

March 2010



MPI Heartland Chapter Newsletter

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

President's Corner

Sean Olson - President

Spring is finally here and the snow is gone! This crazy and unpredictable winter has definitely affected the educational programming for the Heartland Chapter. Both the December and February Chapter Meetings had to be cancelled due to weather which was a concern for our Board of Directors. Even though we hate to cancel meetings, both times were in the best interest of our members. The last thing that we would want to do is have one of our members hurt trying to get to a meeting.



Our hope is that since we have had fewer meetings this year, that you will be excited to get together for the Annual Meeting at the Embassy Suites Downtown/Old Market in Omaha. The Annual Meeting will take place on April 12-13, 2010. The committee has been working very hard on providing you with the best educational value they can. It should be a great two day event for our members and we hope that you come out in full force to take advantage of it. Special thanks go out to Gina Swackhammer and her committee for putting this together.

The proposed slate of officers went out to you recently and Amanda and I are excited to work with everyone that has stepped up and said yes to our Chapter. There might be a number of changes on the horizons with MPI and we will need great leaders to get us through these challenges.

Even though we have elected our leaders for 2010-2011, there are still many opportunities to get involved with the Chapter. If you would like to know more about the opportunities, you may contact Angie Kistaitis, Vice President of Administration and she will find the perfect fit for you.

In previous newsletter, I have challenged all of you to a few things. I want to bring them up again as we end the 2009-2010 year and look forward to the 2010-2011 year.

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May POD Meetings

Central POD

May 11, 2010

Iowa State Alumni Center

Ames, IA

11:30am

Western POD

May 12, 2010

Omaha Marriott Hotel Omaha, NE

3:00pm

April Heartland Chapter Annual Meeting

April 12-13, 2010

Embassy Suites Downtown/Old Market

Omaha, NE

DID YOU KNOW?

All of the approved board minutes are available to you on **GROUPSPACE**. Feel free to read them at your own convenience.

Board Members
2009-2010

- Strive to attend more meetings than you did the previous year
- Bring at least two guests to a Chapter or POD Meeting
- Encourage your guests to become members
- Become a volunteer - please talk with Angie Kistaitis
- Join GroupSpace or LinkedIn and learn how to use it

I want to thank the Chapter Leaders that are finishing their roles with our club at the end of this year and taking a step back:

- Nichole Brown, Vice President of Communications
- Nancy Herselius, Director of Education
- Lesley Brandt, Western POD Co-Leader
- Patty Bain, Western POD Co-Leader

I personally have enjoyed working with all of them this year and they have left the Chapter in a better situation by them saying yes to serving. We will miss their leadership but I know that we can continue to see them very visible as attendees at our events.

Thank you to everyone with the Heartland Chapter. Please contact me if there is anything that you need to discuss. See you in April at the Annual Meeting.

Sean Olson, CMP
Heartland Chapter President

Membership Corner

Jeff Spence -VP Membership

We are currently at 124 members and we continue to pick up new members each month. Congrats and thanks to Abby Johnson from the Qwest Center who will be receiving \$50 from our referral incentive. Remember if you recruit and refer a new member- you will receive \$50 hard cold cash! The incentive runs through the remainder of the fiscal year.



Please welcome all of our New Members of the Heartland Chapter from the first half of our fiscal year.

Sharyn Baudler	Association Management, Ltd.
Lori Beck	The Durham Museum
Ann Clausen	Gateway Hotel and Conference Center
Lyndsay Coad	Kansas State University
Lori Kaser	Doubletree Hotel
Megan Knight	Conference Resources International
Jenny Minino	Embassy Suites La Vista
Patty Papke	The Stanley Foundation
Dixie Pearson	Tenaska
Jennifer Powell	PEAK
Diane Simpson	Newton Manufacturing Company
Heather Tedesco	Home Instead Senior Care
Courtney Westering	PayPal
Cora Whitney	Honey Creek Resort
Kristin Wilcox	ING Financial Solutions

The Membership Committee has some openings for volunteers, so please contact me at any time for a listing of available opportunities. Hope to see you all at the April Annual Meeting!

Cheers,

Jeff

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Financial Times

Joan Hustad - VP Finance

GET YOUR NAME OUT THERE!

Sponsor a POD or Chapter Meeting.



\$100 will allow you to be the sponsor of a POD

Meeting:

- You provide a meeting room and A/V (based upon the speakers' requests)
- You provide breakfast, lunch, break or reception at \$15 inclusive per person
- You donate a door prize for a raffle

A POD sponsor will:

- Receive two complimentary meeting registrations for sponsoring the meeting (\$40-\$60 value)
- Showcase your property to attendees of the POD meeting through the meeting set up and F&B
- Provide a 5 minute infomercial regarding your property during the business portion of the meeting
- Have the opportunity to offer a tour of your property to all interested attendees

\$200 will allow you to be the sponsor of a Chapter Meeting:

- Your donation of \$200 to the MPI Heartland chapter will help offset speaker and any out-of-pocket costs for a meeting.
- You donate a door prize for a raffle
- You receive two complimentary meeting registrations for sponsoring the meeting (\$80-\$100 value)

