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MPI

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Meeting Professionals International

May 2000

Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter

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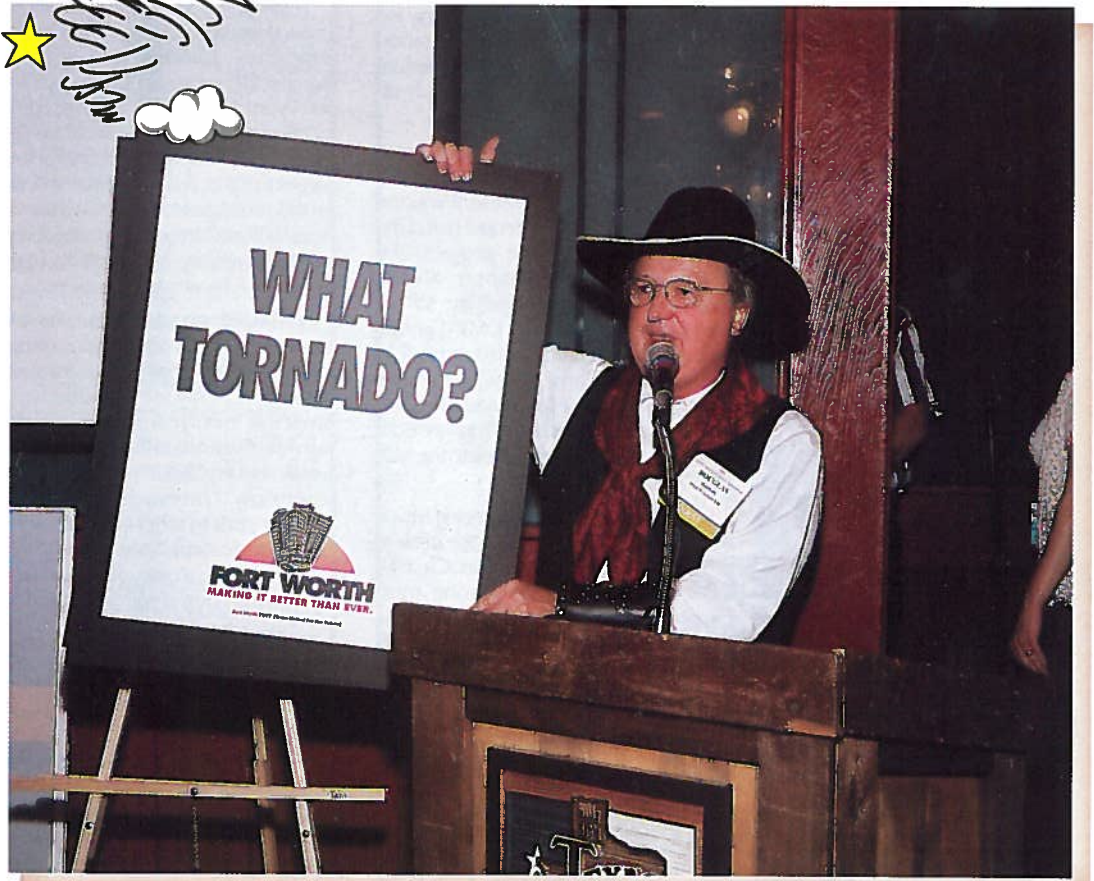
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Inside

- President's Message 2
- May Chapter Meeting..... 3
- Star of the Month 4
- Membership Info 4
- 2nd Annual CMP/CMM
Breakfast 5
- Tornado Hits Fort Worth . 7
- Family Picnic Wrap-Up... 8
- April Meeting Wrap-Up .. 9
- Meeting Tips 12



"It's Been A Little Windy..."



Doug Harman, President and CEO of the Fort Worth Convention and Visitor's Bureau, has a new advertising campaign in mind for the Fort Worth Area. Above, is just one of the numerous ideas presented during his keynote speech for the April Chapter Meeting. See story inside on Page 7.

May 25th • 11:00 a.m. • Doubletree Hotel • Dallas - Lincoln Centre

MPI

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL •
Committed to Educational Leadership

Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter

CURRENT

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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.

The *CURRENT* is published 12 times yearly for the D/FW Chapter of Meeting Professionals International, the industry's leading educational and networking resource in meetings management. Statements of fact and opinion are the responsibility of individual writers and do not imply collective opinion of the officers or members of MPI. The *CURRENT* and MPI D/FW Board of Directors are not responsible for the content of advertisements. Any complaints concerning an ad should be directed to the advertiser.

A Message from the President:

With just a month to go before I finish my term, the transition of responsibility to our 2000-2001 Chapter



Steven G. Foster, CMP
Circle R Ranch
D/FW Chapter President

President, Steve Kemble, is well underway. For months now, his soon-to-be-installed board of directors has been working to set the tone and the standard by which all future MPI D/FW accomplishments will be judged.

Typically an outgoing chapter president is firmly mired in a "short-timers" mindset at this junction; so close to the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel, one can't wait to pass the gavel and return to some semblance of a normal life. But, I enthusiastically look forward to working with Steve's administration because the plans being implemented are both fresh and exciting. This is truly an exciting time.

In the meantime, the current Board of Directors is busy finishing its important work and preparing to present you the results of its work in the second-half of the 1999-2000 term. One project, the completion of a Chapter Needs Assessment spearheaded by VP of Membership Tim Wade, CMP (Lennox Industries) and Director of Membership LeeAnn Harle (Renaissance Meetings & Incentives), will be further detailed at a chapter meeting, but its findings are both revealing and of significance to the MPI D/FW membership.

Needs Assessment Survey: Much effort has been focused in the area of programming and education. Clearly, the overall perception among most chapter members is that the monthly meeting topic cannot be "all things to all people" because of the diversity of our members and their varied needs/interests. We've concentrated on making our members feel as comfortable as possible, as well as promote more active participation.

The delivery system of the continuing education each month is one area which can be changed to better match the requirements of our members. This is of vital importance to Steve Kemble and his new board. Be assured that the monthly meetings and education offerings presented during his term will be unlike

anything you've previously experienced in our chapter.

