



### **SGMP HEADLINE NEWS: Did You Know?**

- ▶ **The National Newsletter of the Year has been renamed the Carole Anne Nelson NOY Competition.**
- ▶ **Chapter Monthly Reports will soon be available in the Members Only section of the Web site. See how your chapter is doing.**
- ▶ **All SGMP chapters will be abiding by one set of by-laws.**
- ▶ **The National Board will no longer be determining the Sam Gilmer Award recipient. Instead, there will be a committee comprised of six past Sam Gilmer Award winners.**
- ▶ **The National Education Conference is scheduled for May 26 – 30, 2004 in Nashville, Tennessee. With over 30 workshops, a cyber café, and a revised exhibit format, this is one conference you should not miss.**

### **Membership Retention Task Force**

*By Kit Gonzales, North Western Region Chair*

The SGMP Membership Retention Task Force (MRTF) is shedding light on what chapters are doing to retain their members. Chapters are doing great work!

The idea of the MRTF was created by the National Board with a goal of working with and helping chapter membership chairs with their retention efforts. After defining the MRTF goals and objectives, and splitting all of the chapters into regions, task force members were asked to contact their region's chapter membership chairs. Those initial contacts were to identify themselves as MRTF members, outline the purpose of the task force, and gather initial retention information. At the time of this writing, the Sacramento, Greater Oregon, Pa-

cific Northwest, Minnesota Northern Lights, Buckeye, Chicago, Missouri State Capital, and the Heart of Illinois chapters responded to a series of questions. Other chapters are still being contacted and the task force looks forward to their input!

#### **Also Inside**

- Vice Presidents Roundtable sets goals and takes action. *See page 3.*
- Silent Auction Debuts in the "Members Only Section" of the SGMP Web Site. *See page 3.*
- Chapter Presidents Roundtable recap of meeting, issues, and goals. *See page 4.*

### How do membership chairs contact members from their drop list?

- Via e-mail reminder that outlines benefits of maintaining membership.
- Reminder phone calls highlighting the new \$25 membership fee and offering a frequent meeting planner plan, which allows a planner to prepay their meeting fees.
- Phone calls encouraging planners to pay the low \$25 themselves.
- Ask those that appear on the drop list what can be done to assist that person in renewing their membership.
- Renewals are listed in the newsletter. A personal note or card is sent to each renewing member highlighting the benefits for the exceptional price of \$25.
- Reminder phone calls from the membership chair and the chapter president.
- Show the current drop list at the chapter meeting as a gentle reminder when those members check in.

### What obstacles do you encounter when making these contacts?

- Members do not plan meetings/events any longer or no longer solicit the government business.
- Issues due to budget cuts, loss of jobs, or job vacancy.
- State budget crisis with a new directive that prohibits departments from paying professional membership dues.
- Comments on the strength or repetitiveness of the programs.
- Travel budgets are limited.
- Members unable to justify their continued membership, especially if they are also members of MPI, PCMA, etc.
- Members fail to follow through with their accounting offices to ensure dues are paid on time.

### What marketing efforts do you employ?

- Continued membership is encouraged as an investment in oneself and the per month cost

(\$2.08/planner, \$29/supplier) is stressed as a bargain investment.

- Emphasis to suppliers on the important requirement to bring in one or more new planners if they let their membership lapse.
- Renewing members are thanked in the chapter's newsletter.

### What special efforts are made for members that come in from their educational conference?

- Make them feel welcome and special: buddy them up with an existing member, attach "New Member" ribbons to their name tags, introduce them during a general session, or enter them into a special drawing just for new members.
- All new members that come in this way are treated to a private reception with chapter board members.
- All new members are given individual recognition and introductions.

The task force will be contacting some members at random as a final outreach effort (those that were at the final drop deadline). Survey questions have been developed that open the door for creative thinking if a member is not satisfied with their chapter's offerings, but mainly focuses on how to get their membership dues check in the mail!

