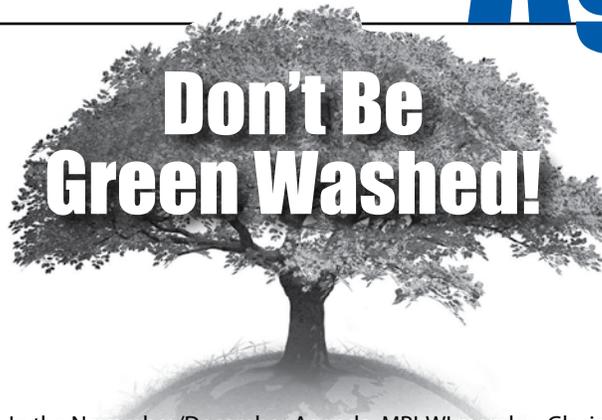


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January/February 2008

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Don't Be Green Washed!

In the November/December Agenda, MPI-WI member Gloria Nelson, CSEP, of Gloria Nelson Event Design, LLC, shared wonderful insight on keeping the meeting industry green. While emailing back and forth with Gloria, she shared a term with me that hadn't crossed my pc screen before – Green Washing.

What is Green Washing?

According to Ms. Nelson, it is when “partners give the appearance of being Green, but actually have labels that are misleading.” Huh – I had never heard of that before. Further research on the web told me that these are companies or organizations that claim to be Green while their actions indicate the exact opposite! In other words, these businesses “talk the talk” but don’t “walk the walk!”

How do we know if the companies with whom we sign contracts or rent lighting or even buy room gifts are doing actually what they say they are doing to help the environment?

One way is to check on the building aspects. Ms. Nelson also shared information about the LEED certification program. LEED is the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program and it is developed within the U.S. Green Building Council. This non-profit organization is dedicated to helping businesses develop physical structures that are kinder to the environment while also being within budget needs. It can be used for buildings of any size, for new constructions or major renovations. Based on a point system, LEED provides third-party validation that the business with whom you are partnering actually is as environmentally active as it proclaims.

Another way is to review the menus. The foods we serve at meetings and events may also be labeled with “Green Washed” words. If your aim is to serve local, organic food at the next meeting, you should verify the content. Even snack items for breaks proclaimed as “all natural” may not be so. They could just be camouflaged in an eco-friendly wrapper.

There are several ways to verify if the company you are about to partner with actually does walk the walk! First, you can check just about any seal or certification on the web for authenticity. Look for use of the EcoLogo or Green Seal. You can even check

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



LET'S MAKE EVERY DAY EARTH DAY!

It doesn't show up as most Hallmark holidays do, but Earth Day is just around the corner! Earth Day is celebrated internationally each spring. Many countries recognize it on April 22nd. However, the United Nations observes it on the spring vernal equinox, which is usually around March 20th.

The equinox is when the length of day and night is the same everywhere on earth. In theory, if you were to stand a vertical pole on the equator at noon, no shadow would be cast. The sun sets at the South Pole, ending roughly six months of daylight and the opposite happens at the North Pole.

Although the concept of “Earth Day” was first introduced in 1969, San Francisco was actually the first American city to issue a proclamation and recognize it. They celebrated the first Earth Day in the United States on March 21, 1970.

Your efforts as a meeting planner or host property make every day Earth Day! Continue to think green for Mother Earth.

agenda staff

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From the Editor's Desk

► **Lisa Lanting, CMP**
Preventive Cardiovascular
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New Year's Transformations

In the last issue, I was so inspired by Susan Kainz and her article "Feng Shui for Meetings" that I decided to do a little more research on the topic and see if I could implement some of the principles. What I have found has revolutionized my life.

There are many schools of thought when it comes to feng shui. Some of them require a compass, blueprints, crystals, mirrors, and cleansing rituals, which I assume take years of study and practice (and patience) to understand. This is a bit overwhelming for me, and I tend to gravitate toward practical, easy, quick applications of concepts, so I have tried to condense it down to the key take-home message. (*My apologies to those who are much more sophisticated and knowledgeable on this subject!*)

Here is how I understand it: Feng shui is an art that combines symbolism and the power of positive energy flow. Put simply, feng shui experts suggest that we can manifest what we want to achieve in life by changing our home or work spaces. Here are what I consider to be the three key components:

- 1. Clutter:** Get rid of clutter; it symbolizes and perpetuates stagnant energy. If we hold on to old ideas, things, habits, people, and activities that are depressing or draining, we have no room for more positive additions to enter our lives. As Karen Kingston says in her book *Clear Your Clutter with Feng Shui*, "Clutter is stuck energy that has far-reaching effects physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. The simple act of clearing clutter can transform your life by releasing negative emotions, generating energy, and allowing you to create space in your life for the things you wish to achieve."
- 2. Energy Flow:** Balance the energy/ambiance in your space through proper placement of furniture, electronics, and décor. For years at my small office we have had to move chairs and sometimes boxes, booths, and clutter to get to the water cooler. Last month, I decided to simply change the direction of the conference table, and voilà ... we now are enjoying better flow in that small area, we have easy access to water, and no one has to sit with their back to the entrance during staff meetings (a vulnerable position in the room).
- 3. Symbolism:** Use artwork, colors, and decorative touches that symbolize what you want to manifest in your life. What do you want to achieve? Wealth, love, good health, success, recognition, a happy family? Surround yourself with visual reminders of your intention in life. See it every day, spend a few moments visualizing the end result, and align your energy with your intention.

This newsletter, the first issue of 2008, represents an exciting, fresh new start for MPI-WI. In these pages, you may notice a "New Year's Transformation," which includes our first vibrant full-color ads. You will also find valuable information that will hopefully help you achieve greater success and balance at work and at home.

Our intention is to educate, inspire, create lasting personal connections, and keep you up to date on the latest trends. Thank you to all of the members, volunteers, industry partners, speakers, and creative minds who make this newsletter possible. With your help, we can continue to make positive transformations in MPI-WI. ■

On The Mooove

► **Sue Lidstrom**
Sheraton Madison Hotel
Madison, WI



Happy New Year! I'm very excited to be the new "roving reporter" for this column. What an honor for me to help celebrate the exciting changes and accomplishments of our members! In the words of one of my greatest heroes, Vince Lombardi, "It is time for us to stand and cheer for the doer, the achiever, the one who recognizes the challenge and does something about it."

Please join me in congratulating:

Rebecca Walters, on her new Sales position with the Chula Vista Resort & Conference Center in Wisconsin Dells.

Following 7+ years as Owner of EVENT Success, **Tamara Esslinger** has begun a new career as the Business Development Manager at Premier Meetings and Incentives, a division of Fox World travel.

Sherri Povolo has joined the new Crowne Plaza Milwaukee - Wauwatosa as Sales Manager. The Crowne Plaza Milwaukee opens in April 2008!

Last year's Rising Star Award recipient, **Alison Huber**, made the list of "30 under 30" in the November edition of *The Meeting Professional Magazine*. The article recognized some of these talented "youngsters" for making an impact on the global meetings community. She is a meeting planner for State Bar of Wisconsin, and is wonderful role

model and mentor to our up and coming students in the meetings degree program at MATC.

Who was the 2007 "Associate Member of the Year" for the Wisconsin Society of Association Executives on December 5th? **Cindy Foley, CMP**, with the Radisson Paper Valley! The **Radisson Paper Valley** was also recently chosen as "Best Hotel for Business" by *Corporate Report Wisconsin Magazine*.

David Olivares has been hired as Sales Manager to replace recently promoted **Laura Cornell, CMP**, for the Monona Terrace Convention Center. Laura is the Director of Sales for Monona Terrace.

Also in Madison, **CUNA Mutual** was a recipient of the 2007 *CIO Magazine* "100 Award" for the development and implementation of its Claims Express project. The 20th annual award program recognizes organizations around the world that exemplify the highest level of operational and strategic excellence in information technology.

Finally, I'm thrilled to share that our own **Sheraton Madison** is among the very first Sheraton Hotels worldwide to unveil the new hi-tech "Link @ Sheraton" Business Lounge & Coffee Bar concept in our lobby!

Please submit accomplishments and changes in employment to me at suelidstrom@marcus-hotels.com. ■

Treasurer's Report: A Brief End of the Year Update

► **Laura Cornell, CMP**
Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center
Madison, WI



As we begin a new year, I hope that you all had a safe and happy holiday season. As we all recover from the many parties and celebrations, the Finance Team is celebrating the strong end to the 2007 calendar year. From a fiscal standpoint the November program was a success as was the December program. We are looking forward to a strong finish to the fiscal year, which ends June 30, 2008.

