



Message from the President

by Jeanne Burris

I want to take this moment to say thank you for all the wonderful support given to me with the death of my father. My family and I very much appreciated all your thoughts and prayers. We have such a caring chapter and I am proud to be a part of this great group.

Now for a chapter update. Your Board of Directors met in early January for the mid-year Board retreat. We used this important time together to review the chapter's business and strategic plans, and to make sure we were on target to achieve our goals. I am happy to report that in all areas we are moving along well and looking forward to a great finish to the year.

In late January, Jill and I attended the Presidents/Presidents Elect meeting at MPI-PEC in San Diego. We worked with chapters of all sizes to discuss common issues and goals for the future of MPI. It was a lively group conversation, and many good ideas were brought forth to MPI staff and leaders on how they can assist the chapters and continue to support a strong association.

Please be sure to check out the KCMPI web site and newsletter for all of our upcoming chapter meetings and activities. Many great things are happening in KCMPI, and we want you to be a part of it all.

Hope to see you at our March meeting at the Hilton KCI!!

Personal Financial Power – Never Kissed a Frog ... Never Had to

by Shari Hockenbery

Everyone has financial goals but not everyone has the time or the know how to attain them. Enter the Twins at Twin Financial. Katheigh Hull Degen and Raleigh Hull Lang are Twin Financial, a full-service financial advisory firm located in Kansas City, Missouri. Katheigh and Raleigh are going to share their 20-plus years of financial expertise with KCMPI members and guests on March 10, 2005, at the "All New" Hilton Kansas City Airport. Through their presentation "Never Kissed a Frog ... Never Had to," the Twins will take attendees on an informative, fun-fill adventure to achieve financial independence. Like everything else in life, there is a formula for success and the Twins will be able to walk you through the five easy steps necessary to make all your financial dreams come true: Select the Right Financial Services Professional, Create a Plan, Develop a Portfolio, Understand How Money Grows, and Review and Update periodically. They will also discuss the importance of insurance, estate planning, the financial implications of marriage or divorce, retirement savings and taxes. The dynamic Twins can take these sometimes complicated, serious issues and help you understand just how easy it is to begin your own personal financial journey. Creating a financial plan is an adventure, not a chore. It is never too late to learn how to tap the "Personal Financial Power" inside us all.

Our generous sponsor, the "All New" Hilton Kansas City Airport, will welcome meeting attendees outside the meeting room (Shawnee B) for registration at 3:30 p.m. The exciting and informative program will run from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. with time at the end for questions. From 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. enjoy the hospitality of the Hilton Kansas City Airport as they host a reception for all meeting attendees. The reception will feature a wine and beer bar, as well as the "Chef's Choice" of delicious finger foods.

March/April 2005

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- Jeanne Burris, President
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Diane Wolfe, CMP, VP of Finance
Tanya Zuckerman, CMP, VP of Membership
Kathy Stipek, CMP, VP of Education and Programs

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A great big thank you to the Elms Resort Spa and Conference Center for hosting the mid-year board retreat in January 2005. The Elms provided KCMPI with an outstanding location, wonderful food & beverage and great customer service which enhanced our opportunity to enjoy a very productive event. We appreciate our sponsors for all they do for KCMPI!

WLI Is Here and We Need Your Help!

By Catherine Thompson

It's here! KCMPI is implementing the MPI's Women's Leadership Initiative. The Women's Leadership Initiative focuses on helping women advance professionally in an industry where they are the great majority, but the minority in leadership. The vision and mission of the WLI is to be "the leading source for research, advocacy, education and resources for and about women in the meetings industry." Please note that men also play a role in WLI! The goals of this initiative are threefold:

1. Help chapter members and our local industry recognize that women are a great majority in the meetings industry, and women are ready and willing to lead.
2. Assist women in our chapter build opportunities and skills for advancement.
3. Help the men in our chapter recognize that the WLI supports and helps them in their quest to make the workplace and the industry a better place through their own advancement, but also by supporting the development of the leadership of women in an industry where women are by far the great majority.

