

Agenda

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STUART TAYLOR is p.27



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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

We all attend events/meetings that we haven't planned and I don't know about you, but I analyze every detail. I noticed the other day while I was at a purely fun and social event that I am a horribly harsh critic when it comes to judging the planning, execution and follow up of any event. No matter what the scope and purpose of the event, I have a hard time just relaxing and relishing in the fact that I am a mere attendee and not the frantic, responsible planner.

Of course, no event could ever be planned as well as I could have done (insert chuckle here), but what I have been trying to do lately is take the "faults" that I find with an event and make a list. Analyzing these "faults" can remind me of the basics of meeting planning and help me to improve my events. Here is a take away list of my thoughts from a recent event. A lot of the below may seem obvious; however it is very easy to get caught up in the logistics of an event and forget that we are planning for the attendee.

1. Pre-event, the attendee should know exactly what the real purpose is behind the event. This could be as simple as including it in an event description during registration or more complex and involve social networking prior to the event. As you will read throughout this edition of the Agenda, there are so many social networking outlets available to planners (many of which are free); it is hard to justify not utilizing them. They help to bring attendees together before, after and during events and can make attendees more personally invested in the purpose of the event. It will also allow your attendees to network prior to the event and build more excitement as they prepare to collaborate in person. You could also take advantage of other free tools on the Internet such as wikis. For a simple example of a wiki, visit www.mpiwi.pbwiki.com. (Caution: Visiting this wiki may inspire to you to write an article for an upcoming Agenda, or at least we hope it does!)
2. From the moment an attendee walks in the door, they should feel welcomed and special. This may seem obvious, but I think that it is easy to overlook this element because of how basic it is. Attendees are the reason that we hold events and we need to remember that without them, we would be out of a job. A cheerful "hello," and "thank you for coming" along with their registration materials and agenda, will keep attendees coming back to your events.
3. Post-event, there should always be some type of follow-up. This depends on the specific goal(s) of the event, but it is important regardless of the intention of the event. We are always seeking feedback and looking for ways to analyze the return on investment in this industry and there are many ways to do this. This is particularly important when supporters are involved. It is important to show them that the event helped to achieve their goals so that you are able to go back to them for support in the future. For events with learning objectives, it is important to provide a pre- and post-test to ensure that the attendees have experienced a measurable change in their lives, careers, etc. and that they are able to take what they have learned at the event and apply it to their daily practices.

Although I admit to being critical of events/meetings, I think that it helps me to be a better planner and gives me a chance to step back and evaluate if I am doing all of the things that I expect others to do. Sometimes I am, but most of the time I am not.

I hope you enjoy this *Agenda* and are able to take what you read here and apply it to your own career. If you are interested in contributing to an upcoming *Agenda*, we would love to have you! Not sure what to write about? Take a look at the wiki mentioned above (www.mpiwi.pbwiki.com) for ideas. Are you full of ideas? Then add your suggestions to the wiki. We'd love to hear from you!



Michelle Reed
is the Meetings Manager for Association Acumen, a full service association management company that provides staff leadership and support for non-profit membership associations in Wisconsin, the U.S. and internationally.

Michelle

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A LOOK AT THE PAST YEAR

It's hard to believe a year has passed since I wrote my first President's Column. And what a year it was! The challenges we faced, both in our professional and our personal lives, were unprecedented. Members changing careers (some without choice), budgets being cut like never before, and greater workloads were placed on many of us. Although there were many challenges faced in our profession over the past year, the meetings industry continues to move forward with great expectations.

As I look back on the year it's truly amazing how much was accomplished by dedicated MPI-WI chapter volunteers. Over 120 volunteers spent countless hours to help our organization grow and thrive. Here are just a few of their accomplishments this past year:

- **Redesign of our Chapter Website**

Our membership survey last year, along with feedback that came out of our board retreat, confirmed that our website was in need of improvements. The new MPI-WI website will be revealed at our Spring Education Day at the Sheraton in Madison. The hard work of many volunteers will give members a much greater resource at their fingertips. By the way, we submitted a grant application to help pay for the upgrades! Thanks to Marie Johnson's grant writing skills, we obtained \$2,500 from the MPI Foundation.

- **Membership Growth**

Membership growth continues to be strong. We grew from 369 to 387 (as of March 25, 2009), and our retention rate holds strong at 77.62%. Even with our downturned economy, our industry continues to reach out for the networking and education opportunities that MPI-WI offer.

- **Volunteers**

Our members are something very special. They spend hundreds of volunteer hours planning education programs, organizing special events, serving on committees, writing articles, updating the website, recruiting members, and more. Thank you for all you do! Remember-we are always looking for more volunteers to get involved.

- **Special Event Fundraisers**

The monies raised at our special events (Holiday Event, February Fundraiser, & Golf Outing) give a huge financial boost to support our chapter and educational programming. Our Holiday Event brought over \$5,000 and our February Fundraiser brought over \$4,500 to our bottom line. The 4th Annual MPI-WI/WSAE Golf Outing is well into the planning stage, and we expect it once again to be a huge success!

- **Community Outreach**

At each monthly event the MPI-WI Chapter promoted and supported community outreach initiatives. From organ donation and breast cancer awareness, to career clothing drives and building homes, our MPI members gave very generously. Congratulations to our members for supporting worthy causes!

- **Education Events**

Education continues to be the focal point of our chapter, and providing the best education for our members is one of our main goals. We've had very stable attendance over the past year, with great survey results to help us continue to offer great learning opportunities for our members.

As my year as your President comes to an end, I'd like to thank the 2008-2009 board members who served countless hours to help make the MPI-WI Chapter successful. The support and friendship they provided me is something that I will always cherish. What a wonderful group of people to know both personally and professionally.

I'd also like to give a special thanks to our incoming President, Tami Gilbertson, CMP, for all her words of encouragement and assistance over the last year. As Tami takes the reins, there is no doubt our chapter will continue to move forward and succeed. The expertise, professionalism, and commitment she gives to this chapter are second to none. Please join me in welcoming Tami to her new role.