Here comes the broken record part: we couldn't do it without your continued support. We are fortunate to have a chapter that has high

meeting attendance and very generous suppliers. We also have members who so generously donate their hard-earned cash and volunteer time to keep our chapter going strong. With the team at MDS making sure that everything balances out and keeping the Board well informed by providing monthly reports, we are on track to finish out this fiscal year on budget. Please contact me if you have questions about the status of our finances or where your money goes. I'm always glad to help. You can reach me at lcornell@mononaterrace.com or 608-261-4016. ■

2007-2008

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President's Column

► Paulette Heney, CMM
United States Bowling Congress
Greendale, WI



Life is a Journey, Make it a Journey to Remember!

In the last issue, I wrote about change and in this issue I want to write about the journey of life. At different points in our lives, I feel we all reflect on where we have been and where we are going. It's when we hit a turning point in life or a big birthday that we really look back and reflect on our lives.

How did I get here? Am I happy with where I am? Where do I see myself going? These are some tough questions to answer, but I am going to give it a try. Now I know what you are thinking, sure you can just rattle this stuff off. Seriously, I have actually taken a couple of weeks to write this article and in fact I looked back through a journal that I have had for many years compiling what I have done.

First of all, I never even knew a job existed as a meeting planner.

I never finished college, actually I never wanted to go to college, however, my mom and dad thought differently, especially because I was in a serious relationship with, shall we say, "not the marrying type!" My parents pushing me to go to college was one of the best things they did. However, I didn't finish, in fact, after a year I decided I wanted to work to make money and didn't want to waste my parent's money. That is exactly what I did and my parents supported me even when deep down inside they were hoping I would eventually finish college.

I never went back, I took a job working at an accounting firm in Milwaukee as an administrative assistant. What a job, I hated it, the hours were horrible, especially around April 15th, the other administrative assistant I worked with hated me, but I stuck it out for two years until I decided to relocate to Chicago, for a man, of course.

I found a job in Chicago at a large realty company, again as an administrative assistant and bought my very own car, a red sports car. I was so excited. Not so much when six months into the job about 200 of us were called into a conference room and told to clean out our desk, because the company was downsizing.

I was scared and didn't know what to do or where to go. I felt a little lost in a new city. Thank god my sister lived in the suburbs and I leaned on her, and within a day was back on my feet looking for a job. I was lucky enough within the first week of interviews to land a job at a new company. Again, hired as an administrative assistant, but I wanted more. I was hoping that since the company was just starting out, growth was inevitable. It was, within a year, I transferred to the meetings department and began to work on pharmaceutical meetings. I loved it! I started off doing meeting registration, was eventually promoted to a meeting coordinator and then a meeting manager. I spent five years at the company learning everything I could about a job I never knew existed. I thrived on the face-paced lifestyle in Chicago and within the industry. I was provided the opportunity to travel all over the world in my early twenties, planning meetings. It was an experience of a lifetime. After five years and traveling about 90% of the year, I took a one-year hiatus and became a bartender.

I know, you can't see me as a bartender, right? Loved the job, bartending was fun, it grounded me and I was able to search inside myself to see what I really wanted to do. I eventually went back to meeting planning but for a non-profit company, onto an incentive company and now with a sport's organization. I truly have had many opportunities of a lifetime in my career.

I don't mean to bore you with my life history, but it is funny to look back and see how you ended up where you are now. The growth I have had over the past 20 years in this industry, the support I have received,

Continued on page 26

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WHILE MEETING IN ONE.



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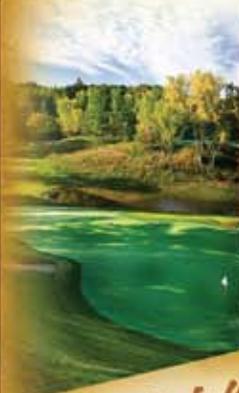
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Wisconsin Dells

Supplier Profile: Kim Swisher



► **Kim Swisher**
Tourism Manager
City of Sheboygan Tourism Division
Sheboygan, WI

How long in the meetings industry?

Seven years

How long in MPI?

A couple of months

Tell us about your company and/or position:

I work on behalf of the City of Sheboygan to welcome leisure and business visitors to our community. The City owns the Blue Harbor Conference Center, a beautiful facility that welcomes business groups throughout the year. We work in cooperation with the Blue Harbor Resort, the conference center management group, to bring business meetings and groups of various sizes to Sheboygan. In addition, I work with other city venues including the John Michael Kohler Arts Center and the Stefanie H. Weill Center for Performing Arts.

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

I am still learning about the organization and the opportunities available, so I have not selected anything at this time.

Where were you born?

Chicago, Illinois

Family:

My husband Michael, our two cats, Jerry and Willy, and our puppy, Bobbie.

Where do you currently live?

North side of Sheboygan

Favorite pastimes:

Reading, camping, riding our motorcycles, spending time with my family.

Person you admire most and why:

Eleanor Roosevelt for her great sensitivity to the underprivileged of all creeds, races, and nations and her constant work to improve their lot.

Dream vacation:

Ireland, Scotland and England.

Words to live by:

"Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it." President Lincoln's Cooper Institute Address, February 27, 1869.

Special personal accomplishments:

Married 13 years; graduate of the Institute for Organization Management.

Don't Say No – You Might be Put on the Naughty List!



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

As MPI-WI member Patricia Kemner volunteers on the Raffle Team and calls on you for a donation, you might want to consider to whom you are speaking. When she comes to your table and asks if you'd like any raffle tickets, look just a little bit closer.



You see, Patricia isn't only an enthusiastic Chapter volunteer. She isn't just a successful and welcoming Sales Director at the Lodge at Cedar Creek.

She is also Mrs Claus. Talk about connections!

Patricia first started donning her merry outfit and bringing holiday cheer to her previous community over a decade ago. She recently began the practice again last year in Wausau. Using local resources, Patricia finds families and facilities, such as nursing homes, that could use some additional cheer. It includes gifts and food – and our very own Patricia in traditional Mrs Santa Claus wardrobe.

It is a huge endeavor and one that Patricia opens her heart to – as well as her pocketbook. The need for Mrs Claus has reached a level where Patricia is researching grants. "You just never want to say 'No!' to anyone, especially at the holidays," commented Patricia. I mean, Mrs Claus!

Fortunately, the fine staff at the Lodge at Cedar Creek adopted Patricia's cause as their own this year. Donations were made from everything from cash to homemade blankets. They carried Mrs Claus' spirit with them as they too dressed in hats and as elves.

And as with most charitable endeavors, what the person gets back is almost always more than they give out. One nursing home resident authored Patricia her very own poem. And, with her husband, traveling for deliveries for the very first time, shared how her effect is "Simply Amazing." Patricia mentioned that both the poem and the words were "Worth a million dollars!"■

Picture provided courtesy of Amy Ryan, Reporter with the Everest Herald. We appreciate Ms. Ryan sharing the photo with us so our MPI-WI could see it as well!

Is Perception Reality?

► Michelle Eggert, CMP
ConferenceDirect
Big Bend, WI



We've all heard the phrase "perception is reality" and often take it to heart. Each day, in every situation, an individual makes a judgment and creates an impression and opinion about a situation, a person or place they encounter. We all know there are two sides to every story; and in some cases, those stories can be exact opposites of each other.

A dramatic example of perception not being reality took place in a classroom where the instructor filled an empty egg carton with eleven "fake" plastic eggs and one real egg. The instructor began the class by carrying the egg carton into the classroom, opening the egg carton, removing the real egg, and cracking it on the edge of the drinking glass. Everyone in the class could easily see the floating egg. The instructor then grabbed the egg carton and threw the remaining eleven fake eggs into the air, to land on the students.

Of course, the students perceived that the eggs were all real, when in reality the eggs were fake. The student's behavior was to duck from the flying eggs, when in reality, ducking wasn't really necessary.

I encountered my own egg ducking experience, while attending a recent MPI reception. A long-time member approached me, and mentioned that even though we were both long time members of the Wisconsin Chapter, we had never taken the opportunity to get to know each other. Our paths had never crossed in the numerous volunteer opportunities offered through the Chapter, either on a committee or during the monthly education programs or special events. Then came the surprise comment – his impression of me was that I was a very shy individual. While not wanting to fall over in front of him, as I have never considered myself a shy person, I asked the third

member of our small group her thoughts. To my surprise, she agreed with the perception!