The membership chairs understand that the task force is there to help them. If your chapter has any retention ideas to add, why not contact task force chair Kristi Griffith [kgriffith@wyndham.com](mailto:kgriffith@wyndham.com), vice chair Kit Gonzales (Northwestern Region) [smgb@consrv.ca.gov](mailto:smgb@consrv.ca.gov), or any task force member: Jennifer Anderson (Southeast Region) [jmanderson@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:jmanderson@ifas.ufl.edu); Kathy Kelly (Eastern Region) [Katherine.Kelly@ichotelsgroup.com](mailto:Katherine.Kelly@ichotelsgroup.com); Nathan Franklin (Southwestern Region) [Nathan.t.franklin@usps.gov](mailto:Nathan.t.franklin@usps.gov); William Rike (Heartland Region) [hifbns1@one.net](mailto:hifbns1@one.net); Julie McCollum (Midwest Region) [JMcCollum@kumc.edu](mailto:JMcCollum@kumc.edu); or Desiree Scott (South Region) [desiree.scott@ichotelsgroup.com](mailto:desiree.scott@ichotelsgroup.com).

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## Second Vice Presidents Roundtable Update: Meeting in Indianapolis

By Lagina Fitzpatrick, CMP, VPR Chair

The usual SGMP excitement was in the air as the second vice presidents gathered for their second meeting of the 2003-2004 VPR. Indianapolis proved to be a great setting for a productive meeting held January 16 and 17, 2004.

### Goals

- To have a supplier toolbox on the SGMP national Web site. This was approved and the content is being put together.
- To investigate the possibility of conducting member renewals and membership transfer on-line.
- To have new member application processed on-line within the next two years.
- For 10 percent of SGMP supplier members to have their CHSP certification.

### Updates

- The VPR will have a session for the second year at the National Conference. The program will be

a panel discussion of “Where are the SGMP Bookings.”

- All of the vice presidents shared ideas on what each chapter is doing or has done to increase their membership and how to retain members.
- The VPR started the supplier side article in Advantage Magazine. There was discussion on upcoming topics and articles, and steps were made to make sure this continues with the future VPR.
- Individuals shared the process their chapter goes through to send their members to the National Conference via scholarships.
- The VPR will have a larger section in the *Officers Handbook*. This will be submitted within 30 days to the national office.
- A date and time was discussed for the May VPR meeting.

Twenty of the 25 chapters were represented at this meeting. As you can see, the VPR has a voice and all chapters are encouraged to send a representative.

## Silent Auction Debuts in the “Members Only” Section of SGMP Web Site

By Steve Hilberg

Every member of SGMP will have the opportunity to participate in the SGMP silent auction in 2004. For the first time, it will be held on-line in the Members Only section of the SGMP Web site, [www.sgmp.org](http://www.sgmp.org).

“By moving the silent auction on-line, we can provide the entire membership with an opportunity to participate,” states Sal Bonnelo, CMP, National Supplier Director. “In the past, the silent auction was held at the annual conference, which effectively limited participation to about one-fifth of our membership. The silent auction has raised approximately \$20,000 each year to support chapter educational programs, industry certification, and scholarships for our members. We hope that moving the silent auction on-line will generate even more funds to support SGMP’s educational programs and scholarship opportunities.”

Mr. Bonnelo also points out that those donating items to the silent auction will receive much more

exposure on-line. Web hyperlinks (Web address of donor) will be listed with the items donated, if desired. A photograph can also be included with the item description.

Items available for the silent auction will be divided into a number of categories, allowing members to easily find items of interest. Information for each item will include a description of the item for bid, the value, the minimum bid, the bid increment, and the highest bid-to-date. Payment for items will be via credit card only on a secure page. The plan is to stagger the times available to bid on items. For example, you may be able to bid on some items for a week, while others may be available for several weeks.

Requests for donations to the silent auction will be sent out soon. The opening of the silent auction will be announced on the SGMP Web site home page and through e-mail notification.

## Chapter Presidents Roundtable Update: Your Presidents at Work

By Robin Wilson, CMP, CPR Chair

Do you wonder what your chapter president does at those joint meetings with the National Board and the Second Vice Presidents (VPR)? We work very hard.

