

Lone Star News

Award Winning Newsletter

Texas Lone Star Capital Chapter
of the Society of Government Meeting Professionals

www.sgmpaustin.org

Vol. XV, No. 4
4th Quarter 2008

A TIME FOR GIVING AND A TIME FOR CELEBRATING

By Robert Gonzalez, Commission on State Emergency Communications and Jim Zukowski

THE ANNUAL HOLIDAY GALA for the Texas Lone Star Capital chapter took place on December 4, sponsored by the Renaissance Hotel in their new Glass Oaks ballroom. Holiday music and decorations filled the ballroom as members checked in with their Blue Santa contributions as well as their hopes to land some great items in the silent auction and bag raffles. Jim Zukowski, president, presided as our host and acknowledged that this was the first time that Renaissance held the SGMP gala and did a wonderful job with their impressive display of food and holiday cheer.

The continued tradition of helping out the Blue Santa program also had members bringing in countless items that would guarantee to bring a smile to scores of Austin area children on Christmas day. According to Jim Zukowski, "SGMP has been contributing to the Blue Santa program as far back as December 2000." At the gala, Blue Santa himself as well as Ben Ornelas, board member for Blue Santa, expressed their sincere appreciation of the contributions received that evening. Mr. Ornelas commented, "This year's goal is to reach 15,000 children." Each year over 40 Blue Santas cover events city wide in an effort to help the local community. Thank you SGMP members for your support of toys and cash contributions in helping this charity try to reach their goal.

At the gala we also learned of the winners of two very distinguished awards. Each year members submit their votes for the Shining Star Awards. In November nomination forms were sent out and our members

voted . . . the envelope please. Linda Jackson, CGMP, last year's Shining Star Planner of the Year award, had the honor of introducing this year's Planner recipient, Kim Kizer, Secretary of State! Not only is Kim the Chair of the Education Committee, she is active in the Community Involvement Committee and serves as Director (Planner) on the chapter board. With her enthusiasm and energy it is no surprise that our members presented her with the title. Afterwards, 2007 Shining Star Supplier of the Year award recipient, Kacie Sicilia, CHSP, introduced the Supplier recipient as charming, passionate, smart, and fun. The envelope please . . . Ed Howard, Hilton Austin Airport. As chair of the Membership Committee as well as our chapter's 2nd Vice President, he attributes Grace Nied as steering him in the direction to serve the SGMP board.

Contributions for the silent auction presented us with a fantastic assortment of items for everyone, ranging from overnight stays packaged with goodies to lavish baskets with wine bottles, crafts, and many other items that were sure to make people content. Our bag raffle also had a significant amount of goodies available for those who

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Kim Kizer received the 2008 Shining Star Planner of the Year award.



The 2008 Shining Star Supplier of the Year award went to Ed Howard.

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**JIM
ZUKOWSKI**

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of your
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

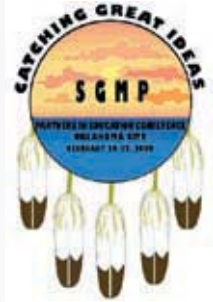
WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO RICH AND REWARDING PROGRAMS IN 2009. Our educational calendar is filled with exciting programs that will provide a wealth of learning experiences. Please attend our monthly chapter meetings so that you can take advantage of these learning opportunities.

The Regional Conference will be held February 20-22, 2009, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Sponsors of the conference include the Wild West Chapter, the North Texas Chapter, and our Texas Lone Star Capital Chapter. The site of the conference will be the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The program looks exciting with national speakers and the presence of some of our SGMP national board members, past and present. Members of the Gilmer Institute will also be on the program. Fun-filled activities are also being planned for the evening. Registration fees are low so make every effort to attend. With gasoline prices considerably lower than in recent months, consider carpooling to the conference. Airlines are offering some reduced fares on selected flights.