This situation has set me on a mission. I've considered myself to be *focused*, concerned with miniscule details, and maybe even a bit short in some of my interactions, because my brain spins on a million different tasks at one time.

What I'm attempting to achieve, at future MPI events in particular, is to *shake* the *shy* label, and instill a more *outgoing/approachable* front.

Are there labels you may have given to certain members or groups of MPI, possibly without investigating the situation further? Have you made any assumptions about the character or reason behind decisions made by the board of directors, the membership, education, finance or communication teams and its members? On the other hand, have you ever jumped to a conclusion about a

new/shy member – who seems *unapproachable*? I challenge each member, and specifically *YOU* to change your perception, take a risk, volunteer to become active in the organization. Make a commitment to your involvement and the overall success of our chapter. Attempt to sit next to someone new at the next meeting. Approach someone you do know with a new set of eyes – determined to open the lines of communication and initiate a new friendship or business relationship. You never know what new opportunities exist; or the significant impact you can make, by changing your perception!

Are you interested in becoming involved on a MPI Team or Committee for the Wisconsin Chapter? Contact Michelle Eggert, CMP at 262-853-7171 or michelle_eggert@conferencedirect.com. Rumor has it, she's very outgoing! ■



**MPI-WI February Chapter Presents
February Chapter Meeting & Fundraiser**

**Meeting Professionals:
A Day in the Life
Wellness through Laughter**

► **Vicky Zacharias**
*Thje Osthoff Resort
Elkhart Lake, WI*



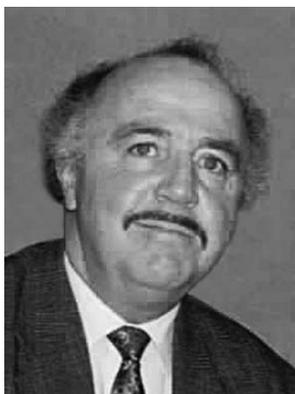
Corporate America is embracing the fact that healthier employees are more productive employees, and that happiness and laughter are an integral part of any wellness plan. If you or your company could use a productivity lift, or just a cure to the winter blues, attend February's chapter education day where we will explore the idea of "Wellness through laughter."

Let us fill your prescription with a healthy dose of laughter at the MPI-WI chapter program on Thursday, February 21st at the Delafield Hotel.

Begin by attending the educational presentation by "The Riot Act," an improv group from the MPI Chicagoland Chapter. The presentation on strategies has been customized just for Wisconsin planners and suppliers.

Following the educational program, a networking reception will feature a silent wine auction and raffle, providing attendees the opportunity to purchase wines and wine accessories. A wide variety of vineyards and vintages will be showcased, spanning the spectrum of flavors and price.

Comedy Club MPI hits the stage at 7:00 pm. Be prepared for an insane amount of laughing (and kindly use the restroom before entering!). Comedian Ron Dentinger will do a 30-minute routine of "classic style" comedy to generate hard laughter. He has written and sold jokes to some of the country's all time comedy greats like the late Rodney Dangerfield.



Comedian Ron Dentinger

and friends for one hilarious night on the town! Admission fees can be paid in advance with registration. Our host property for the evening is The Delafield Hotel (www.thedelafieldhotel.com). ■

Ron is also booked as the opening act for various nationally known entertainers including: Neil McCoy, Jo Dee Messina, George Jones, Randy Travis, Sawyer Brown, Tanya Tucker, Marty Stuart, Billy Dean, Brenda Lee, B.J. Thomas, 'Weird Al' Yankovic, Crosby/Stills/Nash, Mary Wilson, Michael Johnson, The Everly Brothers, Don Williams, Kenny Rogers, and The Righteous Brothers.

This is a fundraising event to support our Chapter and admission to the Club is \$10.00 per member and \$5.00 for the member's guests. Here's a great opportunity to bring co-workers, your spouse, significant other



Request for Donations:

The team is seeking donations of bottles of wine for the event. This is an easy donation to make as a planner or a supplier.

Donations of wine and wine accessories such as wine glasses, charms, baskets, openers and decorative stoppers are requested. Contact Victoria Albanese, Waukesha & Pewaukee CVB, to arrange your donation by calling 262-542-0330 or e-mailing her at Victoria@visitwaukesha.org.

Help Me, Help You: How to Get the Most Out of an Internship

► Allison McCarty
WI Association of School Boards
Madison, WI



So your organization has decided to hire an intern? Finally, you will be able to get the help you need and give a student experience in the workforce. But in order for both of you to get the most out of this experience, be sure to review these simple guidelines:

For The Organization

- **Create a job description** – write down what the job will entail, the anticipated length of time and the duties the intern will do. This helps get everyone started on the right foot.
- **Treat them like an employee** – just because they are not a full-time employee doesn't mean they shouldn't be treated like one. Make sure they learn about your organization and the employees that work there. Get them involved in the day-to-day activities.
- **Give them tools to succeed** – make sure the intern has the tools needed to complete their work: a desk, computer, comfortable chair, decent lighting, etc.
- **Be supportive** - have an open door policy and make sure to encourage them to ask questions. Take the time to explain the job and duties they are involved with.



Interested in hiring an intern? Post your internship opportunity on the chapter website. Internships will be listed in the Career Center under Internship. For more information on listing, contact MPI at admin@mpiwi.org

For the Intern

- **Ask questions** – do not be afraid to ask questions, it is the best way to learn. Talk with different people within the organization, such as co-workers to gain different ideas or perspectives.
- **Be grateful** – organizations are taking a big step when they hire an intern. Respect this opportunity and take advantage of it. Work hard and be thankful for the insight into the workforce.
- **Keep an open mind** – you might be currently pursuing a degree in meeting planning, but what would be wrong with getting an internship with a supplier? Absolutely nothing! Interning with a supplier can give great insight and knowledge and the skills learned will be an asset to your meeting planning.
- **Don't be afraid** – trying new things can be overwhelming and scary, but an internship is your opportunity for a test run. Take advantage of every opportunity and put yourself out there. ■

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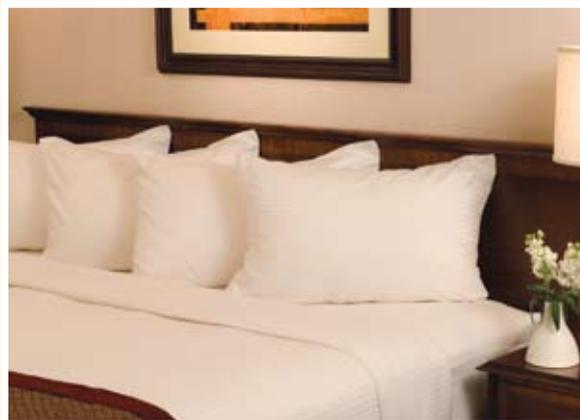
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Our Talents are Far From Hidden!

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



According to Webster's definition, talent is "a special, often creative or artistic aptitude." That would perfectly describe our entertainers at the 2007 MPI-WI Holiday Party! There were singers, musicians, and acts which can only be described as performance artistry!

Before the entertainment began, there was a very enjoyable cocktail hour followed by luscious food ... and, well more beverages of choice! Generous donors provided awesome gifts for both the raffle and silent auctions (*see the thank you list to view all the supporters!*) Many of us – myself especially included – held our breath as we hoped to be the one with the winning ticket or bid!

As one MPI-WI member shared, "I feel the meeting was the best we have had all year! Those who didn't attend definitely missed out. I really enjoyed the Talent Show; it was a great opportunity to showcase our members. It also made for a very entertaining evening ... who knew we had such a variety of talent!!"

Amanda Bauer, The Madison Concourse Hotel & Governor's Club

Amanda's thoughts were echoed by *Agenda* Associate Co-editor, Michelle Reed, of Association Acumen, LLC. "The whole day allowed me to expand my network and meet many new people. It amazes me how friendly and inviting the Wisconsin chapter members are and makes me proud to belong to our group!"

The talent portion of the evening consisted of performances by the incredible First Ladies and Dead Presidents; Claudia Behring, Heidel House Resort who did brilliantly on the saxophone, even with last minute music changes; Kim Jones, Meetings & Incentives with a dance routine that was not thwarted even a bit with a wardrobe malfunction; Liz Hessler, NEW Partnership for Children & Families-UW and guests swayed their way to a beautiful Christmas Hula; and Dana Ecker, Radisson Paper Valley and Tina Luther, Heidel House, wowed us with a duet.