Sounds simple, but to make this initiative a success in our chapter, we need ideas and volunteers to be committee members! *To get the ball rolling, we would like women in our chapter to share their stories of struggle and success: a "My Story: Making It Into Leadership" series. These stories may be published in future newsletters. All women are invited to submit a story to Catherine Thompson at catherine.thompson@marriott.com.*

Stories submitted by 5/31/2005 will be eligible for a prize drawing for dinner for two in Nikko's Japanese Steak House at the Overland Park Marriott.

MPI PEC ~ Another Great Showing

Tanya Zuckerman, CMP

This year's MPI Professional Educational Conference was held in San Diego, California over the dates of January 23-26, 2005. There was a record attendance of over 3000 attendees from all over the world.

Our chapter had a great showing with over 20 attendees. PEC is always a great time to network, build business and receive great education.

The "Influencing Executive Decision Makers" was one track that was of particular interest to me and many other senior level attendees. MPI added this track at the last minute, but filled each session. The sessions covered everything from tracking and reporting return on investment (ROI), procurement and strategic sourcing, legal issues, a panel on hotel positioning and how to influence the "C" level management (CEO, COO, CFO, etc.). These topics hit home and have helped me add value to my current position.

The General Session was filled with great messages, but one of the strongest messages came from the keynote speaker, Marcus Buckingham. Get a seat at the table ... increase your influence ... be a strategic thinker. These are the growing personal development demands that continue to face meeting professionals, but what do they really mean and how do those get you there? It's all about evolving into a leader.



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Jim Pruitt,
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At this year's insightful Opening General Session, the power of leadership came to life as renowned author and lecturer, Marcus Buckingham discussed his newest book, *The One Thing You Need to Know* to share his insights on practical steps you can take to increase your effectiveness and professional success. It was eye opening and really made you think.

In addition to the great education and a top-notch trade show, there was plenty of fun. The Kansas City group was able to bond by getting together for pre-receptions and exploring San Diego. The welcome reception was held on the USS Midway and yours truly was part of a "Dance Heads" threesome. Jessica Waite with AAFP and Becky Kuhn with Fred Pryor Seminars and myself were able to participate in the "Dance Heads" activity. "Dance Heads" is a new virtual activity where your heads are superimposed onto dancing figures and you get to lip sync to a song, we chose "I Will Survive." It is shown on a big screen that the whole world can see. I think the three of us will always remember that moment. We may even show the video at a monthly meeting just to break the ice.

Thanks to all that were able to attend and participate. We all had a lot of fun getting to know someone new and networking. For those of you that haven't attended a national conference and are interested, please feel free to contact me to discuss the benefits.

"It's Not Personal! Understanding Why People Behave the Way That They Do"

(Recap of January 13, 2005 Monthly Meeting)

