



WISCONSIN CHAPTER

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL

JULY/AUG 2008
VOL 30, NUM 4

Agenda

14 Aloha!!!
Spring Education Day

Also in this issue:

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DID YOU KNOW ?

The *AGENDA* is mailed to approximately 400 members and industry partners. The publication runs 32-36 pages on average. So when you look at the collective effects, our chapter uses a lot of paper that potentially impacts endangered forests, indigenous communities, and the Earth's climate.

One of our environment-conscious members recommended to the Board that considering using recycled content paper for our publication. Upon further investigation, we were advised by our printer, Great Graphics, that our chapter is currently and has for some time been using one of the best recycled gloss paper options on the market. Productolith Gloss contains 10% Post Consumer Waste and is Rainforest Alliance Certified. There is one other option our supplier provides that is 30% Post Consumer Waste, but it comes in a larger dimension. That means we'd actually end up wasting more paper by the time we cut it down to the size that we need for printing.

Interested in environmentally friendly options for your organization? Uncoated stocks are much better for the environment and have higher post-consumer recycled materials. However, based on your project you need to determine if you should use coated or uncoated paper. We use a coated stock for the *AGENDA* to ensure the print quality of the publication and our advertisements.

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The Wisconsin Chapter of Meeting Professionals International would like to thank **Visit Milwaukee** for their Bronze Level support of our Strategic Partnership Program!



*John Dorgan and Mae Ibe, CMP
enjoy the Hula Reception.*

Published bimonthly by
Meeting Professionals International –
Wisconsin Chapter

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Publication Deadlines:

September/October 2008
Deadline: July 20, 2008

November/December 2008
Deadline: September 20, 2008

January/February 2009
Deadline: November 20, 2008

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Well, here we go! As a new MPI-WI Chapter year kicks off, I hope this issue finds all of you well. For the upcoming 2008-2009 year, I will be sharing the role of editor for the **AGENDA** with my colleague and friend, Michelle Reed. We are very excited to be launching a new, more contemporary magazine design. The changes are not only intended to be graphically appealing, but they also enable us to offer premium placement for our valued advertisers. If you recall earlier this year, with great success, we introduced eight pages of full color for our advertisers. Now, we also have full page ad space available on the inside front and back covers.



Lori Fuhrmann
is the co-editor
of the MPI-WI
Agenda. She is the
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and Marketing
for the Crowne
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Milwaukee, WI.

Our desire is to continue to produce a quality publication featuring not only educational and informative articles, but fun light-hearted pieces too! So, I encourage you to step outside the box and considering contributing to the **AGENDA**. We are always looking for members to feature columns, submit articles, write up reviews for monthly educational sessions, and help us proof the **AGENDA** before it goes to print. Or, if you don't want to try your hand at writing, but own a digital camera, we could use a few good photographers to capture all of the fun at our events.

And, don't worry about making a mistake ... just remember to fail forward! This reminds me of a quote from Tom Peters, "Whenever you undertake a new project, you should attempt to make as many mistakes as rapidly as possible in order to learn as much as you can in the shortest period of time. Mistakes are great. Learn from them; research them; use them to propel you forward ... test fast, fail fast, and adjust fast." I think he is right. Why drag things out. Learn from your mistakes and move forward. Propel yourself forward to a new journey and experience a hidden talent that you may not even know you have.

In these upcoming pages, we have member submissions featuring a vegan wedding celebration, managing cultural change, and an overview of our May Spring Education Day along with some very fun photos of the rockin rockin Luau.

If you are interested in becoming part of our communication's team, contact me directly at lorif@crowneplazamilwaukee.com or submit comments or feedback on our new design to editor@mpiwi.org. We'd love to hear from you. 🌐

Best,

Lori

Lori

Requests for reprint permission should be directed to Lori Fuhrmann at editor@mpiwi.org.

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THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP

I'm looking out the window as I write this; wondering. Wondering when the trees will start to bloom (I'm writing this in April), wondering when the jackets can be put away, wondering when my kids will stop fighting with each other, and wondering how in the world I ever landed as the President of MPI-WI Chapter. Some days I think "maybe I should have just said no," and other days I wonder with excitement where the path of leadership will lead.

My journey to this leadership role began eight years ago, although I know we all have had leadership in us from birth. After all, everything we do can relate to some type of leadership role, right? We lead our children, our pets, our co-workers, our neighbors, our friends, and any others who ask for advice, or give us the opportunity to give advice without being asked! We all have leadership skills that we use each day, but we may not recognize it.

As we move into our "new" MPI year, I invite each and every one of you to think about your leadership path. There are many ways each of us could lead in our MPI-WI role. Volunteer for a committee, be the first to welcome new members and guests at a meeting, host a chapter meeting, donate a raffle item, or provide feedback about your organization; your leadership counts. Each one of us is important to make this organization a success, and together we will make a difference.

Our outgoing President, Paulette Heney, CMM, did a fantastic job to lead our chapter to a very successful year. I want to thank her for everything she has done for the Chapter and also for me personally. She played a very important role in "mentoring and grooming" me to take over as your President. We were very fortunate to have her as our President. I wish her good luck as she continues to grow in her personal and professional life.

I would also like to thank our outgoing board members; Steve Lorenz, CMP, Michelle Eggert, CMP, Laura Cornell, CMP and Katy Lederer. The time and commitment they have dedicated to this chapter is amazing and very much appreciated. Good luck to each of you!

Your board of directors is ready for their upcoming leadership roles and I'd like to invite each member to think about their roles. As I look back on the last eight "MPI" years, I can't believe it all started by saying yes to someone who asked me to volunteer to hand out name badges at the registration desk. Some of the simplest tasks can bring out the best of our abilities, and teach us that leadership is attainable in many ways.

Thank you for your support as we begin another MPI-WI Chapter year. Please do not hesitate to contact me anytime at mibe@foxcities.org or 920-734-3358 if you have feedback, questions, or concerns about your chapter. ●

"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."

— John F. Kennedy

Speech prepared for delivery in Dallas the day of his assassination, November 22, 1963.



Mae Ibe, CMP, is the 2008-2009 MPI-WI Chapter President. She lives in the Fox Cities area and is the Director of Convention Sales for the Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau.