Shannon Timmerman, Glacier Canyon Lodge at the Wilderness commented, "To see the guts that they had to get up there in front of everyone and perform was amazing. I don't think I've laughed that hard in a very long time, but at the same time it was very impressive! I even got a hula lesson from Liz on the dance floor, so I learned something that night!"

The entertainment was further supplemented with reviews by Judges Kim Ball, CMP of Abbott; Steve Lorenz, CMP of Meetings



Continued on page 14

“

"When I came back from the talent show, I told some of my beginner dancers how surprised I was at being nervous dancing in front of my peers and that I've danced in front of 1,000 people & didn't even flinch. I told them thank goodness some great people jumped on stage to help me out & how much fun we had & how the audience was dancing and I hope they were smiling.

One of my little keke's (little hula dancer) Little Mariana looked at me and said, 'Liz, you should do like I do when I practice in my room. I take all my stuff animals and line them up and tell them if they don't smile at me when I'm practicing, I'm gonna put them in a pillowcase and sit on them hard. They smile all the time!'" — Liz Hessler, NEW Partnership for Children & Families-UW

"We all know that meeting professionals have many talents, but the night's performance both on and off the stage make it a reality." — Kim Ball, CMP, Abbott

"I do the performance at least once a year for my 'Drag Down Cancer Comedy Benefit' to raise money to help fight cancer. I was a lot more nervous going in front of professional colleagues. It was a great night & I hope everyone had as much fun as I did!" — Kim Jones, Meetings & Incentives

"The MPI-WI Chapter truly has talent...and comedy. I've never laughed so hard! It was great to see the Dead Presidents back at it, although it looked like they had new members. It was an amazing night, and kudos to the Holiday Event Team for doing a fantastic job!" — Mae Ibe, CMP, Fox Valley CVB

"Originally I planned on playing 'What Child is This' but then I thought it was too long and too boring. So then I memorized 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas.' I hoped that Q had a cassette player, but no such luck. So I memorized 'Deck the Halls' that night and Dana Ecker was kind enough to play the piano music that I supplied. I thought that it went well considering that we only practiced a run through once or maybe twice. I guess this goes to prove that everyone needs to have a back-up plan!" — Claudia Behring, Heidel House Resort

”

& Incentives; and Mae Ibe, CMP of the Fox Cities CVB. With Q from Music on the Move Plus emceeing, all of the talent headed to the stage once more for some more very deserving accolades. It was a very close competition however Liz Hessler was announced the winner. And, the icing on our Holiday Talent cake was an additional performance by the First Ladies and Dead Presidents! (For additional comments from talent and judges, please see the sidebar.)

The evening continued with dances taught by Q and hula hints demonstrated by Liz Hessler. There was a great spirit of membership and true camaraderie, and, although we didn't want the night to end, one by one we went our separate ways. Closing out a terrific 2007 and looking forward to all the promises and opportunities that 2008 will bring to our Chapter and all our members!



MPI thanks all of the Holiday gathering sponsors for their dedication, support, and participation which helped to make the event a success!

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And a few words from the Holiday Event Team Lead, Tracy Scmidt, Rockwell Automation:

A **Big Thank You** to all the sponsors! I also want to thank the Holiday Event team for all their hard work, determination and commitment to making this year's event a success. A special thank you to all of those that helped me personally by guiding me and supporting me along the way and to be the behind the scenes cheering section. As Team Lead, it allowed me to better understand the MPI organization, get to know more people in the organization and make new friends and achieve a wonderful feeling of accomplishment. Thank you for having the faith in me to lead this event!"

The Holiday Team included Tracy Schmidt, Rockwell Automation and Holiday Lead and members Joan Becker-Pinch, Ramada Plaza Hotel, Fond du Lac; Valerie Casper, Wyndham Milwaukee Airport & Convention Center; Meghan Costello, Greater Madison, CVB; Cheryl Fleck, Wisconsin Counties Association; Linda Hale, Wisconsin Credit Union League; Bill Severson, Rockwell Automation; Michelle Short, Kalahari Resort; Betsy Smith, Kalahari Resort; Christy Stueber, Independent Planner; and Carina Tran, Humana Inc. ■



December Holiday Event:

Education & Entertainment



The December meeting was held in conjunction with the 2007 MPI-WI Chapter Holiday Party and hosted at the newly renovated InterContinental hotel in Milwaukee. There were 93 members registered for the holiday festivities and 57 that also signed up for the complimentary education session entitled Rev Up the Supplier / Planner Relationship, presented by Jay Gubrud.

Jay Gubrud is a very dynamic speaker and has a reputation for relating the trials of life in a way that everyone can relate to... Cars and Driving! On this particular day, he was not the usual "suited-up tie-wearing" presenter. Instead, he had on a light gray bowling shirt with a monogrammed label that read "Homer."

He wanted to illustrate to us the power of perception and surveyed the group in attendance regarding our initial impressions of him. Most of us were fixated on his attire and the responses were quite humorous. Some thought his baggage was accidentally misrouted to Timbuktu. One woman thought he was the repair technician and immediately presumed that something had broken with the audio or video equipment.

After we got past his shirt, he asked us to think about the person we like the least and then answer the question "What do you dislike most about him/her?" Then, he had us write down at least one characteristic that we do like or respect about this person. It was interesting because as we went around the room and shared our thoughts, it was obvious that no matter how much you dislike someone, it is almost always possible to find something you can



► Marie Johnson, CMP
Midwest Airlines
Milwaukee, WI

also appreciate about them. And, in doing that, you are able to consciously change your perception in a matter of seconds.

He told us, "when not perceiving, people tend to be judging or fitting people or situations into boxes." If we are not talking, not asking questions, we are probably making silent judgments. Instead we should look for what is right and unique in others. The next time you see that person, think about this aspect of them and tell them you respect it. Or say nice things about them to other people and it will make its way back.

In terms of communication, when you want to make a point or share your position, you can take down the defenses of your audience by employing a simple strategy. Preface your subjective statements with "In my opinion," "I believe," or "I feel." It is difficult for the other person to argue that what you said is not your opinion or you don't really feel that way about it.

We've all heard of healthy conflict, and we all know that no matter how positive our working relationships are – there will be times when a conflict arises. In those circumstances, Jay advised us not to attack the other person, but to acknowledge the other person's perspective, be honest about what you promise, and keep the bridge open. Know the potential long-term effect of your words. Make sure you are respectful and dignified.

At the conclusion of the session, all in attendance received a complimentary bumper sticker or change box. The bumper sticker read "How come it is always the other person who is the bad driver?" Jay said it is easy to blame others for relationship difficulties, but we can set the tone for our interpersonal relationships. The change box was designed by Jay to make change more of an ongoing process and less of a periodic event, like setting New Year's resolutions. It is a six-sided cube with quotes and inspirational sayings on the outside. And on the inside, you write down a personal commitment or change that you want to happen. Every 15 and 30 days, you open the cube to check your progress. It is a nice idea and I think I'll give it a try. "Be the change you want to see in the world," Mahatma Gandhi. ■



Food for **THOUGHT**

After cultivating plates for international A-listers at the prestigious Bel Age Hotel in Los Angeles, Brian Frakes made his return to Milwaukee's culinary scene in 2006. But before making his mark on the west coast, Frakes spent more than 10 years placing a gulf coast twist on meals at some of the most opulent resorts in Florida, including the the Boca Raton Beach Club and the Deer Country Club.

As the Executive Chef at the Pfister Hotel, Frakes oversees all culinary, stewarding, and purchasing operations. He is also responsible for the success, quality, profitability, and overall guest satisfaction of seven outlets including the banquet facility and 24-hour room service.

His awards are numerous, including the 2007 listing in the *Business Journal* of Milwaukee's "Forty Under 40." Frakes was also a distinguished participant in the James Beard Foundation. He is pleased to share with us one of his favorite recipes. ■



► **Chef Brian Frakes**
Executive Chef
The Pfister Hotel
Milwaukee, WI



Peach Doughnuts & Blackberry Smash

Doughnut Ingredients:

- 2 cups flour
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 Tbsp powdered milk
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup water

When stone fruits are back in season, these are among the best. Feel free to substitute peaches with your favorite apples. Whip up this simple fritter batter a day in advance and have fresh donuts in the morning with your coffee!