A Chapter Meeting sponsor will:

- Have the exclusive opportunity for a tabletop display near the registration table to display materials about your property to the attendees
- Provide a 5 minute infomercial regarding your property during the business portion of the meeting
- Place a complimentary ad in the next MPI Heartland Chapter newsletter

If you are interested in either opportunity, please contact Joan Husted, HRM, CMP via email or send a hard copy to:

Joan A. Husted, HRM, CMP, Program Associate
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University of Nebraska Medical Center
986800 Nebraska Medical Center
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Gina Swackhammer - VP of Education

"Leading By Example"

You won't want to miss the Annual Meeting this year! Please join us April 12-13, 2010 at the Embassy Suites Downtown Old Market in Omaha.

The committee has planned a great line up of speakers: Platinum Speaker, Theresa Syer, "Maximizing Your Network Skills"; Brian Brown, Drake University, "Earning the Right To Lead"; Midwest Speaker's Bureau presents "Humor Happens" with Juli Burney and Jan McInnis; Julie Ann Schmidt, "2008 Republican National Convention - A Personal Experience". Julie is a nominee for Event Solution's Event Planner of the Year Award. You will also have an opportunity to have a Q&A session with Julie; and Kent Stock, "How Do You Want to Be Remembered". Kent was the Norway, IA baseball coach that inspired the movie the "Final Season", that experience has given him the insight to develop leaders in organizations across the country.

There will also be fantastic silent auction items for you to bid on and don't forget to visit the exhibitor booths!

Vendors don't miss this opportunity to meet the meeting planners and meeting planners see what is new and exciting with the vendors.

Join us so you can be "Leading By Example."

THE ANNUAL MEETING IS HERE!

**Tuesday, April 12-13, 2010
Embassy Suites Downtown/Old Market Omaha, Nebraska**

Monday, April 12

1pm - 2pm - Registration Exhibits & Silent Auction Open

2pm - 3pm - Opening Session - **Maximizing Your Networking Skills - Theresa Syer**

Join us for this interactive session that will teach you how to maximize yours, your teams, and your clients networking skills. In today's competitive climate you need to be continually building new relationships. Theresa will show you how to enhance your networking skills to build new mutually beneficial relationships. This workshop will outline the 'tips and techniques' of great networking.

3pm - 3:15pm - Break - Exhibits and Silent Auction Open
Sponsored by Qwest Center Omaha

3:15 - 4:15pm - General Session - **How do You Want to be Remembered? - Kent Stock**

A teacher, coach, middle school principal and powerful speaker, Kent Stock is also the man who coached the Norway baseball team during their now-famous final season. This experience has given him the insight to develop leaders in organizations across the country.

4:15 - 4:45pm Break - Exhibits & Silent Auction Open
Sponsored by Greater Des Moines CVB

4:45 - 5:45pm **Humor Happens!**

humorists. Kent Rader, Juli Burney and Jan McInnis will remind us that humor in the workplace is important. It is quite unique that these three humorists are in the same place at the same time and what perfect timing after this winter to remind all of us that humor does happen even in the most "frosty" situations.

5:45 - 7:00pm - Reception

Tuesday, April 13

8:00am - Breakfast - Exhibits & Silent Auction Open - Sponsored by The Club at Indian Creek

8:30am - Business Meeting & State of the Club Discussion with Sean Olson, Chapter President

9am - 10am General Session - **2008 Republican National Convention - Julie Ann Schmidt**

Julie Ann gives us the inside scoop on the planning of the RNC. This visual presentation will be full of fun statistics and will also give both planners and suppliers insight as to what it takes to pull off an event of this size and magnitude.

10am - 10:30am - **Open Forum - Ask an Experienced Planner...**

Come with questions, Julie Ann Schmidt has been on the cutting edge of our industry for her whole career. Whether it is staying on top of the latest industry trends or her knowledge of what the latest technologies are, she is always ahead of her peers and she is here to help you. Take advantage of this opportunity to have open dialogue with one of the nominees for Event Solutions' Event Planner of the Year.

10:30am - 10:45am - Break - Exhibits & Silent Auction Open - Sponsored by Iowa Bankers Association

10:45am - 11:45am - Closing Session - **Becoming and Extraordinary Leader - David Bush**

Despite what's popular in today's marketplace, leadership success is not a secret. It's about consistent implementation of timeless leadership principles. During this session, David guides the audience through his Six Steps to Becoming an Extraordinary Leader as he shares real life, take-away strategies inside funny stories to help participants succeed in any leadership situation

11:45 - Noon - Final Silent Auction Bidding

Noon - 1:30 - Lunch - Sponsored by Council Bluffs CVB

1:30pm - Adjourn

POD UPDATE

May 11, 2010 Central POD Meeting

"When to Violate a Company's Policy in Today's Business Climate"

Speaker: Jeffery W. Johnson, President, Iowa State University

ISU Alumni Center
420 Beach Avenue
Ames, IA

11:30 - Noon Registration
Noon - 12:30 Lunch
12:30 - 12:45 Chapter Announcements
12:45 to 1:45 Program

Free parking is available in the A-2 or A-3 Iowa State Center parking lot east of the ISU Alumni Center

May 12, 2010 Western POD Meeting

"Promoting and Branding Your Event Utilizing all Communication Platforms."