THE “NEW NORMAL LEADERSHIP”

FOCUSING ON FEEDFORWARD, NOT JUST FEEDBACK

| By David Gabri, President and CEO
Associated Luxury Hotels International

“P roviding feedback has long been considered to be an essential skill for leaders,” according to renowned executive leadership coach and author Marshall Goldsmith, Ph.D. “As they strive to achieve the goals of the organization, employees need to know how they are doing. (But) just as employees need feedback from leaders, leaders can benefit from feedback from their employees.”

After all, as Goldsmith succinctly puts it, “Real leaders are not people who can point out what is wrong. Almost anyone can do that. Real leaders are people who can make things better.”

Goldsmith, who addressed ALHI’s Industry Advisory Council meeting in New Orleans, suggests this “upward feedback” -- where employees provide helpful suggestions for improvements as well as input to managers on their leadership effectiveness -- has become more common over the last few years with the increasing popularity of 360-degree assess-

ments. The most basic question is for leaders to simply ask, “What can I do better?”

While by most accounts this practice is beneficial to the organization, Goldsmith suggests that organizations take it one step further. Rather than just garnering “feedback,” which is based on the past, he suggests focusing on “feedforward” to address the wealth of opportunities that can happen in the future.

Goldsmith advises that leaders implement feedforward programs where individuals are encouraged to provide suggestions for the future and to “help as much as they can.” Furthermore he advises that the leaders listen to the suggestions from others for the future and to “learn as much as they can.”

It may sound obvious, but getting leaders to accept suggestions from those that report to them isn’t

always easy. In the past, successful leaders often felt that if they were successful, and things were going well, there was no need to change.

The exciting news is that the “new normal leadership” is that more and more leaders around the world now willingly accept this type of input.

After all, as Goldsmith succinctly puts it, “Real leaders are not people who can point out what is wrong. Almost anyone can do that. Real leaders are people who can make things better.”

And what better way to make things better than to listen to suggestions for the future? So how can you implement a feedforward program?

According to Goldsmith:

- Pick one behavior that you would like to change.
- Describe this behavior to others (such as other participants in the program).
- Ask for *feedforward* – two suggestions for the future that might help you achieve a positive change in the selected behavior.
- Listen attentively to the suggestions without judging, and take notes.
- Ask the other participants if they would like feedforward suggestions for a behavior they wish to change.

Why do this? Because feedforward helps people envision and focus on a positive future and positive results, rather than on a failed past. This can be vital to your organization achieving greater future success.

Goldsmith also points out that it can be more productive to help people be “right” than prove they were “wrong.” Unlike feedback, which is often seen as negative, feedforward focuses on solutions, not problems, and isn’t perceived as a personal critique since it

continued on page 31

FOOD DRIVE BENEFITING SECOND HARVEST

On May 15th, we had our Spring Education Day and we combined a Community Outreach for the America's Second Harvest of Wisconsin. America's Second Harvest of Wisconsin has warehouses in Milwaukee and the Fox Valley, where they distribute 13 million pounds of food a year to more than 1,100 pantries, meal programs and other non-profit agencies that serve nearly 235,000 people in eastern Wisconsin.

Our Community Outreach helped the America's Second Harvest of Wisconsin at a critical time of the year. As the school year was coming to an end, there is a great need for food supplies at the America's Second Harvest to help the families that have children that have their breakfast and lunch meals supplemented through their school programs. With those supplemented meals no longer available to them on a daily basis during the summer months, these kids often are either going hungry or only having one meal a day throughout the summer months.

**Thirty million people a year
DIE of HUNGER**
**Thirty million people a year
DIE of HUNGER**
**Thirty million people a year
DIE of HUNGER**

brown paper bags of non-perishable food and we also had some monetary donations that were given to the America's Second Harvest of Wisconsin that will enable them to purchase items that are often not donated, but are needed for the food banks.

Thank you to everyone who brought in items for our successful Community Outreach. 🍎

Erica Streik of the America's Second Harvest of Wisconsin was our main contact and she even came to pick up the food products that were collected. MPI is known for their Community Outreach and we have successfully completed another outreach for a very important cause. We were able to collect over 28

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Wanda Gilles is a Corporate Sales Administration Supervisor for WPS Insurance in Madison, WI. She was also the Community Outreach Team Lead 2007-2008 and spearheaded two community service projects during her term.

Managing Cultural Change

Organizational culture influences many aspects of work life. Workplace cultures that are grounded in strong and clear values and behaviors define an organization. An organization's culture consists of assumptions, values, beliefs, norms and behaviors that have developed gradually and may have become relatively unconscious. It can explain much about how an organization functions, both internally and in relation to its external environment. Well-communicated values influence employee behavior and drive how employees relate to all stakeholders within the organization, from co-workers, management, clients, board members and the external environment.

When there is a need to change the way an organization works, it may become necessary to make this implicit set of beliefs explicit as they may no longer be consistent with the actions and behaviors that are now required. Understanding why change is difficult for employees can help management build in methods for easing the process and increasing the likelihood that it will succeed.

Empowering employees is one method to embracing change. This is accomplished by bringing employees into the design and decision making process early so they are a part of the process and not just the recipient. It is through a proactive approach that one can more effectively deal with change and its consequences. It is important to ensure that change is received by the staff in a positive manner whether it is the lowest level worker or the CEO.

One model for implementing and managing cultural change is a process that creates power and motivation sufficient to overcome barriers and obstacles and needs to be guided by high-quality leadership. It has also been called unfreezing, restructuring and refreezing. Unfreezing or unlearning produces anxiety and uncertainty to a person's future work environment. They question their competencies, identity, and role within the organization and feelings of uncertainty cause resistance to change. To reduce the resistance and the feelings of uncertainty the employee must feel safe in their work environment.

Once an organization has been unfrozen, the employees begin to relearn and develop new behaviors, values and attitudes through changes in organizational structures and processes. The employees are empowered to take action by eliminating obstacles,

changing systems or structures that undermine the change vision and encourage brainstorming on new ideas, activities and actions.

After restructuring, it is important to refreeze the new change in the culture and the organization is now at a new organizational state. This is accomplished by making the connections between new behaviors and organizational success. Norms, values, policies, and structures are reinforced.