Method:

Combine all dry ingredients, then incorporate wet ingredients in a mixer to blend. Do not overwhip. Let rest for at least an hour chilled and deep-fry doughnuts until golden brown (about 4 minutes).

- 2 cups diced doughnut peaches
- 2 Tbsp corn oil

For the blackberry smash, combine blackberries, blueberries, and sugar in sauté pan and heat on medium heat until sugar caramelizes. Drizzle in your Grand Marnier and set aside to cool. Spoon some of the blackberry smash in the center of a small plate, place a warm doughnut on top and finish with a little powdered sugar or fresh whipped cream and enjoy!

Blackberry Smash Ingredients:

- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 cup blackberries
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 2 Tbsp Grand Marnier



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- Jim Spellos presenting **Google-licious: How to Find Anything on the Internet**. Well known at national conferences for selling out the room, be sure to get there early; this is one you won't want to miss.
- One of the most recognized and respected names in the meetings industry, Joan Eisenstadt, presents **Meetings Beyond Logistics: Principles, Practices and Play**.
- Top speaker at MPI's Professional Education Conference and World Education Congress, Joanne Dennison, thrills everyone with **"Please, ANYTHING But the Budget!" – How**

to Build a Budget That You Can Actually Explain and But You're Just a Coffee Cup Counter! – How to Move Forward and Take Your Team With You.

- **Working Your Way Through the Maze** - facilitated by local company and MPI MN Member, The Lantern Group.
- Returning again to KQ after outstanding feedback, Dr. Verna Price presents **Influence Without Authority**.
- Local speaker gaining audiences with Fortune 100 companies Dave Horsager will help audience members understand **The TrustEdge**.
- Start and end the day with nationally known keynote speaker Joe Calloway

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Rev-Up Your Supplier/ Planner Relationships V 4.0

By Jay Gubrud, Chris Wagner and
Associations Nationwide

With the pressures of the industry and economy, life has the majority of us working harder to find the solution for doing more with less! As professionals in the hospitality industry, we are consistently looking to increase our book of business with understanding the needs and wants of organizations and more importantly you – the planner!

This article brings to life feedback of both planners and suppliers for managing our daily schedules focusing on communication, budgets, and realistic expectations that is sure to create productive and successful events. We hope you enjoy the following information and that it leads to improved and positive partnerships!

WHAT SUPPLIERS LIKE:

1. Planners that have a clear vision of the expectations of the event. Know what you want and the real budget you are working with. Expectations will be based on past history, budget, and the theme of the proposed RFP.
2. Tell the supplier the reason for your decision to not give them your business so they can accurately address it.
3. Be flexible and realistic with the budget. If a planner has \$35 per person to work with in F&B, let the convention service/catering manager create a F&B package that allows for shifting of lower impact items during certain meal events and bigger "wow" items during the awards luncheon or evening banquet.
4. Provide honest feedback regarding competition; this allows everyone to better position themselves for current and future opportunities.
5. Communicate - return voice mails and/or e-mails in a timely fashion, especially during the RFP stage.
6. Have realistic timing with the decision making process. Inventory that is placed on hold could be lost business to other potential clients.
7. Be prepared with key details of your event such as guestroom needs, function space requirements, and special event outings that will enhance the flow of your program with your supplier.
8. Be flexible with multiple dates that might work.
9. Be prepared with a minimum of two years of history to include guestroom pickup, food and beverage guarantees and other important factors. Be as specific as possible with notes of how the program went from parking and check-in to food and beverage. But be aware that planners might not have history.
10. Know the needs and expectations of attendees. Will they be men, women, families, kids? This will affect everything from accommodations to food.
11. Communicate the budgeted expectations up front, as this will allow your supplier to recommend appropriate proposed options that will fit the expectations set forth.
12. Ask for creative ideas from your supplier that perhaps other groups may have utilized that may work with your group based on knowing your audience and expectations. Give supplier freedom to contribute to the design and success of your event.
13. Let suppliers know you are talking with other suppliers.
14. Be fair and direct with your supplier with deadlines and the likelihood of doing business together.
15. Read and understand the contract/agreement.
16. Send RFP's that are realistic & don't include too many free things.
17. Realize that many government planners must follow a bid technique which makes it difficult to create a "normal" relationship. Frequently there is a third body (i.e. government administration) who make final decisions.
18. Prioritize which "free" items are most important to you.
19. Don't be afraid of hurting the supplier's feelings; they are used to rejection.
20. Let supplier know the status of the business ASAP, they may be holding rooms that they could release for other groups.
21. Be loyal to your past suppliers, assuming you were happy, and association members.
22. Read RFP
23. Use the speakers bureau for centralized communication.
24. Ask each other favored form of communication.
25. Use email to get quicker response, versus phone message.
26. Leave a slow phone message, leave phone number twice.
27. Contact using multiple methods, phone message and email.
28. Use priority designation with you email.
29. Trust us.
30. Give speakers time to prepare prior to performance.
31. Let us know where you are flexible: space, dates, rates, etc.
32. Clarify which specific requirements of the RFP are mandatory and which ones are flexible. For example, "items 1-6 are mandatory and if you can't fulfill, then it is best not to bid"
33. Know your purpose, concept and goal. Is the event intimate, informal, formal? What does a successful event look like to you? Is it a celebration, corporate meeting or is it more centered around activities?
34. Use definitive terms about when you will be getting back to supplier. (i.e. Tuesday morning or 2pm on Friday.)
35. Let supplier know what has been successful in the past.
36. Be realistic with deadlines. Don't tell supplier you have to have document by 5 pm and when they follow up the next day you still have not utilized the document I "dropped everything else" to prepare for you.
37. Help supplier understand and know who the "important people" or VIP's are who will be attending.
38. Negotiate fairly. We are in the business of give and take. I may have to say no.
39. As a planner make sure you have communicated to the speaker or speakers bureau what functions you want the speaker for. Is it just the keynote or do you want them to do Q&A or participate in prize drawings.
40. Releasing dates doesn't only apply to hotels, it also applies to A/V, transportation, props, etc.
41. We appreciate referrals to your meeting planner friends if we have done a good job for you.
42. Be respectful! Remember "I am thinking the same thing about you!"

Continued on page 23

Taking Another Huge Step Forward

Meeting and Event Management Program
Fox Valley Technical College



By Cindy Foley, CMP and Connie Nau, CMP
Fox Valley Technical College Meeting and Event Management
Program Advisory Board Co-Chairs

We are thrilled to share the exciting news that students from Northeastern Wisconsin are now able to earn an Associate Degree in Meeting and Event Management! It has been an exciting journey, to once again have the privilege of being involved in all phases of making another meeting and event program a reality in the state of Wisconsin. We both agree that our involvement, as original members of the team that created the platform for the first associate degree program in our industry, has led to a deeply rooted professional passion in providing accredited education for meeting professionals.

Our program is in high demand in Northeastern and North Central Wisconsin and takes an important step forward, from an industry standpoint, in offering the education required for a successful career in meeting and event management.

The Meeting and Event Management Associate Degree Program will focus specifically on teaching students to plan, conduct and promote meetings, conferences, and conventions for corporations, trade associations and other clients," stated Kathy Stockwell, Associate Dean of the Business, Health and Services division which manages the Meeting and Event Management Program. Graduates will be prepared for jobs with titles such as meeting professional, program manager, conference manager, and special events professional.

In the corporate arena, Meeting Planners are considered professional 'consultants' within the organization, and it is their responsibility to educate other associates on the best practices of successful meetings. It is also their responsibility to: manage an event from the initial request; manage web based registration and attendee management; negotiate contracts with hotels or banquet venues; order food, beverage and audio/visual equipment; survey the attendees and conclude with the final reconciliation of financials."

To that end, students enrolled in the new program will take courses that provide basic competencies for a Meeting and Event Professional. These include:

- Contract law, negotiations, decision making
- Problem solving, leadership, communications
- Exhibit management
- Financial and organizational management
- Related areas of convention, conference, and meeting management

The program's course work also is designed to meet the needs of professionals seeking industry certification and support those individuals trying to achieve their

Certification in Meeting Management (CMM) or Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) designations. ■

For a program overview, list of courses, and additional information, please visit www.fvtc.edu. For additional program/admission information, call Enrollment Services at (920) 735-5645 or e-mail us at enrollserv.staff@fvtc.edu.