by Liz Skahan

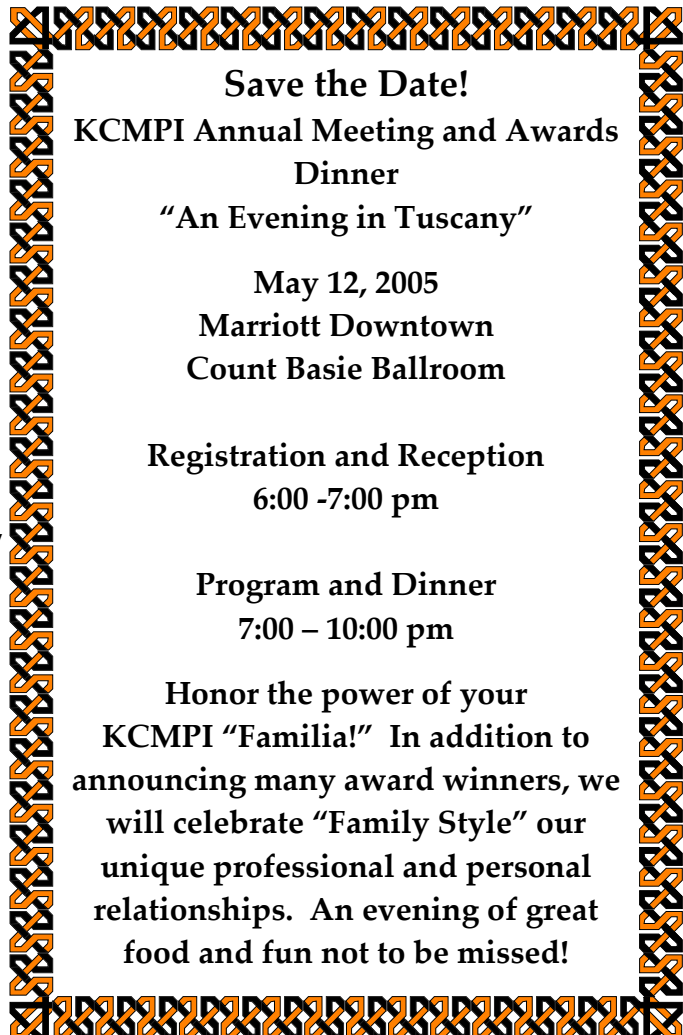
"The more you know about you, the more you know about others." And of course we know that each of us is always right and everyone else is wrong! Dr. Robert Pennington gave those attending the January KCMPI monthly meeting a powerful awakening that our own unconscious habit of feeling uncomfortable, making negative judgments, taking it all so personally and reacting automatically will only make things more difficult.

Dr. Pennington is an educational psychologist who specializes in increasing productivity by reducing the resistance to change and conflict in both individuals and organizations. On January 13, members gathered at the Marriott Overland Park to try and understand why people behave the way they do. Jeanne Burris kicked off the luncheon with a few short announcements and then the wonderful staff at the Marriott Overland Park pampered us with a sensational menu to keep us warm on a blustery day.

Dr. Pennington then began his presentation with a quick ice-breaker and divided the room in groups of "As" and "Bs." The "Bs" were to make a fist and the "As" were to try and open their fist in any way possible. As usual some fought hard to open their partner's fist, some made bribes and some just asked! But what was the consensus reaction of everyone was a negative reaction. Every "A" just knew that not one "B" was going to cooperate!

With this in mind Dr. Pennington reminded us that we can't control our initial, habitual negative reaction to anyone or anything but we can control our next response often leading to the possibility of more positive results.

Negative thoughts entice negative emotions which entice negative behavior which give us negative results. Everyone experiences emotions at work. We get frustrated with our bosses; we get upset with co-workers who don't do their jobs, so we can't do ours. We get angry with irate customers who don't realize we are only trying to help. We worry about an uncertain future. But with all these emotions, most people don't think they have anything to do with how they are feeling. They believe their emotions are a result of an external cause and they believe that because that is how they have been taught to think about emotions. The goal is not to never have any negative emotions... the goal is to recognize them faster and move through them quicker. People become less difficult if each of us can learn to deal with our own unconscious habits of feeling uncomfortable, making negative judgments and taking it all so personally.



Save the Date!

KCMPI Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner

"An Evening in Tuscany"

May 12, 2005

**Marriott Downtown
Count Basie Ballroom**

Registration and Reception

6:00 -7:00 pm

Program and Dinner

7:00 – 10:00 pm

Honor the power of your KCMPI "Familia!" In addition to announcing many award winners, we will celebrate "Family Style" our unique professional and personal relationships. An evening of great food and fun not to be missed!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ **Apologies for an Omission by** ★

