

HEARTLAND CHAPTER MPI

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL

To provide educational opportunities for professional growth, development and competency for those in the meetings industry through education, communication, recognition and networking.

March 2009

In this issue

- :: Message from the President
- :: President Elect Perspective
 - :: Membership Corner
 - :: Financial Times
- :: Notes on the Chalkboard
- :: Heartland Chapter Tidbits

Message from the President

Paulette Lester
Des Moines CVB



Happy Spring! Winter has come and gone and it is Spring time in the Heartland. What a great way to start off the season than with our Heartland Chapter Annual Meeting. This is a wonderful event and very beneficial as you learn from experts and meet others in the industry who can share their knowledge and experiences. It's a terrific way to keep up with the latest issues, visit with our exhibitor members, participate in the Silent Auction and it is a suburb networking function. The committee has great plans for the Annual Meeting. Please plan to join us on April 20-21, 2009 at the Holiday Inn Downtown Des Moines, Iowa.

Check out our new enhanced website for details about the Annual Meeting and Upcoming events at www.mpiheartland.org.

MPI membership offers numerous benefits to its members including:

CMP Information: MPI Foundation has funded a CMP Online Study Guide, giving members a practical framework for exam preparation. The guide allows individuals to study at their own pace. For more information about this study guide visit www.mpiweb.org.

Job Posting: On MPI website at www.mpiweb.org members may post an open position for \$100.00 and their resumes for free. On Heartland Chapter website www.mpiheartland.org - members may post their open positions at no charge.

The Heartland Chapter and the Kansas City Chapter partnered to present the webinar in February 2009. The webinar was hosted by Ready Talk Audio and Web Conferencing and their company has offered our Heartland chapter members a discounted rate until the end of our fiscal year to host web meetings for your own organization. You may contact Danny Cohen: phone: 303-209-1682 or danny.cohen@readytalk.com if you are interested in conducting your own webinars.

MPI encourages you to update your membership information. Please review your individual information at www.mpiweb.org. Go to "My Membership" click on Contact Details and double check your email address and all contact information. Once completed, please click on Member Profile and update this section. This information is very beneficial to MPI.

We appreciate and thank you for your membership in the MPI Heartland Chapter. We want to continue to make sure we are providing the value you expect. If at any time you have any suggestions or comments, I encourage you to share them with any MPI Heartland Board member. I look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting.

President Elect Perspective

Sean Olson, CMP
Qwest Center Omaha



It is hard to believe that we are headed into the last quarter for the 2008-2009 MPI year. As we get ready to usher in new leadership for next year, let's work on finishing strong the rest of this year.

If you haven't already done so, please consider joining us for the Annual Meeting in Des Moines on April 20-21, 2009. Registration is open and the committee is working on a great day of education, networking and fun. The Annual Meeting is a time for all Heartland Members to come together and celebrate the success of our chapter while making new connections and learning more about the hospitality industry.

Not only will we have great education, but we will be honoring the next Star of the Quarter. If you would like to nominate someone that has gone above and beyond to volunteer for our Chapter, please fill out the form located on the website or on our GroupSpace page. We also plan to honor the members who are celebrating a 5 or 10 year membership in the Heartland Chapter.

I wanted to inform you about a new website that MPI has developed to help with the negative attitudes the meeting industry has undertaken over the past year or so. The website is www.meetingindustrycrisiscenter.com. Please take some time to look at this website and consider writing your local, state or federal representatives about the necessity of the meeting industry. There are some documents on this website that will help you complete this task. The Heartland Chapter Board of Directors will also be discussing what we can do as a board to get the word out as well. You can

Financial Times

Amanda LaPuzza, CMP
Starwood Hotels



There are still advertising opportunities left for the rest of the 2008 - 2009 season. Advertising is not limited to MPI members, any industry related organization may advertise in the MPI Heartland calendar of events or newsletter. Advertising rates for the 2008 - 2009 Newsletter are \$88.00 per issue for members and \$110.00 per issue for non members. Please contact Nichole Brown or Amanda LaPuzza if you are interested in advertising.

Sponsors needed!

We still have sponsorship opportunities left for Western Pod, Central Pod and Chapter Meetings. Pod Sponsorships are \$100.00, plus a donation of a door prize. With a Pod sponsorship an individual will get the opportunity to present at the meeting, exclusive rights to display material at the Pod meeting and recognition in the newsletter.