Member Retention: I wish I could report the news was as promising in this area of chapter involvement, but the fact of the matter is, it's not. There are many reasons for the continuing loss of members - among them fierce competition by other professional associations and a paradigm shift within our own industry where many are leaving for careers with "dot com" businesses. The reality is the numbers have finally caught up with this association, resulting in the numerical downslide of the one-dimensional focus on membership growth for many years.

The good news, however, is this: even in a chapter as large as ours, with 840-plus members, we've always had a core membership (about half the membership total) which has traditionally done the work and represented true involvement. I believe it's the members "in the game" that the leadership of this chapter should focus our efforts on.

We know why people join MPI. We know why they get involved. We know why they choose not to renew membership in the association. The Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter has been recognized four times as MPI's "Chapter of the Year," a process by which educational offerings garner the greatest point total in scoring for this prestigious International award. As recently as two years ago, this chapter was honored by MPI with its highest award for Educational Excellence.

This tells me two things. One, we've been pretty "right on" when it comes to education in the past and as long as we stay focused on providing the best quality programs to our members, we're doing our due diligence in the vital area. Two, we can't worry about "noise" concerning retention rates, mathematical comparisons to other chapters or head counts and calculations. MPI D/FW has to take care of its own - its involved and active own. The rest will take care of itself.

Final Thoughts: Since next month's column will be my last as your president, and I know will focus on presenting to you the results of this year's effort to "Impact the Legacy," I wanted to recognize a few MPI D/FW members who have been working to do just that. These people made a commitment on your behalf. I hope you will take a moment the next time you see them to express your thanks.

Board member LeeAnn Harle is currently on maternity leave, expecting a new daughter this month, so she will miss the May chapter meeting and perhaps the June Awards Gala. She has served as this



chapter's government affairs liaison and committee chair for two years, and had a focused involvement on the Membership Committee this year.

Denise Hawkins (Stockyards Station) spearheaded the effort to produce last month's MPI D/FW Family Picnic in Fort Worth, acquiring many of the donated services associated with the event, including the facility, food and beverage, and a majority of the entertainment. Two other chapter members, Richard Pollak (Rainbow Entertainment) and Marshall Leak III (Entertainment Enterprises) also were vitally important in producing this event.

Dvorah Evans (Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce) assumed the chair of the Jan Pollard Award for Professional Development Committee, which holds a raffle at each monthly meeting and uses the proceeds to fund scholarships available to any chapter member for professional growth.

Tamra Fairbrother, CMP, chair of the Community Services Committee, launched an overwhelmingly successful toiletries drive at the March meeting. She also is among several chapter members to recently obtain the Certified Meeting Professional designation.

Congratulations to all on a job well done.

DON'T FORGET *CURRENT* Deadlines

ISSUE	DEADLINE
June	May 12, Friday inserts due May 5
July	June 9, Friday inserts due July 3
August	July 14, Friday inserts due August 7

May DFW Chapter Meeting

Thursday, May 25, 2000

E-MAIL ETIQUETTE: Who is reading your e-mail???



Who's been reading my e-mail?

E-mail is a reality in today's business world. It is here to stay rivaling phones, faxes, hand-written notes, letters, and memos. It is the connecting link in the virtual world.

Randy Milhorn, with marchFirst, Inc., whose professional career has been focused primarily on information systems, brings us back to the "real world" by looking at e-mail in the context of the business environment. Randy addresses the topic of e-mail etiquette from the perspective of business communication where formality and confidentiality are factors.

If you do not know who is reading your e-mail, you will want to attend the May meeting. Make your reservation today.

Our speaker is a member of marchFirst's strategy practice team. Randy's twenty years of professional experience includes exposure in oil and gas, federal government, banking, hospitality, manufacturing, software development, and professional services.

marchFIRST, Inc. is the new global internet professional services company created by the merger of Whittman-Hart and USWeb/CKS. Headquartered in Chicago, the company has more than 8,500 employees in 14 countries worldwide.

May Host Facility

Double Tree Hotel Dallas - Lincoln Center

With the excitement of the city lights all around you, the Dallas Parkway Hilton is perfect for travelers looking to be in the heart of the North Dallas business center. Just 15 miles from both the Dallas/Ft. Worth Airport and Love Field Airport, the hotel is a quick taxi ride from the airport. The Dallas Parkway Hilton is surrounded by ample free parking and is an easy in-and-out from major highways and tollways.

Located across the street from the premiere shopping mall, the Galleria, the hotel offers a comfortable atmosphere for weekend shoppers.

DIRECTIONS

Going East on IH-635, Exit Dallas Parkway/Dallas Tollway. At the split continue following Dallas Parkway signage (do not take Tollway). Go up ramp through 2 stop lights. Take a right into Lincoln Centre Complex.

Going West on IH-635, exit Galleria/Alpha Road (will put you on Inwood Road), cross over IH-635 - take a left at IH-635 East onto access road. Take a right into Lincoln Centre complex

May MPI D/FW Chapter Meeting

E-MAIL ETIQUETTE: Who is reading your e-mail???

Double Tree Hotel Dallas - Lincoln Center

- 11:00am— Dress for Success Clothes Drive Drop-Off
- 11:00am— Orientation
- 11:30am— Registration / Reception
- 12:00pm— Lunch & Program

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Luncheon sponsored by: **Hilton Sales Worldwide**

R.S.V.P. to Randie

by noon, Monday, May 22, 2000

Reservations rec'd after the deadline will be placed on waiting list.

• FAX 972-506-7485 (see fax insert)

• rcharnes@msn.com

• www.mpidfw.org

April

Star of the Month

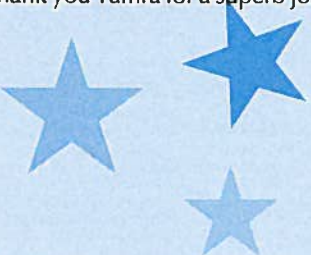


Congratulations to Tamra Fairbrother, CMP, as "Star of the Month." Formerly with the Ballpark Diamond Club, she is now an Independent Meeting Planner. Tamra has been a member of MPI since June 1997.



