Examination Commitment: May 10
Examination Date: July 10

D/FW Spring Study Group:

Info/Application Session: March 1
Study Group: April 5 – May 10,
University: May 22-23

Meeting Site:

Harvey Hotel DFW Airport
4545 W. John Carpenter Freeway
Irving, TX 75063

MPI D/FW Mailing List and Labels For Sale



The MPI D/FW mailing list, which consists of more than 800 meetings professionals, can be purchased in ready-to-mail label format. The list, which is updated monthly, is sorted alphabetically, or by planner or supplier categories.

The cost is \$150 for MPI D/FW members; \$250 for members of other MPI Chapters; and \$300 for non-members.

Contact:
Randie Charnes,
972-506-7485 or
rcharnes@msn.com

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January Meeting Highlights

MPI D/FW Members Prepare to 'Overcome The Unexpected'

The January MPI D/FW Chapter luncheon meeting at the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport Marriott was interrupted when two armed men rose from their seats, fired weapons, and abducted one of the attendees. While the scenario was staged, the reaction of the attendees was not.



Christian D'Alesandro, protective services agent for ERASE Enterprises, stages a hostage incident. **Paige Braun** (Dallas/Fort Worth/Arlington Conventioneer) was the willing hostage volunteer.

Are you prepared to "overcome the unexpected?"

Kevin Mellott, president of ERASE Enterprises, discussed potential crisis situations and emergencies that provoke serious concern throughout the meetings industry. His company—dedicated to emergency response and safety education—boasts an impressive list of clients, including Microsoft, the Department of the Air Force, NASA and The White House Technical Staff.

Mellott's program featured unique interactive emergency management scenarios that may place meeting attendees directly in the path of both man-made and natural disasters—all based on real-life experiences of meeting professionals.

Mellott emphasized that the most important point for survival for individuals witnessing a hostage situation is "getting down and staying low behind cover—not running for the exit."

Video footage and sound tracks of approaching tornadoes provided the backdrop for Mellott's discussion about surviving natural disasters.

Unless you are prepared to deal with weather disasters, "don't plan a meeting or convention in tornado alley during the tornado season," Mellott said.

Mellott stressed the importance of designing a successful emergency plan, detailed in his handout, "The Critical Seven Steps of Disaster and Contingency Planning for Meetings and Events."



Kevin Mellott, president, ERASE Enterprises, is flanked by **Vincent D'Alesandro** and **Vincent D'Alesandro**, protective services agent.

Violence in the Workplace

Domestic violence is on the rise in the workplace.

- Last year, 47% of females who died in the workplace were murdered.
- Murder is the number two cause of death in the workplace for women.
- The attackers are disgruntled employees, clients, coworkers, and domestic partners of the victims.

How to prepare for workplace incident:

- Assess the site and your organization for potential incidents.
- Develop and enforce a comprehensive access control policy.
- Prepare the emergency statement to get down and stay low.
- Assign staff to specific emergency roles and responsibilities.
- When threats are indicated, use trained plainclothes officers.

—provided by VISTA



Photos by VISTA



Christian agents for ERASE.

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rity agents
SE Enterprises

Weather Emergencies

Tornadoes: Did you know...?

- The worst day for tornadoes in Texas history was September 20, 1967 when 67 tornadoes touched down
- Texas is annually impacted by tornadoes and severe weather
- Tornadoes may move at speeds up to 75 mph, allowing very little time to react

Be prepared for weather emergencies!

- Assess the site for seasonal storm issues
- Assess the site Emergency Management Plan and the areas of safe refuge
- Assign staff to specific emergency roles and responsibilities
- Acquire a National Weather Service alerting radio
- Prepare a disaster supply kit

—provided by ERASE Enterprises

Photos by VISTA



Jennifer L. Jolley (ERASE Enterprises) purchases a JPAPG (Jan Pollard Award for Professional Growth) ticket from **Lianne Pereira** (The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation). Funds from JPAPG ticket sales at the January meeting totaled \$252.



Table hosts will now be easily identified by distinctive MPI DFW chairback covers, complete with a pouch for handouts.

Showing off the black and bright gold covers are January meeting hosts **Kellie Faughn** (Holiday Inn Arlington) and **Melissa Parks, CMP** (H.D. Vest Financial Services).



