



# HEARTLAND CHAPTER

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL

## Heartland Chapter News

A publication by the Heartland Chapter of Meeting Professionals International

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

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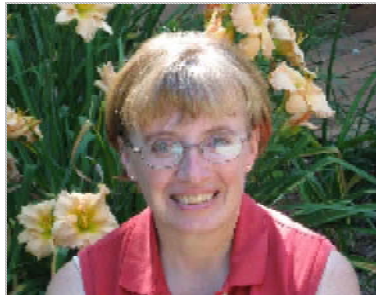
Kathy Codner, CMP  
National Pork Board

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### President's Message

By Nancy Herselius, CMP



With mixed emotions, I write my last newsletter article as your President. The year has gone quickly and so much has been accomplished. You have heard the board members talk about the succession plan, the Policies and Procedures

Manual, the membership retention and recruitment plan, and other issues vital to the Heartland Chapter. Work on these things will not stop at the end of June, but will continue

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**Chapter & POD Meetings**

By Michelle Hilsabeck

**Chapter and POD 2008-09 Meetings**

Dates, times, and locations for next year's Chapter and POD Meetings will be announced this summer. Watch your e-mail for further details.

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**Annual Meeting**

to grow and help make our chapter bigger and better, a chapter that can offer what is important to our members.

As I leave the Office of President, I hand the gavel to Paulette Lester of the Greater Des Moines Convention and Visitors Bureau. Paulette has worked side-by-side with me this past year, and has been involved in making the important decisions. I wouldn't have gotten through this year without her help and insight. She will be a very capable leader for 2008-09.

I have been blessed with a very active, talented, and hard working board and I express my sincere thanks to every one of them. It has been easy to delegate responsibilities because I knew the job would be done. All board members but Mary Cason will continue in the next year, some in new positions.

The MPI Heartland Board of Directors for 2008-09 is:

President	Paulette Lester
President Elect	Sean Olson
Vice President of Finance	Amanda LaPuzza
Vice President of Education	Michelle Hilsabeck
Vice President of Membership	Jeff Spence
Vice President of Administration	Kathy Codner
Vice President of Communications	Nichole Brown
Past President	Nancy Herselius
Chapter Administrator	Brenda Ram

I also want to recognize Krista Rogers, our MPI International Liaison. Krista has helped us work through the rough spots this year. She has been an open ear to any and all questions. I'm sure Paulette will agree that we have depended on Krista's expertise several times and she has always come through for us.

This is the shortest article I have written. I am literally at a loss for words. But I want you to know that I have thoroughly enjoyed this past year and meeting many of you. I encourage

## Overview

This year's annual meeting, "Hot Topicals" was held April 21-22, at the Omaha Marriott Regency. There were 53 meeting planners and suppliers in attendance. The opening session by Meryl Runion entitled "Some Boats Need to Be Rocked: How to Use Power Phrases to Talk About What Matters Most," showed attendees how to play nicely in the sandbox with co-workers and loved ones by practicing "say what you mean, mean what you say and don't be mean when you say it".

Following the opening session, the silent auction, exhibitor showcase and welcome reception began. That evening, the Chapter welcomed several hospitality students from Metropolitan Community College to the welcoming reception, silent auction and exhibitor showcase courtesy of a donation by dice.com.

Day 2 opened with a breakout sessions by Doug Pedersen (Stress and Time Management), Jeff Beals (Self Marketing Power) and Tommy Wilson (AV Trends).



Pictured is Jeff Beals addressing the attendees.

The meeting continued with a second session of breakouts by Chef's Michael Rhoades and Glenn Wheeler (Food and Beverage Best Practices and Current Trends), Mike Compton (Tradeshows) and Tonya Towne-Barwick, Theresa Contreras, Nichole Brown (RFP's and Collaboration).