Gaining an understanding and commitment to a new direction is never an easy task and it's very important not to underestimate how difficult change can be. Common pitfalls include: poor communication, either in terms of the clarity of the messages or the lack of ongoing communication; failing to establish a leading change team; not communicating the vision effectively; not empowering workers to take an active role in the transition; lack of incentives tied to the change initiative; inadequate training of the employees; unclear expectations without a good measurement system to evaluate the change; seeking quick, easy, short-term solutions; and a lack of commitment from senior management.

Through cultural change, a leader can implement new ways of doing things, create a new vision, strategies and goals, however these changes will not produce a cultural change unless the new way of doing things actually works better and provides the employees a new set of shared experiences. New behavior can be learned but only if it leads to success and satisfaction. Leadership should be in harmony, managers should be accessible, and management needs to become good listeners.

The rate of change in the business world has increased and does not seem to be slowing down. Competition, technology, globalization of the economy and social trends are all contributing factors. Companies must learn how to adapt to these changes at a relatively quickly pace or they will be left behind. Change will not happen overnight but by following the steps to incorporating change and awareness of the pitfalls that can happen along the way, the company will be assured of a successful transformation. ●



Sherry Benzmilller, CMP is a Meeting Planner and Project Administrator with the Energy Center of Wisconsin located in Madison. Sherry joined the MPI-WI Chapter Board as the Director of Monthly Programming.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Featuring: Jan Blochwitz, Monona Catering, Executive Pastry Chef

After receiving a Bachelor's of Art degree from Lawrence University in 1983, Jan Blochwitz embarked on her career in pastry cooking. Her award winning career began in Madison, Wisconsin, where she worked as a baker for the award winning Ovens of Brittany.



*Pastry Chef Jan Blochwitz
of Monona Catering*

Her career then took her to Atlanta, Georgia, where she became a Pastry Chef in 1992. At Alon's Bakery. At Alon's she was fortunate enough to perfect her pastry skills while working under the direction of its European-schooled owner.



In 1998, Monona Catering sought a Pastry Chef in order to better serve the requests and special pastry requirements of Monona Terrace clients. Jan joined the team, and her skills have lead to numerous culinary awards for Monona Catering, including Best Dessert and Most Decadent Pleasure Awards for the Big Eat, and

First Place Showpiece for the Capital Confectioner Award. She has also made it possible to provide European quality Danish, scones, muffins, and croissants, freshly baked each morning in our in-house bakery. Her skill with desserts and chocolate has resulted in many custom made creations as requested by our clients. ●



Fran Puleo is the Community & Public Relations Manager for the Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center in Madison.

VEGAN FRUIT TART

SHELL

Phyllo Dough	8 oz/½ box/12 sheets
Vegetable Oil or Spray	¼ to 1/3 cup
Sugar	¼ cup

FILLING

Coconut Milk	1 cup
Tofutti Sour Cream	8 ounces
Vanilla Instant Pudding	1 box (3.4 ounces)
Vanilla Bean	1/3 pod

FRUIT

Strawberries (topped)	2 pints
Kiwifruit (peeled & sliced)	3 each
Raspberries	½ pint
Apricot Jelly	1/3 cup

- Preheat oven to 375°
- Make sure that phyllo dough is fully thawed (usually overnight in the refrigerator is fine).
- Lay one phyllo sheet down in fluted tart pan (9"-11" with removable bottom), brush lightly or spray with oil (about 5 seconds per sheet).
- Sprinkle a generous teaspoon of sugar across and lay next sheet down. Continue until 12 sheets are in place. Don't grease or sugar final sheet.
- Gently trim overhanging edges of dough with a scissors.
- Place foil or parchment onto dough and fill with pie weights or beans.
- Blind bake for 15 minutes or so until golden brown. The weights can be removed in final minutes for better browning.
- Let crust cool at room temperature.
- Put all the filling ingredients—scraping the vanilla seeds with the back of a paring knife from a split pod—into a bowl.
- Blend with a stick blender or put everything into a food processor or blender to mix thoroughly.
- Spread filling evenly into cooled crust.
- Top with berries and fruit.
- Brush melted jelly across the top.

SPRING EDUCATION DAY 2008

Ohana A'o Palapala – Coming Together Through Education

Aloha!!!

A Rockin Rockin Luau kicked off the Spring Education Day in May at the Sheraton in Brookfield. Liz Hessler, CMP and her dance team provided the attendees with fantastic Hula dancing! But wait, that's not all the dancing that was done! Ms. Hessler made sure all were able to enjoy the fun and learn a move or two. Many members were on the dance floor learning to do the Huki Lau.

Many of us have wondered what it would take to get our Certified Meeting Planner (CMP) certification. Janet Sperstad, CMP shared it all. Janet guided us from the application process to recertifying. Boot camp isn't just for the military any more.

The meeting industry is ever changing, as is the internet. James Spellos addressed this evolution and spoke on the newest and hottest technologies emerging within the meeting industry.

Along with the knowledge we received from James Spellos on the internet, the day wouldn't have been complete without discussing email. Franklin Billerbeck, instructor of Communication Skills at Waukesha County Technical College, taught us how to write effective e-mails that get results.

Craig Thalman, Catering Manager at Sheraton Brookfield, and Dick Bradley, Sales Manager, were an enormous help. Craig shared the teams' excitement and made sure all the details were attended, too. A big part of the day included a hearty breakfast, kindly, donated by the Sheraton Brookfield. Lastly, to bring a bit of island flavor, Sheraton Chef Mastian and Liz Hessler, CMP, collaborated on the fantastic Polynesian lunch.

Now on to Thursday ... this years theme of: *Ohana A'o Palapala – Coming Together Through Education* brought a wealth of talent! The MPI-WI Chapter was once again honored with the knowledge of James Spellos, CMP. James taught us about

the vast resources the internet offers. He also demonstrated how we can identify these critical sites and redefine how we utilize the internet.

