

Volume 28, Number 2  
March/April 2006

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# ROI is in Power of the Partnership



► **Gloria Nelson, CSEP**

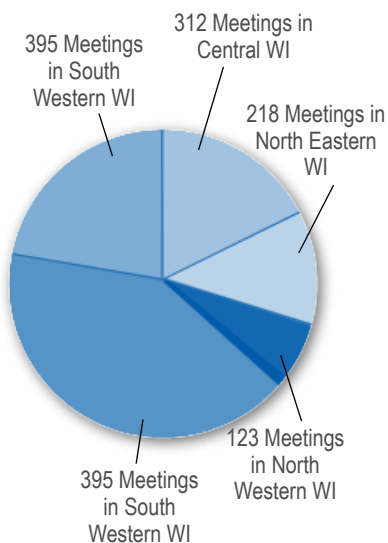
*Gloria Nelson Event Design, LLC  
Winneconne, Wisconsin*

**Strategic Alliances is a** dynamic approach introduced in 2004 to segue our need to define the power of meetings into impacting our educational programming through the generous donations made by both planners and suppliers inside and outside our statewide membership.

In 2004, a committee spearheaded by Connie Nau, CMP, along with Janet Sperstad, CMP and Cindy Foley, CMP quantitatively measured the buying power within the State of Wisconsin through a planner survey conducted in 2004. Approximately a third of our planner based members replied, which is impressive based upon typical response rates that are much lower in surveys of this nature, gleaning power-packed information.

This very closely mirrors the overall comparative

complexion of our membership on the planner side in our database, hence the data collected clearly was a strong representation of responses that could be extrapolated



across the board representing our planner membership base as a whole with its response alignment.

Additional data showed the average median age of our planner respondents was 40 with planning focus on education, trade shows, special events and corporate meetings with 50–500 attendees on average over a three-day duration.

Eye-opening information on meetings held in Wisconsin alone showed our local collective buying power from 31% of our respondents gave us greater clarity of the local and out of state meeting location trends and spending:

Our membership that responded controlled \$167M in spend. Further detail was broken out on a state-by-state basis, Caribbean and International destinations and even how they spent their investment allocations in other areas such as topline items expenditures that were somewhat surprising:

- Office Supplies, Binders, Folders
- Print Services & Publication
- Promotion / Incentive Gifts
- A/V Equipment & Production
- Restaurants
- CVB's
- Caterers

This dynamic team mined the information and garnered two extraordinary Strategic Alliance Partners underwriting our educational program this year, including OnVantage and Wyndham Hotels &

## RESPONDENTS BREAKDOWN

- 43% Corporate Sector
- 40% Association Sector
- 17% Independent Planners

# Brilliance Among Us

## SPRING EDUCATION DAY

However you  
define it, we at  
MPI are all over it.

**Spring Education Day** is nigh and the session offerings are nothing short of brilliant. Couple that with a quality trade show and valuable networking time and one can find no reason not to attend! March 23, 2006 is your chance to shine. Join in the learning at the Midwest Airlines Center in Milwaukee and stay for the reception afterwards at the Hilton. There will be airline tickets, hotel stays, and more to be won ... be there! Here is a taste of the brilliance to come:

### Breakout Session: Swimming With the Sharks

**Phillip Chard** will present his *Swimming With Sharks: Uncommon Conflict Management* session. Conflict management skills are essential for business professionals. However, mediation and other reasonable approaches fail with folks who are intimidating, manipulative, or narcissistic. Dealing with "tough critters" requires creative, high-impact methods rarely taught in conflict resolution training. Participants will learn to:

- Recognize shark-like conflict tactics
- Utilize intuitive intervention approaches, such as Mental Aikido and Pattern Interruption
- Employ behavioral flexibility
- Handle "impossible people"
- Manage enemy #1 in conflict — your fear

### Breakout Session: The New Economy

**Barbara Taylor Carpender** is offering a Platinum Series Presentation entitled *The New Economy: Life in the Trenches*. So, here we are in the "New Economy." How do we take what we've learned "in-the-trenches" and apply it to our business relationships so that we learn from each other and support our combined goals? This hot-topic program, based on the results of FutureWatch 2005, separates fact from fiction about day-to-day business relationship management.

Learner Outcomes:

- Recognize what holds true and what rings false in our relationships with our customers, team members, and industry colleagues
- Develop and grow your business relationships despite increased "bottom-line-pressure"

**Brilliant (bril'yent) [adj]** 1. shining brightly, sparkling; glittering; lustrous; 2. distinguished; illustrious; 3. having or showing great intelligence, talent, quality, etc; 4. strong and clear in tone; vivid; bright; 5. splendid or magnificent

### Breakout Session: Planning Healthy Menus

**Marjorie Risinger, CMP** (a Platinum Series speaker) will offer *Planning Healthy Menus for Today's Palates and Diets*. You can't please all of the people, all of the time, but you can try!!! Learn some tips for taking menu items and making them more healthy. What substitutions can you make to satisfy the Atkins, South Beach, Low Fat, and Weight Watchers people and still satisfy the particular palate? Learn how the foods you choose affect the people in your sessions. What helps to keep them awake and what puts them to sleep. How far does our responsibility as a professional planner go? This lively, energetic session will keep you awake and thinking. *(To read more about Marjorie, see her article on page 22.)*

Learner Outcomes:

- Identify foods that energize and those that drain your energy
- Use some tricks to give dieters foods they can eat and still not break the budget
- Understand how food affects your attendees.

### Keynote Presenter: Release Your Brilliance



As our afternoon **Keynote Presenter, Simon T. Bailey** will help you Release Your Brilliance and achieve new heights in your personal life and career. Release Your Brilliance is a high-impact, inspiring program that will teach individuals how to forge a new future through thoughts, words and actions. What is brilliance? It's an aspect of being human that can only be explained by the exceptional clarity that comes from the alchemical alignment of vision, passion and spirit.

Enlightened organizations that encourage team members to discover their unique purpose and release their brilliance reap lasting benefits. Brilliant team members are in control of their emotions and actions; unleash their imaginations; are committed to excellence; and experience a deep sense of enjoyment from the knowledge that they are enhancing the value of the organization. Team members who discover their hidden potential become inspired, re-energized men and women who let their brilliance shine through their work, relationships, and daily activities. The result is a rejuvenated organization where beliefs and behaviors are aligned to drive positive results! Individuals who attend this program will:

- Be released from self-limiting belief systems;
- Reconnect to their internal purpose and celebrate their distinctiveness;
- Rekindle the fire of hope, happiness and belief in the future;
- Develop an action plan to unleash their inner greatness.

# From the Editor's Desk

## GIVE CHANGE A CHANCE!

**Maya Angelou once said,** “If you don’t like something, change it. If you can’t change it, change your attitude.”

But, change is hard for a lot of people. And, it can be in the form of little things – say, taking a different route to work. Or, it can be major – changing a diet due to hypertension or pre-diabetes. And, it can be that somewhere in between; those things that feel major but really aren’t in the grand scheme of things – like speaking in public for the first time in years.

Here’s my own personal example – last summer my local newspaper was going to quit running the Cryptoquote and replace it with the latest puzzle craze – the Suduko. It was very well explained that this was a temporary test. It was only for a two week period. They weren’t canceling the Cryptoquote – just not running it for the next two weeks.

I can’t really explain how I felt reading the explanation; mostly because I’m embarrassed to admit now that I was nothing short than outraged. Yes, I was livid! How dare they change? What did they think I would work on while I made dinner? And, yes, I’m a puzzle snob – I mean anyone can work on a crossword or the jumbo word, but how many are going to stick it out with the Cryptoquote?

I e-mailed the paper first thing that day, as did many other Cryptoquote fans. We didn’t like seeing it go – even for just two weeks! We wanted change. We did something about it. The paper received so many calls and e-mails from unhappy readers that they started running both the Cryptoquote and the Suduko the very next day.

And, I can rather sheepishly say that not only did I do my part to make this change, I also changed my perception about Suduko puzzles. To add another irony that is making up a list for my life, I am crazily hooked on them. I work on it every day – before I even bother with any of the other puzzles. I do the puzzle in the paper and in magazines – I have books and even a handheld game. Life can be so funny that way! You’d never know that I was the one who wrote “Suduko is Sucko!” to the local newspaper.