Chapter Meeting Sponsorships are \$200.00 per meeting, plus a donation of a door prize. Chapter sponsorships include the opportunity to present at the meeting, exclusive rights to display materials, two complimentary attendees at the meeting and recognition in the newsletter.

If you are interested in sponsoring a POD or chapter meeting please contact Amanda LaPuzza at 402-661-7010

Notes on the Chalkboard

The Education Update

Michelle Hilsabeck

Des Moines Marriott



Kansas City and Heartland Chapters Make History!

By Michelle Lizak, CMP - Kansas City Chapter

On February 16, 2009, the Kansas City and Heartland Chapters partnered to make history by hosting the first monthly program exclusively via webinar. This effort began as a search to provide members with a cost-effective, convenient and educational program that would attract planners and suppliers alike.

also visit www.KeepAmericaMeeting.org to sign the petition and share your story about the industry.

I would also like to congratulate the incoming leaders of our Chapter for 2009-2010. These individuals will be taking over on July 1, 2009 and I am looking forward to working with them over the next year.

Paulette Lester - Past President
Sean Olson - President
Amanda LaPuzza - President-Elect
Gina Swackhammer - Vice President of Education
Joan Husted - Vice President of Finance
Angie Kistaitis - Vice President of Administration
Nancy Herselius - Director of Education
Judy Tallant - Central POD Leader
Ginger Burrell - Central POD Leader
Kim McPheron-Kreitter - Western POD Leader

Finally, I continue to encourage all of our members to take some time and visit the brand new MPI website. The address is www.mpiweb.org. There are many areas to obtain information and to connect with others in the meeting industry. If you were at the Fall Summit, you know that it is important for meeting professionals to network and gain knowledge from others in the industry. We still encourage all of you to join the Heartland Chapter GroupSpace page on the MPI website while joining the LinkedIn Heartland Chapter Group. You can also connect with members through Facebook or other online networking tools. Increasing your network will be something that you can continue to build on year after year. This networking can lead to new thoughts, ideas and friendships. If you have any questions on how to join any of these tools, please let me know.

Continued success in 2009 and please let us know if there is anything that we can do to make your MPI experience a better one.

Sean Olson, CMP
Heartland Chapter President-Elect

ReadyTalk was the sponsoring web conference partner for this event. Based out of Colorado, ReadyTalk delivers audio and web-meeting services that help planners and suppliers sell, market, educate and collaborate remotely. They provide services, such as audio conferencing, web conferencing, event management tools and podcasting! For more information about ReadyTalk and the many services offered, visit their website.

This first-ever webinar had a total of 47 attendees from Kansas City and across the Heartland. Of the 47 participants, 23 were members of KCMPI and 15 were Heartland chapter members. Planners predominantly attended this event from both chapters, making up 77 percent of webinar participants.

All webinar registrants received a post-event notice that contained links to the archived version of this conference. This complimentary archived version will be available for online viewing for 30 days after the event.

The speaker selected for this event was Steven M. Rudner, principal of the Rudner Law Offices, which exclusively represent hotels and resorts throughout the world in regard to meetings and convention issues from their offices in Dallas and San Francisco. He has been recognized by Successful Meetings as one of the industry's "top legal minds." His work in the hospitality field has captured the attention of the Wall Street Journal. Mr. Rudner's resume speaks for itself. He is Vice-President of the Academy of Hospitality Industry Attorneys, Platinum Series speaker for MPI, Best in Class Speaker for PCMA, and is a member of the American Hotel & Lodging Association, MPI, PCMA, RCMA and HSMIAI. He also is a member of the contracts panel for the APEX Initiative of the Convention Industry Council, as well as the State Bars of the States of Texas, New York, Arizona, Colorado and the District of Columbia.

If you were unable to attend the original broadcast of this event, it will be available for purchase online at: http://www.kcmpi.org/html/event_calendar/programs_events.html starting on March 30th. The fee to purchase this archived version of "What's New in Hotel Contracts" is \$35.00.

Heartland Chapter Tidbits!

NEW WEBSITE - The Heartland Chapter has a new look to our website! Check it out! <http://www.mpiheartland.org>

CAREER CONNECTIONS - Take Advantage of the MPI Job Bank. MPI Career Connections is your talent and opportunity marketplace. Search available positions for career opportunities that range from meeting and event planning to hotel sales. Members can also post their resume online.