We last met in Indianapolis, Indiana; we had two solid days of work sessions. Friday morning Donna Carey kicked off the joint meeting with exciting news regarding the 2004 SGMP Education Conference in Nashville, Tenn. Former national president and Sam Gilmer recipient Steve Hilberg demonstrated the new on-line silent auction procedures. This fundraising process is the vision of national director Sal Bonello, CMP, with a goal of raising three times the amount of money from previous on-site auctions.

The on-line auction will be open to all members for a month to bid on packages, gift baskets, and more, on a secure, protected Web site. There will be staggered ending dates, administered by headquarters. All members are encouraged to make donations – craft items, certificates, vacations, and baskets. Digital photos or Web links will display auction items. Look for more information at [www.sgmp.org](http://www.sgmp.org).

Next, the VPR and CPR received parliamentary procedures training from Harriett Edmunds, of Old Dominion Chapter. Harriett was the 2003 Sam Gilmer recipient, past president of her chapter, and previous chair of the CPR. She is an expert! She covered the history of parliamentary procedures and the steps of conducting meetings. Ask your president for a copy of the understandable handout that Harriett provided in Indianapolis.

The goals of the CPR are to share common issues, serve as a communication link between the national board and the members, and to support the national board in the growth and development of the organization. We feel that training is a major component of the CPR to increase our effectiveness as leaders at the chapter level. With this goal, each chapter donated \$200 to the Rance R. Willis Education Foundation to support the pre-conference Certified Meeting Professional (CMP), Certified Hospitality Sales Professional (CHSP), and new Convention and Visitors Bureau Professional (in conjoint effort with the International Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus, IACVB) development and certification sessions in Nashville.

For the remainder of the Friday session, the CPR took the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) test

and training. Grace Nied, Texas Lone Star Capital president and certified MBTI facilitator, led the eye-opening self-evaluation and discussions with a focus on how we think, communicate, and make decisions differently. It was fascinating to learn how each type functions in different situations. For instance, Perceptives (“P”) prefer to fly by the seat of their pants, which can irritate other board members with their seeming lack of preparation. Thinking (“T”) types want to know “why?” and can drive others up the wall with their relentless focus on logic and lists. The energy in the room soared with each stand-up exercise and had us laughing at our type preferences (i.e., idiosyncrasies). The discussions centered on how to pair committees and work with board members to maximize their strengths and effectiveness, and how to improve our communication skills.

Saturday morning opened with all presidents sharing their chapter’s best practices. This had the greatest value to all presidents, new and experienced. The breadth of ideas on membership, programs, and chapter operations was enlightening. Why re-invent the wheel if another chapter has something that works well? Chapter presidents shared recruitment incentives such as spa and department store certificates, cash drawings, and free conference registration. Some chapters have had success with joint regional conferences and tradeshow, monthly programs based on chapters from the Convention Industry Council (CIC) manual, and pre-paid frequent meeting attendee cards to increase attendance at monthly meetings. The variety of outreach programs and fundraisers were unlimited. It was great to learn from others in this informal setting.

The teams of presidents worked on building strategies for meeting the two-year goals set by the CPR at the September meeting.

### CPR Two-Year Goals and Teams

- Update and maintain CPR document (Jan Slingsby, Nancy Kelly, Janice Hayden).
- Update, improve, and maintain *Chapters Office Handbook* (Nancy Kelly, Linda Lefebvre, CMP).
- Attain 50/50 ratio in all chapters (Kay Bothwell, CMP).
- Establish and maintain CPR-only Web site as part of the national Web site (Grace Neid).
- Create chapter leadership programs (Arlene Roberts).

- Establish a mentor or buddy system (Kim Todd, Jacqui Howell, Thomas McLean for Teresa Campbell).
- Set up new chapter president orientation and formal training (Grace Neid; Cindy Gooch, CMP; and Robin Wilson, CMP).
- Improve networking among chapter presidents by developing a list of items and information to be shared on a regular basis; e.g., newsletter (Arlene Roberts, Darlene McKinney, Carmon Walker-Momon).