“As Meeting and Event Management student Lisa Schmid notes, the program is tailored to professionals already in the workforce performing meeting planning functions:

“Since my graduate degree is in a completely unrelated field, I decided to pursue the Meeting and Event Management program at FVTC to gain more insight as to how to successfully plan and coordinate major events. I work in Criminal Justice, primarily with the AMBER Alert program, and we host many training programs throughout the country each year. I am hoping that this new program will help me apply the new skills learned to my position.”

Lisa Schmid, Program Specialist
Fox Valley Technical College
Criminal Justice Division, Child Protection Training Center



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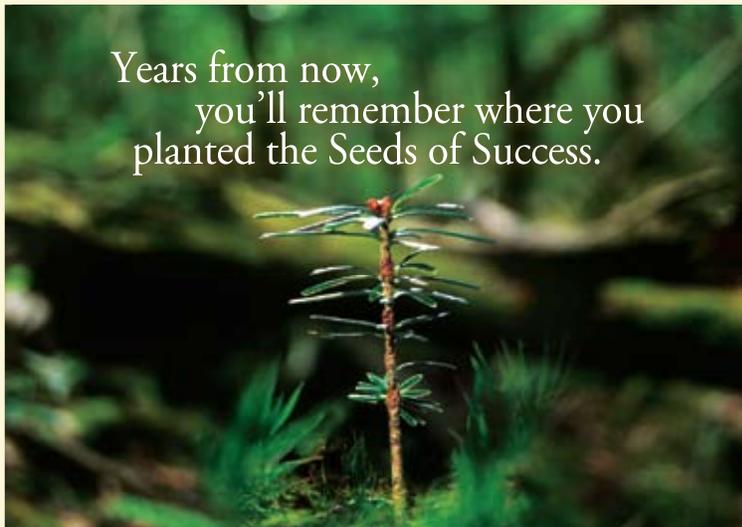
out the fraudulent use of the logo area at the EcoLogo site. The LEED certification can be verified with the USGBC.

In the paper from TerraChoice 2007 Environmental Marketing, "The Six Sins of Green Washing," they refer to the "Sin of the Hidden Trade Off." This sin is "committed by suggesting a product is 'green' based on a single environmental attribute or an unexpectedly narrow set of attributes without attention to other important or perhaps more important, environmental issues." One example they share is of copy paper that is made of recycled paper, but does not take into account air or water emissions to produce it.

You can also ask for proof of certification. If it can't be provided, think twice. You can also look for the use of statistics that are no longer relevant. Also, be wary of information that is vague or that the business-partner to be cannot substantiate.

For additional information on making conferences and meetings eco-friendly, please visit www.mpiweb.org. You will find a great deal of useful information under the Knowledge tab. The key tab to find is Corporate Social Responsibility. You may find the case study from the recap of the MPI World Education Conference à la Montréal to be of specific interest. ■

Additional sources: www.usgbc.com, www.govpro.com



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WHAT PLANNERS LIKE:

1. Take time for a good tour, it will pay off!
2. Be creative within the budget they have. Draw upon ideas you have used with other clients.
3. Help them stay within budget.
4. Don't bid on an RFP if you cannot deliver on the specifications.
5. Follow through with VIP status people like the board chairman; it makes a significant impact.
6. Make the arrival pleasant, as it sets the mood and expectations for the rest of the event.
7. Staff the front desk appropriately, especially during peak hours.
8. Keep your contract simple or highlight specific areas that tend to be important or have caused misunderstandings in the past.
9. Equip all your staff with the knowledge and power to assist guests.
10. Communicate with detail and be specific. It doesn't hurt to suck up a little!
11. Put the key components of the proposal at the front and the "fluff" at the end.
12. Package RFP's for comparison. It makes life much easier and the planner will not be put off having to rearrange it themselves.
13. Match the experience/knowledge of your sales person to that of the planner.
14. Host events so the planner can experience your property.
15. Respond quickly to RFP's.
16. Don't entice the planner if the dates are not available.
17. Be creative with billing. Planners have billing preferences, get to know them.
18. Make sure your sales person is on property for at least the first day or your event.
19. Have breaks set up on time.
20. Don't be upset if the decision maker passes you on to a logistics or meeting planner.
21. Don't play the decision maker off the planner. They work closely together and will be annoyed by that.
22. Don't be stingy with space.
23. Pay attention to details. One planner was having an emotional speaker and the hotel salesperson had Kleenex on the tables for the participants without being asked for them.
24. Submit your best offer first. Some planners like to negotiate and others don't. This varies throughout the country. Find out their preference up front.
25. Submit the right type (Corporate, Government, etc.) of contract first.
26. Get to know your customer! Send appropriate amenities that your client and VIP's appreciate. Be sure to communicate internally with your operations team so everyone is on board.
27. Ask if the dates can be changed, don't assume they can when responding to an RFP.
28. Be flexible with room set up. Have an extra table or chairs in the room to accommodate late arrivals and groups that want to spread out.
29. Expect the unexpected; be courteous and proactive to operational issues which may occur during events.
30. Know how much money you have to work with.
31. Service restrooms before breaks.
32. Be honest what dates and number of rooms are actually available and which ones are "kind of" available.
33. Tell us the actual reason why you cannot take our group, don't make us stories.
34. Remember that some planner's compensation depends on the success of the event.
35. Listen to the planner: if they request 3000 square feet of space for a certain number of people, it may be a requirement even though technically less space would work for that headcount.
36. Listen to the planner: if they request 4 people per table, it may be a requirement even though you could fit 6 or 8 at each table. i.e. law enforcement groups.
37. Do a site visit unannounced to see how things really operate.
38. Do your fact finding up front. Purpose, concept and goals. Intimate, formal or informal. Is the event based around a celebration, corporate event or activities? Find out level of knowledge of your point of contact. Formal or informal pre-con? Do you want a post-con? What form of communication do you like?
39. I will ask you for what I want.
40. Qualify us and show us features we want to know about. i.e. a site tour, you don't have to show us every feature of your property.
41. Don't reply to RFP with boilerplate response. Look carefully at the details. If you have questions about RFP, ask!
42. Don't call if RFP says to communicate via email.
43. MPI is a great resource for RFP formats. Check out Industry Council on their website.
44. Don't add a "resort fee" to room rate. That can annoy. Include it in the room rate.
45. Planners just want their event to go smooth and easy.
46. It is our job to take care of VIP's. Compliment us in front of them so we can be appreciated for what we do. But be specific. If you say we are "nice to work with" then our boss may think we paid too much. Say something like "Jenny was a great negotiator but great to work with!"
47. CVB's set the feeling for the city they are in. If you run into troubles in a city on a site visit, it will make you wary about what problems might come up during the conference or how they will be handled.
48. What type of pre-con do you like? Formal vs informal. If formal, make sure appropriate people are there. Plan them at the right time. Mid morning and mid afternoon tend to work good.
49. Some planners like electronic survey and others want a phone call, find out their preference.
50. If you are an off site planner then you need feedback from hotel staff, i.e. the facilitator was rude, etc.
51. Create "24 Hour" sheet for planner with all nearby 24 hour doctors, dentists, shopping, drugstore with pharmacy, churches, etc.
52. Entice planner on alternative dates with a good value package and they might be flexible.
53. Be respectful! Remember "I am thinking the same thing about you!" ■

About the Authors:

For over eight years, **Jay Gubrud** has helped corporations, associations, their boards and members eliminate roadblocks to their success. His theme is very unique and one everybody can relate to – Cars and Driving! Jay's articles on performance improvement have been in numerous publications nationwide. You can reach Jay at www.jaygubrud.com and 651-635-9939.

Chris Wagner is a graduate from the University of Wisconsin Stout in hotel management. He has over 15 years of hospitality experience both in sales and marketing and hotel operations with a focus on retaining and building client relationships through understanding the various needs and desires of clients and markets. You can reach Chris at cwagner@sunstonehotels.com and 800-733-1655.

Planner Profile:

Rebecca Malnar-Wolbiakowski

► **Rebecca Malnar-Wolbiakowski**

State Marketing Specialist
American Family Insurance
Pewaukee, WI

How long in the meetings industry?

2 years

How long in MPI?

Since July 2007

Tell us about your company and/or position:

American Family created my position two years ago to assist agents with local community event marketing. I help agents support their local community organizations and charities, which in turn puts them face to face with potential customers. It's a win/win!

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

MPI Community Outreach program sounds like a nice fit for me.

Tell us about your family:

On December 14, 2007, I got married on an island off of Mexico.

Where were you born?

Waukesha, WI

Where do you currently live?