On MPI website at www.mpiweb.org members may post an open position for \$100.00 and their resumes for free. On Heartland Chapter website www.mpiheartland.org - members may post their open positions at no charge.

CENTRAL POD GET READY! - The 2009 Fall Summit is coming your way. Request For Proposals will be sent soon.

Membership Corner

Jeff Spence

Embassy Suites Des Moines



Happy New Year!

I hope everyone had a safe new year's celebration and is prepared for a great 2009 with the Heartland Chapter!

Even with an economy in a downturn we continue to grow the chapter with new members. Many of which find their way to the chapter directly from your referrals both directly and indirectly.

Thank you to everyone in our Chapter that continues to talk about MPI and the benefits of being affiliated with our organization. We are currently at 136 members and continue to grow. Keep spreading the word and don't forget about our recruitment incentive campaign that continues this year.

2008/09 Recruitment Incentive:
Remember to recruit a new member (supplier or planner) and receive \$50 cash per person who becomes a member of the MPI Heartland Chapter by June 2009.

Please contact Jeff Spence, VP of Membership at 515-559-0084 or at jeff.spence@jqh.com.

Cheers,
Jeff Spence

WESTERN POD UPDATE

By: Leslie Brandt

The Western POD's meeting on Wednesday, May 13th will be a collaborative effort with NPBTA, HSMIAI, NACE and MPI. We are pleased to have Dr. Kim Hooegeveen as our featured speaker. Dr. Hooegeveen is President & CEO of Quality Living, Inc. (QLI) voted best places to work in Omaha for three years. Dr. Hooegeveen is also the CEO of MindSet, LLC - a leadership philosophy based on 7 key principles. The presentation will focus on his 7 Leadership Principles and engendering a positive workplace environment in an industry that is subject to recent economic impact, high turnover rates, and retention issues. Dr. Hooegeveen is truly a remarkable speaker & his content unmatched.

Cost is:

\$25 for members

\$30 for non-members.

****First timers will be asked to pay the \$30 non-member fee****

Admission includes one drink ticket at the networking cocktail reception with networking after the speaker.

3PM-Registration

3:30-4:30PM-Speaker

4:30-5:30PM-Networking

CENTRAL POD UPDATE

By: Kellie Hanselman

The Central Pod Meeting for May will be held on Wednesday May 13th from 3p-5p at the Jasper Winery in Des Moines. Our speaker is Pam Wood. Our program is about Work Smarter Not Harder: 3 Ways to Improve Your Time Management and Productivity

It's a common complaint . . . you work hard, you're crazy busy but at the end of the day you haven't accomplished much from your own "to-do" list. Yes, you took care of a couple easy tasks, you handled a crisis or two, however, that important project you wanted to work on, well-you never found the time to move it forward. If this is a recurring theme for you-you won't want to miss this program. Pam Woods, Certified Professional Organizer®, Coach, and Author will provide practical solutions to help you skillfully move through your day with greater focus and results.

This program will teach you:

- How to use your natural energy cycle to tackle your workload.
- How to make time for progress on your own priorities.
- A simple workflow-processing model to quickly handle incoming paper and requests.

Please go to the chapter website for more details and to register. I hope to see all of you there!

Daily Struggles in Advanced Contracting - Recap from February 16 Webinar

By: Michelle Hilsabeck Heartland Chapter

Advanced contracting is an issue Meeting Professionals struggle with daily. Contract language and addenda flood desk and minds. What would be acceptable for both entities? How can these clauses possibly help to protect the company? And most importantly, what exactly does this clause mean? To help answer these questions, Mr. Rudner had four main points which helped to shed some light on these and other issues surrounding some of the most commonly questioned clauses.

Clause 1 - Change of Management and/or Ownership of a Venue

When encountered with this clause, the number one question a supplier would want to ask is: "What is the true concern of the planner?" Is it the brand's "Points" Program? Is it the service standards at the property? After that, key information is uncovered, which is what both parties would want to address.

Clause 2 - Renovation Concerns

When faced with a client asking for a clause that guarantees renovations will not occur during the time of their event, one's best bet is to enlist the assistance of the General Contractor performing the project. A venue cannot control the speed of a project, nor can a planner know exactly what elements of the project could be disruptive. The general contractor has the most accurate information regarding all projects and can make such a determination.