And finally, I must thank my family for the love and support. My three kids (you could probably include my husband as well) were at a loss as to what "MPI" was, much less what it meant to be President. My 8-year old daughter asked if I was going to be on TV like Obama (this was during the election) and if I was going to go to lots of parties. As I look back on her excitement, I have to say, even though it wasn't as glamorous as she envisioned, it is a rewarding experience and I will always be thankful for the opportunity of serving MPI-WI Chapter members! 🌐

Mae



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.

MEETDIFFERENT 2009

Southern hospitality streamed through every part of this year's MeetDifferent. Hosted in Atlanta, Georgia, the conference included great educational content, excellent networking opportunities and experiences to last a lifetime!

MeetDifferent 2009 began on February 7, 2009, with a MPI Chapter Leadership Forum – Leadership Conversations. This forum provided Chapter Leaders an opportunity to speak with peers from other Chapters and learn new ideas as well as brainstorm on a variety of topics. We met with several leaders from the MPI Minnesota Chapter and continued discussions about the upcoming Midwest Regional Conference and Supplier Showcase.

The MeetDifferent experience continued with a powerful opening session, including much discussion on the economy and how it is impacting the meetings industry—and, how the meeting industry is impacting the economy. Don Reynold is an economist and past pension board chairman who was responsible for over \$120 billion in pension and trust funds. As part of the opening session, Don shared this thought (and I paraphrase): Canceling a meeting, delaying a meeting is adding to the lay-offs and unemployment and is further adding to the length of the economic recovery.

This statement was further supported by other keynote participants, including Roger Dow, President and Chief Executive Officer of the U.S. Travel Association and Christine Duffy, President and Chief Executive Maritz Travel and former President of MPI. Dow and Duffy's discussion focused on current legislative actions and its potential impact on our industry.

The conference continued with further discussion on the economy as well as technology overview and labs, professional development presentations, meeting skill development and motivational speakers. As shared by Mae Ibe, CMP, President, MPI WI Chapter, "It's difficult to see so many of our peers hit so hard by the economy. However, Meeting Professionals International demonstrated that we really stand by our members, giving all great educational content and networking opportunities!"

The next fabulous opportunity from Meeting Professionals International is the World Education Congress in Salt Lake City, Utah from July 11-14 and then early next year is next MeetDifferent – February 20-23 in Cancun, Mexico. 🌐



Tami Gilbertson, CMP, works for WPS Health Insurance and is the President-elect of the MPI-WI chapter.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: November 12 for the Midwest Regional Conference and Supplier Showcase! It is a collaborative effort between the MPI Minnesota and Wisconsin Chapters. The education will be spectacular, the networking wonderful – and its right here in our backyard at Madison! The Conference will be hosted by The Monona Terrace and Convention Center.



▲ MPI welcomes attendees to the Welcome Reception at the George Aquarium



▲ Tami Gilbertson, CMP, and Mae Ibe, CMP, get a bear hug from the Coca-Cola Bear

MARCH EVENT: Work-Life Balance for the Busy Meeting Professional

The March MPI-WI event took place on March 19 at the Holiday Inn Nee-nah Riverwalk. If you were unable to attend this wonderful event, you sure did miss a great time. The host site did a wonderful job showcasing their culinary skills and made sure we did not leave hungry. During lunch, the Community Outreach Program was a special presentation given by Larry Medema from the Fox River Navigational Locks (see information on this on page 15).

The afternoon session featured author/speaker Andy Masters. Andy showed great enthusiasm and energy while discussing Work Life Balance for the Busy Meeting Professional. Andy explained the positives to delegation and how it can really be a great thing. The activity presented at the end of the session helped show MPI-WI members that anything can be accomplished if you just take time and start it!

Later in the afternoon, a reception followed the educational presentation. Members had the opportunity to test their Jenga skills by trying to keep the tower standing. Of course the evening did not end there. A special thanks to the Fox Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau and Mae Ibe, CMP, for hosting the Historic Tavern Tour. A good time was had by all.

We hope to see you at the next MPI-WI event!! 🌐



*Sara Beuthien
works for WPS
Health Insurance
in Madison.*



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SUPPLIER PROFILE:



David R. Schneider

Sales Manager / Event Planner
Wisconsin Center District

How long in the meetings industry? Two years

How long in MPI? 1 month

Tell a bit about your company and/or current position: The Wisconsin Center District owns and operates the Midwest Airlines Center, Milwaukee Theatre and U.S. Cellular Arena, located in downtown Milwaukee. The WCD supplies venues & services to a wide variety of state associations, corporations, non-profit organizations and public entertainment producers. My role is composed of assisting the various organizations with the overall event planning process, date/site selections, event services and contract arrangements. I work with a great team of operational staff at the WCD and area hotels to supply our valued clients with the best possible services available. I strive to make the event planning process a productive and friendly experience from start to finish for the clients I work with. Most importantly, I look for ways to help improve our clients' experience at our facilities, so that they return with success year after year.

Teams or projects that you have worked on for MPI or would like to be involved with: I have an interest in learning more about the Education or Communication committees.

Tell us about your family: I come from a family of seven, with two brothers and two sisters. I fall somewhere in between!

Where do you currently live? Milwaukee since 2000.

Favorite Pastimes: Live concerts, summer outdoor activities such as mountain biking, camping, team sports, and social gatherings. I love to spend time with friends and family. I enjoy arranging social gatherings and events.

Person you admire most and why: My father for his strong work ethic, patience and positive attitude under any given circumstance.

Dream Vacation: Tour of Europe

Words to live by: Whatever you are, be a good one. – Abraham Lincoln

Special personal accomplishments: Being the individual that I am today and continue to grow into. I look forward to new challenges.

What else would you like other MPI members to know about you? I am a hard worker with a strong desire to learn. I am shy at first approach but have a unique sense of humor when you get to know me. I love to meet new people and I look forward to building new relationships with MPI members. 🌐

PLANNER PROFILE:



Melanie Swanson, CTSM

Marketing Event Planner
American Family Insurance

How long in the meetings industry? 17 years

How long in MPI? Two months

Tell us about your company and/or position: I plan and execute a variety of events each year.

Tell us about your family: Married with a daughter and new son-in-law; hoping for grandkids very soon.