Tamra Fairbrother, CMP
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During that time she has served on the Education Committee, Program Committee and the PR/Marketing Committee. Tamra has done a most outstanding job as the Community Services Director. In March she chaired an extremely successful toiletry drive to benefit the Wilkinson Center. Brian Bruton from the Wilkinson Center said it best: "Tamra is contagious – her personality and drive fills a room." Don't miss her ever-inspiring "From the Heart" column in the Current. Thank you Tamra for a superb job.



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

MPI D/FW Chapter Membership Report

825 Total Members: 392 Planners • 410 Suppliers • 23 Students

15 New Members: 8 Planners • 6 Suppliers • 1 Student

60 Renewals: 24 Planners • 36 Suppliers

17 Drops: 5 Planners • 11 Suppliers • 1 Student

These figures reflect a retention rate of 69.33% — Membership data based on reports valid March 31, 2000

Galleria Gold Membership Recruitment Standings

Member	New Members Recruited
O.D. O'Donnell	9
Marguerita Neubauer	3
Phyllis Firebaugh, CMP, Sandi Galloway, Lisa South, CMP, Linda Vest, CMP	2

The following members have recruited one new member: Arturo Aguirre, Melanie Arguello-Hoo, Dawn Ballard, Heather Barton, Rajesh Batra, Carol Benavidez, Joshua Brown, Shirley Bruner, Bitsy Burns, Michelle Carter, Sherri Cook, Kellie Cote, Suzanne David, Sheila Dingess, Charlene Dykes, Ahsley Ewing, Wendy Ezernack, Tamra Fairbrother, Steven Foster, Betty Garrett, James Genette, Sally Goldesberry, Judy Hall, Sandra Harlow, Joan Henderson, Gloria Hernandez, Nancey Hernandez, Jane Hooker, Debra Lakin, Lynn Lewis, Marie Mahan, Carol Marks, Valerie Neeley, Mark Nickells, Andrea Oram, Konnie Patke, Kimberly Pearson, Sheri Pizitz, Gregory Pynes, Colleen Rickenbacher, Christina Salibo, Stephanie Schroeder, Marsha Singler, Patty Stern, Lynn Stone, Sonya Wickel and Esther Wigley

Grand Prize: \$500 – Let's Recruit for the Bucks!!!

Recruitment data based on reports valid March 31, 2000

Presentation of Survey scheduled for July Meeting

MPI D/FW Reports on Member Needs Assessment

The report was presented to the Board at their retreat at Circle R Ranch on February 13. The response to the survey was excellent with 28% or 224 surveys being returned. 111 suppliers responded while 113 planers completed the survey.

The purpose of the study was to assess the educational needs of MPI members, so that the chapter leadership can more effectively plan educational programs. Basic demographic information was included to assess the general make-up of the membership.

What are some of the demographics? A majority of our members (52%) have over 10 years experience in the meetings industry. 40% of our membership is in the 35-44 age group although an emerging trend shows that our members are becoming younger – with 30% of

our members in the 25-34 age group.

"What's really exciting is that these and other results are planned to be presented to our chapter at the July MPI meeting," said Tim Wade, CMP, Lennox Industries.

During the annual retreat, Wade presented the findings to the board of directors. Board members and invited guests then concentrated on the top ten problems or issues concerning the total membership (based on the survey). A few of the major concerns or issues of our membership include:

- New members need to feel comfortable at meetings
- Members could learn from each other in small groups or roundtable discussions
- More open forums between planners and suppliers

- Need for more in-depth training to help us (members) do our jobs
- Monthly chapter meetings need to be restructured for time efficiency

These ideas will be incorporated when planning monthly meetings, educational programs, and communications to members.

Plan to make the July MPI monthly meeting when more of this information will be presented.

"It is imperative that we communicate these results to our membership," said Wade. "They have spoken loud and clear. We want them to know they have been heard and that we are responding to these concerns."



CMP's and CMM's to be Recognized The Second Annual ChaMPion's Breakfast

The Walk A While Committee, in conjunction with the CMP Study Group Committee is proud to once again produce this eagerly anticipated and highly deserved invitation-only special event. The event, designed to honor and recognize all CMP's and CMM's residing in the North Texas area, will take place Friday, June 16th at the Hotel Crescent Court !

Our congratulations go out to the following list of newly designated CMP's

July 1999 Graduates

Gina Marie Ash, CMP
Kelly J. Carr, CMP
Phyllis Cox, CMP
Tony Cummins, CMP
Theodore Davis, CMP
Angela D. Eger, CMP
Leslie Kay Hamic, CMP
Sheila Mae Honore, CMP
George H. Jenkins, CMP
Charles L. Mayer, CMP
Tanja Nichols, CMP
Mary C. Nolte, CMP
Lianne Pereira, CMP
Carol A. Rees, CMP
Yvette E. Remschel, CMP
Jo Robinson, CMP
Diana R. Toney, CMP
Sandra Weed, CMP
Michelle W. Taylor, CMP
David R. Winter, CMP

January 2000 Graduates

Tamra S. Fairbrother, CMP
Claudia Greenlee, CMP
Nicole Christofilis, CMP
Megan C. Harwood, CMP
Darryl D. Leavitt, CMP
Valerie A. Lennington, CMP
Laurie L. Sprouse, CMP
Jolene H. Thrasher, CMP
Linda C. Thornton, CMP
Gail M. Grogan, CMP
Linda T. Leroy, CMP

Chapter CMMs

David Berkoski, CMM (1999)
Sally Goldesberry, CMM (1998)
Eric Johnson, CMM (1998)
Roxanne McCreery, CMM (1998)
Jennie McNeill, CMM (1998)



Good news for meeting planning...the next best thing to being there

The majority of the nation's largest companies still prefer face-to-face meetings and email is fast becoming the next-most-desirable form of communication. A Carlsbad, CA company, Office Team, recently conducted an independent random poll of 150 executives from top companies. The exec's communication preferences were:

- 44% face-to-face meetings
- 34% email
- 12% paper memo
- 7% voicemail
- 3% clueless managers who just don't know

Upcoming MPI D/FW Chapter Meetings

•
June 22, 2000
6:00 pm - Dinner
"Annual Awards Gala"
Hotel Inter-Continental
•

MPI

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL
Committed to Educational Leadership

Meeting Professionals International is the world's largest association of meetings professionals with more than 17,000 members in 64 countries and 58 chapters and six 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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Didn't meet in Vail.