Change is inevitable, though, and it’s the only way we grow. Ms Angelou is correct. If you don’t like the change, do something about it. If you can’t do anything about, adjust your thinking about it. And, not to step on Ms. Angelou’s toes, but I think she should add one thing to her thought – sometimes change is just plain good! Heck, yes, sometimes, you just need to embrace change! It might be scary. There may be some unknowns. But, that can be what makes the whole process wonderful!

That’s what happened to me when I became involved with the Agenda. At first, I just wanted to write articles. Give me a topic and away I

would go! That’s where my comfort zone was...and then I got tapped to be the Associate Editor. And, that evolved into a Co-Editorship and then into being the Editor.

I watched Gloria Nelson, CSEP, who sat in the Editor seat before me. She made it all appear so seamless, but I thought there had to be a catch – maybe it was rocket science and Gloria was a NASA engineer!?! I didn’t think I could do it – I felt entirely still too much the rookie to be able to make that level of contribution. And, my work schedule was crazy – how was I going to fit it all in?

Honestly, I struggled at first. I now realize it was mainly because I was fighting the change. Once I began to accept the role and understand it, I was then able fully appreciate this wonderful opportunity.

And, that’s right around the time I sat by Laura Cornell at a luncheon. She said that I was almost done with my Editor term – and I asked if I could do it for one more year. I spent the first year fighting the change and making myself miserable and not putting out a newsletter that reached its full potential. I’ve spent the second year changing my perception and more importantly realizing how fortunate I am to have gone through this entire experience. I learned to embrace the change and my role. And, publishing a newsletter

that can make my team, my Board leaders, my Chapter, and I proud! I have grown professionally and personally based on the MPI volunteer experience, and I’m so pleased to be able to say that. I needed to go full circle with the change cycle before I could really appreciate it.

We have some more changes coming soon to the Agenda – changes that should be embraced. The May/June issue will be the last one with me as the Editor. We’ll soon be welcoming Marie Johnson to the helm as Editor – and, she’s going to do a fantastic job! Marie has excellent editing skills and has made some wonderful connections within the organization. Although I will be a little sad at no longer being so involved with the Agenda – and thus, its readers – I am much more excited about how Marie can take this publication to the next level and beyond.

There will also be changes at the Board level. Remember to thank those who have made their contributions and are now stepping down. But, more importantly, look at the ones that are serving or beginning to serve on the Board. Look at the expectations for them. Consider the changes each individual will have to make in his or her own life to satisfy and even exceed those expectations. Question, “What can I do? What can I offer to help with these changes?”

Ask yourself, “What change can I embrace to help make MPI-WI an even greater chapter?” ❖

► **Tami Gilbertson, CMP**  
WPS Health Insurance  
Madison, WI





## 2005-2006

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# Report on PEC-NA Professional Education Conference-North America



► **MaryAnn Mlekush**  
Magna Publications  
Madison, WI



► **Laura Cornell**  
Monona Terrace Conv. Ctr  
Madison, WI

*Note to readers: Laura will cover her conference observations for Saturday and Sunday and Maryann will cover Monday and Tuesday.*

**A delegation from** the Wisconsin chapter attended the 2006 PEC-NA in Charlotte, NC in January of 2006. Many arrived for the Saturday Chapter Management Forum (CMF) where the first of many mentions of the MPI Professional Pathways skills assessment was discussed. Take the assessment at [www.mpiweb.org](http://www.mpiweb.org) and our chapter could win for having the highest percentage of planner participation. Suppliers can and should take it as well!

The CMF provided an opportunity for discussion in round tables touching on a variety of topics. Chapter members from all over the world met to discuss best practices and share information on topics ranging from recruiting and retaining members to website and technology. There were too many interesting topics to attend them all, but we spread out and covered as many as we could.



*Kim Ball and Laura Cornell race to participate in a team building event.*

Sunday was the first formal day of the conference. This day started by a sign decorating contest which was an enjoyable experience. Our theme was "When you say Wisconsin, you said it all" and had the sign decorated in a badger theme. While we weren't recognized for our uniqueness, the best sign award was given to the Gulf States chapter as they did a really great job. We then went to the opening general session where MPI Chairwoman Christine Duffy introduced a panel of senior



*WI Chapter says it all*

*Continued on Page 5*

executives who linked the services of a skilled, confident meeting professional to the business bottom line. The session was billed as a “live news talk show” and really emphasized key issues facing the industry and the influence senior meeting professionals are achieving in their organizations. This was great to hear because the bad news was also delivered that we didn’t get chapter of the year. (COTY)

The COTY award for chapters with 251-500 members was awarded to the St. Louis Area chapter for their wonderful accomplishments. You can imagine our disappointment as so many put their blood, sweat, and tears into our submission for this year. Thank you again to all who do so!



*The Wisconsin Chapter was represented in full strength at PEC. Thanks to pc/nametag for hosting this event. Seated: Darryl Anunson, Gene Davis, Laura Cornell, and Kim Ball. Standing, Row 1: Steve Lorenz, MaryAnn Mlekush, Maggie Steffen, Sherry Lee, Marge Anderson, Carrie Jensen, Glenn Brill, Cindy Foley. Standing, Back Row: Jim Lee, Nancy Lund, Janet Sperstad, Matt Engel and Jere Foley.*



*Glenn Brill and Sherry Lee enjoy the MPI-WI Chapter Gathering.*



*Past MPI-WI Presidents at PEC are Janet Sperstad, Glenn Brill, Cindy Foley, Marge Anderson, and Nancy Lund.*



*MaryAnn Mlekush and Carrie Jensen, Magna Publications, smile for the camera at the MPI - WI Chapter Gathering.*

The opening networking reception at the Bank of Americas building diminished our disappointment. There were various ‘zones’ within this enormous building, which included a live band, a lounge zone, the hill-country zone, and the NASCAR zone. I thought that Kim Ball and I had a new calling as part of a pit crew, but our team time of 1.17 minutes needed some work. A professional pit crew gets their job done in 13 seconds. I can cross “changing a NASCAR tire quickly” off my list of things I’ve done in my life now, however.

Monday started off with the opening of the trade show. With over 300 booths, you could find resources for everything from linens to venues for hosting meetings abroad. It took us about 3 hours to walk through and visit all of the vendors, with a break for a Mexican themed lunch. The afternoon entailed more than 20 concurrent enlightening workshops and left that evening free for us to mingle or rest for before another information-packed day.

Tuesday was filled with more than 50 workshops that filled the entire day. There were great educational opportunities, and it was hard to pick just one session to attend at a time. The sessions were geared for both planners and suppliers and were ranked on what level of audience that they attracted, such as novice, intermediate, or advanced.

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# On The Mooove

► **Carmen Smalley**  
Quality Inn & Suites  
Madison, WI



Congratulations to **Gloria Nelson, CSEP**, for earning the first and only Certified Special Events Professional (CSEP) designation for the state of Wisconsin! Also, congratulations to Gloria for becoming a NICE Awards Finalist for “Best Nonprofit Fundraiser” and “Best Logistical Achievement.”

**Jody Roos** joined Wisconsin Bankers Association on January 16 as their Associate Meeting Planner.

**Tom Coleman** is excited to announce his new Senior Sales Manager position with the Lodge at Cedar Creek Hotel and Water Park. He started his new position at the end of January.

Congratulations to **Kelly Langenecker**. She was just elected to the Board of

Directors for both the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and St. Norbert College.

**Lori Fuhrman** has recently joined the team at the Four Points by Sheraton Milwaukee Airport. She started her new position as their corporate sales manager in December.

**Sue Lidstrom** has joined the sales team at the Chula Vista Resort & Conference Center in Wisconsin Dells, which is in the midst of a \$200 million dollar expansion project.

**Carmen Smalley** recently announced her wedding engagement to Brent Schaer. The couple is planning a wedding in October of 2007.

**Tom Coleman** and his band, The Bad Downs, are making their debut in Madison on January 27<sup>th</sup>. The band will

be playing at the Middleton restaurant/bar Cheeseburger in Paradise. For future dates and login on to their website at [www.thebaddowns.com](http://www.thebaddowns.com).