Hall of Fame

Please salute the following companies and individuals for their contributions to the January meeting at the DFW Airport Marriott

Facility, Reception, Luncheon, Audio-Visual The Dallas/Fort Worth Airport Marriott

Steve Benkowitz
General Manager

Alice Bien
Director of Sales

Don Jacober
Director of Catering

Chuck O'Donnell
Director of Catering Operations

Klaus Meier
Executive Chef

Mark Garbarino
Director of Audio Visual Services

Speaker
ERASE Enterprises
Kevin Mellott

Presentation Support
J&S Audio Visual, Inc.
Kristi Carter

Entertainment
Encore Productions
Luana Stoutmeyer

January Program Committee
Gloria Hernandez, CMP
Holiday Inn Select DFW Airport North

Steven G. Foster
Circle R Ranch

Cindy Hamilton
CityPlace Conference Center

Julie Johnson, CMP
Lennox Industries Inc.

Bitsy Burns, CMP
H.D. Vest Financial Services

December Hall of Fame

... an addition to last month's listing:

Drawing Prize
The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau and American Airlines Group & Meeting Travel
3 night/4day stay at
El Conquistador Resort & Country Club
with airline tickets to San Juan.

LF Dallas/Fort Worth Marriott
Director of Sales **Alice Bien**
welcomed MPI DFW members to
the January chapter meeting.

**Third Annual
Texas
Education
Conference**



November 5-6
Renaissance Austin Hotel

MPI Hill Country
MPI Houston Area
MPI D/FW

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carolmarksmusic.com



Booking Entertainment

By O.D. O'Donnell • Nightlife Talent & Management Agency

When planning entertainment, the first consideration is the date, venue, and time it will be needed. Next, select the type of entertainment your client prefers. Top 40, Pop, Country Western, Latin, Dixieland, Jazz, Big Band Swing or Rock & Roll, as well as Comics, Mimes, Card Readers, Caricature Artists or Celebrities are among the many available possibilities.

If you are looking for entertainment ideas or want something to enhance a particular meeting or event, an agent can assist you with creative and clever ideas. I have suggested having a C.E.O. enter the convention on the back of a longhorn steer, and once arranged to have the president of a company delivered to the stage at an outdoor event on an elephant.

Entertainment should blend in with the function's theme. For example, at a company picnic, a petting zoo along with clowns, mimes and street musicians might be appropriate.

Be sure to discuss what the entertainers will wear, style of music, length of sets and breaks. I usually recommend a dressing room where the band can relax or get something to drink. It's a good idea to provide light beverages and snacks for the entertainers. These policies should be detailed in writing.

An important key to success in selecting and providing entertainment is working with a competent full-time agent. A good agent offers solutions, not problems. A good agent is able to save the client time and money, as well as make creative suggestions. This allows you time to concentrate on making your event the best ever.

Call for Additional Nominations 1999-2000 MPI D/FW Leadership Roster Underway

By Gregory Pynes
Hand & Associates Mktg. Comm.

The MPI D/FW Chapter Nominating Committee is pleased to present a proposed slate of officers and board of directors for the board term of July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000. (See insert for photos and MPI D/FW biographies of each nominee.)

The Nominations Committee, which met Jan. 19 at City Place Conference Center, feels that the proposed slate will serve the Chapter well, as each candidate has expressed his/her willingness to serve.

This notice and the insert serves as an announcement of the upcoming election. The actual ballot will be mailed to each member in good standing in March.

This notice is in compliance with Policy & Procedures calling for any additional nominations to be made by the

membership.

This is your opportunity to nominate any chapter member in good standing who is willing to serve, and has the support of the employer, to any of the officer or board of directors positions as listed on the insert.

How to add a name to the ballot

Any member who meets the eligibility requirements as outlined in the Chapter Bylaws and Policy & Procedures (see Chapter Membership Directory) will be added to the ballot if 10% of the chapter membership in good standing sign a petition stating their desire to see the individual's name added to the ballot.