Clause 3 -Non-Compete Clause

Non-compete clauses are generally paired with clauses containing verbiage regarding confidentiality and keeping the information discussed in the meeting room contained to the meeting room. Issues with non-compete clauses are numerous, particularly in dealing with a hotel. A properly constructed non-compete clause should be explicit in identifying the competitors of the contracting company.

Clause 4 - Liquidated Damages

Liquidated Damages are legally defined as a reasonable and prospective estimate of the hotel's loss. Based on the prospective (and not retrospective) estimate of loss, there is no legal requirement for a hotel to offer a Rooms Resold Clause, as that would be retrospective. Frequently the hotel will be accused of double-dipping when it chooses to offer a Rooms Resold Clause. Mr. Rudner likened Rooms Resold to Foreclosure. Should a default on a home loan occur, and a home be repossessed by a bank, that lender will not offer back the money paid prior to the default. Additionally, if a contract contains a cancellation clause with a sliding scale of damages due, the concept of Rooms Resold has already been considered as the hotel has offered the prospective estimate of loss.

Mr. Rudner closed after touching on three other "Hot Spots":

CVB/Tourism Office/Destination Marketing Organization - Are they in your address book?

Planners often ask exactly what is it that a CVB, Tourism Office or Destination Marketing Office (DMO) can do for them. We also get asked about fees and why a planner would contact us if they already have a relationship with a hotel national sales office.

We thought a good overview of CVB and Tourism services might benefit the membership as a refresher. First, most Convention Bureaus, Tourism Boards, and/or Destination Marketing Organizations are similar in what they do. They just have different names. Most are non-profits and are supported by a bed tax, government or membership fees. A member or partner, as they are often called, might be a hotel, venue, restaurant, Destination Management Company (DMC) or other entity related to our industry. The goal of each organization is to promote their destination as objectively as possible. It doesn't matter which hotel or venue you choose -just as long as your hold your meeting in "their" destination.

Most offer complimentary services such as:

- Attendance boosters like brochures, DVDs, maps, coupons, pictures, etc.
- Online hotel RFP (Request for Proposal) service ; sent to the hotels you request

- Meeting Planner Guides in digital and print
- Expertise in our destination
- Customs and tax information
- Robust website offerings
- Area attraction information
- Fam trips & customized site inspection coordination
- Materials for bid presentations
- Pre and post convention tours and programs
- Suggestions for group activities during the event
- Dedicated Convention Services Manager
- Housing Services

We understand the importance of working with your national sales office; we're not in competition with each other we actually work together to offer you the most complete package possible. As a reminder, be sure to include both of us on your RFP request.

Even if you have a hotel national sales office, your Convention Bureaus (CVB), Tourism Office or Board, and/or Destination Marketing Organization:

- Adds another knowledgeable team member who can assist you with your meeting or event.
- Provides expertise in the destination and can facilitate the RFP process.
- Able to secure bids from boutique hotels not part of a NSO list.

If you have any questions about our individual agencies -just ask!

Sincerely,

Dionne Hulsey, Tourisme Montreal; Annemarie Heidbuechel, Tourisme Québec; Jonathan Hixon, Tourism Toronto; Rachael Nocera, CMP, Tourism Vancouver and Jan Tolle MacDonald, CMP, CMM, Travel Alberta

NOTE: *The views reflected here are those of the Canadian partners listed. Not all convention bureaus, tourism board and/or destination marketing organization offer the exact same services; your mileage will vary. If you want to know how your Tourism Board, CVB or DMO works - just ask.*

MPI Heartland Chapter Annual Meeting

April 20-21, 2009

Holiday Inn Downtown at Mercy Campus
Des Moines, Iowa

MAY 13th - Western POD Meeting (3-5:30 pm)

MPI/HSMIAI/NACE/NPBTA Educational Session and Networking Reception
Embassy Suites LaVista

May 13th - Central POD Meeting (3-5 pm)

Jasper Winery

JUNE 10th - Educational Session and Social

JULY 11-14th - MPI World Education Conference

Salt Lake City, Utah



Supplier Spotlight!