The **Oshkosh Convention & Visitors Bureau** is excited to announce that they have moved their offices. The new location is 2401 West Waukau Avenue, Oshkosh, WI 54904. The CVB offices needed to be easily accessible to the visitor. The proximity to Prime Outlets, the EAA Aviation Center and the new Country USA festival grounds make this a prime location. Another feature they are excited about is their offering to the visitor a 24-hour, 7-day accessibility to all of their Oshkosh information which was not feasible at their old location. ♦

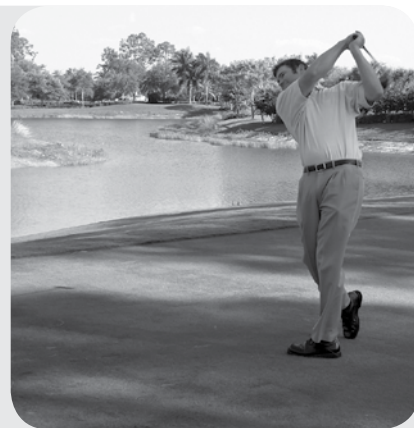
## Announcing....

## MPI-WI/WSAE 2006 Joint Golf Outing!

Mark your calendar for the first joint golf outing between WI Meeting Professionals International-Wisconsin Chapter (MPI-WI) and the Wisconsin Society of Association Executives (WSAE)!

The outing will take place on Wednesday, June 21, 2006 at Tuscumbia Golf Course at the Heidel House Resort in Green Lake, WI. The outing will begin late morning with an 18-hole scramble.

There are many sponsorship opportunities. Please contact Carmen Smalley at [csmalley@qualitysuitesmadison](mailto:csmalley@qualitysuitesmadison) or 608-274-7200 to learn more about sponsorship opportunities. This is a perfect opportunity to showcase your company to two organizations.



# President's Column



► **Kim Marie Ball, CMP**  
2005-2006 MPI-WI President  
Abbott  
Abbott Park, IL

## IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU...

Since becoming a member of MPI in 1997, many things have changed from headquarters that have allowed for the more effective management of our chapters. MPI is currently focused on the professional growth needs of its members and elevating the meetings industry to the executive level. MPI continues to strive and in 2006 headquarters sends the message *It's All About You!*

This theme resonates with me as I share a mid-year review on the Wisconsin Chapter. Our Wisconsin Chapter continues to distinguish itself in the upper echelon of the 66 MPI chapters. We are highly regarded at the International level and many of our past and current leaders are frequently called upon as industry experts. Our chapter is financially healthy and will join headquarters to let our members know *It's All About You!*

## Where We Have Been

★ **Membership – We continue to grow.** Our hands-on approach of talking or emailing each person has been very successful. Whether you are a new member or it is time to renew your membership, you will hear from the membership team. Our members continue to experience professional growth through leadership opportunities. The MPI family provides you a safe environment to learn and challenge yourself. Our chapter provides our members with a Return on Investment. They say the proof is in the numbers.

As of February 1, 2006, your chapter is proud to report:

- 340 members
- 58 new members since July 1, 2005
- A current retention rate of 74%, which rates us in the top 10 in the United States.

★ **Education – The quality of educational programs continues to receive excellent ratings on our surveys.** Are you completing the surveys? Your feedback is critical. There has been a strategic effort to identify your needs and insure quality educational programming each and every month.

Some highlights from our Education Division include:

- *The Fall Symposium, "Meeting Expectations,"* held November 10th at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison successfully broke new ground for our chapter. As you know, the Spring and Fall education day events have had a trade show component. What was different for November's event is that MPI managed and produced the entire event, which resulted in trade

*Continued on Page 8*



## Business and leisure connections made daily in Central Wisconsin

**Stevens Point/Plover** is located smack dab in the middle of Wisconsin, so you don't have to drive hours and hours to get to one of the best meeting, convention and retreat destinations in the Midwest.

Stevens Point/Plover has great new facilities — we can accommodate a meeting for five people to receptions for 1,500 people and just about anything in between. Nowhere will you find more assistance, better service and warmer hospitality.

Let Convention Central plan your next meeting or convention in Stevens Point/Plover. Make the business/leisure connection. Call for your Convention Central Planners Kit! **1-800-236-4636** or visit

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President's Column, Continued from Page 7

show revenues for our chapter! The incredible November team acted on the suggestions of our members and delivered a more intimate event with a greater qualified purchasing audience than previous fall shows.

• **The entire 2006 educational calendar is complete.** This means you will be notified of upcoming events and be able to register sooner. The RFPs for 2007 meeting locations will be sent out soon. All members are encouraged to actively participate in this process. Typically our meetings are held at one of Wisconsin's hotels, but the committee will consider different venues, including college campuses and corporate offices.

#### ★ Communications

• **Newsletter** - Our amazing newsletter supports the initiative *It's All About You*. Our newsletter (yes, you are reading it now) provides quality industry-related information and personal planner and supplier experiences.

• **www.mpiwi.org** - Did you know there will be a new, innovative Wisconsin Chapter website unveiled soon? I've had a sneak peek and you will be excited and proud of this new website. Stay tuned!

• **Community Outreach** - Our chapter rocks! We have consistently exceeded the expectations of those outreach efforts we have supported. Community outreach is an important part of our personal and professional growth as individuals. Please keep supporting these efforts and be grateful for all your blessings.

• **Advocacy** - A process is being implemented to change a State of Wisconsin website to include a more comprehensive definition of the role of meeting or event planners. This aligns us with international, as we strive for more recognition of our profession.

#### ★ Finance

• **Strategic Alliances/Fundraising** - Identifying and securing strategic alliance opportunities for our chapter continues to challenge us.

• **Special Events** - Even though most of us consider each monthly program a special event, what we are specifically referring to here is the Holiday Party, Awards Gala and Golf Outing. A joint golf outing with WSAE is scheduled for Wednesday, June 21 at Tuscumbia Golf Course at the Heidel House Resort in Green Lake. This new partnership will provide a more enjoyable experience for our planner members and deliver greater value to supplier members of both organizations. Please mark your calendars now as there will be something for everyone!

As you can see, our chapter is doing well and *It's All About You*.

Looking to the future...

★ **The current printed directory format will be replaced with an online printable version in 2007.** (You will receive one more printed version in 2006). The Board of Directors gave this initiative much consideration and several factors led to the decision with revenue and technology leading the discussion list. Many of us, myself included, have become accustomed to having the print directory at their fingertips. The reality is that advertising needs are different and revenues are harder to come by. Our printing costs are up and the true reality is that the print version becomes inaccurate before the ink dries. To that end, the

Continued on Page 20



# Financial Bill of Health

► **Paulette Heney**

*United States Bowling Congress  
Greendale, WI*



**Ah, it is time** to do a financial check-up for the MPI Wisconsin Chapter. I'm pleased to diagnose that at halfway through the fiscal year – we are on target! I wish I could say the same is true of my personal finances after the holidays.

November was an outstanding meeting and it shows on our bottom line. Kudos to all of our MPI team members that “weighed in” and made it happen. Their hard work and diligence has paid off!

I hope everyone who came to the Holiday party had a great time. I know I did, a little too much, as I decided to provide the hotel an additional resident for the evening. The Holiday party team did a wonderful job of organizing a fun and successful networking event. The evening earned over \$4,000 for MPI Wisconsin. Great job!

Currently, I am working with the Strategic Alliance team on some new prospects. This

*Continued on Page 30*



## SYNERGY.

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# Educate Yourself with MPI-WI Chapter's Help!

## Member Grants and Scholarships Available

**What is stopping you** from advancing your career in our meetings profession?

Meeting Professionals International and the Wisconsin chapter are dedicated to the continued education of its members, and work to create opportunities for those looking to enter the profession by working with academic institutions that are training tomorrow's professionals. MPI provides many opportunities to further your education. From MPI's Professional Education Conference (PEC) to a CMP workshop, to the classrooms of MATC and WATC, the possibilities are endless.