Where were you born? St. Louis, MO

Where do you currently live? Sun Prairie, WI

Favorite Pastimes: Reading

Favorite Musical Group: Any group from the 70's

Dream Vacation: Hawaii – sun, sand, surfing – need I say more?

If I won the lottery I would: Finally go on my dream vacation!

Words to live by: Don't sweat the small stuff (and it's all small stuff)

Special personal accomplishments: Currently enrolled in the MBA program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

What else would you like other MPI members to know about you? I sit for my CMP exam in July – wish me luck!

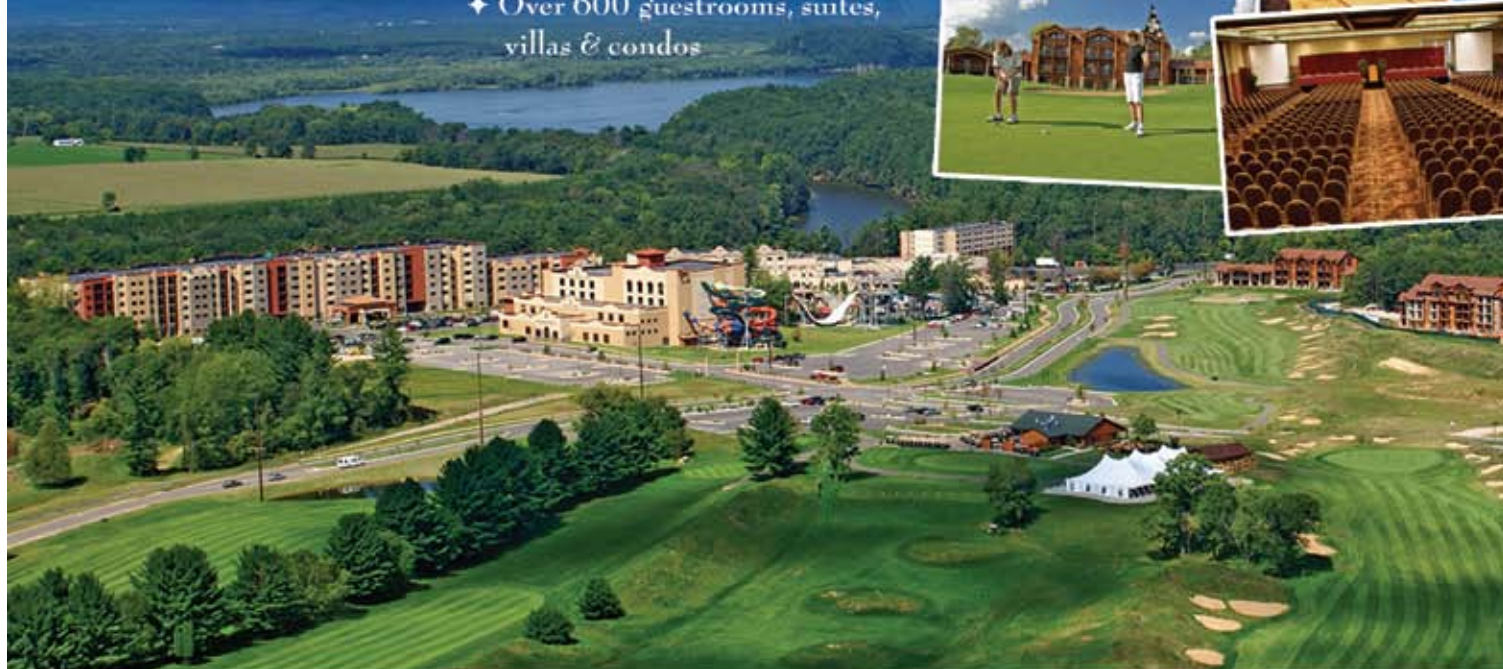
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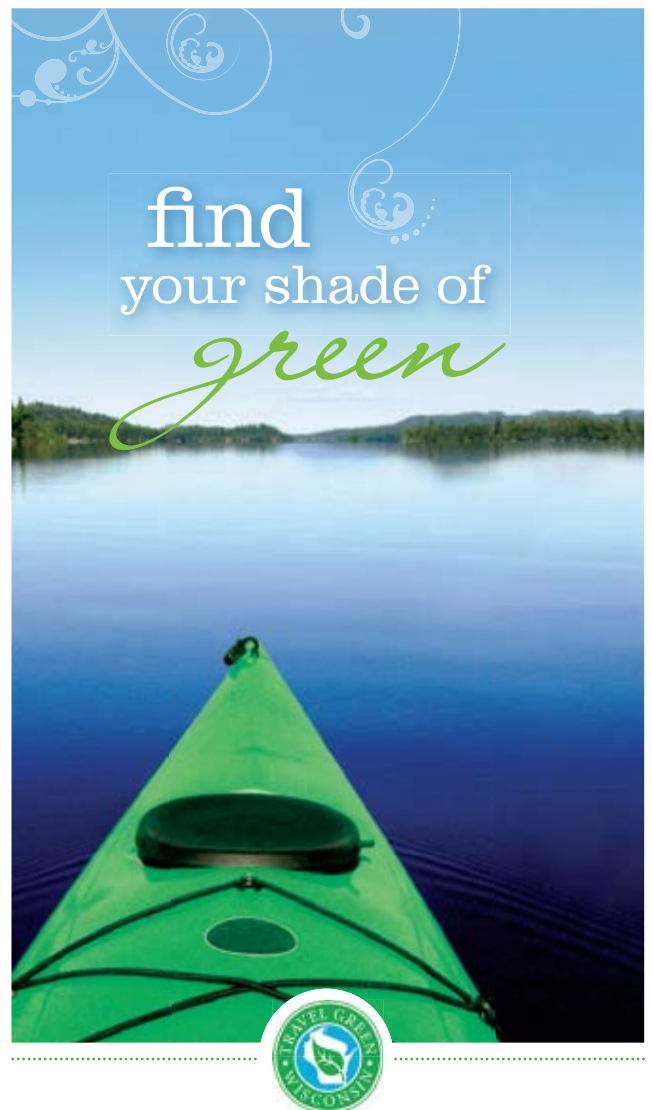
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TEAM BUILDING

Team Building is something that can mean many things in the world of events, so as a new member to MPI, I was excited to learn what the “Team Challenge” would be for our February education meeting.