Educational offerings included:

Is it the Visitor & Convention Bureau or Convention & Visitor Bureau? However your city's convention bureau identifies itself – one thing is true – we certainly had a lot more questions about them than we had answers. But, no more ... after all the wonderful advice offered by Mae Ibe, CMP (Fox Cities CVB), Sara Brish (Stevens Point Area CVB), Helen Wick (WI Dells VCB) and Paul Sienko (Visit Milwaukee) are there any more questions?

Our fabulous Hula Dancer Apelila shows off her talents.





Left: Liz Kostka & Cathy Cluff pose for the camera.

How about the MPI Hula Dance team? I have to admit when the idea was conceived for the team to perform a hula dance, I was excited. After a couple of lessons, I started to doubt myself and wondered if my nerves would allow me to perform in front of my peers. The bonds created during our lessons were all the encouragement I needed. So with the guidance of a fearless Ms. Hessler, we learned to hula!!! It was a lot of fun, we hope you enjoyed our show!!!!!!

The Spring Education team consisted of the following:

Team Leader, Julie (Kuli) Finco, Sara (Kala) Clauder, Cathy (Kaki) Cluff, John (Keoni) Dorgan, Marie (Malia) Grevsmuehl, Liz (Lika) Hessler, CMP, Liz (Lika) Kostka, and Shannon (Kanonu) Timmerman.

The team would like to also thank David Helegson, CMP and Susan Arts, CMP for their assistance along with Heather and Christopher Dyer of Morgan Data Systems. ●



Julie Finco started her career as a Catering Manager with the Radisson Green Bay and went on to be the Director of Conferences & Special Events at the Tundra Lodge. Currently, she is the Catering Manager with Sodexo at Marian University.



Top: Julie Finco encourages other MPI members to join in the fun.

Above Julie Finco & Dave Helgeson, CMP are debating if they should steal the Hula Dancers' headdresses.

Below: Apelila & Paki give Chris Dyer at happy Hula hug.



Right: Liz Hessler, CMP, shows us the essence and spirit of Hawaii in her dance.

THANK YOU

Please join me in thanking our member organizations for all the wonderful raffle donations and all of our members that purchased raffle tickets to support our chapter's fundraising efforts:

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Supple Group
Tanger Outlet Mall
Tundra Lodge, Green Bay
Wisconsin Dells CVB



Continued on page 16

VOLUNTEER KICK-OFF

We want to thank the following members for registering for the event and hope they have signed on to help grow and build their chapter. 🍷



Above: Heather Dyer of Morgan Data shares good news about our chapter's finances



Right: Denise Henson, Taci Tolzman, Robin Kluk & Ronny Hill get down to business.

Student Profile:

Jen O'Branovich



Place of Employment: The Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation

Job Title: Event Coordinator / Administrative Assistant

What drew you to the meetings industry? It was a special event that actually brought me into the planner's world. I planned an annual diversity conference in senior year for my high school county (Sheboygan County). I had only the assistance of my advisor and only two weeks to plan and execute the event for over 300 high schoolers. It worked, it was stressful, and I loved every minute of it.

Where were you born? I was born in Plymouth, Wisconsin.

Where do you currently live? I currently live in downtown Madison.

Favorite Pastimes: In the winter I really like to knit. In the summer I love to go tailgate and watch the Brew Crew. Other than that, I tend to fill up "pastimes" with work.

Tell us about your college program: I began as linguistics major after receiving my International Studies Certificate. That shortly changed after I realized MATC-Madison had a "Meeting and Event Management Program" taught by CMP's and headed by the International Meeting Planner 2007. I have never enjoyed school as much as I did for those two years. The real life knowledge and education I received glows in comparison to the other two years I spent in the UW system. The classes were enjoyable and the teachers were experienced. I couldn't have asked for anything better.

Teams or projects that you have worked on for MPI or would like to be involved with: I am interested in being involved with the Wisconsin Chapter of MPI on their committees. I am fairly interested in their finance committee. I am currently not an active member of my chapter, but now that I am no longer in school, I feel ready to take on more responsibilities.

Tell us about your family: I was raised by my single (very hardworking) mother, with three older brothers; the closest in age being 4 years older than me. I had strong family ties to my grandparents who helped care for my brothers and me while my mother worked. My oldest brother has two little girls, my second oldest has one little boy with another

on the way, and the youngest brother of the three is living in Florida with his girlfriend. My favorite pastime with my family is having a cookout while sitting outside in the sun, talking.

Favorite Musical Group: I'm a HUGE fan of music, so this is a hard question. The Decemberists usually put me into a really good mood.

Person you admire most and why: My mother. She's been through a lot and has probably seen it all. However, she is always willing to forgive others and cherishes everyday for what it's worth. Plus, she's an extremely hard worker.

Dream Vacation: My dream vacation is to start traveling the world and only stop once I've seen every inch of every land.

If I won the lottery I would:

Pay off the debt (mostly school loans) of all close family members, friends, myself, and try to take my dream vacation! Once I got back from my dream vacation (if I'd ever come back) I'd open up my own café.

Words to live by: Be able to grant yourself the serenity to accept the things you cannot change; courage to change the things you can; and wisdom to know the difference.

Special personal accomplishments:

When I was 16, I left high school, got on a plane for my very first time, and flew to Panama to live there for 7 months. That was the scariest feeling ever. I feel like I can do anything after that. 🌍

WHO'S IN THE NEWS

Changes & Accomplishments

I am happy to report that **Paulette Heney, CMM**, our MPI-WI Chapter's Immediate Past President was selected to the International Chapter Leadership Committee (ICL). This is her second International appointment. She previously represented the Wisconsin Chapter on the Governance Committee in 2007-2008.



Naomi Tucker, CMP, just welcomed a lovely little addition to her family. On Tuesday, May 27, 2008 at 9:23 p.m. Samara Leilani Tucker was born. She weighed 5 lbs, 14 oz, and was 19 inches long. We wish James and Naomi sleep filled nights. Since we won't see Naomi for a while at chapter events, we can get a peek at her beautiful baby girl.

Julie Finco has accepted the position of Catering Manager with Sodexo at Marian University. Please join us in wishing her luck in her new endeavor.

Please help us congratulate **Kristi Kaiser, Jennifer Obranovich** and **Alyssa Teasdale** from Madison Area Technical College on earning scholarships to IMEX/MPI Future Leaders Forum at the WEC in August. The MPI-WI Chapter is fortunate to attract young upcoming leaders and industry professionals to our association. We are proud to call them our own.