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Vail is different. Far from the noise and smog of most urban destinations, a trip to Vail can single-handedly rejuvenate your group. After your perfectly executed meeting, you'll be able to hike, bike or hot air balloon to an entirely new perspective. Find out what hosting a meeting in Vail can do for you and your group. Visit www.visitvailvalley.com or call 800-775-8245.



MPI Members Experience Twister Trauma

by Steven Foster, CMP, Circle R Ranch

When two tornadoes cut their way across Tarrant County on March 28, most MPI D/FW members viewed the widespread destruction tucked safely away in their homes via televised weather reports. Some, however, found themselves caught in the path of the storm.

Four people were killed, one remains missing and is presumed dead, and 90 were injured in the storms which caused damages estimated to be as high as \$450 million. Approximately 200 Fort Worth businesses were shut down or forced to relocate, 171 homes were destroyed and 13,000 damaged. The memories are vivid for those who experienced the devastation first-hand.

Doug Harman, CDME, Ph.D, President and CEO of the Fort Worth Convention and Visitors Bureau, had just left his office in downtown Fort Worth for the short drive home. He knew from early weather reports a storm was brewing, but couldn't imagine how severe it would be.

"As I was driving home I looked back over my shoulder and saw a big, black cloud. There was lightning striking everywhere and transformers were blowing. It was weird," said Harman. He immediately returned to the Fort Worth CVB offices, passing along the way a

television and VCR that had been sucked out of the CVB's conference room by the force of the tornado, and arriving just minutes after the storm hit.

"The front office was full of debris. There was roofing material, insulation, black tar and I've never seen so much broken glass in my life. It was a mess. Most of our exhibits were blown away."

A large wall mural inside the CVB office featuring a scene from the movie, "Red River" with John Wayne was completely riddled with glass by winds estimated to be in excess of 125 mph. Another prized possession, an original framed movie poster from "Fort Worth" with Randolph Scott hanging in the conference room, was never recovered.

Barbara Stone, Director of Convention Services for the Fort Worth CVB, had perhaps the best view of the approaching storm. She was entertaining clients at Reata, an upscale restaurant perched on the 35th floor atop the Bank One Office Tower, a glass-enclosed building downtown which sustained some of the tornado's most serious damage.

"We had just sat down when suddenly everyone started moving over to the windows and pointing. I got up and looked out and the tornado was about a block away. It was a huge, black cloud that funneled down, just like you see in the movies. It was scary."

Stone, her clients and about 100 other

restaurant patrons were quickly moved into the building's stairwell, where they began a 35-story walk downstairs to the basement. It would be almost an hour-and-a-half before the Fort Worth fire department would exit them from the basement.

"It was really odd," said Stone. "While we were in the basement you couldn't hear or see anything, but when we finally came up and out on the street it was horrible. It looked like a bomb went off. There was glass everywhere, office furniture in the middle of the street, cars turned upside down. It was shocking."

Back at the Fort Worth CVB offices, Stone's car was among many that was totaled by the storm, as was that of her co-worker, Greg Staley, the CVB's Assistant Director of Communications. He had been alone in the office when the storm hit, first hearing the rain and hail, and then alerted to the real danger by the sound of breaking glass. He went to investigate.

"There was a lot of glass and debris circling the office," said Staley, who immediately went to the basement to wait with others already gathered there. "All the time I could hear this high-pitched squealing and we were watching the reports on TV. It was surreal."

He later emerged to survey the damage. "The destruction was very discriminate. Some items were totally damaged, torn right off the wall and other things were completely undamaged."

Across town in Arlington, former MPI D/FW newsletter editor Gracie Hilton was alone in her home when the tornado hit, knocking out the electricity. Her husband, Jerry,



The Bank One building sustained heavy damages

was visiting his father at Medical Center of Arlington and daughter, Laura, an attorney, was at work in the Bank One Office Tower in downtown Fort Worth.

"I heard the televised warnings about the tornado being spotted at I-20 and Collins, which was not far away," said Hilton. "Then we lost the electrical power. I just stayed in the interior of the house ready to toss sofa pillows over my head, just in case"

Eventually Hilton located a small flashlight and rode out the storm, alone and in the dark. "None of the phones worked because of the power loss and I couldn't get any calls out on the cell phone. I had no idea what was going on."

Although the tornadoes caused severe destruction throughout Tarrant County, the local meetings and tourism industry was fortunately spared. The Army Aviation Convention in Fort Worth continued after just a half-day delay, and work began almost immediately to repair damaged rooms at both the Worthington Hotel and Radisson Plaza Hotel in Fort Worth.

"We all were amazed there wasn't more loss of life, because the damage was pretty frightening," said Harman, whose office was reopened five days after the storm. "



Fort Worth CVB undergoes repairs.

Wrap Up FAMILY PICNIC



Center, Marshall Leak, III, with Andrews Media Service is presented with the an Award for sponsoring our Family Picnic event. Committee members are Esther Wigley (l) and Leah Belasco (r).



Carnival and Midway rides were part of the entertainment at the MPI Family Picnic.



Left: Committee Members for the event were Esther Wigley, CMP, Announcements, Sy Retsky, Independent Planner, and Leah Belasco, Independent Planner.

In a year where the International Theme for MPI is "A Matter of Balance," the MPI D/FW Chapter responded with a Family Picnic at Stockyards Station in Fort Worth's Stockyards National Historic District.

The event, held Saturday, April 8, began with a reception at the Grapevine Visitor Information Center. Early-risers were treated to a continental breakfast and Champagne Mimosas sponsored by the Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau. Then, everyone boarded the Tarantula Train for the hour's scenic ride to Fort Worth. A special drawing was held on-board the train and chapter member Wayne Walgren (Wordwide Incentives) won a night's stay donated by the Worthington Hotel.