Let MPI-WI give you the start you need in this process – CASH! A \$500 MPI-WI Membership Grant is available to current MPI-WI members. These grants may be used at the discretion of the recipient for MPI membership dues and/or registration fees for the following professional development activities:

- PEC-North America
- PEC-Europe
- World Education Congress (WEC)
- MPI Institutes
- Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) exam
- Certification in Meeting Management (CMM) exam

More detailed information on the program, criteria for eligibility, and the application form can be found on the MPI-WI website under "Education."

Thinking about pursuing a degree in hospitality or meeting planning? MPI-WI also offers the \$500 Kristin Bjurstrom Krueger Scholarship for students enrolled in a course of study in the hospitality or meeting planning fields at an accredited college. All the applying student needs to do is carry a minimum of six credits per semester and maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.25. Please visit the MPI-WI website for complete details

on this scholarship, eligibility, and the online application.

These are both excellent opportunities for members and students to receive funding and further advance their careers in our industry. If you are going to broaden your knowledge in the meeting planning industry, apply for the member grant or student scholarship today. The application deadline of April 21, 2006 is quickly approaching. Don't miss out on this opportunity!

Special thanks to Former MPI-WI Member George Kalka with La Quinta Hotels for his initial notes from another article. ♦

► **Tom Coleman**  
*The Lodge at Cedar Creek*

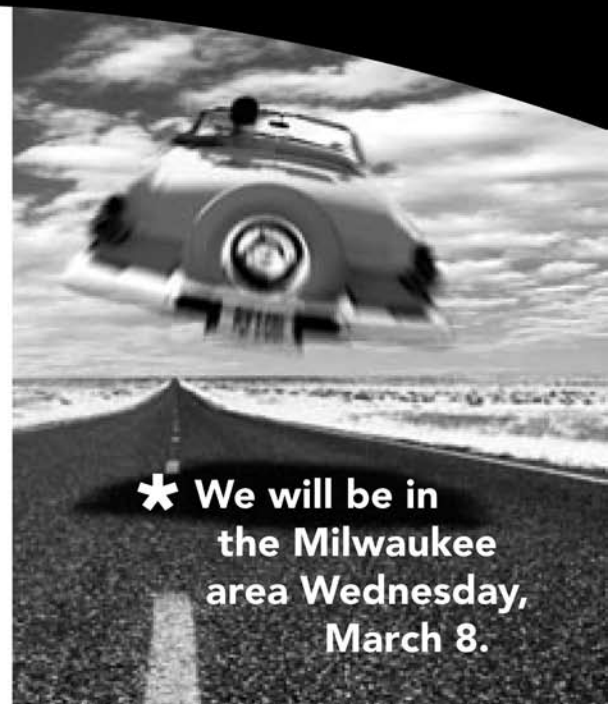


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**\* We will be in  
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March 8.**



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# The Non-Professional

► Meredith Rockafellow

*Madison Area Technical College  
Meeting and Event Management  
Madison, WI*



**Baby Boomers. Generation X. Generation Y.** Like it or not, up until now we have all had our labels assigned to us based off of our birth date. A new generation, however has just arrived, which for the first time since generation labels were given, is not based off of age. The new generation is Generation C, a generation based off of a mindset, not a date.

In Generation C, the C stands for content. With the wealth of information on the internet, and professional quality products being made for home consumer use, this group is made of people who feel that with a little study and creativity, they can be an expert. According to Trendwatching.com, “anyone with even a tiny amount of creative talent can be part of this not-so-exclusive trend.” Generation C-ers are broadcasting independent talk shows all over the internet, and publishing their own writings online, and creating their own music. Generation C is everywhere.

So how does this impact the Meeting Industry? Well among the many things Gen C-ers are moving into, Meeting and Event Planning is a growing career on their list. Websites claiming the ability to easily start your own business and make \$20,000 a month are popping up. They offer to give you all the forms you need to send RFP’s and sign contracts, and be a “professional planner.”

Recently I was told of an incident where a group of planners were at an event, when a woman approached them claiming to be a meeting planner. The woman started talking to them, and not knowing that she was talking to true professionals, said that meeting planning didn’t require any certain skills, you just had to be organized. When questioned, this individual

that these individuals are not a fair representation of a meeting and event professional. More importantly though, we should all realize that this is the time to show all, that a true professional is more than just a party planner. As MPI’s vision states, meeting and event planners are a “strategic component of organizational success.” We need to be showing our value everyday,

peer assistance and resources for continued learning. As programs in Meeting and Event Management develop around the country, it will also help in setting a standard on what curriculum should be covered, and what skills students should obtain while in their program of study.

Not only will Member Solutions help in developing the skills of planners, it will also help in developing the meeting and event industry as a recognized profession. It will be used as a tool to demonstrate to human resource professionals, what a true meeting and event professional can bring to their organization. It will show them what skills should exist when hiring, and what value they have. For these reasons and more, it’s crucially important to support MPI’s efforts to establish meeting and event planning as a solid profession. Just as a company wouldn’t hire someone as an accountant who had merely downloaded forms and read a book, they will also learn to know the difference between and meeting “non-professional” and professional.

Generation C is here. MPI Member Solutions is here. We have the perfect tool to help educate this new creative generation as well as those in business, on what a true meeting professional is. We need to set the standard for the “non-professionals” to be viewed as just that. A non-professional. ♦

**“A new generation, however has just arrived, which for the first time since generation labels were given, is not based off of age.”**

wasn’t even aware that a group like MPI existed.

The problem with this trend, is for each Generation C-er that calls themselves an expert, and then goes out into the field and fails, the meeting industry runs the risk of loosing credibility. When someone who has only read a website and downloaded forms goes out and acts unprofessionally and incompetently, it works against the push MPI is making for us to be recognized as true professionals.

So what can we do about this? For one we should all be aware that the number of “Non-Professional” will probably be increasing. So for those on the supplier side, when you run across this, please keep in mind

and with every contact we deal with in our professional lives.

To help us along this path, MPI is rolling out Member Solutions. It’s vitally important that we support and use this new resource. Member Solutions is a strong tool that will help meeting professionals in developing their career. Supporting and using this tool will bring vitality and strength to not only planners, but to our industry as a whole. It benchmarks not only the 13 key skill groups essential to being a great meeting planner, but goes even more in-depth to cover over 160 skills within these families, showing planners where improvements in their work can be made. It offers standardized job descriptions, as well as peer-to-

# Food for Thought

## Introducing : Chef Edward F. Howes

Heidel House Resort

### Chef Edward Howes

comes to the Heidel House Resort with a unique culinary background that is evident in the taste as well as the presentation of each of his dishes. Howes trained under the direction of Certified Executive Chef John Brantley from 1993-1998 with the American Culinary Federal Apprenticeship Program and has since been creating, in Chef Howe's words, an experience that the customer will not soon forget. Howes' success is largely due to the fact that he believes that it is important for a chef to clearly understand what the customer



wants, and deliver that relentlessly. Heidel House Resort is home to Grey Rock, Boathouse and The Sunroom restaurants, each serving up a different menu with

a different atmosphere. With the assortment of menu items, whatever your mood, one of these three restaurants is sure to please. During your visit to the Heidel House Resort, don't forget to take a ride on the Escapde yacht, get a dip of ice-cream from Pumphouse Parlor for dessert, or get a relaxing treatment at Evensong Spa scheduled to open fall of 2006. ❖

### Green Mango Relish for Walleye Pike

4 whole mangos diced small  
¾ cup finely diced red peppers  
¼ cup diced green peppers  
¼ cup finely chopped shallots  
½ cup chopped cilantro leaves  
1 tablespoon ginger puree  
1 tablespoon garlic puree  
1 tablespoon mint chopped



Mix all together and add sauce  
(see recipe at right)

#### SAUCE FOR RELISH

¼ cup grape seed oil  
1 oz of rice or coconut vinegar  
1 tablespoon of sugar  
1 oz of fish sauce

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Combined Locks, WI 54113  
(920) 766-7676  
kjahrens31@aol.com  
Supplier

## Diane Beckman

Student  
220 N Brookwood #121  
Mt Horeb, WI 53572  
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dbeckmann@stu.matcmadison.edu  
Student

## Karen Brown

Director of Publications & Events  
Wisconsin Transportation Builders  
Association  
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Planner

## Camille Dickinson

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Madison, WI 53711  
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ckdplus3@charter.net  
Student