1. Contact Nominations Chair Gregory Pynes @214.770.1609 for a petition form and further instructions.

2. The petition must be returned to the Nominations Chair by February 25.

SPOTLIGHT: CHAPTER PARTNERS

"Spotlight: Chapter Partners" is a new feature recognizing various individuals whose companies support involvement in Meeting Professionals International by donating their time, talent and services to the D/FW Chapter. If you have participated in an MPI-sponsored event with donated/discounted products or service—and are interested in being a part of this Spotlight Series, contact Steven Foster (Circle R Ranch), 817-430-1561.



Ginny Paxton

Ginny's Gifts
1108 W. Parker,
#110
Plano, TX. 75075
972.881.3888
972.422.7202

Ginny Paxton's motto could very well be "pay no attention to that woman behind the curtain." Like the kindly professor in "The Wizard of Oz," she's one of those "behind-the-scenes" volunteers. You may never have seen the effort, but she's been working her magic on the MPI D/FW Chapter for almost five years.

An active member of many committees, including Programs, Membership and The MPI Kids Charity Ball, her chapter experience is a model of "return on involvement."

"When I joined MPI, I remember just picking people's brains for all kinds of information, everything from terminology to planning meetings to what kind of services were being offered," recalls Paxton. "I will forever be grateful to the MPlers who understood my need for information and were willing to patiently explain basic concepts."

Paxton was a fast learner. Six years ago her business was a small hospital gift shop. Today, she operates three stores which have expanded into gift baskets, florals, amenities and logo items. Once a "technology illiterate," Paxton now also manages her own website, which has helped grow her business on many levels, especially for her out-of-town customers.

"Our customer applications seem to become more varied every year as our experience expands. I've learned what works and what doesn't, and try to gently guide my customers toward success."

You might say Patty Stern was destined for "stardom." Certainly her participation in MPI D/FW has been marked by brushes with "star" power, highlighted at last year's Awards Gala with her nomination as a Chapter Rising Star. As chairperson of the Jan Pollard Award for Professional Growth Committee, Stern has been active in raising funds for member development, and her work on the Education Committee earned her honors as "Star of the Month" in August, 1997.

She also has managed time to run a prosperous business. Eight years ago she and her father launched a new limousine company, which they promptly christened "Five Star Limousines." In November 1998, the Stern's successful business united with transportation heavyweight Carey DFW in a stellar merger to produce a new locally-based transportation powerhouse.

"I'm really excited about the recent merger," says Stern, who will serve as Director of Client Services for the newly-created Carey DFW/Five Star Limousines. "Jay Allen (president of Carey) and I are confident we now have the ability to fulfill the needs in the corporate, meeting, convention and special event markets."

A new business opportunity can often mean long hours at the office—a scenario Stern's fellow MPI Education Committee volunteers hope won't keep her from continued participation with them. Her many generous contributions of transportation services have greatly enhanced member experiences in programs such as "Walk a While" and "Super Sessions."



Patty Stern

*Carey DFW and
Five Star Limousines*
8615 Directors Row
Dallas, TX 75247
214.638.5019 x243
Fax: 214.638.3208

President's Message: Americans with Disabilities Act *continued from page 3*

Businesses; Service Animals; numerous Fact Sheets and "Who Has Obligations Under Title III?"

The books provided valuable information including registration forms, temporary access remedies; space planning; communication access; braille printed materials; emergencies and catering issues. There



By the January MPI D/FW meeting, Rickenbacher had "graduated" to sturdy flat sandals but still depended on a cane.

is a lot more to it than simply asking on a registration form if a person has any special needs or requests.

Are you, your staff and co-workers prepared to handle all these needs? We must prepare our venues, facilities and staff to do everything possible for a person who may be challenged. We must treat all of our guests, clients and acquaintances

with the utmost professionalism and concern.

There are many seminars and programs on ADA and I encourage you to attend these worthwhile programs.

I also contacted and visited the Lighthouse for the Blind and they provided excellent information on the needs of the special people that they work with every day.

Think about the many people we encounter with special needs. Next time, just take a moment and give that person a smile or a helping hand.

For more information: Southwest Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center; 2323 S. Shepherd, Suite 1000; Houston, TX 77019; 800.949.4232/713.520.5785 (fax); or Contact MPI Headquarters Research Center.

Disasters



Now that the storm is over, could you hold your meeting in this building?