Upon arrival in Fort Worth, the Tarantula Train was met by Balloon Clowns provided by Rainbow Entertainment, and the entire group



Diane Smith, CMP, Alcon Laboratories, receives a cow-town welcome to Fort Worth!

was escorted to a front-row view of the Fort Worth Herd, a collection of longhorn steers accompanied by cowboys, as they made their way up Exchange Avenue.

The Family Picnic officially began with musical entertainment by the Texas Tumbleweeds, an old-style country-western band, and a Hamburger-Hot Dog Buffet sponsored by Risky's Barbecue. Attendees enjoyed carnival rides, concession foods, face painting, guided hay-wagon tours of the Stockyards and more musical entertainment by DJ Marshall Leak of Entertainment Enterprises.

Attendees also had a chance to try and escape from the Cowtown Cattle Pen Maze, the Stockyards newest attraction, which features hidden stations within its walls that participants must located before exiting.

The event concluded with tours of the historic Stockyards Hotel and a reception in the Texas Suite.



Opening entertainment was the old-style country-western sounds of The Texas Tumbleweeds, sponsored by Rainbow Entertainment.



Face painters and balloon clowns were part of the children's activities provided by Rainbow Entertainment.



The running of Fort Worth Herd of Texas Longhorns were the stars of the parade.



Below: MPI Spectators were impressed with the proximity of the Longhorns on Parade.



April Meeting Wrap Up



Billy Bob's Texas was a huge hit with all members who attended the April Chapter Meeting: Fort Worth: Old West Meets 21st Century.

Left: Attendees go a little wild and get on board for a lot of fun souvenirs.

Below: Barbara Stone (Fort Worth CVB) presents Tamra Fairbrother, CMP, (The Meeting Planners) with April's Star of the Month Award



Above: The San Antonio CVB was the official meeting sponsor for April.

Below, Left: Astrid Koh-Stenzer (EXE Technologies, Inc.) and Diane Smith, CMP, (Alcon Laboratories) enjoyed the festivities, like bull riding - which appears on the right.



April

Hall Of Fame

Fort Worth Convention & Visitors Bureau
Doug Harman - FWCVB
San Antonio Convention and Visitor's Bureau
Coach USA
Billy Bob's Texas
Stockyards Station
Radisson Plaza Fort Worth
Ellington's Southern Table Restaurant

April Committee Members

Dirk Thomas, CMP, CHME - Chair - Radisson Plaza Fort Worth

Paige Braun - Dallas/Fort Worth-Arlington Conventioneer

Sharri Wilson - Billy Bob's Texas

Faye Cantrell - Galderma

Denise Hawkins - Stockyards Station

Barbara Stone - FWCVB

Peg Wolschon, CTP - Coach USA

Don DeFao - Radisson Plaza Fort Worth

Jennifer McDonald - Pier I Imports

Gia Staley - Healthpoint

Shirley Coleman - Crescent Real Estate Equities



Chapter of the Year
1989 • 1990 • 1994 • 1996

MPI

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL
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International Chapter Liaisons

The International Liaisons are appointed by the Chapter President to provide a vital communication between MPI D/FW members and MPI. Each liaison has a specific assignment and is responsible for providing information to chapter members on areas including Marketing, Government Affairs, Special Interest Groups, Public Relations and both the WEC and PEC Conferences.

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Legacy Committee Chair

Delinda Dudley
Fun Factory Decorations & Special Events
(972) 271-7444
Fax: (972) 271-7888

Part of the Platinum Series led by Steven M. Rudner

"Contract Issues That Lead To Litigation"

by Cindy M. Hamilton, Cityplace Conference Center

I had heard Steven Rudner at an MPI Chapter Meeting a couple of years ago, and I was struck by how practical his suggestions were for negotiating contracts. I wanted to attend this workshop because the hospitality industry is changing so rapidly, and I wanted to stay current regarding the latest laws and trends in hospitality contracts.

Once again, I came away with new information about ways that we could clarify and simplify our contracts. Mr. Rudner addressed the issue of "who has authority to sign a contract" by saying that the courts will usually find in favor of the supplier if it was "reasonable to believe" that the person was authorized to sign the contract. He also suggested that the best way to negotiate a cancellation clause is to get both parties to agree on a specific amount to be owed in the case of cancellation. Words like "estimated amount" and "contracted amount" are vague, and often unenforceable in court. The term "liquidated damages" means lost profits for the supplier, and the courts will only cause the cancelling party to pay lost profits. The supplier must never profit more from the cancellation than they would if the event had taken place.

Everyone seemed to walk away with something that they could take back to their offices and apply to their jobs. The Anatole did a beautiful job with set up and refreshments. There were about 80 people in attendance. I felt that I received far more value than the \$25 registration fee.



Alainna Palmer, CMP
Excel Communications, Inc.
'Grapevine' Columnist

Heard it through the Grapevine!



Mitchell Cathey
'Grapevine' Columnist

Dvorah A. Evans, director of conventions and tourism for the *Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce*, was recently announced as one of the twenty metroplex women selected as the Minority Business News DFW "Women Who Mean Business 2000". The award is given annually for hard work and commitment towards minority and women-owned business development.

Judy Benaroche Johnson, CMP has been promoted to president of *E. Harden & Associates, Inc.* Most recently, she was the vice president of meetings and marketing. Judy is a twenty-year veteran of the hospitality industry.

Barbara Edwards has joined *Southfork Ranch Event and Conference Center*.

Laura Yarbrough, CMP has accepted a position with *Excel Communications, Inc.* as project manager.

Tony Cummins, CMP and his wife, Lucinda, are expecting a baby girl on May 5th.

Kerri Atterberry, formerly with the *Wyndham Anatole Hotel*, has joined the *Adams Mark Hotel*.

Cyndi Martinez has joined *Doubletree Lincoln Centre*. She was formerly with *Intercontinental Hotel*.

Kristen Eliason, formerly with *Wyndham Anatole Hotel*, has joined *Pegasus*.

Fun Factory Decorations & Special Events has announced its official entry into the exposition industry through the acquisition of

JP Expo Services. In addition to full-service event planning, they now offer tradeshow booth materials and furnishings.