In the same house I grew up in; I bought it from my parents after I graduated from college.

Favorite Pastimes:

Riding horses, whitewater rafting, planning for our future.

Favorite Musical Group:

It's a toss up between Rascal Flatts and Third Day.

Person you admire most and why:

There are too many to list. My mom (for her direction and life lessons), my dad (for his accomplishments), and my boss (for his leadership).

Dream Vacation:

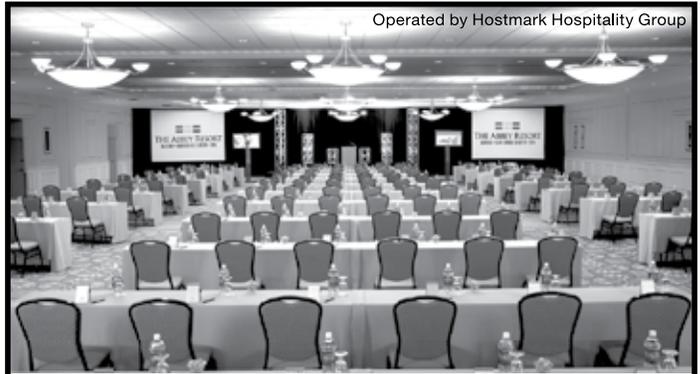
My dream vacation would have to include plenty of time relaxing in the sun at the pool but also plenty of time snowboarding, whitewater rafting, and hiking. We may have to stop in Vegas for a few days to win some big \$, catch a show, and enjoy a fine surf and turf dinner.

Words to live by:

"The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance, a wise man grows it under his feet" – James Oppenheim

What else would you like other MPI members to know about you? Summer is my favorite time of year, I love great danes, I'm going to own my own business someday. ■

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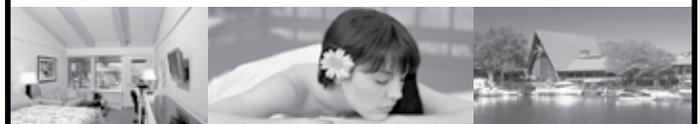


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Confidence in 2008: Don't Wait, Step Up to the Plate



► **Lori A. Fuhrmann**
Crowne Plaza Milwaukee - Wauwatosa
Wauwatosa, WI

Since I started in the industry in 1980 (and don't do the fuzzy math), I have had a lot of contact with confident people who believed in themselves and what they did. That has always impressed me. I never realized how much went into the word, confidence.

Last summer a good friend of mine, Deborah DiMarzo with Marcus, gave me a book for my most recent 30th birthday entitled, *"The Confident Woman"* by Joyce Meyer, inscribed with a very kind note that I found most intriguing. This compelled me to do a little research on the word "confidence" and here is what I found on Wikipedia:

Confidence: a mental process that arises from considering if a person or thing is capable of something. Confidence has a quality that is related to, but distinct from, self-esteem. Could be made up of 5 components: social confidence – [alcohol induced at MPI], physical presence, stage presence [witnessed this at the Holiday Party], status confidence and peer independence.

Self-Confidence: having confidence in oneself when considering a capability. Self-confidence is faith in one's own abilities. Self-confident people typically have little fear of the unknown, are able to stand up for what they believe in, and have the courage to risk embarrassment. Example: giving a presentation to a large group of people; a self-confident person is never loud, brash or reckless. I say if you are self-confident, male or female, you carry a quiet elegance about you and never need to be the center of attention.

Overconfidence: having the unmerited confidence – believing something or someone is capable when they are not. Especially when it is the person selling you. Proceed with caution. A situation can only be judged after the objective has been achieved (or not). Think about it.

Choking: losing confidence, especially self-confidence, just at the moment when it was needed most, can totally alter a person's life. If most of you are like me, there are times when you would like to "choke" someone before they dig themselves any deeper, but I really do not look good in black and white stripes ... especially horizontal. So, I step in and try to make good of where the situation is going. I was on a sales call with one of the sales managers years ago in Madison when the male sales manager froze up in front of a semi-beautiful woman, young enough to be his granddaughter. He choked, I had to quickly step in and lighten the mood. I mentioned that it was almost time for his meds and that he would be better then. She was light-hearted about it and I continued the presentation to obtain the business. For those of you who know me or have traveled with me,



know that the instant that we got back in the car, he got a rap on the head. Funny, he ducked before I could get him.

Seasonal Confidence Building:

Winter – a time for rest and recuperation. Prepare for the spring. Use this time for restoration, reconnect and reflect on the year so far and be mentally and confidently ready for 2008. Have a business and personal plan and don't mentally set it aside. Breathe it.

Spring – a time for emergence, promise and hope. Represents new life in general, from trees and flowers to newborn animals (my favorite part of living in the woods). I recommend enjoying the nature around you or doing whatever it is that makes you tick. Just do what means the most to you – it's that simple. Personally, when I see a baby fawn or baby turkey that looks like a cotton ball with legs running around my lawn and coming up on the decks with me, it is all I need to be confident in life ahead. No matter how bad it is in the world, these things can teach us how really simple love is. Without expecting anything back, other than what naturally comes back to them, with the true natural instinct of trust and confidence – in you and in me.

Summer – corresponds with the direction South. This southern direction is good for passion, excitement, drama, socializing, expressing yourself, and spontaneity. In short, it is a time for playing big. Sign me up.

Fall – a bountiful time of year; a time of fruition. This is my favorite time of year. The animals scurry around with much work to do in preparation for hibernation. I love to cozy up near a fireplace and blanket in envy of them for being able to hibernate. It's a beautiful season that starts with the tail end of summer and ends with the beginning of winter. I like June, September, and October in Wisconsin, so while I love the yellows that become gold, reds that become maroon and oranges become copper, I wish every year that we could have fall for 6 months (60 – 70 degrees), summer for two, (too many bad hair days), and Winter three months (40-50 degrees).

So as you go through 2008 and take yourself to what you believe is your total confidence level, remember these words from Joyce Meyer, *"Achieve" comes before "Believe" in the dictionary, but the order is switched in real life.*

2008 is going to be great! Only your "confidence" and belief in your personal and business life will make all of your expectations of yourself come true. Believe in you ... I do. ■

New Year's Resolution: Education



► **Susan Arts, CMP**
*Meetings & Incentives
 Caledonia, WI*

Did you make any New Year's resolutions? Lose weight, get in shape, strive for work-life balance, spend more time with family and friends? What about your professional education?

This is the perfect time to take a look at your 2008 calendar and block out the time to attend MPI programs!

Every event offers opportunities to learn from and network with your fellow meeting professionals. Make the commitment to yourself today – mark your calendars and plan to attend as many professional events as possible. This is your year to learn! ■

Date	Event	Location
January 10	MPI-WI Chapter Meeting	Madison
February 3-5	MPI Professional Education Conference, North America (PEC-NA)	Houston
February 21	MPI-WI Chapter Meeting	Delafield
March 20	MPI-WI Chapter Meeting	Rockford, IL
April 5-6	MPI Gulf Meetings and Events Conference	Dubai
April 17	MPI-WI Chapter Meeting	Oshkosh
April 18-20	MPI European Meeting and Events Conference	London
May 15	MPI-WI Chapter Meeting	Brookfield
June 18	MPI-WI/WSAE golf outing	Wisconsin Dells
August 9-12	MPI World Education Congress (WEC)	Las Vegas
September 11	MPI-WI Awards Gala	Sheboygan
October 16	MPI-WI Chapter Meeting	Tomah
November 13	MPI-WI Chapter Meeting	Milwaukee
December 4	MPI-WI Holiday Event	Appleton

President's Column

Continued from page 4

the friendships I have developed and the life lessons learned are something that I wouldn't trade for the world. Not even the downs. All of these jobs, the people I have met, and the co-workers have molded me into the person I am and with each step in my journey I know that I am not alone.

There have been ups and downs for me in my personal and professional life, but as always, I continue to turn those times into lessons I have learned and move forward, grow and thrive within myself.