Saturday, June 14, **Sara Clauder** married a gentleman named Tim Beuthien, and will thus be named be Sara Beuthien. We all wish Sara and Tim many years of love and happiness.

The MPI-WI Chapter is pleased to announce a partnership with the **National Speaker's Association of Wisconsin**. NSA Wisconsin and MPI-WI have common goals of providing member value and delivering top notch education. To meet those goals, the initiative will include partnering on education, collaboration, and networking for business opportunities. Their membership includes over 70 speakers, trainers and consultants; our planners are often tasked

with selecting speakers for their programs; so this is a winning combination that will benefit both of our organizations.

Allison and Alison news!

First, **Alison Huber** has several bits of exciting news. She has been selected for the International Community Membership Advisory Council for 2008-2009, along with Paulette for International Service. And, if that is not enough for our mover and shaker, she has accepted a position with the Wisconsin Association of School Boards. She will be working on their annual convention, trade show and a variety of other meetings throughout the year.

Allison McCarty, previously with the Wisconsin Association of School Board will be rejoining the World Council of Credit Unions as a conference specialist. Allison served an internship with the council while she was obtaining her degree. In her new role, she will be planning global meetings and have an opportunity to travel to fun and exciting international destinations. ●



Sue Lidstrom is a contributing writer for the **Agenda** focusing on her 'Who's in the News' column. She works for Sheraton Madison Hotel and lives in Madison. Sue has also taken the lead role for the 2008-2009 Community Outreach Initiatives. Please submit accomplishments and changes in employment to Sue at suelidstrom@marcushotels.com.

WHAT OUR MEMBERS HAD TO SAY...

At the end of April, we invited our chapter members to participate in an online survey to share their candid feedback, experiences regarding monthly educational events, and overall satisfaction with the MPI-WI Chapter. The survey was spearheaded by Michelle Eggert, CMP, Katy Lederer, and Jodi Goldbeck to help guide future member recruitment and retention efforts.

The MPI-WI Chapter Membership Retention committee is committed to ensuring the continued growth and education of all our members. As such, they were interested in gaining insight on what they can do to increase the benefits received through MPI-WI Chapter membership. Additionally, our 2008 member survey serves an important tool to help our leadership stay focused on your needs and exceed your expectations.


After compiling responses for one month, a total of 112 (approximately 32%) members participated in the survey. It was a good mix of new and veteran members – those that just joined in the past year (22%), those that have been a part of the chapter for 1-3 years (30%), 4-6 years (23%) and 7+ years (25%). It was important to hear from our planners and suppliers, alike. Plus, we were interested in what our student members had to say. We were pleased that 49% of respondents were planners, 41% suppliers and the remaining were student and faculty.

We asked “what was the primary reason you joined MPI?” Half of our members indicated it was to network with colleagues and industry professionals, followed by an interest in educational opportunities.

In regards to the personal benefits of belonging to MPI, 89% of our members indicated they were proud to be a member of the MPI-WI Chapter, 82% enjoy the educational opportunities afforded them and 65% said their membership helps them be successful in their job.

One of the key objectives of the survey was to hear from our members that have not attended an MPI-WI Chapter event in the past 12 months. We want to better understand if there are things our leadership can do or initiatives our teams can take to get more member participation. The good news is that the vast majority of respondents are active members (83%). The most common reason for members not attending events is the inability to get time away from work. This is helpful information for our education team to take into account when developing the 2009-2010 monthly programs in terms of time of day and location of events.

We asked members to evaluate their most recent experience with an MPI-WI Chapter event or educational session. While the great news is that not one respondent indicated their expectations were not met at all, there is always room for improvement. Of the total, 10% gave the highest rating of greatly exceeding expectations, 18% said it somewhat exceeded expectations and 63% said it simply met expectations. One member had commented “I would like to see more interactive education. Speakers are nice, but limiting. I would like to see more panels, round table, case based education, small group work. We are adults and adults learn better when they interact.” And that is balanced by another perspective “The education is always excellent - don’t change a thing on that.”



Michelle Egge, CMP, is a National



Michelle Eggert, CMP, is a National Account Manager with Conference Direct. She most recently on the MPI-WI Chapter Board as VP of Member Care.

In deciding whether or not to attend an event, members consider the educational topic first, following by business contacts and networking opportunities and location of the event. Also of interest is that almost three quarters of our members only attend chapter events, they do not participate at the international level. So from a communications standpoint, it is important that we share the mission, vision and initiatives of international with our chapter members so that we all feel connected to our MPI community.

In terms of association member benefits, 45% indicated the membership directory was very important to them and 35% said the chapter website and members-only section was very important. As a reminder, the membership directory is available online at www.mpiwi.org. You can use the search feature if looking for a specific member or company. You can also print a copy of the entire directory, if you wish.

I am not sure who coined the phrase, “you can’t please all of the people all of the time,” but it certainly rings true. It is not the answer to any one particular survey question or com-

continued on page 26

Supplier Profile:

Patrick Lalley

Place of Employment: Windy City Fieldhouse Corporate Events

Job Title: Business Development Manager

How long in the meetings industry? Since November of 2007

How long in MPI? December of 2007 (7 Months). WCF has been involved with MPI for over 10 years.

Tell a bit about your company and/or current position:

Windy City Fieldhouse (WCF), voted Chicago's #1 Team Building Company for the 3rd consecutive year, is the Midwest's largest Team Building and Entertainment Company dedicated to assisting its clients in the creation of exceptional and memorable interactive events throughout the Chicagoland area and across the United States. With many events already executed in Southern Wisconsin, WCF is excited about the opportunity to bring its years of experience to Milwaukee and the surrounding areas.

WCF's fun and interactive programs ranging from Summer Picnics and Great Amazing Races to Deep Skills Team Building events provide the results you need to build a high performance team with enthusiastic, motivated and loyal employees. WCF accommodates your every need by matching and customizing its programs to fit your unique mission and objectives.

Teams or projects that you have worked on for MPI or would like to be involved with: Currently on the Retention Committee.