## Matthew Engel

Director Meetings and Incentives  
Adelman Travel Group  
6980 North Port Washington  
Milwaukee, WI 53217  
(414) 410-8345  
mengel@adelmanmail.com  
Planner

## Sandra Jeske

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National Funeral Director's  
Association  
13625 Bishop's Drive  
Brookfield, WI 53005  
(262) 789-1880  
sjeske@nfda.org  
Planner

## Sharon Marzec

Marketing & Sales Director  
The Four Seasons Resort on  
Miscauno Island  
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Pembine, WI 54156  
(920) 252-0147  
sharon@thefourseasonsclub.com  
Supplier

## Kimberly Montanye

Sales Manager  
Holiday Inn West  
2747 South Eleventh Street  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009  
(269) 375-6000  
kmontanye@holidayinnkz.com  
Supplier

## Clare Mulcahy-Rudd

Charter Sales Manager  
Lake Geneva Cruise Line  
812 Wrigley Drive  
PO Box 68  
Lake Geneva, WI 53147  
(262) 248-5657  
cm@glcl.net  
Supplier

## Nedra Pierce

Business Development  
Thompson Investment  
Management  
1200 John Q. Hammons Drive  
Madison, WI 53717  
(608) 827-7310  
npierce@thompsonim.com  
Planner

## Taci Tolzman

4733 Hayes Road  
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tacitolzman@hotmail.com  
Student

## Joe Wimberger

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# 2006:

## The New Online Face of MPI-Wisconsin Chapter

► **Jere M. Foley II**  
Web Developer  
Dreamvelopment  
Madison, WI



► **Tom Gale**  
Marriotts of the  
Gulf Coast  
Racine, WI

**Experts from all industries** know that to stay competitive they must update regularly. New technology is constantly introduced, some of it cost-prohibitive, some of it exactly what the customer needs. With new technology often comes a new face ... a face that engenders the same level of commitment and service customers have come to rely upon, yet takes it a step further.

At the MPI-Wisconsin Education Day March 23<sup>rd</sup>, the MPI-Wisconsin Chapter Communications team will proudly unveil the arrival of the new Chapter Website!

The new design will showcase the Wisconsin Chapter while providing a user-friendly, easier-to-navigate site with even more resources than ever before. You can look forward to:

- Event and registration links right from the homepage.
- Every page will have a Quicklinks box that takes you to related articles and items.

- An expanded Career Center that includes a state-wide job board, national education calendar, degree program information, and other industry-related career information.
- A Media Center which will include an archive of chapter newsletters, press releases, links to industry news and a photo gallery.
- A sleek new design that highlights the chapter's strengths, accomplishments, and future visions.

As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions on the MPI-Wisconsin Chapter website, after all, it's yours! Please contact a member of the Communications Team Website Committee or the web developer:

Laura Cornell, [lcornell@cityofmadison.com](mailto:lcornell@cityofmadison.com)  
Allyson Kinney, [allyson.k@renttechnology.com](mailto:allyson.k@renttechnology.com)  
Tom Gale, [Tom.Gale@pchresorts.com](mailto:Tom.Gale@pchresorts.com)  
Jere M. Foley II, [webmaster@mpiwi.org](mailto:webmaster@mpiwi.org)



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# Supplier Profile: Jodie Moore

► **Jodie Moore**  
Sales Manager  
The Madison Concourse Hotel &  
Governor's Club  
Madison, WI



## How long in the meetings industry?

6.5 years

## How long in MPI?

New Member

## Teams or projects that you have worked on for MPI or would like to be involved with:

*Haven't had the chance to get involved yet, but possibly the Membership committee.*

## Where were you born?

La Crosse

## Family:

*Husband, Brian that works for Sysco Foods and our spoiled dog, Maya.*

## If I won the lottery I would:

*Buy several vacation homes and travel to visit friends and family.*

## Dream Vacation:

*Already had it...went to London and Spain last May!*

## Person you admire most and why:

*My husband for showing me experiences I wouldn't have had on my own.*

## Favorite Musical Group:

*Gypsy Kings*

## Where do you currently live?

*Fitchburg*

## Words to live by:

*Life is too short to drink bad wine*

## Favorite Pastimes:

*Hiking, Camping, Food and Wine*

## Special personal accomplishments:

*After graduating from Stout, I picked up and moved to Northern California, on my own. Quite the change from Wisconsin, but enjoyed all my years there.*

## What else would you like other MPI members to know about you?

*That I'm not "crazy" for moving from Monterey California to Madison at the start of winter! ♦*

# Planner Profile: Taci Tolzman

► **Taci Tolzman**  
Full Time Student  
Part Time in Restaurant Business  
Madison, WI



## How long in the meetings industry?

*I started the Meeting and Event Management Associate Degree program at Madison Area Technical College in August 2005. I start my internship February 2nd at Hospice Care in Madison. This will provide me real world experience in planning special events.*

## How long in MPI?

*I've been a member since November 2005.*

## Teams or projects that you have worked on for MPI or would like to be involved with:

*As a new member, I am interested in exploring the membership committee.*

## Where were you born?

*I was born and raised in Mankato, MN.*

## Where do you currently live?

*I moved to Madison, WI at the end of August 2005.*

## Family:

*My parents, Al and Becky. My dad is the Director of Sales and Marketing for Pepsi Cola of LaCrosse. My mom is a second grade teacher in Houston MN. I have 3 older siblings. Tate, Trish, and Todd. My dad's side of the family has tradition of naming everyone with T's so my cousins' names all start with T as well.*

## Dream Vacation:

*Opening up the door, walking through the Royal Towers Grand Suite at the Atlantis Paradise Island Resort, going to the balcony and as I step out, breathing in a breath of fresh air as I look over the gorgeous island of the Bahamas.*

## Favorite Musical Group:

*I am definitely a country girl! I listen to all types of music but I love my country music. Carrie Underwood, Rascal Flatts, Kelly Clarkson are 3 of my favorites.*

## Favorite Pastimes:

*Like most women, I love to shop. When I'm not doing school work or working, I enjoy putting together pictures to songs and making them into DVD's on my computer. When I go back to Mankato, I love hanging out with my family and my high school friends. I was a nanny back home so I love to go visit and spend time with that family as well.*

## Person you admire most and why:

*My parents. They have an enormous amount of love and care for people. They are both extremely dedicated to their jobs and have shown me that if you strive to achieve your dreams, they can come true.*

## Words to live by:

*Don't ever give up and always remember you may be only one person in the world, but you may also be the world to one person.*

## If I won the lottery I would:

*First I would buy an Acura MDX because it is my dream car. I would donate a portion of it to Saint Jude's Children's research center because I think what they do is incredible. With the rest... who knows!*

## What else would you like other MPI members to know about you?

*I moved to Madison for the Meeting and Event Management program at MATC. I have learned many things in the past 5 months and I'm very excited to keep learning about this exciting and fast paced industry. I love the stress and hard work that goes into planning events and meeting and I'm very excited to start a career here. I am looking forward to meeting all of you in the near future. ♦*



# Get More Than You Give:

## Why I Volunteer with MPI

► **Susan Arts, CMP**  
SC Johnson & Son Inc.  
Racine, WI



### First, know that I am passionate about this industry.

I love being in it, and cannot imagine doing anything else. I look back on when I was a clueless 22 year old, trying to find my place in the world. I found it in meeting planning, and then I found my "tribe" in MPI. Because of everything they have contributed to me, I have chosen to give back. Here are just some of the ways my involvement with MPI has enriched my life.

Networking opportunities. Not only do I get a chance to network with my peers in Wisconsin, I have had the opportunity to meet some of the biggest names in the meetings industry. One of my personal favorites was meeting Joan Eisenstadt at the PEC-NA a few years ago. We had a great conversation about teamwork, and participated in a workshop together. At last year's Awards Banquet, I got to meet Colin Rorie who has given so much to this organization, and hearing his vision for the future was uplifting and inspiring.

On a local level, networking with fellow MPI members has been invaluable. I have developed relationships with suppliers that I trust with my groups, and when I need to bounce an idea off someone else, I just pick up the phone or send out an e-mail. The advice and counsel I have received from my peers has been invaluable and continues to contribute to my professional development. Education. I am a true believer in life-long learning (something else I have in common with Joan Eisenstadt). The chapter

meetings continue to provide me with top-notch educational programs, and have stretched my mind in some very different ways. After the January meeting on Gender Communications, I began to pay attention to how I communicating with my co-workers and family to make sure what I was saying is what they heard. (It will remain a work in progress, I'm sure!)