In my previous experience when talking about Team Building, people tend to think of rope courses and having a co-worker catch them when falling backwards. To my delight, our friends at Windy City brought some real enthusiasm to the afternoon. As soon as we were divided up into teams and presented our team’s perfect cheer, I could tell we were in for some fun.

We were team number #1, called the “Do-Whops,” and without a moment to spare, we were at our first station competing against another team called “Thinking inside the Box.” We had to race to complete as many puzzles as possible. We had a variety of colorful shapes that fit into a square taped on the floor, and we were charged with the task to create every picture given to us by the official, in the time allotted. Our team quickly jumped in trying to put pieces into place following the suggestions of those on the floor, and those with a “birds eye view” standing back to see the bigger picture. We started out slow, and then quickly began to hit our stride by creating a team approach to focus on the “red” puzzle pieces first.

After coming together as a team to accomplish the challenging puzzles, we were off to the “Picture This” station. Being fairly familiar with the Pictionary concept, we quickly appointed our drawers and took our turns at the drawing board. This activity brought a flurry of crazy guesses, confusion at times, and laughter.

Then we were onto an activity I had been secretly dreading since my arrival to the meeting, assembling an elaborate puzzle made of wood pieces. The rules were simple, disassemble the puzzle into a pile, and then, when given the signal, recreate the correct structure as quickly as possible. After the rules of the game were explained, I was thoroughly convinced I should give up and see what the bar had to offer. However, to my surprise, the team confidence built in just the last few activities started to emerge, and soon we had a plan and began to practice. Our strategy was simple: 14 boards and 11 of us, let’s each take one

or two in some cases and be responsible for knowing our place when it came time to our re-assemble time test. When it was time to show what the team was made of, it was an absolute surprise!

We completed the activity faster than our competitor, and had one of the best times for the entire MPI group. It was a great confidence builder to have done so well on something we almost walked away from because it was too overwhelming.



The last activity was the old-fashioned game of telephone. With teams of ten or eleven, we knew this would not be an easy task, so as we lined up we tried to strategize. Turns out strategy could not have prepared us for the story we were in for! In the end it boiled down

to clear communication and focusing on a few key elements, or all was lost.

The team challenge ended with a quick 20 minute debriefing that really brought the activities full circle for me, by relating the activities we just did to our everyday lives at work. The teams that failed were those that spent too much time strategizing and not practicing, or perhaps those who jumped in without any thinking at all. It focused on the things we hear all the time, but sometimes forget such as, the need for cooperation, having a positive attitude, and good communication. In the end it was a memorable reminder of what it means to be a good team member, and I think all who participated would agree Windy City Field house did an excellent job.

To end the evening, the MPI fundraiser kicked off the real fun with an excellently organized dance party throw back to the 1950’s. The menu was inspired by the 50’s era and even had an old fashioned sundae bar! (Yum!) Attendees danced and swayed to the oldies while playing the many carnival games to win raffle tickets. In the end, we are all winners by attending this wonderful event that helped raise funds for our MPI Chapter. 🌐



Amy Mueller is the Corporate Marketing Consultant planning meeting and events for General Casualty Insurance in Sun Prairie, WI.

NEW MEMBERS

Please help us welcome our new members!

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222 Washington Ave
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pamelaw@sonicfoundry.com
Meeting Management Professional
- Planner

COMMUNITY OUTREACH NEWS

The community outreach team has worked extremely hard this year to provide a variety of opportunities for involvement and to share information on a wide range of issues affecting our communities. Please see the below information on our March, April and May initiatives.

March

Larry Medema of Friends of the Fox joined us for a short presentation at lunch at the March chapter meeting in Neenah. Larry shared with us some history of the Friends of the Fox, as well as details of their plan to improve the Fox River System and its related watershed. This includes upgrades to 16 of the 17 navigational locks and re-developing access to Wisconsin historical sites along the Fox River. This project is meant to increase tourism from Prairie du Chien north to Green Bay – not only helping our friends in the Fox Cities, but those to the Southwest as well. For more information, please see www.friendsofthefox.org.




April

As I write this, on another snow filled late March day, plans are well underway for the Breast Cancer Awareness/Wear Pink event. A special raffle will be held to raise money and all chapter members are encouraged to wear pink in support of the cause. Our efforts in April will benefit two Wisconsin organizations – Wisconsin Breast Cancer Coalition in Milwaukee - www.standupandspeakout.org; Breast Cancer Recovery Foundation in Madison - www.bcrecovery.org



May

Get ready to build! The MPI-WI Chapter will have 20 volunteers rolling up their sleeves and wearing a hardhat to help Habitat for Humanity of Dane County work on a build site. The build will take place on Wednesday, May 13 to ramp up the volunteers for Thursday's Chapter event – Extreme Makeover – MPI-WI Edition. Spaces are limited - see the event details or sign-up today at www.mpiwi.org. For more information on Habitat for Humanity of Dane County, see www.habitatdane.org, or find information on your local organization at www.habitat.org, and enter your zip code. 



Alison Huber works for Wisconsin Association of School Boards and is the Director of Publications, Advertising & Community Outreach for MPI-WI.

WHO'S IN THE NEWS

Changes & Accomplishments

"It's what you learn after you know it all that counts."
~Harry S. Truman

Congratulations and high-fives all around to our chapter's newest CMP graduates!

Cindy Parker Ferguson, CMP with CUNA, Inc.