Please excuse the name error in last month's issue...

Heather Hersley, has joined the Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau as sales manager. She was formerly with *Southfork Ranch Event & Conference Center*.

To submit information to *Heard It Through the Grapevine!*

Please contact:

Alainna Palmer, CMP at
214-863-8926

214-863-8576 (fax)
apalmer@excel.com

or

Mitchell Cathey at 214/520-3901

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Upcoming MPI D/FW Chapter Committee Meetings

(For Educational Opportunities,
see page 4.)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

May 24, 2000

Wednesday @ 5:45 pm
Doubletree Lincoln Centre

June 21, 2000

Wednesday @ 5:00 pm
Hotel Inter-Continental
Contact: Steven G. Foster, CMP
(817) 430-1561
stevenfoster@mindspring.com

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

June 14, 2000

Wednesday @ 5:45 p.m.
TBA
Contact: Tony W. Cummins
(214) 922-0316
tlcc.dallas@att.net

FINANCE COMMITTEE

May 24, 2000

Wednesday @ 5:00 pm
Doubletree Lincoln Centre
Contact: Cheryl Beasley, CMP
(817) 931-7923
cheryl.beasley@sabre.com

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

May 18, 2000

Thursday @ 5:30 pm
TBA
Contact O.D. O'Donnell
(972) 789-9340
od@nightlifetalent.com

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

May 16

Tuesday @ 5:30 pm
Membership Committee
Renaissance Meetings
(2544 Elm Street, Suite 100)
Contact: Tim Wade
tim.wade@lennoxintl.com

P.R./MARKETING COMMITTEE

June 13, 2000

Tuesday @ 5:30 pm
Westin Park Central Hotel
Contact: Stephanie Schroeder
(972) 238-1008
stephanie.schroeder@starwoodhotels.com

COMMUNITY SERVICES

May 29, 2000

Monday @ 5:30-6:30 pm
Crowne Plaza North Dallas/Addison
Contact: Tamra Fairbrother, CMP
(972) 691-1335
tamra@themeetingplanners.com

It's More Than Just Hiring An Interpreter

International Meeting Tips

It takes more than hiring an interpreter or checking on special dietary requirements to plan a meeting for an International audience. It takes research and an understanding of your audience's culture.

Whether you are traveling overseas or your audience is coming to the U.S. you need to research everything from language and geography to details about customs and traditions.

Your lack of sensitivity could cost you the business deal you have been working on for months.

With an International audience or clients you need to consider the following basics:

- Research. Get a copy of Fodor's or Frommer's travel books. They explain customs and traditions.
- If there is a language barrier, hire an interpreter or provide headsets. Buy a pocket translation guide.
- If your audience does speak English, provide written copies of any speeches so they can follow along. If you are able, provide translations in writing of native languages.
- Partner with the staff of the hotel, conference center, or restaurants so you can work together.
- Be aware of travel time. Don't expect people to have a business

meeting after flying all day.

- Adjust meal times to accommodate your International guests. In many foreign countries lunch is the most important meal of the day and starts later. Buffets are an ideal solution to meal service, it allows various types of eating habits to be accommodated. Try to provide a few local favorites of your guests. Although foreign guests may enjoy a Texas B-B-Q, they usually prefer to have some familiar foods.
- Words and phrases may not mean the same in other languages or cultures. For example, a continental breakfast in the US is much more extensive than in Europe.
- Foreigners struggle with currencies and exchange rates. Provide a reference sheet on how to tip.
- If your meeting is being held outside of the U.S., plan for most things to take twice as long to accomplish. A personal relationship and trust must be established first before conducting any business. This will also affect your budget as it may require additional meals and entertainment prior to business.
- Avoid jokes, slang words or colloquialisms. They don't translate well, even when English

is a second language.

- Learn how to introduce yourself to your guests. Business cards exchanges can become a major blunder if done incorrectly. In Japan, for example to place a card into your briefcase, pocket or purse after receiving it is a sign of disrespect.
- Colors, numbers and types of gifts can create havoc. A Syrian guest would be offended by a gift decorated in blue, or white for some African countries. Knives as gifts for a Chinese guest is a symbol of cutting off the relationship. Muslims don't drink alcohol, so a gift of wine is inappropriate. The number 13 is good luck in Belgium. In Japan, if anything is less than 10, they sell them in odd numbers, for good luck; a tea set will have 7 not 8 cups. In Germany don't send a dozen, but 13 roses.
- Eye contact and hand gestures are important. The "ok" sign is offensive in some cultures. In Kuwait, you don't use your left hand for eating. In Japan, the eye lowered is a sign of respect.

Doing business Internationally is rewarding, make it work for you, be informed - your business relationship depends on it.


Keys to Successful Interpretations

The keynote speaker at your annual conference, trying to make a point, "Show me the Money!" Unfortunately, the Japanese attendees heard through the translator, "Display now your currency!" Hiring a well qualified, professional interpreter can reduce these embarrassing gaffes. Berlitz International offers the following guidelines:

- Give the interpretator the most up-to-date copy of your speech. Include a transcript of audio-visual presentation, handouts and any other materials.

- Prepare an advance briefing with the interpreter to answer any questions about terminology, meeting agenda, etc.
- To test the microphone, don't blow into it; it is amplified in the interpretators ears.
- Don't speak closely into the microphone, it will distort the sound.
- Keep your headset or award from the microphone to prevent feedback.
- If the speaker moves around, make sure to use a handheld or lapel microphone.

- Don't interrupt another speaker, only one voice can be heard at a time.
- Speak clearly and at a moderate speed.
- In the case of consecutive interpretation, pause after every two or three sentences to allow the interruptor to translate.
- A good interpreter will usually take notes while the speaker is talking, allow time for this.

Familiarize yourself with the culture of your audience; understand the social and business etiquette of your foreign associates. 