★ **Shari Hockenbery:** ★

★ It came to my attention that some wonderful, ★

★ hard-working KCMPI members were not ★

★ recognized in the last newsletter for their ★

★ efforts to create a spectacular annual Auction in ★

★ December. Co-chairs of the Fundraising ★

★ Committee, Vanesa Masucci and Kelly Kirby ★

★ poured heart and soul into this venture, working ★

★ with suppliers and planners to provide the ★

★ extensive selection of auction items. Kelly also ★

★ orchestrated a lovely venue and meal for the ★

★ evening. Gwen Knight provided much-needed ★

★ guidance and experience, and Vanesa, Kelly, ★

★ Gwen, Caroline West and Jeanne Burris ★

★ provided on-site labor to coordinate the layout of ★

★ the auction items. To everyone else who played ★

★ a part, large or small, many thanks to you for ★

★ creating such a fabulous and successful event. ★

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Savvy Professional: Voice Mail Etiquette

by Marlys K. Arnold

Often the first contact we have with a potential client or supplier is over the phone. Yet phone manners, especially voice mail, are often overlooked. Whether it's your personal greeting to callers, or you're leaving a message for a colleague or client, your image is being conveyed through your voice. In today's high-tech business world, it's more important than ever to present a professional image over the phone.

- Check messages regularly, even when you're away from the office. Always respect the callers' time and return messages the same business day (if at all possible) or else the following day (unless you're on vacation, of course).

- When someone calls with a list of questions, do your best to answer all of them in your return call. If there's something you can't answer without more detail, let them know that.

- Whether you're recording your outgoing message, or leaving a message for someone else, always remember to speak slowly and clearly. No one likes to rewind a message five or six times trying to catch the phone number! It also helps to relax so you sound more sincere. Also, watch your tone – it's easy for attitudes to be misread on a voice mail. Try smiling as you leave your message ... it really will be apparent on the other end of the line!

- Always thank them!

- Never forget that a voice mail is a recording, and that anyone could listen to it at any point. Watch what you say, in case the message falls into the wrong hands.

Leaving a basic voice mail message:

- Leave your reason for calling, your name and company (if applicable), and your preferred contact number, including the extension. Always include your number, even if you assume the other person already has it. There's always the chance that they'll be accessing the message from a remote location, and might not have your number handy. It's even a good idea to repeat your number again at the end of the call, in case they didn't get it written down the first time. Also include some suggestions for when would be the best time to reach you (if the issue requires person-to-person discussion).

- If you find yourself getting flustered when that beep sounds, write yourself some notes before you call. Then you'll be better prepared, whether the person answers or not.

Basic Personal Greeting:

- State your name, title, and company name, but keep your message to 20 seconds or less, if at all possible. If you have an ever-changing schedule, re-record your message each morning, giving callers your agenda for the day, and when you will be back in your office. (But be sure to keep updating these greetings so they don't get outdated.) You may also wish to provide an alternate contact, such as a cell phone number or an e-mail address, or even offer the number of someone else who could assist the caller.

- Stand when you record your message, since this will heighten the energy level reflected in your voice.

Some examples:

"You've reached the voice mailbox of Suzy Planner. For the week of May 1st, I will be in meetings on Monday and Tuesday, but will be in the office the remainder of the week. Please leave your message and I will return your call on Wednesday when I return to the office. If you require assistance before then, please call our main office at Thank you."

-- or --

"Hello, you've reached Suzy Planner. I'm either on the other line or away from my desk. However, if you leave your name, phone number and details of how I can help you, I will call you back as soon as possible. Thank you."

Basic corporate voice mail system:

- No matter how many options you provide, make sure one of them is to reach an operator or leave a general message. (Not everyone's call fits neatly into a "press 1 for marketing, 2 for catering, etc." situation.) Another handy tool is a company directory, so people can immediately reach the person they're looking for.

Example:

"Thank you for calling Company ABC. Our normal business hours are 8 AM to 5:30 PM Monday through Friday. If you're calling after hours, please leave your name, phone number and a detailed message and we will pass it on to the appropriate person to call you back on the next business day. If you know the person you need to reach, please press # to access our company directory of names. Thank you."

If anyone is interested in becoming the KCMPI Newsletter Publisher/Editor, please contact Sherie Howell, CMP at showell@askusa.com or 1-800-315-4333 ext. 206.