The silent auction and raffle prize winners were announced during the closing luncheon along with several short infomercials. Juli Burney's hilarious yet point driven speech closed the meeting.

you to get to know your board members and tell them the positive things you see happening in this chapter and how they affect you and your position. Also let them know your concerns. The board is there to make sure MPI and the Heartland Chapter meet your needs. Becoming more involved in a committee or in some other way will also be of great benefit to you both personally and professionally.

To echo the words of that famous song, "I'll be seeing you..."

*Nancy*

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**Plan to  
join MPI  
at the  
ballpark!**

## Heartland Chapter Social Event

**Monday, June 30, 2008**

This is a great opportunity to network with MPI members, share time with family, support your local team, and see a great game.

5:30 p.m.	Tailgate Party, Party Deck Picnic Area
	Sec Taylor Stadium, Des Moines, Iowa
7:05 p.m.	Game time
\$25 Per Person	Includes: Reserved Grandstand Game Ticket, Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Potato Salad, Potato Chips, and Pop
\$6 Parking	Kids 3 and under are free

For more information or to register, go the chapter web-site at [www.mpiheartland.org](http://www.mpiheartland.org) and select the events tab.

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Angie Kistaitis, Conference Sales Manager for the Mid-America Center (Council Bluffs) was awarded the Star of the Year for 2007-2008. Angie received the Star of the Quarter in March.

Angie shared some comments on receiving the award, "I must admit - it was a big surprise to win Star of the Quarter - not to mention Star of the Year. I had totally forgotten that is presented at the Spring Conference so that DOUBLED the surprise. It's a great feeling to know that your peers would choose you for this award - what an honor!! I will be attending WEC in August in Las Vegas and have already started looking at the different break out options to see what I will attend. There are so many - it may not be easy to choose! Thanks again."

A special thank you to the following exhibitors and sponsors for supporting the Heartland Chapter's Annual Meeting.

**Exhibitors**

- Cedar Shore Resort
- ConferenceDirect
- Council Bluffs Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- Embassy Suites Omaha- LaVista Hotel & Conf Ctr
- Gibb's Rental
- Greater Des Moines Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- Iowa Marriott Hotels:
  - Coralville Marriott
  - Courtyard Quad Cities
  - Courtyard Clive
  - Des Moines Marriott
  - Renaissance Savery Hotel
  - West Des Moines Marriott
- Iowa's Event Planner
- King's Pointe Resort
- Lake of The Ozarks Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Mason City Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- Mid-America Center
- Omaha Convention and Visitor's Bureau

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** Central POD Meetings**

**March Central POD Meeting**

**Overview**

By Pam Peterson

The March 4<sup>th</sup> Central Pod Meeting was held at the Scottish Rite Consistory in Downtown Des Moines. Our speaker, Tracy Fuller presented, 'The Wow Factor – Raising the Bar for Your Event' to a record number of attendees. A portion of our meeting room was transformed into an elaborate setting which definitely took us by surprise. We were 'Wowed' by what Tracy and her staff had put together for us and appreciate all the work to make the presentation a success.

Thanks to Shane Harshbarger for being our host and giving us an opportunity to tour their beautiful facility and Laurie Colt from Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center for being our sponsor and providing door prizes.

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** Heartland Stars**

Kellie Hanselman, Director of Sales at Stoney Creek Inn in Johnston, Iowa, won the Heartland Chapter Star of the Quarter. Kellie has been an MPI member since 2004. She stepped up and volunteered to be a Central Co-Pod Leader for 2007-2008.

Pam Peterson, Kellie's Co-Pod leader said, "Kellie agreed to be the Central Co-Pod leader without knowing what her responsibilities would be or the time commitment. Kellie planned and coordinated the January and May 2008 Central POD Meetings which included choosing topics that would develop planners and suppliers professionally, selecting the speakers, securing the meeting sites and coordinating all other meeting logistics. She assisted with these and other Co-POD Leader responsibilities willingly and with enthusiasm each month."