Tell us about your family: My parents and the majority of my family reside in Holland, MI which is best known for its Tulip Festival and is located on the West Side of Michigan right on the Lake. My great grandparents were originally from Racine.

Where were you born? Holland, MI

Favorite Pastimes: I love being outside either on the water boating or relaxing on the beach. I am a huge sports fan and love to make road trips to support my Detroit and Michigan State University teams!

Favorite Musical Group: I have an eclectic taste and it just depends on what mood I am in at the time. Recently I have been listening to a lot of Jason Mraz.



Where do you currently live? Chicago

Person you admire most and why: It is a tie between Mom and Dad. They are my backbone and I owe all of my successes to them. They instilled in me the importance of working hard, being friendly and enjoying life.

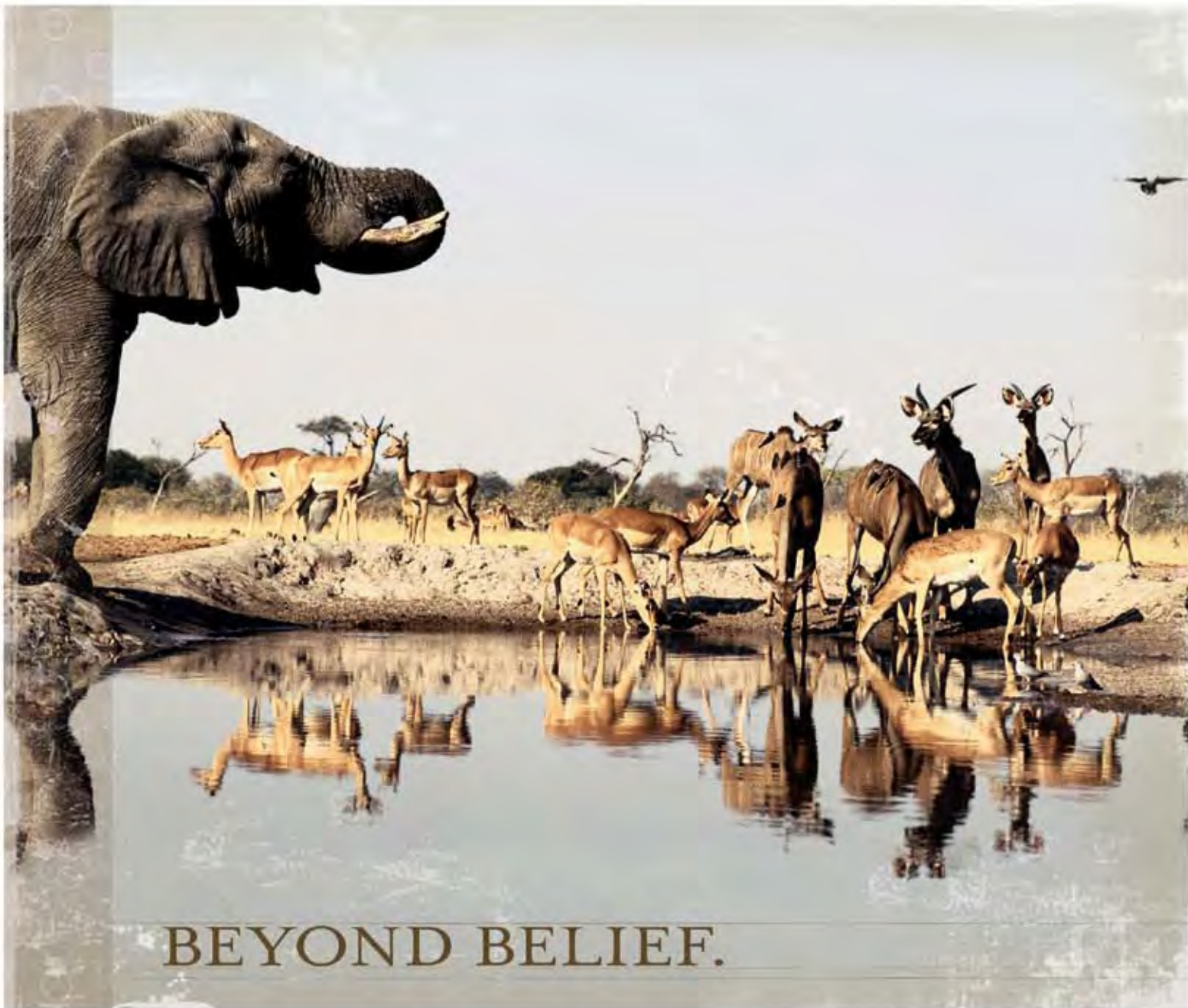
Dream Vacation: As long as I am with my friends or family and can spend time with them, the location does not matter. However, if it were someplace warm and sunny, I wouldn't complain.

If I won the lottery I would: Be glad that I know so many people in MPI because that would be a big party to plan and set up!

Words to live by: "You get what you deserve." You get out of something whatever you put in. Nothing is ever handed to you.

Special personal accomplishments: I was a team manager for Michigan State University Men's Basketball Team that won a National Championship, 4 Big Ten Championships, and made 3 consecutive Final 4 appearances. I also worked for the Detroit Pistons organization for 5 years including their World Championship season in 2004. I was fortunate enough to accumulate 6 championship rings between the 2 organizations without playing a single game!

What else would you like other MPI members to know about you? I am always excited to meet other members so if you ever see me please introduce yourself. Being new to the industry I am eager to learn what other members do and would love any tips or suggestions that you could pass my way. In turn, hopefully I will be able to help other members as WCF has a unique niche within the industry. 🌐



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Planner Profile:

Ronny L. Hill

Place of Employment:

American Express Corporate Meeting Solutions onsite at Johnson Controls, Inc. corporate headquarters in Glendale, WI.

Job Title:

Meeting Manager

How long in the meetings industry?

Seven years total; two full-time.

How long in MPI?

Two years

Tell us about your company and/or position:

I am a Meeting Manager for American Express Corporate Meeting Solutions. I am dedicated to the Johnson Controls, Inc. account servicing clients worldwide. I plan both domestic and international meetings from initial program development and site inspection through execution and final billing reconciliation. My programs range in number from 10 – 250 attendees.