From The Heart

The MPI D/FW Community Service Committee has not only adopted The Wilkinson Center as beneficiary of our chapter's contributions but we have also



Tamra Fairbrother, CMP
THE Meeting Planners
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Flower Mound, Texas
75028
972.691.1335
Fax: 972.691-1336
tamra@themeetingplanners.com

adopted the slogan "MPI D/FW Chapter Has Heart". You displayed such heart in March during the Toiletry Drive and you continued to "Fill A Heart" at the April Meeting with your monetary contributions to the center. There is no doubt that you will again astonish The Wilkinson Center in May with

your kind clothing donations furnishing warmth and a sense of caring to those you will help.

Look each month as we display our "MPI D/FW Chapter Has Heart" goal poster in order to monitor our progress as we continue to "Fill A Heart" through monthly donations and programs until May 2001. All donations are tax deductible to the extent the law will allow and receipts will be furnished for your convenience.

"Dress For Success" Clothes Drive

May 25, 2000

Lincoln Doubletree Hotel

Drop off Valet Service for donations prior to luncheon

11:00am-12:15pm
(look for signs)

Gently used clothes and shoes for Women, Men and Children.

Place folded items in a plastic bag or

leave on hangers. (NO BOXES PLEASE).

Signs will direct you to the drop off site where The Wilkinson Center staff will unload your contribution and supply you with a receipt.

You will then self-park your vehicle and attend the luncheon.

NO ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT INTO THE HOTEL

If you arrive late, you may call Brian Burton (214) 821-6380 with The Wilkinson Center to set up a convenient time to drop off your delivery.

You may also bring any toiletry items you may have indented to bring during the March meeting.

Monthly Meetings are held the last Monday of each month at the Crowne Plaza North Dallas/Addison, 14315 Midway Road, Addison, Texas 75001, (972) 980-8877, 5:30p.m. - 6:30p.m.

Tidbits from the Top News from MPI International

Chairman's Honor Roll Nearing Conclusion

The 1999-2000 Chairman's Honor Roll Campaign officially concludes on June 30, 2000. An impressive number of MPI members are participating in this year's annual recruitment effort entitled *Reach for the Stars* with 3,604 new members already enrolled as of February.

MPI members who sponsor new members receive rewards for their efforts and the top recruiters are eligible for trips to *Ritz Carlton Hotels* in Berlin, San Juan and New Orleans.

Chapters with the highest number of new members and best retention rates receive scholarships to the 2001 Professional Education Conference - North America, including registration, airfare and hotel accommodations.

For more information, contact the Marketing Dept at 972-702-3050.

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FAX REGISTRATION FORM
MPI D/FW Chapter Meeting
“E-Mail Etiquette: Who Is Reading Your E-Mail???”

May Chapter Meeting – Doubletree Hotel Lincoln Centre - Thursday, May 25 – 11:00 a.m.

Fax form to chapter office @ 972-506-7485 or e-mail info to rcharnes@msn.com or use On-Line Registration via web site: www.mpidfw.org (preferred method of registration)

NO TELEPHONE RESERVATIONS ACCEPTED
Deadline: noon, Monday, May 22, 2000

*** Please retain the fax confirmation sheet and bring it to the registration desk the day of the meeting.***

MEMBER REGISTRATION: (Please print legibly)

I am a Planner Supplier Membership #: _____

Member Name: _____

Company: _____

Phone _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Web Site: _____

Pre-Paid Credit Card Express Registration: (Must include payment for guests)

Type of Card: VISA MasterCard American Express Exp Date: _____

Name on Card: _____ Card number : _____

Total Amount to Charge: _____ (Member Price \$27 - Guest Price \$30
Walk In/On-Site/Late \$40)

I agree to pay this amount according to my credit card agreement. No refunds for registrants who fail to attend.

Signature: _____

Guest's Name: _____

Guest's Company: _____

My Guest is a Planner Supplier

Guest's Name: _____

Guest's Company: _____

My Guest is a Planner Supplier

VEGETARIAN MEAL CARDS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE REGISTRATION TABLE
(SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR REGISTRATION RULES)

Registration Guidelines

Via FAX

1. Always use **BLACK INK**. Blue ink or pencil will not fax well.
2. Always print all information legibly. This will help prevent misspelled names.
3. Always give complete credit card account information; type of card, account number and expiration date. Again, write legibly.
4. If you pay by credit card and have a guest or guests, you must pay for them as well. Partial payment will not be allowed. If this policy is not followed, your RSVP will not be considered pre-paid.
5. If you pre-pay by credit card and become a NO SHOW, your fee will not be refunded unless you cancel before 5:00 P.M. on the Wednesday prior to the meeting.
6. If you pre-register but do not pre-pay and become a NO SHOW, you will be billed for your fee unless you cancel before 5:00 P.M. on the Wednesday prior to the meeting.
7. Fax reservation closes at 12:00 noon on the Monday before the event. **AT THAT TIME THE FAX MACHINE WILL BE TURNED OFF AND WILL NOT BE RECONNECTED UNTIL 9:00 A.M., THE FRIDAY AFTER THE EVENT.**
8. FAX RSVP's are not acknowledged - keep your FAX verification from your fax machine. All fax forms received are brought to the event by the Chapter Secretary. Without your verification, we will rely on our records.
9. **E-mail RSVP's** will be excepted after the 12:00 noon deadline on the Monday before the event, **providing they have an origination time stamp prior to 12:00 noon.** All e-mail RSVP's are acknowledged.
10. **NO TELEPHONE RSVP's ARE ACCEPTED!!!**
11. Pre-registered and Pre-Paid RSVP's will be held at the appropriate registration desk until 10 minutes after the meeting starts. At that time, any remaining RSVP's will be considered NO SHOWS and seats will be released to Walk In Registration desk.

Via E-Mail

1. Always give complete credit card account information; type of card, account number and expiration date.
2. If you pay by credit card and have a guest or guests, you must pay for

- them as well. Partial payment will not be allowed. If this policy is not followed, your RSVP will not be considered pre-paid.
3. If you pre-pay by credit card and become a NO SHOW, your fee will not be refunded unless you cancel before 5:00 P.M. on the Wednesday prior to the meeting.
4. If you pre-register but do not pre-pay and become a NO SHOW, you will be billed for your fee unless you cancel before 5:00 P.M. on the Wednesday prior to the meeting.
5. E-mail RSVP's will be excepted after the 12:00 noon deadline on the Tuesday before the event, **providing they have an origination time stamp prior to 12:00 noon.** All e-mail RSVP's are acknowledged.
6. Pre-registered and Pre-Paid RSVP's will be held at the appropriate registration desk until 10 minutes after the meeting starts. At that time, any remaining RSVP's will be considered NO SHOWS. The seats will be released to the Walk In Registration desk.