Kellie is a great asset to the MPI Heartland

PlanitOmaha  
 Tanque Verde Ranch  
 The Magnolia Hotel

**Contributors**

Council Bluffs Convnt & Visitor's  
 Bureau (Marketing)  
 Gibb's Rental (Linens for Reception)  
 Greater Des Moines Convention and  
 Visitors Bureau  
 (Food and Beverage Sponsor)  
 J&S Audiovisual (Audiovisual  
 Equipment)  
 The Magnolia Hotel  
 (Keynote Speaker Hotel  
 Accommodations)  
 Omaha Convention and Visitors  
 Bureau  
 (Speaker Mugs and Participant Bags)  
 Omaha Marriott Regency  
 (Refreshment Breaks)

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**2009 Annual Meeting**

The Heartland MPI Chapter is requesting proposals to host the 2009 Annual Meeting. Proposals must be submitted by June 15, 2008.

Dates: Two consecutive days (traditionally Monday-Tuesday in April)  
Preferred dates: April 20-21 or April 27-28, 2009

Estimated Attendance: 50-75 people

Decision Date: June 2008

Special Notes: First option will be provided to MPI members. The Chapter Board requests meeting room rental be waived or greatly reduced. Please provide estimated food and beverage costs for continental breakfast, plated lunch, and reception. Sleeping room rate to be comparable to and not exceed previous rates.

Locations under consideration:  
 Central Iowa

2008	Omaha Marriott, Omaha NE <i>Combined with KC</i>	\$89
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Chapter and we congratulate her on being awarded the "Star of the Quarter".

Kellie appreciates receiving the award and thanked the chapter for the honor of being a recipient.

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**Membership Corner**

By Sean Olson, CMP, CC



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 135 members and continue to grow. Keep spreading the word!

I want to welcome the newest members to the Heartland Chapter:

Jolene Davis, Meeting Planner IOTA, Urbandale, IA	Katherine Langmoreland, Salisbury House Foundation Des Moines, IA
Brenda Horst, Senior Conf Planner Conference Event Mgt, Omaha, NE	Aaron Lindman, Sales Manager Sioux Falls Convnt & Visitors Bur. Sioux Falls, SD
Carrie Jennings, Meeting Planner Wells Fargo Financial, Des Moines, IA	Megan Little, Student University of Northern Iowa Cedar Falls, IA
Jessica Kepsteen, Training Coordin. Allied Insurance, Des Moines, IA	Linda Minter Woodlands Resort & Conf

2007	Combined with KC Chapter	NA
2006	Iowa City, IA	NA
2005	Pella, IA	\$59
2004	Hilton Omaha, Omaha, NE	\$69
2003	Crowne Plaza, Cedar Rapids, IA	\$69

Sleeping Rooms Needed (Majority are single rooms):  
 Sunday night = 5 and Monday night = 15

**Draft Agenda:**

<b>Monday</b>	
8:00 or 9:00 a.m.	Exhibitors Setup (10-12 table top exhibits to be used for the duration of the conference)
	Silent Auction Setup (1000 sq. ft. with classroom tables around perimeter to be used for the duration of the conference)
9:30 a.m.	Board Meeting (board table or u-shape for 12-15 people)
1:00 or 2:00 p.m.	Registration begins
3:00 - 4:00 p.m.	General session. Rounds for 50-75 people (can be in same area as silent auction, exhibitors and reception)
4:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Reception (host/cash bar, heavy appetizers for 40-50 people)
<b>Tuesday</b>	
8:00 a.m.	Buffet breakfast for 50-75 people
9:00 - 10:15 a.m.	Concurrent sessions (3 rooms for 25 people each)
10:15 - 10:30 a.m.	Beverage Break
10:30 - 11:45 a.m.	Concurrent sessions (3 rooms for 25 people each)

	Ctr The Woodlands, TX
Dawn Kuster, Account Executive	Jennifer Neid, Sales Manager
Iowa's Event Planner, Neola, IA	Embassy Suites Omaha-LaVista Hotel & Conf. Ctr, LaVista, NE
	Lori Riggs, CMP, Event Producer/Owner Leading Star Events Omaha, NE

This is my last article as Vice President of Membership for the 2007-08 year. I am the President-Elect for the upcoming year. I look forward to this new position and working with you as we continue to move our chapter in a positive and exciting direction.