Carmen Smalley, CMP with North Central Group Hotels

Susan Walker, CMP

Kelly Vandenboogart, CMP with Humana

Check out all of the MPI-WI supplier members on the list for the 2009 Best of Wisconsin Meetings, voted by the readers of *Wisconsin Meetings Magazine*:

Hotel with the Best Service: **The Pfister Hotel**, Milwaukee

Best Lakeshore Resort: **The Abbey Resort**, Fontana

Best Reception Facility: **Lambeau Field Atrium**, Green Bay

Best Golf Resort: **Grand Geneva**, Lake Geneva

Best Convention Center: **Monona Terrace**, Madison

Best Lodge/Retreat: **Lake Lawn Resort**, Delavan


Best Conference Center: **Kalahari Resort**, Wisconsin Dells

Most Helpful CVB: **La Crosse CVB**

Additionally, **Michelle Eggert, CMP** with ConferenceDirect was highlighted in the *Wisconsin Meetings Magazine* article, "Key Accommodations Considerations" written by Tina Chovanec. "Knowing your client and their meeting is important so you can approach the hotel with a positive outlook and create a partnership, not just a contracting process," Eggert advised.

Congrats also go out to the **The Delafield Hotel** for being listed as one of the 15 places to stay in the USA-Central in the April issue of *National Geographic Traveler*.

Finally, **Lisa Lawry, CMP** has joined the sales team for the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites, West Madison. Way to go!

I wish each & every one of you a terrific summer! 

Please submit accomplishments and changes in employment to Sue at smidstrom@hotmail.com.



Sue Lidstrom is with Lodge-Works as the Director of Sales for the future Hyatt Place Hotel Madison

MEETINGS ARE NECESSARY

The major news over the last year has been about the suffering economy and the meetings industry is not immune. Recently our industry

has been mislabeled by the government and media who believe meetings and travel are wasteful and unnecessary. Companies are discouraging travel, meetings are being canceled, and the government is putting travel stipulations on the companies that have received emergency funding.

American workers and communities pay the price as meetings and events decline. The US Travel Association estimates that business travel creates 2.4 million American jobs, is responsible for \$240 billion in spending, and \$39 billion in tax revenue. The meetings and events component of business travel is responsible for nearly 15% of all travel in the United States, drives \$101 billion

in spending, generates 1 million jobs and creates \$16 billion in tax revenue at the federal, state and local level. As meetings and events decline, local communities lose funding to help pay for essential services such as education, public safety, and social services.

The meetings and events component of business travel is responsible for nearly 15% of all travel in the United States, drives \$101 billion in spending, generates 1 million jobs and creates \$16 billion in tax revenue at the federal, state and local level.

Jobs are clearly affected by the travel and meetings industry. In 2008, the U.S. Department of Labor reported a loss of nearly 200,000 travel related jobs and the Department of Commerce data predicts a loss of an additional


247,000 jobs in 2009. The workers that are directly affected by the decline in meetings are tax-paying Americans who work hard to make a living. Meeting planners, airline attendants, baggage handlers, taxi cab drivers, servers, housekeepers, front desk clerks, bellmen, banquet staff, restaurant staff, and bartenders are just some of the citizens that are losing their jobs due to canceled meetings and events.

The belief that meetings are irresponsible with lavish parties and excessive expense is overshadowing the true nature of meetings and conferences. Meetings are essential tools for companies to strengthen business relationships, educate employees, generate ideas, and share knowledge that drives business growth. The progress these companies make at these meetings allows them to compete and sustain in a very unstable time. Although technology advances make it convenient to host meetings via the web, there will be nothing that will ever take the place of meeting face-to-face, shaking hands, breaking bread, and making eye contact with the people you are brainstorming with.



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.

Companies using taxpayer dollars should act responsibly and be accountable for the money they've received. The travel community has addressed an urgent public need by developing clear guidelines designed to ensure responsible business travel practices within companies that have received emergency government lending.

The meetings industry is part of the economic solution, not the problem. Please see www.keepamericameeting.com to learn more. 



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THE VIRTUAL SECRETARY:

Using Free Web 2.0 Technologies for Successful Meeting Professionals

By James P. Hogg

In today's economy, with constricting budgets and a decrease in time, how can we use technology to manage meetings and events and use technology to make us more informed. Many people constantly ask me how do I keep up on all of the latest of technology and information with my busy schedule and my answer is always that I have my own personal virtual secretary. As meeting professionals we have to constantly balance work, clients, and personal time constraints. For most of us by the time our day is done we are exhausted and people are still requesting our time. So how do we get more time? How do we get more information? How do we get more resources? And with today's economic challenges how do we get all of this at no cost? We get all these things at no cost through the use of a virtual secretary.

So what do I mean by a virtual secretary? A virtual, invisible assistant who searches the web all day long and constantly comes back to us through our computers and our mobile devices giving us information and resources delivered in real time, tailored directly to the content that we decide is the most important for us in our lives today. There are many Web 2.0 technologies, that refer to content that is web-based that is delivered anywhere, anytime exactly when and where it is needed. The web-based technologies that will be explored in this article are: RSS feeds, iGoogle, Twitter, Delicious, Engadget and Engadget mobile. The first Web 2.0 technology that will be discussed in the article is RSS feeds.

RSS feeds



RSS feeds stands for Really Simple Syndication. They are small news feeds from websites that deliver the content that you choose directly to your email or your mobile devices. Your virtual secretary crawls across all the websites that you choose to subscribe to RSS feeds and deliver them

directly to you. You choose the mini headlines that you want to read and when you click on them it opens up the website directly to that article. No need to search through multiple web-page's and scrolls through hour's worth of articles just to see the information that is important and relevant. To take RSS feeds to the next level we will incorporate the feeds directly from the web to any web browser through iGoogle.

iGoogle

iGoogle takes your Google search engine to the next level. It loads all the top feeds off all the websites you choose directly to a tabbed browser inside of Google. The information loads dynamically and the news and events of the day are constantly updated throughout the day. Your virtual secretary surfs the web for you

all day and every time you have a moment to sit down and open your web browser your virtual secretary comes in and give you all your latest information, categorized and organized directly for your particular interest. Now that you are getting constant updated information and resources you can use cloud computing to share all your information documents and resources, which are web-based, with everyone you choose.



Cloud computing



Cloud computing is a new way at looking at sharing documents and information online.