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

Around the same time that I joined MPI in Spring 2007, my workload just about tripled at the same time due to internal staffing changes and I just could not get away from the office and was not able to maximize my membership in MPI. This year, our team is at full staffing capacity, so I am hoping to become more involved with the Communications Committee.

Tell us about your family:

I have one son, Donovan, age 9; no pets.

Where were you born?

Milwaukee, WI

Where do you currently live?

Milwaukee, WI

Favorite Pastimes:

Bike riding all over the city, playing the piano, reading in the backyard on a cool summer afternoon.



Favorite Musical Group:

IPOD

Person you admire most and why:

My son; at the age of 9 he is not afraid to try anything at least once and lives so carefree; it's wonderful to see that he doesn't have any inhibitions about life or what it may bring his way, but just takes it a day at a time. He is truly living and learning!!

Dream Vacation:

For some reason, the over-the-water bungalows in Tahiti just absolutely fascinate me. I'd love to spend a week in one doing nothing but listening to the waves crash all day and reading a really good book.

If I won the lottery I would:

Payoff my student loans, live comfortably, and continue working in the meetings industry.

Words to live by:

Live and Learn. Live some more. Learn some more.

Special personal accomplishments: Master of Tourism Administration, The George Washington University, December, 2000.

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

It's taken me 10 years to break into the industry full time, but it was worth the wait and I love my job because it is all that I expected it to be and so much more!! 🌟

MPI-WI 2008-09 BOARD RETREAT SETS STRATEGIC GOALS

The incoming 2008-09 Meeting Professionals International-Wisconsin Chapter Board of Directors met on June 6 and 7, 2008 at the Delafield Resort to fine tune strategies for the upcoming year.



Tami Gilbertson, CMP is the 2008-2009 President-Elect of the MPI-WI Board of Directors. She works at WPS Health Insurance in Madison, Wisconsin.

Mae Ibe, CMP, Fox Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau (and current MPI-WI President at the time of publication) coordinated the meeting. Maureen Hodgson, CMM, is our Chapter Business Manager and attended as our special guest. She has been with MPI since May 2002. Maureen supports seventeen of MPI's sixty eight chapters. She works to assure that each chapter is effective within their community by providing support with business planning, budgeting and program development. Maureen also serves as the liaison between chapter leaders and MPI Headquarters.

According to Mae Ibe, CMP and President Elect, "We spent many hours developing goals and outcomes we felt our members would benefit from the most. The volunteer work that the chapter completes in a fiscal year is amazing. We have a good start with new, fresh ideas for our teams as we begin a new MPI year. We left the board retreat energized and ready for another successful year with the WI Chapter!"

The retreat was facilitated by Michael E Bergman, formerly of Hilton Minneapolis, and now Managing Director, of HelmsBriscoe. Michael also is the Immediate Past President of the MPI Minnesota Chapter and is currently on the International Chapter Leadership Committee; which is the organization within MPI which worked to create and define the new chapter structure which was discussed at the retreat.

"This is my 11th board retreat as a member of the WI Board of Directors and it is such a treat to see the continued dedication from our volunteers," shared Paulette Heney, CMM, and President. "Their thought processes continue to evolve with great ideas on how to move our chapter forward and I am excited to see us grow over the next year. I also want to thank Mae, Michael and Maureen for doing a great job keeping us on track."

Key goals for 2008-09 will be membership growth, member engagement, and member satisfaction. Watch future agenda articles to share greater details! Volunteers will also receive this information via your team leads on how you can continue to contribute to the success of the MPI-WI Chapter! ●



Top: Susan Arts shares membership ideas with her fellow board members.

Bottom: Micheal Bergman, CMP, of HelmsBriscoe facilitated the two-day strategic session.

Meet the

2008-2009 MPI-WISCONSIN BOARD OF DIRECTORS



From left to right: Mae Ibe, CMP; Tami Gilbertson, CMP; Tina Luther, Susan Arts, CMP; Susan Kainz, Dave Helgesen, CMP; Carmen Schaefer, Linda Dupont, CME, Denise Henson, Paulette Heney, CMM. At the podium is Cinda Vingers, CMP. (Absent are Naomi Tucker, CMP and Marie Johnson, CMP)

President

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President-Elect

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Director - Special Events, Fundraising & Strategic Alliances

Carmen Smalley Schaefer
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GOLF EVENT PROFITS DONATED

MPI-WI Chapter Profits from the 2008 Golf Event Donated to the Badger Chapter of the American Red Cross



The MPI Wisconsin Board of Directors voted in the middle of June to contribute MPI-WI profits from the 3rd annual golf event to the Badger Chapter of the American Red Cross. Sue Lidstrom is our Community Outreach Team Lead for the 2008-2009 year. She and her team

members were very excited that our chapter was able to respond so quickly to this call and support our statewide recovery efforts through the Badger Chapter of the American Red Cross. At time of print, the event team was still wrapping up the details and finances of the event. In our September/October issue of the Agenda, we will provide an update on our contribution to the cause.

As we know, the devastation from the flood waters not only affected our members in Wisconsin, but all of the heartland states. As a result, international made the following announcement:

A Message from MPI Headquarters in Dallas, TX

MPI extends its deepest sympathies to all those who have been impacted by the disaster wrought by flooding in the middle of the United States. Our hearts go out to all the families and communities that have been directly affected by this devastating natural disaster.

MPI is taking a number of steps to express our compassion and to provide assistance to those in need. MPI will waive dues for one year for members of the Heartland, Wisconsin and St. Louis Chapter who have lost their home or employment and/or business due to the flooding. You will need to apply for this waiver of dues. Please send an email to Junior Tauvaa, MPI Vice President of Member Care and Chapter Business Management at jtauvaa@mpiweb.org letting me know if you have lost your business, job or home due to the flooding. We will immediately extend the offer of one year free dues to you. ●

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ment that drives change, but the cumulative total of responses and recurring themes. Once we have clear understanding of what is important to our members and how we are performing in those areas, it is easier to identify solutions and create enhancements.

Another key objective of the survey was to assess member loyalty. There are a series of four questions that are helpful in determining the level of engagement of our MPI-WI Chapter members.