Professional life. Quite simply, without my MPI involvement, I would not have my current "dream" job. When I was interviewing with SC Johnson, I was able to present my professional credentials with confidence, especially my CMP designation and my position on the Board of Directors. I knew that because of MPI, I was at the leading edge of the industry and had the professional education to back it up. It is not just a job – it is a career that deserves recognition and respect.

Personal life. Have you ever noticed that as you get older, it gets more difficult to make friends? You don't have that built in camaraderie that you had in high school and college. MPI has been a wonderful way to make friends ... and ones that understand what it is like to go on-site for a meeting – it's not a vacation, it's work!

So – what are you getting out of YOUR involvement? You will get more than you ever expected if you are willing to invest your time and talent. Go to the chapter website, click on the Get Involved link, and volunteer. You'll be amazed at what it adds to your life. ♦

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# MPI Member Solutions

## This Incentive is for YOU!

**As if we needed** further encouragement! MPI Members who complete the skills assessment via MPI Member Solutions, whether from PEC-NA or elsewhere, will be entered into a drawing to win designer luggage or one of three hotel packages. The drawing for the hotel packages will occur on March 31, 2006, and the drawing for the luggage will occur during WEC in July 2006.

### And, wait – there's more!

To further encourage chapters to become stakeholders in the success of MPI Member Solutions, a chapter contest will be conducted from launch in January 2006 through June 30, 2006. Based on the percentage of planner members within a chapter who have filled out their assessments at the end of the fiscal year, chapters will be entered into a drawing for each of the following:

- ▶ 30%-49% - Drawing for 10 free conference registrations (PEC-NA, PEC-E, or WEC);
- ▶ 50%-74% - Drawing for one of five free platinum programs;
- ▶ 75%+ - Drawing for \$2,500 in cash for chapter use.

**Log onto [www.mpiweb.org](http://www.mpiweb.org) to complete your skills assessment today! ♦**

*President's Column, Continued from Page 8*

board agreed that an online version of the membership directory would be developed for 2007. The online version will allow for new members, address changes and employment changes to be listed instantly and available for you to print. Join with me and embrace this change that will allow our chapter to technologically move forward.

### ★ Recently, headquarters changed the requirements for the structure of the chapter Board of Directors.

The following positions are required by International:

- President
- President-Elect
- Immediate Past-President
- Vice President – Finance
- Vice President – Membership
- Vice President – Education

Currently, your Board of Directors consists of 16 positions. Three (3) of these positions are vacant (due to resignations that were family related). During this transition, your Board has successfully managed to work as a team to insure leadership in all areas. As the 2006 – 2007 nominations process begins, our board structure will be reduced to 15 positions. This change will allow more effective strategic management and leadership to our members.

*Continued on Page 28*

## Convention Proclamation

*Whereas, La Crosse is proud to introduce the "Convention Proclamation" which has been created for convention attendees to discover and be entertained by our city's rich historic past.*

*Whereas, ladies and gentlemen and children of all ages will have the opportunity to enjoy our museums, galleries, high teas, historic homes, riverboats, antiques, old-fashioned malts, candy shops, a children's museum, and more.*

*Whereas, convention attendees will be given the opportunity to meet historic characters such as Mark Twain, Doc Powell, and La Crosse's very first sheriff.*

*Whereas, walking tours through shops housed in historic buildings beneath old-fashioned street lamps along brick-lined sidewalks will be open for all to enjoy.*

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Madison Magazine 2005 Readers' Poll, Best Hotel for Business.  
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# Planning Healthy Menus for Today's Palates and Diets



**Meeting Planners today** juggle a myriad of details to plan meetings that are appealing to our attendees that make good use of time, satisfy the goals and objectives, and also are entertaining. At the same time planners have to stay on top of new technology. Do attendees possibly expect planners to plan food and beverage functions that satisfy all of their dietary needs? How can we possibly plan meals that are healthy, when they aren't specified as such on the banquet menus? Have you ever seen the "heart healthy" symbol next to an item on a banquet menu? I don't think that planners have to plan for everyone's "kinky" diets, or we would be serving baskets of grapefruits, or, the latest thing is the vanilla diet. (Breakfast consists of coffee or tea and a spoon full of vanilla). What planners do need to plan are foods that energize, foods that help attendees stay awake, feel good, and learn more. Avoid the 1 o'clock slump!!

During Marge Risinger's presentation, one learns some quick tricks for taking menu items and making them healthier. What can you do to satisfy the Atkins, South Beach, and low fat dieters? What questions should you ask to get healthy results? In the meantime, let's take a closer look and see what is happening in several hotels, and how they are planning for the business traveler and the meeting attendee.

On the surface it seems like hotels are a little behind in planning healthy menus for banquets, so perhaps if we dig a little deeper, we can find out exactly what is happening in the kitchen and what is available to us, the meeting planners.

How many menus show a list of vegetarian selections as well as meats and poultry? Not many, but did you know that many hotels, such as the Hyatt Regency Long Beach, CA, have a weekly menu of both vegetarian and vegan selections. Ask Nancy Monte-Frye, Director of Catering and Convention Services, and you will discover such delectables as: STRUDEL OF GRILLED VEGETABLE, seasonally dictated, flaky puff pastry encased & tomato-rosemary coulis; GRAIN & GARDEN VEGETABLE MOSAIC LOAF, rough-cut tomato pan-jus; PORTOBELLO MUSHROOM STACK, broiled tofu, julienne garden vegetable & yellow pepper coulis. This is not a special request but prepared weekly as a part of the regular menu. All you have to do is ask!!

Mr. Nusrat Mirza, General Manager of the Renaissance Long Beach is very involved with his chef as an integral part of managing his hotel. He says that the word today is "OPTIONS," providing enough variety to satisfy all types of diets. His chef focuses on providing enough variety to satisfy all types of diets: carb conscious, low sugar; low fat, less than 3 grams per 100 gram serving, and low cholesterol. Do you know why vegetables prepared at banquets taste so good? Most of them have a butter bath. Now most anything dipped in butter tastes better, but that does not meet requirements for the low fat dieter, low cholesterol or the calorie counter. Mr. Mirza gave me an OPTION that can be served in his hotel, dip those vegetables in a little olive oil and use proper seasonings. They will taste just as good.

The Hilton Family of Hotels has launched "Hilton Eat Right®," offering meal choices that are rich in nutrition, and designed with such health-conscious attributes as increased protein and reduced saturated fats, cholesterol, carbohydrates and calories. These new healthy menu programs are featured in their restaurants and room service, but not yet on their banquet menus. "These initiatives are more about changing the culture of eating on the road than they are about fitting in with a short-term dietary program. They aren't trendy, low-carbohydrate diet or weight-loss programs; rather, they are composed of nutritionally balanced menu items that cater to a positive lifestyle," said Paul Keeler, VP of food & beverage, Hilton Hotels Corporation.

► **Marjorie Y. Risinger, CMP**  
Rosenberg & Risinger  
The Meeting Professionals,  
Culver City, CA

Marjorie Y. Risinger, MS, CMP is a Partner in the firm of Rosenberg & Risinger, The Meeting Professionals. She has planned meetings for many associations, corporations and non-profit groups over the past 30 years. She has taught Food & Beverage courses at Cal State Long Beach for the past ten years, is a frequent speaker at industry events. Marge is now the coordinator of the Meeting Planning and Special Event Planning Certificate program at California State University at Long Beach and is on the advisory board of the certificate program at California State University at Dominguez Hills and has been instrumental in the development of that program. She has written articles for many industry magazines. She is a past president of the Southern California Chapter of Meeting Professionals International and received the "Planner of the Year" award from the chapter in 1990 and the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004.