Disasters, in one form or another, can occur anywhere at anytime. Are you comfortable with the responsibility of preparing for all the contingencies that may affect your next meeting?

ERASE Enterprises is the premier provider of emergency planning and site services for the meetings and events industry. Our staff is comprised of professional emergency response officers who have experience in planning for and responding to emergency situations.

If you need help in preparing a realistic and effective emergency response plan for your next meeting, we are only a telephone call away!

ERASE

1-800-372-7330

ERASE Enterprises is a MPI member organization

Community Services Corner



Toiletries, Canned Goods, Women's Accessories Needed

By Stephanie Schroeder • Starwood Hotels & Resorts
MPI D/FW Internal Community Services Chair

In the spirit of Valentines Day, we're opening our hearts to those less fortunate.

During the month of February, MPI D/FW members will distribute the toiletry items collected in January to The Samaritan Inn, a homeless shelter for men, women and children in Collin County.

We will also collect canned food items for "Hope's Door," an organization which provides safe shelter, counseling and resources for abused women. Please remember to bring your canned food items to the Feb. 25 luncheon.

In March is the "Accessory Drive" for Attitudes and Attire, an organization that promotes personal growth for economically disadvantaged women by helping them develop self-esteem, communication skills and dressing them for the workplace. Start putting aside your scarves, jewelry, belts, and hair accessories, and bring them to the March 25 dinner at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Fort Worth.

The Community Services Committee appreciates your support, and urges you to participate in current and future events.

Questions? Suggestions? Call Stephanie Schroeder, (Starwood Hotels & Resorts), 972-238-1008.

**Please
bring
canned goods
to the Feb. 25
meeting**



Gifts will benefit
Hope's Door

"Hope's Door" provides safe shelter, counseling, and resources for abused women.

For more information:

Stephanie Schroeder (Starwood Hotels & Resorts), 972-238-1008 or
Delinda Dudley (Fun Factory Decorations & Special Events),
972-271-7444.



M.T. Hickman
Richland College
'Grapevine' Columnist

Heard it through the Grapevine!



Mitchell Cathey
Palomino Euro Bistro
'Grapevine' Columnist



Cheryl Beasley, CMP, was promoted from manager of event marketing to manager of community relations for *The SABRE Group*. In her new position, Cheryl is responsible for developing corporate strategy for

philanthropic giving and employee volunteerism

Elizabeth Baryshev was named planning and costing analyst, *MCI Performance Group*. Her former position was meeting planner, Compucom Systems.



Sherry Howell will marry Kenny Howard Feb. 14.



Jyll Bishop started her own company, *Hunting 1st Class*, a meeting planning company focusing on executive corporate hunting events.

Alainna Ryan, CMP, manager of corporate events, *Excel Communications*, had a baby girl, Emily Rebekah, 9 lbs. 2 oz., born Jan. 5, 1999.



Colleen A. Rickenbacher, Dallas CVB, has been named chair of the Certified Meeting Professionals (CMP) Board.

"Headshots! We wish we had more!" says *CURRENT* Managing Editor **Kristi Carter** (J&S Audio Visual, Inc.). If the *CURRENT* does not have your photo on file, mail one to *CURRENT* Editor Gracie Hilton, (The Write Stuff, 3020 Glasgow Court, Arlington, TX 76015). Want your photo returned? Just include a SASE (self-addressed, stamped envelope).



Janette Edwards accepted the position of manager of corporate incentives and travel administration, *VarTech Telecom*. Her former position was coordinator of regional incentives and special events, Dr Pepper/Seven Up Company.



After 21 years of working for the *Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention*, **Susie Tennison, CMP**, announces early retirement. Susie and her husband, Dan, who will retire later this year, plan to enjoy their retirement

by visiting Honduras, British Columbia, Hilton Head and Alaska.

Cindy Plotkin, *BTI Americas/WorldTravel Partners*, had her first child, Madeleine Helene, 7 lbs., 15 oz., on Sept. 7, 1998.

Steve Kemble, *Steve Kemble Event Design*, and **Linda Thornton**, *Fun Factory Decorations & Special Events*, won "Best Corporate/Company Picnic" as awarded by *The*



Special Events Magazine. Kemble also received the award for "Best Balloon Creation."