Overall, how satisfied are you with your membership in the MPI-WI Chapter? How likely are you to recommend the MPI-WI Chapter to your friends and colleagues? How likely are you to continue your membership with the MPI-WI Chapter?

Being a member of the chapter is valuable and worth the cost of membership. We look at each of these questions individually as well as collectively. Not surprisingly, 100% of our survey participants said they are very likely or somewhat likely to recommend the MPI-WI Chapter. When asked how many plan to continue their membership, 98% indicated very likely, somewhat likely. Next highest, 96% believe the chapter is delivering value, and 94% are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their membership in the chapter.

The true measure of member loyalty is calculating how many members gave the top box score to all four of the questions and create a loyalty index. Based on the results, we can consider approximately half (45%) of our members truly engaged with the MPI-WI Chapter. As with some of the other areas, this is a good starting point, but there is always room for improvement.

Participation paid off in more than just enhanced membership. At the end of the survey, all participants had the opportunity to include their email address to be entered into a drawing and win a \$50 gas card that they could use to attend their next MPI-WI Chapter event. We are pleased to announce our lucky winner was Cynthia McPhedran, CMP, CMM. Cynthia has been a member of MPI for quite a few years. She is a Meeting and Event Planner with Miller Brewing Company. However, because of her busy work and travel schedule, it is difficult for her to attend monthly events. Cynthia was last sited at MPI-WEC in Dallas, but we hope to see her at an upcoming event in the near future. ●

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Datebook: CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AUGUST 2008

9-12 MPI World Education Congress
Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino
Las Vegas, NV
www.mpiweb.org

20 CMP Application Deadline
for the January 2009 Exam
www.conventionindustry.org

21 MPI-WI Board Meeting
Morgan Data Solutions
Madison, WI
www.mpiwi.org

SEPTEMBER 2008

11 MPI-WI Chapter Awards Gala
Blue Harbor Resort & Conference Center
Sheboygan, WI
www.mpiwi.org

OCTOBER 2008

16 MPI-WI Chapter Meeting
Cranberry Country Lodge
Tomah, WI
www.mpiwi.org

NOVEMBER 2008

**13 MPI-WI Chapter Education Day/
Trade Show**
Wyndham Milwaukee Airport Hotel
Milwaukee, WI
www.mpiwi.org

DECEMBER 2008

4 MPI-WI Chapter Holiday Event
Radisson Paper Valley Hotel
Appleton, WI
www.mpiwi.org

COOKING UP GREEN!

For Pastry Chef Jan Blochwitz of Monona Catering, the exclusive caterer for Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center, “green” menus and environmentally sensitive catering operations are nothing new. However, the Frank-Lloyd Wright designed facility will host its first Vegan wedding this May.

“It was a learning experience how many foods are already Vegan. At first, I thought it would be a challenge, but then I was surprised at how easy it was to substitute ingredients,” says Blochwitz. Vegan diets exclude the use of any animal based products. Soymilk, soy margarine and egg substitutes are readily available and serve as the key stand-in ingredients of the Vegan wedding cake that Jan developed.



Bride-to-be Shannon Tervo of Madison wanted a special wedding celebration that would reflect her personal values. “I want to share our Vegan lifestyle with our friends and family and maybe in doing so, help offset the notion that Vegan food is strange,” said Tervo.

When asked about cost, Laurie Wirkus, Monona Catering Sales Manager, indicated that given the rising costs of dairy and eggs, a Vegan menu is now comparable in cost to a conventional meal, and ingredients are readily available in stores. “Many of the food products on the market today are Vegan without being labeled as such,” Wirkus said.

In keeping with the recent LEED-EB (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Existing Buildings) Silver certification obtained by the convention center, Monona Catering has followed suit with sustainable operations. In 2007, Monona Catering served over 450,000 guests at functions held at Monona Terrace. In the same year, they donated 7,255 pounds of food to local charities. In addition, Monona Catering proudly uses recycled materials wherever practical, including corn based plastics, recycled cardboard, paper and office supplies. While large quantities of certain organic foods can be difficult to come by, Monona Catering offers custom organic menus for clients ... a popular option among the growing number of “green” meetings and conventions that take place at Monona Terrace each year. ●



Fran Puleo is the Community & Public Relations Manager for the Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center in Madison.

NEW MEMBERS

Please help us welcome our new members!

Diane M. Battista

Student
Waukesha County Tech College
P.O. Box 684
Pewaukee WI 53072
262-957-4462 (p)
Student

Jo Ann Bauer, CMP

Experimental Aircraft Association
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Oshkosh WI 54903
920-426-6169 (p)
jbauer@eaa.org
Association/Non-profit Meeting
Professional

Mia Brondyke

Director of Sales
VISIT Milwaukee
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Supplier Meeting Professional

Joshua C. Eastman

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Student

Mary C. Evers

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mary.evers@thewaterfrontlacrosse.com
Supplier Meeting Professional

Pamela Fierst

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Professional

Jenny Sara Freistadt

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Professional

Andrea Hellenbrand

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Supplier Meeting Professional

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Professional

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is discussing something that hasn't yet happened. It is more focused on being "helpful" than on being an expert with "superior judgment." So it can be easier to hear the suggestions.

While Goldsmith emphasizes that leaders and companies do not need to stop providing feedback to employees, he does suggest that utilizing feedforward techniques can be an effective way to garner beneficial, dynamic solutions for the future.

Not only can this insight help you to be a more effective leader at work, you can also apply the principles to all aspects of your life. The result could be a renewed focus on the future rather than dwelling on mistakes or shortcomings of the past. ●



Marshall Goldsmith is a University Professor and the namesake of The Marshall Goldsmith School of Management at Alliant International University. He has been recognized by the American Management Association and Business Week as one of the most effective leaders in the history of leadership development, and was a speaker this year's PCMA conference. For information, visit www.Marshall-GoldsmithLibrary.com.



David Gabri is president and CEO of Associated Luxury Hotels International (ALHI), which has the national sales responsibilities to the meetings and incentive industries for its membership of over 100 premier Four- and Five-Diamond/Star quality hotels and resorts worldwide. For information, contact your nearest ALHI National Sales Office, call the "ALHI Luxury Group Desk" toll-free at 866-303-2544, or visit www.alhi.com.



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