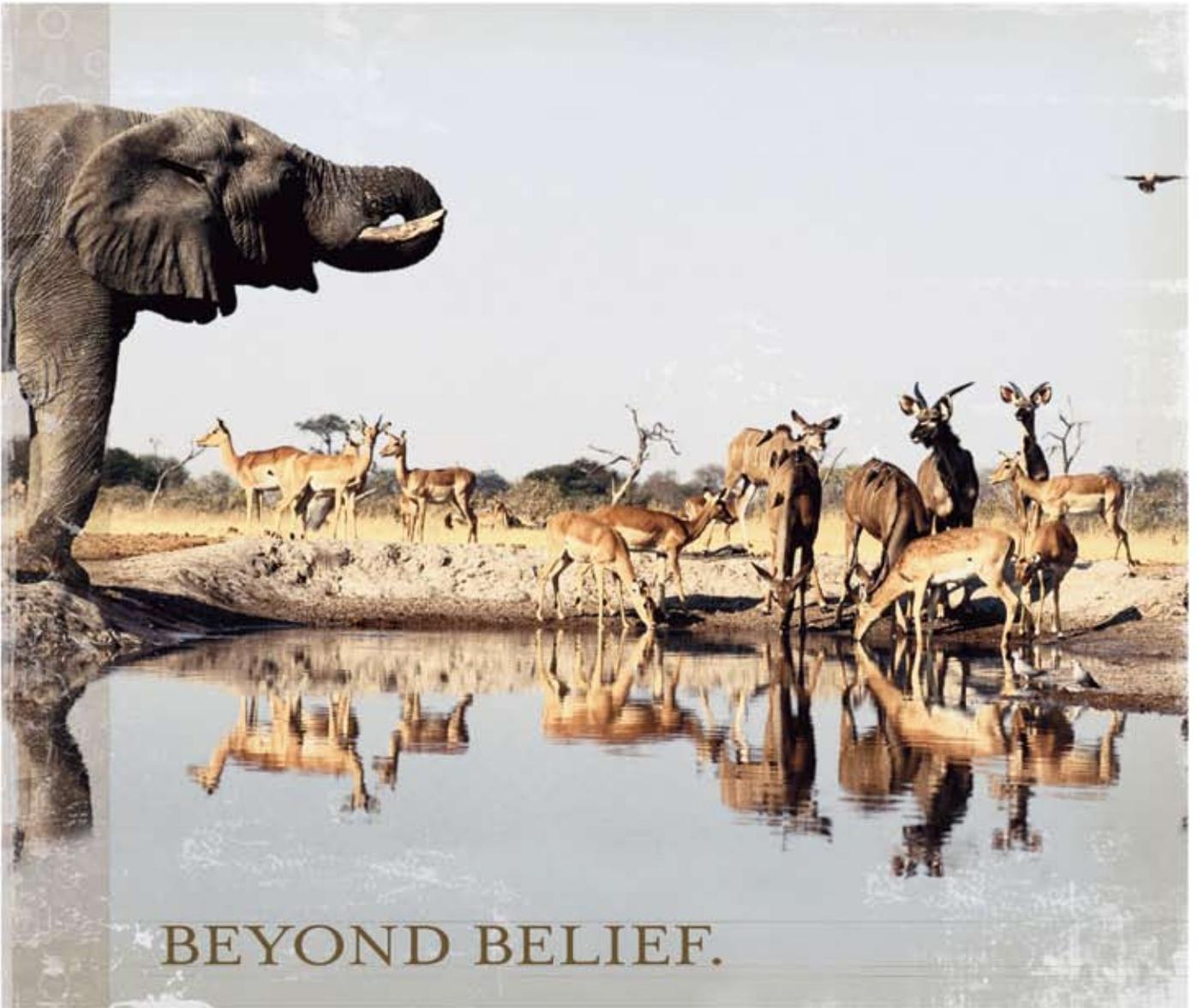
In October there was a significant loss in my life and many of my friend's lives. A co-worker, friend, and colleague passed away from breast cancer. No one was prepared, she was a survivor and I look at the past seven years that she fought breast cancer and all the while she was going through chemo,

raising her daughter and working, she made her life a journey to remember and made sure no matter how she felt, it was a journey worthy of remembrance and celebration. She lived every day to the fullest and left a mark on everyone who knew her!

As I am writing and looking back on my life, I think "WOW, if I had to leave my family, friends, co-workers and colleagues, would my journey have meant something?" I have had a great life so far and everyday it just keeps getting better. Relish in the happy times, live through the sad times, and celebrate the great times!

Thank you to everyone with whom I have crossed paths, you have made me the person I am today and I wouldn't trade it for the world.

Life is a journey, make it a journey to remember! ■



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MPI Fall Education Day & Symposium

► Sara Clauder
WPS Health Insurance
Madison, WI



This year's Fall Education Day & Symposium took place on November 8th at the Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells. The theme was "Takin' Care of Business," and both the resort and industry professionals knew exactly what it meant to take care of business.

The resort was very welcoming to MPI members and the chefs provided a wonderful breakfast and lunch. The staff did a fantastic job showcasing the property.

The Keynote Speaker, Tom Jadin, used humor and spoke on how we can keep ourselves motivated and manage stress in everyday life. Chris Shepro from Total Administrative Services Corporation (TASC) commented, "This was a very good session and I really liked the speaker. The topic fits the whole meeting planning industry well." Tom was able to grab our attention by using humor in his presentation. Kelli Keyzers, from Vitense Golfland, agrees. "I thought his message was very attention-grabbing, thought provoking, and challenging."

Shannon Timmerman from the Wilderness Resort had the opportunity to attend the breakout session on RFP/Site Inspections. She explained, "I like the interaction between planners and suppliers where we can see what both sides are looking for and want." The presenters, Beth Ebert and Carina Tran, CMP, talked about the things they look for when putting together RFPs and site inspections and made the presentation very interactive.

There were other breakout sessions throughout the day for members to choose from. One was AV 101 presented by Andrew Kluck. This session explored some basic AV set-ups and helpful tips for audio-visual malfunction. Vicky Betzig, CMP presented two sessions: "All About APEX" and "Cost Cutting Jeopardy!" The first was designed to help participants learn about the 7 key APEX areas that benefit both the planners and the suppliers. Cost Cutting Jeopardy included an interactive game show with a variety of topics from the meeting industry.

During lunch, a special award presentation took place. Each year, the National Speakers Association of WI chooses a meeting planner to recognize based on a number of criteria. The meeting planner has to be in Wisconsin, be in the meeting planning industry for some time, and contribute to the overall industry.

Robert Ian, President of the National Speakers Association of WI presented this year's Meeting Planner of the Year Award to one of our very own members, Janet Sperstad, CMP. Congratulations Janet on the well deserved award!

Many thanks to Marin Medema and Cindy Foley for Co-Chairing the Fall Education Day & Symposium. Marin stated, "This year's Fall Education Day was once again pulled off without a hitch because of the skills of a great team. This will be my final year chairing this event. I've learned so much from the planner's perspective such as having a low budget and

discovering how much AV can cost, eeks! I wouldn't have passed up this opportunity for anything and have also gained some great friends over the last 4 years on this team as well. Thank you MPI for the opportunity!"

Cindy Foley, CMP commented, "Marin and I were very pleased with all of the positive feedback we received on the educational sessions this year. We felt that Tom Jadin offered a fresh approach to motivational speaking; and all of the breakouts offered the type of "hands on learning" that participants could apply to their jobs when they returned the next day. Our Chapter has been most fortunate to have had Marin Medema lead an amazing group of dedicated team members these past years. They have raised the bar significantly in putting together such a polished professional program."

Thank you to the event sponsors; Chula Vista, The Osthoff Resort, Omnipress and WI Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau. You really helped make Education Day a success! ■

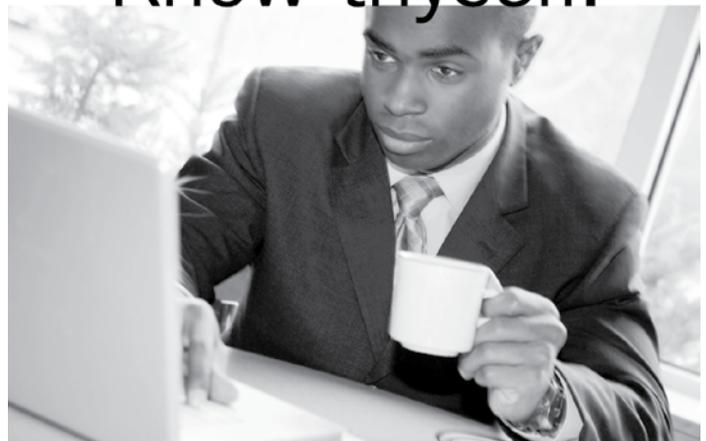


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Datebook: Calendar of Events

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FEBRUARY 2008

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