Speaker: MJ McBride, CEO of Rebel Interactive a marketing and branding agency.

Omaha Marriott Hotel
10220 Regency Cir
Omaha, NE

3:00-4:30 pm

Supplier Spotlight!

Written by Michelle DeClerck, CMP, President, Conference Event Management

When you think of "those heavenly beds," Amanda LaPuzza, CMP, wants to hear from you! As the Global Account Manager for Starwood Hotels and Resorts in their Global Sales Office, Amanda is more than happy to know Starwood's is associated with a guest's great night of sleep at over 1000 properties worldwide. That's what keeps groups coming back year after year.



Amanda joined the hospitality industry nine years ago and cites "learning about all the great destinations out there and sharing what I learn with planners," as a highlight of her job. She got her start with her culinary degree from Metropolitan Community College in Omaha, and her bachelors in Marketing Management from Bellevue University in Bellevue, Nebraska.

"After culinary school I knew I wanted to work in catering on the sales end," said Amanda. She spent six years working at on property, before applying for her current position. And not surprisingly, she said "I spend most of my time reading contracts and chasing responses for clients. I really enjoy the fast pace of my current position and I love the clients I work with as well."

Perhaps not her favorite, but by far her most difficult task was working for the Holland Performing Arts Center as the Catering Manager when The Lion King roared into town. She was asked to handle an off-site party for the cast and donors after the opening show, which resulted in working from 8 a.m. on opening day until 3 a.m. the following day. She had to ensure everything, from set up to tear down, was flawless. The Lion King cast complimented her efforts by telling her "it was by far the best opening night bash we'd seen from the menu to the décor," and Amanda stated this was by far one of her most rewarding challenges.

It's not all work and no play. During well deserved down time, she enjoys baking and gardening, or volunteering for Junior League - but there's a chance she's also working her part-time job at Weight Watchers.

You might find Amanda doing a bit of traveling for her job, but it's the incentive trips she lives for, having gone to Bangkok and Hawaii.

Planner Spotlight!

Written by Michelle DeClerck, CMP, President, Conference Event Management

Heather Bullock began her work as a meeting planner eight years ago at the Nebraska Hospital Association (NHA). At that time, a previously scheduled event provided her with the opportunity to step in at the last minute and showcase her organizational skills. After great success in coordinating the event, the NHA president created a new position for her-marketing & events coordinator-and she holds that position today. In addition to meeting planning, Heather has expanded her responsibilities to include coordinating revenue generating options for the NHA such as advertising, sponsorship and the NHA Affiliate Membership Program.



"My favorite part of meeting planning is being 'in' on all the details and decision-making prior to the event. The best pleasure of all, though, is seeing an event in progress and knowing you had a part in making it all happen," cited Heather. "I love every minute of it."

Her favorite event to coordinate is their annual two-and-a-half day convention, complete with about 15 concurrent sessions, a trade show, receptions and an award ceremony. "It is quite the job, but worth it every year when it all comes together," Heather said.

Perhaps Heather gained her appreciation for orchestrated events as a child, as she is the youngest of 13 children and no doubt lived in a very well-organized home that demanded everyone's participation. She is also extremely proud to be a grandmother to a beautiful 16-month-old granddaughter who was born premature at just 3 pounds, but today is a very happy and healthy toddler. Family is very important to Heather and she looks forward to the Fourth of July celebration when all her family makes it a point to get together.

When asked about the future, Heather relayed that although being a meeting planner wasn't something she set out to be, she now couldn't imagine doing anything else. "I truly enjoy the work that I do and am honored to have been given the chance to learn more about the meeting planning profession," commented Heather. "This is where my heart and soul belong!"

MONEY TALKS!

When times are tough, we are here to help!

The Heartland Chapter Board of Directors has increased the scholarship pool from \$1,500 to \$2,000 for the 2009-2010 year.



Please download the new guidelines and application either from mpiheartland.org or from mpiweb.org and the chapter groupspace document listing.

Newsletter Advertising

Have you considered how you can best get your business name out there to potential clients? Consider advertising in the MPI Heartland Chapter newsletter! The newsletter is sent electronically to Heartland Chapter members and uploaded to the website.

The Heartland Chapter publishes a newsletter five times a year which includes information on upcoming chapter events, updates on the industry, member information, MPI International events, education AND advertising!

The deadline to submit advertising requests is the 15th of the month for the following month. Ads should be submitted electronically in .jpg format.

For more information, contact Nichole Brown at NBrown@visitomaha.com or at 402-444-4611

Earn CEUs By Attending MPI 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, Pam Peterson 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 Pam 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 me at PamPeterson@iowabankers.com if you have any questions.