It is very important that all chapter members continue recruiting new members. We want our chapter to grow over the next year and we need everyone's help to accomplish this. To the new members, we appreciate you joining our chapter. I encourage you to find a volunteer position within our chapter which will get you active and allow you to get the most out of your membership.

Jeff Spence will be the Vice President of Membership on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Jeff will do a great job and our new members and guests will enjoy getting to know him as the first connection to our chapter.

Have a great summer and we hope to see you at the June Social in Des Moines later this month. Thank you.

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**Planner/Supplier Spotlight**  
 By Michelle DeClerck, CMP

**Planner: Terry McConnell, IOM**  
 A warm welcome to one of our newer planner members, Terry McConnell, IOM, Meeting Planner for Aviva USA. However, Terry is certainly not new to the industry with over 23 years in the business. She spent the first 18 of

11:45 – 2:00 p.m.	people each) Lunch (plated for 50-75 people), closing keynote speaker, silent auction and raffle winners, annual chapter awards, introductions of incoming board members, etc.
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## Educational Opportunities

Checkout the upcoming MPI Educational Event.  
For more information go to [www.mpiweb.org](http://www.mpiweb.org)

**2008 World Education Congress**  
August 9-12, 2008  
Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas

For more information go to [www.mpiweb.org](http://www.mpiweb.org)

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**Advertising:** For more information on promoting your company or services in the MPI Heartland Chapter newsletter, please contact Mary Cason at 515.440.7625 or at

those years in association management, with the past five years handling event/meeting planning on a larger scale.

She cites the fact that “there is never one day like any other” as one of the enjoyable facets to her tenure, as well as the variety of duties and the sense of accomplishment she has when an event is complete.

One of Terry’s favorite meeting destinations is Hawaii where there are plenty of activities to offer participants. She also finds Costa Rica to be a great international destination as “the travel to get there isn’t draining and it’s a beautiful country that still preserves its natural beauty.” When I asked Terry if she had any interesting stories to share, she commented “Are you kidding? Have you ever sat around and talked to a group of meeting planners and listened to the stories? We should write a book!” Now there’s a meeting planner who has seen it all!

Terry offers a great perspective on meeting planning she states, “A lot of people tell me, ‘I could never do what you do,’ and I don’t quite understand what they’re talking about. As long as you’re organized, detail-oriented, and can adapt to continual change, you can be a meeting planner. It can be frustrating at times, but for the most part, it’s a fun profession. I think it’s the sort of job you have to have a passion for in order to enjoy it.”

Terry is a graduate of Upper Iowa University and University of Notre Dame, where she has earned the IOM distinction which is awarded by the Institute for Organization Management for professional development and training in the association, chamber and nonprofit industries. After raising seven children, and after traveling throughout the world, Terry and her husband can find no greater enjoyment than getting away to their “other” home at Lake Rathbun.

### **Supplier: Jennifer Neid**

Jennifer Neid, Sales Manager for Embassy Suites Omaha – La Vista / Hotel & Conference Center, is anxiously awaiting their opening on July 1st of this year!

As a sales manager for almost eight years, Jennifer loves helping planners put on their

[mcason@iada.com](mailto:mcason@iada.com)

best event ever. She cites being a part of the pre-opening team for the Hilton Omaha as one of her favorite experiences and is enjoying it again with the Embassy Suites La Vista.

During college, Jennifer worked part time at The Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln. She observed sales managers and their clients dining in the restaurant and thought it would be fun to one day have a job helping to plan meetings. She soon had a sales job at the Crowne Plaza Old Mill and has been helping others since then.

Jennifer has her Bachelors of Journalism from the University of Nebraska, enjoys spending time with her husband and two children. When she has free time, she grabs a book, swims or plans her next trip.

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