Cloud computing is like having a hard drive or thumb drive that is web-based and is available on any computer anywhere at any time. There are

many services out there that can be utilized for free. One of the technologies is Google apps and another is Microsoft Office Live. Microsoft office live incorporates into your office suites and gives you an available option of being able to save and retrieve documents from your office live workspace. You can create templates for meeting planners, contracts and presentations. You can also invite others to share your workspace and grant individual's rights to either view or alter a document. With Google apps you can do the same thing and even work on the same document at the same time. Now that you can share information on your documents, information and

Continued on page 20

resources you can use social networks to stay informed with other members of your networks. The best way to do this is through the use of social networks. The three main social networks being used by our industry today are Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. The first social network that I will examine is Twitter.

Twitter

Twitter is a micro-blog updating system that allows you to track all the people you need to communicate with about your daily events. As your day changes, the meeting or event changes you update your twitter status and your virtual secretary updates all your clients, friends, family and associations that are set up to track you. You can set twitter up so that you can have your updates as well as the update of the people you are tracking delivered to your mobile device through text messaging. The next social network that I will discuss is the use of Facebook.



Facebook



Facebook is a social networking platform that allows members to post information, share videos, music and videos and con-

nects many of the older technologies into one platform. You can post information to each other's wall, make comments, create social groups that represent your brand, your organization, and your personal and professional interests. It takes the technology of blogs, wikis, podcasts, email, and instant messaging and integrates them into one platform. The next social network I will discuss will be the use of LinkedIn.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a professional social network that links colleagues, organizations and companies together. You can create your resume or CV online and share your contact information with others in the industry. You can create groups and link to groups that represent professional



organizations. You can also email other members and invite others to join or link to you professionally. As more younger members, who use Facebook, become professionals in the industry there will be a greater movement of people into the LinkedIn platform. I talked about how my virtual secretary can give me information but I want to share two sites that will allow you to keep up to date on the latest technology trends. Technology changes so fast that it's hard to stay up to date on what tools and technologies are available for meeting professionals. The two technology sites are engadget and engadget mobile.



Engadget and Engadget Mobile

Engadget is a website that explores the latest and the greatest of technologies while Engadget Mobile explores all technologies related to mobile devices. If you want to know about the latest computer technology, video and audio technology, cutting edge research on new product technology, and any new technology that is related to personal mobile devices and communications check out these two based websites. Take both of these sites and don't forget to subscribe to the RSS feeds, add them both to your iGoogle web browser, place them into your delicious links and then tell all your associates about it on twitter.

This article explored only five web-based technologies that are free and once set up with give you your own virtual secretary who will spend hours, days, and weeks searching endlessly for you on all of the latest resources and information. Your virtual secretary will work for free and will travel with you everywhere you go and will give you the information and resources you need exactly when you need them. There are many different types of Web 2.0 technologies that are available outside of the five discussed including wiki's, blogs and podcasts. There are numerous social media social sites such as YouTube and Flickr. All of these Web 2.0 technologies can be facilitated and integrated into the tools discussed and can all be facilitated by your virtual secretary. Remember to manager your time and your resources wisely, get your information and resources effectively and do it at no cost during this time of economic challenges. 🌐

STUDENT PROFILE:



Samantha Soter

Intern & Certified Nursing Assistant
The Rees Group, Inc. & Golden Living
Center Continental Manor of Randolph

What drew you to the meetings industry? Before I read about the Meeting and Event program at Madison Area Technical

College (MATC) I had never really thought about entering the meetings industry. After I read about the program and did some research on the industry I began to think that it was something that I would like to do. I didn't want to enter into a career where I would be doing the same thing everyday. With a career in the meetings industry I know that there will always be new people to meet and different challenges to overcome. Plus there are so many different areas involved with planning meetings and events that there is also something new to learn about and be a part of.

Tell us about your college program: The Meeting and Event Management program at MATC is a really wonderful program to be in. When I entered the program I had no idea how much is actually involved with planning meetings and events. In my classes I learn about all aspects of planning meetings and events, from contracts and negotiations, to budgets, to onsite management and everything in between. In every class there is something new and interesting to learn about. It is also great to hear the real life experiences and stories of my instructors and guest speakers. Overall the program is all that I expected it to be and more. I have learned so much about the meetings industry and know that the knowledge and skills I have learned will be valuable tools when I begin my career.

Tell us about your family:

My family consists of my parents and two sisters. In August of this year I will be getting married to my high school sweetheart.

Where do you currently live? Cambria, WI

Person you admire most and why: The person that I most admire would be my grandmother, Marlene DeYoung. My grandmother has worked very hard throughout her life and has always kept a positive attitude. She is always there when her family or friends need her and cares so deeply about everyone she knows. Someday I hope to have as much strength and compassion as my grandmother possesses.

Words to live by:

Do to others what you would have them do to you. Matthew 7:12

Special personal accomplishments:

One accomplishment that I am proud of is working my way through college and paying off all of my tuition. It just goes to show that with hard work and determination you can do anything you put your mind to. 🌐

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Mtg Rms: 6 Slp Rms: 105 F&B: Yes
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Mtg Rms: 3 Slp Rms: 67 F&B: No
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920/499-3161 Fax: 920/499-9401
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Mtg Rms: 9 Slp Rms: 145 F&B: Yes
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Mtg Rms: 10 Slp Rms: 100 F&B: Yes
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MPI WISCONSIN IS AWARDED A \$2,500 GRANT FOR WEBSITE REDESIGN




You said it ... We listened! In a membership survey in 2008, the MPI Wisconsin membership base overwhelmingly responded that the website is a critical membership benefit. With that information in hand, your Chapter leadership set out to redesign our website to ensure that it continues to evolve as a useful membership tool. Get ready, get set...go! The rollout of the newly designed website will take place at Education Day on May 14, 2009.