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# Supporting The Shaken Baby Association



The Wisconsin Chapter of MPI supports The Shaken Baby Association, Inc. as the chapter's spring community outreach effort. The Shaken Baby Association's mission is to protect the lives of children in Wisconsin through prevention, education and advocacy. Shaken baby syndrome is a term used to describe symptoms resulting from violent shaking or impacting of the head of an infant or small child. Approximately 20% of cases are fatal in the first few days after injury. The majority of the survivors are left with handicaps ranging from learning disorders, behavioral changes to profound mental and developmental retardation, paralysis, blindness, inability to eat, or exist in a permanent vegetative state. We'd like to share with you the story of Evan Coleman, the grandson of Susan Kainz, MPI member and corporate sales manager with the Wyndham Milwaukee Center Hotel. The February and March MPI Chapter meetings provided information on Evan's story as well as background information on Shaken Baby Syndrome.

We ask for your consideration of a gift to support this very worthwhile cause. Donations were made throughout February and still into March with 100% of the donation going directly to The Shaken Baby Association. Please visit <http://www.mpiwi.org> to make a donation online or bring your donation to the next Chapter meeting. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Susan Kainz at 414-291-4765 [susankainz@wyndhammilwaukee.com](mailto:susankainz@wyndhammilwaukee.com) or Sara Kern, sales manager, The Abbey Resort at 262-275-9082 [kern@TheAbbeyResort.com](mailto:kern@TheAbbeyResort.com). ♦

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# MATC Meeting & Event Management Program Has You Covered

► Jan Torkildson  
MATC Meeting Planners  
Club President  
MATC

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If you are planning a large meeting or event and you need extra support, help is on the way. Consider hiring a Madison Area Technical College student as an intern. Students in the Meeting and Event Management program at MATC are always looking for ways to enhance their educational experience and are seriously interested in supporting your meetings and events. We are highly motivated and may bring new perspective to old problems.

Internships must provide a minimum of 180 hours of project work and should provide a behind-the-scenes understanding of meeting and event management as well as hands-on experience in planning logistics for a meeting and/or event.

You may want to hire students to provide support at an upcoming meeting or event. Students are already very knowledgeable about

a number of logistical elements including registration, housing, food and beverage, and trade show management. We can ensure the level of quality you desire. You will be impressed with our skill level and excellent customer service skills. Learn more about the meeting planning competencies students bring by viewing our curriculum at: <http://matcmadison.edu/matc/ASP/showprogram.asp?ID=3003>.

The Meeting and Event Management Program at MATC is just four years old. We have established a membership club for our students and are looking for ways to provide additional hands-on experience in the meeting and event management field. Our students are knowledgeable in all aspects of meeting planning including: logistical coordination, trade show design, legal aspects including fire and safety requirements, room set-ups, floor plan designs, registration, housing, event orders, and many more functions.

If you are interested in providing an internship for a MATC student or are looking for additional support for your upcoming

*Continued on Page 30*



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# He Said, She Said.

## What Did You Hear?!

► **Linda DuPont**  
Aurora Health Care  
Franklin, WI



On January 5, 2006 the MPI-WI Chapter held their monthly educational event and a board retreat at the Radisson Milwaukee West. For a meeting held so soon after a hectic holiday season, there was a great turn out (including the 21 people who registered the day before the event.)

The Radisson Milwaukee West, playing host for the meeting, did an outstanding job. We started the day with a

wonderfully festive ethnic buffet. Katy Lederer, Director of Catering, and her staff had set up three serving stations: Italian, Asian, and Mexican, throughout the dining room. With food everywhere there was something for everyone; my personal favorite was the to-die-for guacamole.

After being well fed, we moved into the educational room where we were fortunate to be the first chapter to have the new "Member Solutions" presented to us by Maureen Lupo Hodgson, Manager of Global Chapter Relations from MPI.

The "Member Solutions" will be rolled out at the Professional Education Conference - North America in Charlotte, North Carolina. MPI has developed the MPI Member Solutions, as an initiative to define meeting planning as a recognized, respected profession which provides a lifetime of professional development for MPI members, and creates paths for them to evolve to positions of strategic influence.

One would think Maureen's presentation on the exciting new MPI Member Solutions would be hard to follow, but Tracey Weigel, founder and president of United

Communication Experts, LLC., was more than up to the challenge. Tracey is a linguist who educates people on how communication is shaped and impacted by gender, age, ethnicity, culture, and social status; and how these factors cause people to misunderstand and misinterpret one another.

Tracey's presentation, "He Said, She Said. They Heard... – Language and Gender," was not only educational, but also filled with humor and full of information that was usable immediately. Tracey looked at the role of gender in

*Continued on Page 30*



  
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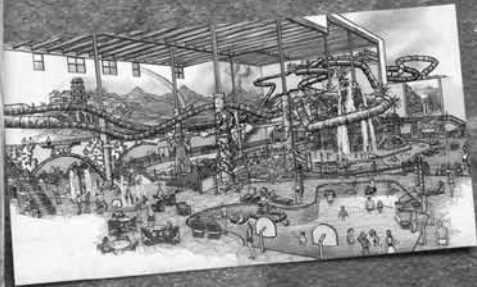
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# MPI Institutes: It's a Great Experience

► **Sherry Benzmiller**  
*Energy Center of Wisconsin  
Madison, WI*

**I was a bit apprehensive** about attending MPI Institutes in Whistler, British Columbia. I wasn't sure if I would learn what I needed to, make the right connections and be able to retain it all.

However, my apprehension was calmed a bit during my layover at the Minneapolis airport when I spotted what looked like a group of meeting planners. (Yes, we do look different!) I overheard the group talking about MPI so I went and introduced myself and made my first MPI Institute friends.

Institutes are a smaller learning event for about 150 people, with three levels of curriculum, then sectioned off into smaller groups. I was in a group of about 25 for the 4-day training. And, that allowed me to learn what others do in their positions, build trust, and greater sharing of ideas.

The educational component was great with top-notch educational teaching staff, pertinent curriculum – and looking out a window at breathtaking views of the mountains wasn't bad either. Although the classroom education was very important, I think a lot of my learning happened in the "off" times. Networking at social events and talking about our industry, sharing experiences and hearing first hand new ideas on how to handle difficult situations was very valuable.

Thank you to MPI Wisconsin for the opportunity to attend MPI Institutes with the help of the scholarship that I received last May. I hope that everyone gets the chance to attend this great educational experience. And to my new MPI friends at Land O'Lakes, Helmes Briscoe, PC Nametag, and Boeing, I hope our paths cross again. ♦

## *President's Column, Continued from Page 20*

We have over 100 members who have taken advantage of the leadership opportunities within our chapter. This is an extraordinary statement highlighting the character and passion of our members.

With that said, thank you to everyone who serves our chapter. Whatever your role – it is significant and valued – and your Board of Directors recognizes your efforts.

Remember ... I Ain't Too Proud To Beg. Please take an active role in your Wisconsin Chapter. Take responsibility for your professional and personal growth through the many leadership opportunities that exist. Join the effort of Meeting Professionals International to garner the executive recognition of the meetings industry. Your success is the Wisconsin Chapter's continued success. ♦

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# 1 for 1, 6 for 5, 13 for 10 and 30 for 20

**Y**ou might very well be wondering what those numbers mean. If you're a regular attendee at our MPI – Wisconsin Chapter meetings, you may have come face-to-face with our dynamic duo of Team Lead, Janet Fugate of the Janesville CVB and Diane Meyer from the Oshkosh CVB. Yes, those words will be very familiar as you're a regular contributor to our monthly meeting raffles! Your support makes all the difference in the quality of monthly meeting programs! This team is given a goal to sell each month. Those sales include the creative offerings of members and nonmembers, who have direct or indirect ties to the meeting and events industry. Items have included everything from a gift basket and functional emergency car kits to posh skybox seats at sports outings along with accommodations at luxurious hotels ... some even with heavenly or sleep number beds!

Since June 2005, the generous donors have contributed to our monthly raffles. And, credible sources are saying that it exceeds the revenue that a chapter almost three times our size garners. Say, perhaps a chapter just on the other side of

the southern state line? As a matter of fact, this team should receive a standing ovation for currently being at 133% of budgeted goal for this fiscal year as well!

Please make sure to say thank you to the following generous donors who continue to support MPI's fundraising efforts in making your programming experience better through their generosity, as well as the energetic team who is committed to selling tickets for these items at each monthly meeting. Thank you for the "Power of the Partnership" in your generosity to make our educational programming meaningful!