Walk-in Registration

1. Walk In Registration (On Site) is handled on a first come first served basis, regardless of a individual's status with the association.
2. Your fee will be collected at the time you register and will not be refunded if you cannot be seated due to space limitations.
3. Walk In participants will not be seated until 15 minutes after the program starts. All Pre-registered and Pre-paid participants will be seated first.
4. Walk In Fees are: **\$40 - Lunch , \$45 - Dinner**
5. There are no exceptions to the Walk In Rules unless authorized by the President or VP of Programs.

No Show Policy

A **NO SHOW** fee equal to the amount charged for the event shall be collected from individuals who have registered, but fail to attend. This includes monthly meetings, educational offerings with pre-registration and other events for which posted or faxed RSVPs are required for attendance.

Members with outstanding **NO SHOW** charges are not eligible for scholarship awards. Any reimbursement payments due to individuals with outstand-

Directions to Double Tree Hotel Dallas - Lincoln Center

Going East on IH-635, Exit Dallas Parkway/Dallas Tollway. At the split continue following Dallas Parkway signage (do not take Tollway). Go up ramp through 2 stop lights. Take a right into Lincoln Centre Complex.

Going West on IH-635, exit Galleria/Alpha Road (will put you on Inwood Road), cross over IH-635 - take a left at IH-635 East onto access road. Take a right into Lincoln Centre complex

ing **NO SHOW** charges will have the amount of the outstanding fees deducted from the amount reimbursed

NSF Checks

NSFs shall be collected from individuals and a fee of **\$15** shall be collected in addition to the amount of the original check. Any payment of **NSF** items that proves uncollectable will require the individual to make payment in cash, cashiers check or some other guaranteed bank draft.

Any member that has incurred three **NSFs** in one fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) will be required to pay all Chapter events with cash or other guaranteed funds for the remained of that year. In addition, any member with one or more outstanding **NSFs** shall not be eligible for scholarship awards and will have the amount of the outstanding **NSF** and bank charges deducted from any reimbursement due from the Chapter.

Credit Card Declines

Notice shall be posted at all events for which credit card payments are accepted stating that any declined credit card charges will be assessed a **\$15** fee in addition to the amount of the original charge by cash, check or a different credit card. If a second decline of a card is received an additional **\$15** fee will be charged and cash only will be accepted as payment.

Alcohol Policy MPI D/FW Chapter

MPI D/FW recognizes and supports the many legitimate uses of alcoholic beverages in the process of conducting our business and social activities. As a chapter, we also recognize that the use and consumption of alcohol at our functions carries with it the requirement to consume those beverages responsibly and in keeping with our professional code of ethics and conduct. We strongly oppose the abuse and misuse of alcohol. We further support those efforts that seek to inform our members of the issues concerning alcohol use and in offering assistance to any members seeking further information and/or assistance either personally or professionally.



The MPI Kids Charity Ball

Produced by Meeting Professionals International
Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter

kids.com

The 2000 MPI Kids Charity Ball benefiting
Love For Kids, Wipe Out Kids Cancer, Child Protective Services/Rainbow
Room and the MPI D/FW Education Fund

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**Be a sponsor? Donate a silent or live auction item?
Volunteer? Buy a table of 10 or individual tickets?**

If you answered yes to any of the above, then please contact **Marsha
Singer, Chair** as soon as possible.

Phone: 214-823-4370

Fax: 214-821-1856

Email: wmrsinger@aol.com

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 2000

HYATT REGENCY DALLAS

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kids.com is not an official website.
Refer to www.mpidfw.org for more information.

MPI

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MPI D/FW Chapter Education Committee Presents

Power E-Mail 101: A Workshop on E-Mail Use & Techniques

Thursday, May 25, 2000, Doubletree Hotel Lincoln Centre
LBJ Freeway and Dallas North Tollway

9:30 a.m. – Registration opens, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. Workshop

Need to become more efficient at using e-mail as a communication tool? Want to learn how to customize your e-mail system to suit your needs? Wish you knew why you couldn't open certain attachments? Frustrated with problems that you don't understand how to fix? If you missed this workshop the first time around, this is your opportunity to learn more about how e-mail software works and how you can use it to your advantage!

Guest presenter Erin Longley (ImagineEvents, Inc.) will focus on some of the most popular e-mail software packages -- Microsoft Outlook, Eudora, America Online and Netscape Messenger – and explore principles generally applicable to all e-mail users.

You can expect to learn more about:

- Sending attachments
- Customizing your mailbox using mailbox rules
- Maximizing preferences
- Creating signatures
- Using distribution groups
- Avoiding e-mail viruses
- Other useful shortcuts!

Register by Monday, May 22

Fax or e-mail information to Tony Cummins, CMP at 214-343-9838 or tlcc.dallas@att.net

NAME: _____ COMPANY: _____

PHONE: _____ FAX: _____ E-MAIL: _____

MPI MEMBERS: \$15.00 NON-MEMBERS: \$20.00 SMART CARD: \$ 0

Pay on-site via check made payable to MPI D/FW Chapter or pre-pay now via Credit Card (fax only)

DO NOT SEND CREDIT CARD NUMBERS VIA E-MAIL. PAY AT DOOR WITH CREDIT CARD

Pre-Paid Credit Card Express Registration: Type of Card: Visa Master Card AMEX

Name on Card: _____ Card #: _____ Expires _____

I agree to pay this amount according to my credit card agreement. No refunds for registrants who fail to attend.

Signature: _____ Total Amount of Charge: _____

**REGISTRATION FOR THIS WORKSHOP IS SEPARATE FROM THE MONTHLY
LUNCHEON. ALL NO SHOWS WILL BE BILLED!**