Linda Lefebvre, CMP, St. Louis Gateway Chapter, will chair the CPR *Chapter Celebration of Success*, with a presentation at the national SGMP Education Conference in Nashville. Not a competition, chapters can submit up to three of their best and most successful ideas to share with other chapters in a booklet printed and distributed at the conference.

Also, a special note for the Nashville conference, the CPR will wear chapter shirts at the Awards Lunch on Thursday. Chapter banners will be hung on display again for attendees to view. Banquet seating for the Gilmer Awards dinner will be open. No tables will be assigned to chapters, so if you want to sit in a group, turn in your banquet tickets early. There will be scholarships for planners and

suppliers from the National Board to apply for on-line, so check out the [www.sgmp.org](http://www.sgmp.org) Web site.

The CPR will meet May 26 in Nashville to elect next year's chair, vice-chair, and recorder. New presidents-elect are encouraged to attend this CPR with their outgoing presidents. The presidents will present an overview session on board and chapter operations on Saturday, May 30. Do not miss this how-to workshop for chapter board members and anyone interested in learning about how chapters function. This session will also assist newly elected board members in their transition to their duties on the board. It will be a mandatory class for all chapter scholarship recipients.

Indianapolis was a most interesting venue for the joint meetings. The downtown area is historic with lovely buildings around a center monument circle. The new convention center connects with three large hotels and is within walking distance to others. Crossroads of America president, Teresa Bacon-Campbell, and Paul Williams, Indianapolis Convention and Visitors Association, arranged tours of several hotels, restaurants, and a local winery to show us the best of the "number one sports city in the US." The CPR appreciates the warm hospitality of these folks.

## CHAPTER MONTHLY MEETINGS CALENDAR

### Atlanta Chapter

- March 17: How Adults Learn, Wyndham
- April 21: Chapter Elections, Raddision Hotel
- May 19: TBD, Holiday Inn

### Buckeye Chapter

- March 15: TBD, University Plaza
- April 19: TBD, Holiday Inn

### Florida Capital Chapter

- March 16: Supplier Appreciation, Brokaw-McDougall House

### Great Lakes State Chapter

- March 17: Annual Conference, TBD
- April 21: TBD

### Greater Oregon SGMP Chapter

- March 4: VIP Etiquette, OSU Alumni Center
- April 1: Contract Basics, Benson Hotel
- May 6: Technology Update, Eugene Hilton

### Heart of America Chapter

- March 18: Educational Conference, Doubletree
- April 21: Setting a Meeting Budget, Holiday Inn

### Heart of Illinois Chapter

- March 23: ADA and the Meeting Planner, Signature Inn
- April 27: TBD, Inn at 835

### Minnesota Norther Lights Chapter

- March 20: TBD, Holiday Inn
- April 17: TBD, Radisson Hotel

### Missouri State Capital Chapter

- March 11: SGMP National Board, Native Stone Winery
- April 8: Charity Event, Apple Creek Orchard

- May 13: What's a Diploma Mill?, Ramada Inn

### NATCAP Chapter

- March 17: ADA Awareness, Hilton
- April 21: Supplier Appreciation, Hilton

### Old Dominion Chapter

- March 3: State of the Chapter, Radisson Hotel

### Pacific Northwest Chapter

- March 10: TBD, Courtyard by Marriott
- April 14: TBD, Lucky Eagle Casino
- May 12: TBD, State Auditors Office

### Sacramento Chapter

- March 4: Airport Travel Trends, Hawthorn Suites
- April 1: Silent Auctions, Lions Gate Hotel
- May 6: Public Speaking, Clarion Hotel

### Rocky Mountain SGMP Chapter

- March 23: A Trunk Show, Doulbetree
- April 27: TBD, Hilton

### San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

- March 18: Education Conference, Embassy Suites

### St. Louis Gateway Chapter

- March 24: TBD, Holiday Inn
- April 28: TBD, Drury Hotel

### Texas Lone Star Capital Chapter

- March 11: Function and Room Setup, Hyatt Regency

### Wild West Chapter

- March 11: Benefits of CVBs, Marriott
- April 8: Identity Theft Prevention, Holiday Inn
- May 6: Supplier Appreciation, Renaissance Hotel

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