Thank you also for supporting the raffle so generously! Your support is vital to the success of this team. Whether you buy 1 ticket or 30 tickets, this raffle makes us all winners!



► **Gloria Nelson, CSEP**

*Gloria Nelson Event Design, LLC  
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*If we have inadvertently missed anyone,  
please let us know! We can make certain to  
give recognition in our year end appreciation  
of our final Agenda for the fiscal year.*



Resorts. Rini Ghose, Director of Marketing for OnVantage said, “We, at OnVantage, rely on meeting planners for our success. It is both an honor and a pleasure for us to sponsor associations like MPI-Wisconsin. And while we do look for ROI for our marketing investment, our reasons for sponsoring your organization were somewhat different. We are committed to supporting an enlightened and engaged planner community and this is a small way in which we can make this happen.”

As MPI changes its focus, the needs for repositioning and creating new paradigm shifts have become apparent. Shares MPI International President and CEO, Colin Rorrie, Jr. PhD, CAE, “Approximately 80% of MPI members receive the majority of their membership experience at the chapter level. Therefore it is critical for every chapter to provide the best education and networking programs available to meet specific member needs. Many of these programs would not be possible without the support of Strategic Partners, especially from the supplier community.”

“By being affiliated with MPI, strategic partners have a unique opportunity to reach the meetings industry’s most qualified buyers and influential

leaders. From showcasing products and services to media coverage to direct marketing, there are endless opportunities to grow their business with MPI. And, as the meetings industry becomes increasingly complex, being a partner of MPI is a great way to know and work at a more strategic level with planner counterparts.

One of MPI’s core principles is ‘The Power of the Partnership’ ... combining strengths of individuals for the greater good of the association and the industry. The relationship between strategic partners and MPI at the chapter, as well as international level, is a perfect example of the ‘Power of the Partnership’. In fact, we have an entire objective of our strategic plan designed for suppliers and making MPI the premiere marketplace worldwide.

“Interested in or know of a supplier that would benefit from the collective buying power and capturing the attention of a significant buying audience or a planner that wants to thank the organization for all they’ve learned through quality education? Contact Team Lead Courtney Muehlmeier from Midway Hotels, Kelly Dallman of Great Wolf Lodge or Paulette Heney, CMM, MPI Wisconsin Chapter VP-Finance to learn more about how you, your

company, or your preferred suppliers can enhance the learning experiences for our membership at the local chapter level through the “Power of the Partnership.” ♦

### **Financial Bill of Health**

*Continued from Page 9*

project is a hard one to get off the ground, plus we’ve set a very aggressive first-year goal of \$5,000. I’ll be ecstatic if we hit the mark, and even more so, if we exceed it. Building strategic alliances is vital to insure the success of our organization and will eventually become a cornerstone for future funding of MPI Wisconsin.

Again, for all who generously contribute to MPI Wisconsin, thank you! We couldn’t have achieved such a healthy outcome without you. If you have any questions or comments or would like to assist us in reaching any one of our goals, please contact me at 414/423-3332 or paulette.heney@bowl.com. ♦

### **MATC Program**

*Continued from Page 24*

meeting or event please contact Jan Torkildson, Meeting Planners Club – President at (608)-712-2308 or email [jantorkildson@yahoo.com](mailto:jantorkildson@yahoo.com). You may also contact Janet Sperstad, CMP at (608) 246-6585 or email [jsperstad@matcmadison.edu](mailto:jsperstad@matcmadison.edu). ♦

The New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau sponsored Tuesdays lunch. We were presented with many facts on the progress of New Orleans. Their slogan “Make Way for the Re-Birth” emulates New Orleans. Although it will never be the same, it will be better than ever! They already have many meetings booked including PEC-NA, January 21-23, 2007. Show your industry support and mark your calendars now! If you like jazz, you will have wished you were there – we were treated to the smooth sounds of Irvin Mayfield and The New Orleans Jazz Orchestra.

The theme of Tuesday night’s closing gala was “Once in a Blue Moon” and featured singer Chris Isaak. There was a variety of food, elegant ice sculptures, and light blue hydrangea centerpieces highlighted on all of the tables. If you were interested in more relaxed seating, you could have taken advantage of the comfortable couches provided in a lounge setting. There was a mixture of entertainment from acrobatics to sitting in a photo booth and getting your picture taken.

PEC-NA was a worthwhile experience and one we’ll never forget! ♦

### **He Said, She Said**

*Continued from Page 26*

relation to communication and discussed the interactive relationship among gender, language, thought & culture; and the ways communication creates and perpetuates gender identities and gender interaction. Now this sounds complicated, but Tracey

presented it in ways that were so familiar we could all relate to it. Using real life cases, Tracey had us testing ourselves on female/male language and exploring how we interpret others. Our time spent with Tracey was educational, entertaining and thought provoking. (Do I really speak with brain-wired female language??)

Our day ended on a winery note. David Breen from Estates Wines provided a wine education/tasting for our members. David gave a short educational introduction to wines and answered a few questions from group. We then proceeded to the reception area where David had worked with Katy to pair wines and food together for an

enhanced tasting experience. David, keeping with our ethnic flavor from lunch, had wines from several different countries to sample.

One left the January MPI-WI Chapter meeting having been well dined, wined, and educated. ♦

## Healthy Eating

Continued from Page 22

Paul Scott, North America Food & Beverage, Starwood Hotels and Resorts explains that Starwood does not have a standardized "healthy dining" menu due to varied interpretations of what that is. "Our chefs are quite versed and prepared to customize countless specified 'healthy' offerings for our clients as we feel it is not a 'one size fits all'."

So here we are, back to "What questions to ask." Is there a lighter fare besides cold salads? Check out the restaurant menus. Do they have "Heart Healthy" items? Why not the Banquet Menus?

The American Cancer Society is ahead of the game. In 2000 they published a booklet, titled "Meeting Well, a tool for Planning Healthy Meetings and Events." This booklet was

designed for all of their meeting planners around the country and they also have seminars for other organizations which includes this information. One of the handouts at Marge's presentation will outline some simple changes to provide your attendees with power-packed nutrients.

Eating is such an important part of our social life. Food and Beverage functions are the things that attendees remember good or bad. Marge Risinger presents practical ideas and shares personal stories that will have you laughing with her. You will leave with new ideas and learn how to:

- Identify foods that energize
- Add healthy foods without breaking the budget
- Maximize communication with the catering staff ♦

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# Datebook: Calendar of Events

## March

- 6 **Summer 2006 Application Due** - Certified Meeting Planner Examination  
[www.conventionindustry.org](http://www.conventionindustry.org)
- 15 **MPI MN Meeting**  
[www.mnmpi.org](http://www.mnmpi.org)
- 23 **MPI-WI Meeting**  
Spring Education Day  
Midwest Airlines Center  
Milwaukee, WI  
[www.mpiwi.org](http://www.mpiwi.org)
- 29 **MPI-Chicago Meeting**  
[www.mpicac.org](http://www.mpicac.org)

## April

- 19 **MPI MN Meeting**  
[www.mnmpi.org](http://www.mnmpi.org)
- 20 **MPI-Chicago Meeting**  
[www.mpicac.org](http://www.mpicac.org)
- 20 **MPI-WI Meeting**  
**Meeting Planners: Are You Prepared for the Impact of the Sarbanes-Oxley Corporate Accountability Act on the Meetings Industry?**  
Janesville Conference Ctr  
Janesville, WI  
[www.mpiwi.org](http://www.mpiwi.org)

## Redefining corporate casual.

Sure, attendees at meetings and conventions expect they'll have to dress up for those pesky planning sessions and PowerPoint presentations. But must they take themselves so seriously the rest of the time? We think not. We believe for every minute spent in a meeting, employees benefit by spending equal time riding our extreme waterslides, surf machines and water roller coasters.

Oh, and just so attendees may plan ahead, warn them the kids will want to come, too. Suggest they position it as a "summer vacation." You know, the one that never happened because Mom and Dad were just too busy with work. Pleasantly ironic, isn't it? Wonders never cease in "The Waterpark Capital of the World!™"



On duty is Meeting and Convention "Lifeguard" Helen Wick.  
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