Marie Johnson, CMP and VP of Chapter Communications, wrote a compelling grant application to the MPI International Foundation requesting \$2,500 for the project redesign. As quoted in the grant application, "The



Denise Henson is the Director of Web Site, Public Relations & Advocacy for the MPI-WI Chapter and Associate Director of Sales for the Racine Marriott.

web has become a driving force in our industry. It is a potent source for communicating, collaborating, socializing and working together." Currently our website is primarily utilized to register for chapter events and search for other members within the directory. Your Chapter leaders believe it is imperative to grow the chapter by "offering online tools that foster ongoing communication, interaction and sense of community through the use of internet forums, weblogs, Wikis, social networking and social media." By taking the time to write a persuasive application, Marie was able to receive a grant of \$2,500 for the redesign of the Chapter website. From there Taci Tolzman has lead the charge! And, what a charge it has been. Teamed up with Jere Foley, from Dreamvelopment, they have diligently worked to not just give the site a new look, but to also make certain that relevant Chapter and International information is prominently placed in order to stay connected and ensure we continue to reach our members' needs. Besides

a new look and upgraded navigational tools, the critical changes that will be found include Wisconsin Chapter information and International Chapter RSS feeds on the homepage; Prominent visibility and access to "My MPI" for event registration and the membership directory; "Newsbytes" for members to submit information to be shared among the Chapter community. Did you know that we have a Chapter "Linked In" account? Get "LinkedIn" today with other members. Do you have your MPI Wisconsin gear? It can be found on our website – order your golf shirt for the June outing. Streaming video, web blogs, and more to come! Visit www.mpiwi.org to see the new MPI Wisconsin Chapter website and all it has to offer. 

Meeting Professionals International Foundation

The MPI Foundation powers the vision of Meeting Professionals International (MPI), the meetings and events industry's largest and most vibrant global community comprised of more than 24,000 members, representing 69 chapters and clubs in 80 countries worldwide. Contributions from MPI members, chapters, and organizations are invested in high-impact programs to support a rich, global meetings and events industry and provide investment into the future of the meetings and events profession.

Founded in 1984 the focus of the MPI Foundation is to support the vision and mission of MPI by providing members opportunities for success through meaningful connections to innovative knowledge, rich relationships and abundant marketplaces.

The MPI Foundation has raised more than \$13 million and re-invested those funds back into relevant programming, projects and services, which benefit the global meetings and events industry. Events such as Rendezvous and Blackjack are very important fundraising tools for the MPI Foundation and provided thousands of dollars annually. Last year, the MPI Foundation invested nearly \$1.7 million at the industry-, chapter- and individual-levels through grants, scholarships and major research projects.

Each month, through the Chapter Grant Program, the Board of Trustees awards funding to MPI chapters for projects judged beneficial to the advancement of MPI's vision and strategic plan. Last year the Chapter Grant Program donated more than \$173,000 to local chapters. In addition to chapter grants, the MPI Foundation also awards money for individual grants, major grants and scholarships which help our members advance their professional lives.

The Wisconsin Chapter was awarded \$2,500 towards redesigning and enhancing the Chapter Web site.

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Mark Your Calendar

4TH ANNUAL MPI/WSAE GOLF OUTING




Tucked within historic Lake Geneva, the Grand Geneva, this year's home for the 4th Annual MPI/WSAE golf outing, is the only AAA Four-Diamond property in Southeastern Wisconsin. On June 18th, golfers will be able to test their skills on the Highlands Golf Course. The Highlands course is a Scottish style course originally the creation of Pete Dye/Jack Nicklaus and in 2006 updated by Bob Lohmann with major redesign of holes 9, 12 and 15. Golf Magazine has rated the Grand Geneva as one of the nation's top courses in terms of value and pace of play, and named the Grand Geneva winner of Golf Magazine's prestigious 2007 Silver Medal for the 10th consecutive year. The cost to play this fabulous course during the golf outing on June 18th is just \$99 per person and includes a cart, boxed lunch and a reception afterwards.

Those who choose to not test their skill on the golf course; the Grand Geneva is providing a complimentary trolley shuttle to the downtown area for a scenic boat tour around Geneva Lake. Non-golfers can relax and enjoy the beauty of the lake while learning about the area's history. After the boat cruise non-golfers will be able to shop downtown Lake Geneva for antiques, fine art, unique gifts, or the latest trends. Local shops will be offering special discounts on this day for MPI/WSAE shoppers. The non-golfer activity includes the trolley ride to/from the resort, boat cruise and lunch for just \$59 per person.


If golfing, shopping, or taking a boat tour is not your thing Grand Geneva is also providing a special discount of 20% off select spa treatments at their newly renovated Well Spa. Slip into a robe and slippers and renew your senses with a massage, skin care services, pedicures, manicures, and other various services. The special offer is good for both Wednesday, June 17th and Thursday, June 18th.

Make sure to arrive early as Grand Geneva will be hosting a reception at 6:00 pm the night before, on Wednesday, June 17th. You can take advantage of a special warm up rate of \$25 on the Highlands course or \$45 on the Brute course for nine holes after 2:30pm, June 17th. At your request, the sales staff will be available to provide tours of their \$17 Million renovations which include guestroom and spa refurbishments.

Becoming a sponsor is a great way to showcase your company to both the Wisconsin Chapter of Meeting Professionals and Wisconsin Society of Association Executives. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, donating raffle items or items for our welcome bag, please contact Carmen Smalley at 608-662-3656 or via email at csmalley@ncghotels.com. 



Carmen Smalley, CMP, is the Director of Special Events, Fundraising & Strategic Alliances for the MPI-WI Chapter and Regional Sales Manager for the North Central Group in Madison.



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WHAT WE'VE LEARNED THROUGH ...

This year was my 20th anniversary in the meeting planning industry. That milestone, and the current economic climate, has led me to reflect on what changes and events have shaped not only my career, but the industry as a whole. I look at things not as what we've lived through, but what we've learned through.

- We have learned through telex, fax, FedEx, e-mail, PDAs, instant messages and Twitter
- We have learned through overhead projectors, LCD panels, LCD projectors, audioconferencing, videoconferencing and Second Life
- We have learned through occupancy rates at 50% and occupancy rates at 90%
- We have learned through attrition clauses and energy surcharges
- We have learned through hurricanes, earthquakes, blackouts, floods and planes flying into buildings

Through it all, there are a few lessons that remain constant:

- **Relationships matter.** We all remember those suppliers and clients who treat us fairly in both good times and lean times.
- **Education matters.** We continue to educate ourselves, our attendees, our clients and our organizations about the value of meetings and how they can be improved.
- **Communication matters.** The packaging may change, but there is still no better way to disseminate information and generate ideas than face-to-face meetings.