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Chapter Members Learn Steps to Successful Public Speaking and Enjoy Hospitality of the Great Wolf Lodge

by Shari Hockenbery

In the natural environs of the beautiful Great Wolf Lodge nearly 70 KCMPI members met one of their greatest fears head on – the fear of speaking in public. After a delicious lunch of pan seared American red snapper and petit filet of American Bison cooked to perfection by the talented chefs of the Great Wolf Lodge, Brad Plumb, CMP, took attendees on an odyssey of self-discovery. Plumb, a 20-year member of KCMPI and veteran Toastmaster, was not always at ease in front of the microphone or on center stage. He recalled a time at 14 years of age when he was afraid to stand up in front of his family and say the Thanksgiving prayer; a story told to let attendees know that they are not alone in their fears and steps can be taken to become a successful public speaker.

In fact, Plumb has turned his initial trepidation in public speaking into a successful long-time career at FIVE STAR Speakers & Trainers, LLC in Overland Park, Kansas. He agrees with famous tough guy Steven Seagal from the movie *Hard to Kill*: "The thought of dying is far worse than death itself." Or, public speaking for that matter. According to Plumb, there are four initial steps to overcoming your fears – Mental Readiness, Speech PREP from the Ground Up, Visual Aids and Speech Time. From the very beginning, successful speakers are mentally ready. Their thoughts are positive and strong, and their mindset and intent are steady as uneasiness bleeds away. Good speeches are never memorized – rehearsed in front of a mirror or video camera – but never memorized. Remember, the audience wants a speaker to succeed.

Visual aids help an audience to remember what was said and they help a speaker to "make a Point, explain a Reason, give an Example and reaffirm a major Point." After listening to Plumb and feeling more confident about their own abilities to speak successfully in public, KCMPI members were excited and ready to approach Speech Time, whenever that may occur over the course of their careers.

Complimented by a Valentine's theme and centerpieces made of spring flowers, meeting attendees also heard Chapter President Jeanne Burris discuss efforts to raise money for Tsunami relief through donations to the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA). Ronn McLane, Director of Sales and Marketing at the Great Wolf Lodge, was an honored guest at the meeting and he spoke for a few moments about the Lodge and an exciting new property in Williamsburg, Virginia. Ronn also accepted a gift from Burris on behalf of KCMPI. Also in the news, Frank Schevinger discussed the April Education Conference and introduced Ed Hearn, professional speaker and former professional baseball player. Hearn held a drawing for an autographed baseball, which was won by Lindsay Niemeyer of Northwest Missouri State University. Recognition Committee member Sue Heley discussed the May 12 Awards Dinner and honored Teddy Wright as November 2004 Committee Member of the Month. Brad Plumb announced the formation of another CMP study group starting in March.



BATTERS UP! The eagerly anticipated cleanup hitter is on deck. The 2005 KCMPI Professional Education Conference: *Field of Dreams for Meeting Professionals* will be held April 12-13, 2005 at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center and the Crown Center Exhibit Hall. This program is sure to be a dinger so don't miss it! Come out and cheer on the great lineup of speakers including former umpire Steve Palermo, former World Series baseball player Ed Hearn and MPI Platinum Speaker Sue Hershkowitz-Coore.

Steve Palermo spent 15 years on the field until he was wounded and paralyzed coming to the rescue of two women being attacked in July 1991. Following his injury, Palermo endured daily rehabilitation work and accepted over 25 awards for courage and dedication, including the 1994 Arthur Ashe Courage Award at the ESPY's. Palermo has taken his unique perspective of the game to present an inspirational speech at the Opening Session. Ed Hearn, a member of the 1986 World Series Champion New York Mets, will be the last at bat on April 12th. Hearn's life experiences "touches all the bases." He has both "celebrated at the top" and "battled some of life's nasty curves." His story will leave you with a "positive, successful approach toward work, relationships, and life!" The final batter of the conference will be Sue Hershkowitz-Coore, one of the best business motivational speakers. Sue, a communications expert, believes that "success is dependent on how you communicate your message and vision." Sue's high energy and informative presentation will ensure you a win in your personal and professional lives.

For more information on speakers and the overall game plan, check out www.kcmpi.org. Sign up by March 4th to get a discount on your ticket.

We will see you at the old ball game on April 12th!