Written By: Michelle Declerk, CMP



Nichole Brown was in the right place at the right time to land the perfect job for her personality when she was hired as the Conference Sales Manager for the Omaha Convention & Visitors Bureau. The Omaha Convention Bureau promotes the destination as a meeting destination, supporting meeting planners and their special needs. "The best part about being a supplier is seeing all the creative avenues people use to have successful meetings. I really enjoy learning something new about my city every day."

Nichole has just been in the industry for two years and already she's making an impact. Last summer she attended the ASAE tradeshow in San Diego and her booth won and the "Best Booth Staff" award. She also shared that she follows the golden rule when it comes to business, "Treat people as you want to be treated." Once you get to know Nichole and her team, you can easily see why their booth won that honor, and why the Omaha CVB team is on fire! The next time you have a question, or to book a group with 200 rooms or less on peak nights, she's your go-to resource!

Nichole shared that she enjoys staying busy - and she does a great job with that! Besides MPI, she's a member of NSAE and HSMAI. Within the Omaha community she's also involved with the Young Professional Council of Omaha and serves as the Public Relations Chapter Advisor of the Gamma Delta Chapter of Alpha Xi Delta. When she's not tied up with volunteer work, she loves spending time outdoors with running, biking, and hiking. She also enjoys traveling, wine tastings, shopping, reading and hanging out with her family and friends.

She's a graduate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, receiving her degree in PR and Advertising, with a minor in public speaking. What's next? Nichole hopes to earn her CMP in a few years.

Planner Spotlight!

Written by: Michelle Declerck, CMP



Just over a year ago, Jenny Zahradnik, "took the leap" into becoming a full-time planner at StoneRiver after a journey led by her role model and mentor who previously held her position. In her current role as the Corporate Marketing Events Manager, Jenny has been putting her skills to the test, working to create several memorable experiences that will last a lifetime for each attendee.

Over the years, Jenny has discovered that that meeting planning is her true calling and passion. "I genuinely love what I do. So much so, that there are times I ask myself 'Do I really get paid to do this?'" What she enjoys most is knowing that she has the ability to create memorable experiences that can make a difference for so many people. Whether it is developing an interactive agenda, designing a tradeshow exhibit, planning a closing night party, or even handling the often dreaded financials and budget management, Jenny finds that all of the aspects of meeting planning are appealing to her.

Jenny considers herself honored to be able to plan her first ever incentive program to the U.S. Virgin Islands which will reward employees from all levels of the company. Jenny mentions, "The recipients are so excited ... this may be one of the most memorable trips they take. Can you imagine what an honor that is for a meeting planner?" She is inspired by their excitement to discover creative ways to thrill her attendees.

In her free time, Jenny enjoys travelling (which suits her profession nicely), reading and spending time with her family. Jenny, her husband, and her two children (ages four and seven), say their favorite family destination is Hilton Head. "The beaches are amazing and the bike trails are so plentiful you can practically get from one end of the island to the other without dodging in and out of traffic." For romantic getaways, Jenny and husband choose to visit Italy where they were engaged. "We'd like to go back every five years and immerse ourselves in the culture as much as we can."



5 Year Anniversaries

Janna Binder
Marion Elmquest
Jessica Gochenour
Maggie Kotlarz
Amanda LaPuzza

10 Year Anniversaries

Carolyn Sullivan

You can earn CEU's by attending Heartland Chapter Meetings.

If you recently received your CMP designation or are considering applying for it, did you know that you can earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) by attending your Heartland Chapter meetings? CEU's convert into validated hours that serve as points toward your CMP and CMM. This information is requested when completing the CMP and CMM applications and for recertification.

Members may keep their own detailed record of MPI meetings they attend and CEU points they earn throughout the year. However, if you prefer, I will keep track of this information for you according to the guidelines set by MPI. POD leaders and the VP of Education have received a copy of the CEU Chapter Guidelines and Criteria set by MPI, and if the meeting program you attend qualifies for CEUs, please complete the CEU Tracking Form (available at your meetings), have your POD leader or Education/Program Chairperson sign off on your attendance and fax the form to me at (515) 280-4140. Please note, however, that forms submitted after 30 days of the completion of the program will not be accepted for credit. At the end of the MPI fiscal year, you will receive a report showing the number of CEU credits you have earned.

Visit the MPI website www.mpiheartland.org for the pdf file to review the requirements for the CMP designation. Feel free to contact me at 515.286.4220 or you can email PamPeterson@iowabankers.com if you have any questions.

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