Times may be good, times may be challenging but through it all we continue to learn (and hopefully improve). I have learned and experienced more than I ever thought possible, and look forward to continuing that pattern.

I have had the privilege and honor of serving on the MPI-WI Board of Directors for the past five years. This is my final column in that capacity, and I want to thank all those with whom I have served. Thank you for your time, dedication and expertise – the chapter is better because of what you have contributed. Good luck and continued success to the incoming Board of Directors, I know you will do a great job. 🌐



***Susan Arts, CMP,** is the Vice President of Education for the MPI-WI Chapter and works at Meetings & Incentives in Caledonia, Wisconsin.*



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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Featuring: Chef Dale Martz

Head Chef, The Four Seasons Resort
Miscauno Island, Pembine Wisconsin

DALE MARTZ has been head chef of The Four Seasons Resort Miscauno Island in Pembine, Wisconsin for three years. His culinary training started in Milwaukee under a renowned Cajun chef. He moved to the North Woods of Wisconsin ten years ago to capture the essence of 'up north' cooking. His first head chef position of seven years was with Pine Mountain Resort in Iron Mountain, Michigan. Dale enjoys all aspects of cooking however his forte is creating new recipes to wow the audience. 🌐



Crab Stuffed Rainbow Trout

Ingredients:

- 4 slices bacon
- 1/2 cup chopped scallion
- 1/4 cup diced celery
- 1 grated rind of lemon
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs
- salt and pepper
- 8 ounces crabmeat (about 1 cup)
- 1 egg, beaten
- 4 whole trout or red snapper, about 3/4 to 1 pound each, cleaned, scaled if needed and boned

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Fry the bacon slices until crisp and rendered of fat.
3. Drain on paper towels.
4. Crumble the bacon.
5. Pour off all but 1 tablespoon bacon fat from the pan into a small bowl and set aside.
6. Brush a little reserved fat over the bottom of a baking dish that will fit the fish comfortably.
7. Set aside the bacon fat.
8. Heat the fat still in the frying pan and cook the scallions and celery, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5-7 minutes.
9. Mix together the vegetables, lemon rind, parsley, crumbs, salt and pepper.
10. Fold in the crabmeat and bacon.
11. Bind with the egg.
12. Open each fish like a book, skin side down.
13. Spread the stuffing over one half.
14. Pack it down firmly, then fold over the other half and press down gently.
15. Close the opening with toothpicks if desired.
16. Set the fish in the prepared baking dish or roasting pan.
17. Brush the top of the fish with a little reserved bacon fat.
18. Bake until the fish is cooked, 25-30 minutes.
19. Carefully transfer the fish to warmed serving plates and serve immediately.

WHO AM I?

If you were not already aware, I am your new Chapter Business Manager for Meeting Professionals International. You might ask yourself, “What does this mean and how does it benefit me?” First, I think I need to give you a little more information about who I am and my experience with MPI.

I am based in Edmonton, Canada and have lived here for 99% of my life. Before my current position with MPI, I worked in the hotel industry in Edmonton for 12 ½ years working for a variety of companies including Delta Hotels, CHIP Hospitality (now Silver Birch Resorts) and Coast Hotels and Resorts. I began my career as a bellman and progressed through the front office to revenue management and finally in a sales capacity for the last five years.

My MPI experience began in January 2004 when a co-worker of mine left the hotel and I joined MPI as the member from the workplace. I started to attend monthly meetings and decided to get involved so I joined the education committee a short time later. I soon became VP of Education the following year, which led to a position of President-Elect for the 2005-2006 year. I was only President-Elect for 3 months and then the current President had to step down for work reasons so I was “fast-tracked” to the position of President. With no training I was able to learn about the position for the balance of the year with the help of Elizabeth Henderson, who was the MPI Director of Canadian Development. I also had help from one of our Past Presidents who was still involved part time with the chapter. Of course, this is not the way that any chapter should operate but it helped me for the next year when I stayed on as President for a 2nd year to help the chapter grow with a new chapter board. In May of 2007, I decided I wanted to stay involved with MPI on a larger scale after my term had been completed and decided to apply for the International Chapter Leadership Committee. I was fortunate to be chosen for this position as the Canadian representative and it was a great learning experience on a much broader level than just my own chapter.

Earlier this year, I found out that Elizabeth Henderson was beginning a new chapter in her MPI life as the new MPI Director of Corporate Social Responsibility. With this change, there

was a vacancy in providing chapter support and a new position called Chapter Business Manager. I decided to apply for this position and was hired in August of this year, with my 1st day of employment taking place at the World Education Congress in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Besides myself, there are three other CBM's in the United States and one in Europe. The purpose of this position is to assure that each chapter works effectively within their community by maintaining financial stability, which will help to increase chapter membership and retain current members, and to make sure the chapter maintains strong educational/networking programs for their community. I also serve as the liaison between chapter leaders and MPI headquarters. Besides providing support for your chapter, I also support the eight Canadian MPI chapters, Michigan and Minnesota chapters. Additionally, I am the project manager for MPI Canadian Leadership University and National Meetings Industry Day.

As you can see, I have a lot of different responsibilities but I am also a past chapter member/volunteer so I know how precious your time in MPI is and what a great association it is to be a part of in today's meetings industry. My virtual door is always open via the phone or e-mail so I want you to know that I am here to help support each and every one of you to get the most out of your membership. I will also be working closely with your board of directors and providing support to them to ensure they have a successful year. If you ever have any questions or concerns about your membership, the MPI website, MPI in general, etc. I am here to help. If I don't have the answer to your questions, I will tell you so and get the answer for you.

My contact information is below and I look forward to working with you and hopefully meet you in person at a future event.

Cheers,

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Datebook: CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2009

MAY 2009

13-14

Volunteer Kickoff/Education Day

Sheraton Madison
Madison

JUNE 2009

18

MPI-WI & WSAE Golf Outing

Grand Geneva Resort & Spa
Lake Geneva

JULY 2009

11

CMP Exam

Various Locations

11-14

MPI World Education Congress

Salt Lake City, Utah



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