To submit items for this column contact
M.T. Hickman (Richland College) 972-238-6097; fax 972-238-6333, or mthickman@dcccd.edu; or
Mitchell Cathey (Palomino Euro Bistro), 214-999-1222; fax 214-999-1115.

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Advertising opportunities include second and third color additions, reasonably priced classified ads and inserts (a limited number).

Call Advertising Chair Gregory Pynes (Hand & Associates Marketing Communications), 214-770-1609 for details.



Gregory Pynes
214-770-1609
your link to
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advertising

TMKCB Seeks '99 Auction Items

By Pat McCain, CMP
Krisam Hotels & Resorts
1999 TMKCB Chair

Like the countless hours of committee work and the strong support of our charities, The MPI Kids Charity Ball Live and Silent Auctions play a very important role in the overall success of the event.



Pat McCain, CMP
Krisam Hotels & Resorts
Chair, 1999 TMKCB

In order to reach our financial goals this year, the 1999 edition of TMKCB will need to generate more than \$55,000 in auction sales.

I have been asked many times where our large array of fabulous auction items comes from. And I always respond with two short answers: The unbelievable energy of our Live and Silent Auction Committee and MPI members like YOU!

Thousands of hours of work by the Auction Committee go into searching out and soliciting items that will attract attention and provide the winning bidder with something that is both fun to purchase and meaningful. Their energy and commitment are extraordinary!

Others of you have goods and services that, like a child's most ordinary gift at Christmas, could turn into an unexpected treasure! And, the publicity your donation will receive may be another source of exposure that results in future business opportunities!

As the Ball draws near, your help is needed to provide auction items. Enclosed within this issue of the *CURRENT* is a donation form. Please take the time to make a donation or help our Auction Committee solicit a special someone who can provide what may be one of the most popular auction items!

If you have any comments or questions, please give me a call at 972-458-8692.



The MPI Kids Charity Ball

Produced by Meeting Professionals International
Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter

May 15

The Fairmont Hotel



The MPI Kids Charity Ball bear greets guests at the annual Love For Kids Christmas party.

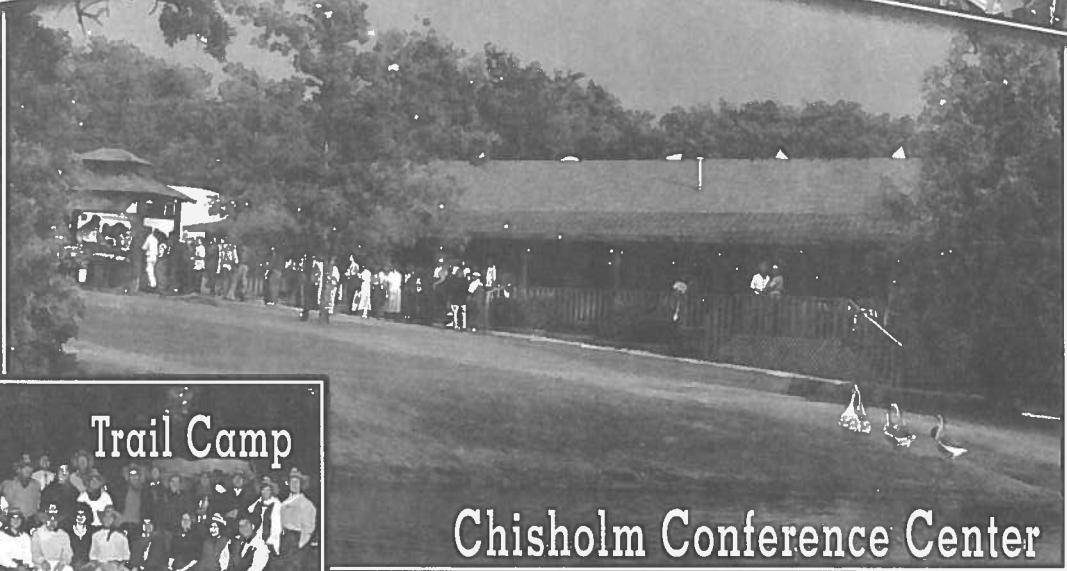


The MPI Kids Charity Ball Committee visits Annie's House.

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