The SGMP National Education Conference will be held in Louisville, KY, May 16-19, 2009. The host hotel is the historic Galt House. The draft program looks very promising with several prominent key note speakers on board. The opening night reception is tentatively planned for Churchill Downs, site of the Kentucky Derby. The weather in Louisville in May should be beautiful with lovely flowers in full bloom. Registration and program information for the national conference will be available soon on the national SGMP website.

Our chapter will be awarding scholarships to the national SGMP conference. It is through participation in our chapter activities and committees that you become eligible for a scholarship. More scholarship information will be sent to chapter members in the near future, however, you may view the chapter scholarship application on-line at sgmp.org.

We are also preparing to select a site for our summer Professional Development Seminar. The Request for Proposals for the seminar has been sent to numerous suppliers in our chapter membership. The Professional Development Seminar will take place in August 2009. ★



Rob Casias, National Guard Association of Texas

OUR SECOND VICE PRESIDENT IS ED HOWARD, sales manager at the Hilton Austin Airport Hotel. His primary chapter responsibility is membership and he has an awesome committee that helps him perform the various duties involved. Ed processes all new membership applications and ensures that the individual is eligible to belong to SGMP. It is extremely important that he monitor the planner/supplier ratio so we stay in compliance with the national 50/50 or more planners. When we go under 50 percent planners, we lose our share of our members' annual dues and the chapter budget relies on that money to operate. Ed also maintains the membership database that is used for e-mail distributions and other mail outs. Committee members help with member recruitment and retention, including calling members that haven't been to meetings in a while. Ed and his volunteers staff the registration desk at monthly meetings and welcome members and guests each month. They also ensure that each member has a name badge and maintain those badges from month to month. Ed attends monthly board meetings as well as our chapter meetings and monthly membership committee meetings. As second vice president, Ed represents our supplier members at the national level on the Supplier Leadership Roundtable. If you are interested in joining the membership committee, please contact Ed at ed_howard@hilton.com. ★

FINANCIAL REPORT

*Donna Cottle, CMP, CHSC,
Austin Convention & Visitors Bureau*

Income

Sep. Oct. Nov. 2008

Monthly Meeting Dues	\$ 1,240.00
Raffles	563.00
Cook Books	20.00
T Shirts	10.00
Revenue Share from National	840.00
No Shows Collected	50.00
Sponsorship Ad-Newsletter	1,150.00
Chapter Retreat Registration	430.00
Sponsorship-Chapter Retreat	600.00
Scholarship Donation	75.00
	\$ 4,978.00

Expenses.....\$ 6,261.27

CORRECTIONS: Two articles in the 3rd quarter newsletter had incorrect bylines. Real World Selling was written by Jaime Yount and How to Win Friends and Influence People was written by Darlene Morgan.

MEMBERSHIP *Update*

Ed Howard, Chair, Hilton Hotel Austin Airport

Current Member Statistics

45.8% Government Planners
4.5% Contract Planners
50.3% Total Planners
49.7% Suppliers

Membership Statistics

71 Government Planners
6 Contract Planners
77 Suppliers
12 Educator/Student/Retired
167 Total Members

Welcome Our Newest Members

Planners

Mary Galarza, State Bar of Texas
Sherri Prince, UT System
Susan Ruiz, Texas Workforce Commission
Carolyn Salinas, Texas Workforce Commission
Hazel Van Cleve, Texas Workforce Commission

Suppliers

Gene Belmares, La Posada Hotel & Suites
Lesa Labar, LaCope Inn Beach Front Resort
Erica Perry, Visit Lubbock CVB
Joanna Mojica Simpson, McAllen Chamber of Commerce & CVB
Dedi Kavanaugh, Austin Marriott North
Karen Krc, Sharaton Austin Hotel
Amy Zientek, Visit Lubbock the CVB
Marge Pettway, Alliant Hospitality
Michael Rodriguez, El Tropicano Hotel
Jan Allen, Holiday Inn Town Lake
Angel Alvarado, Radisson Hill Country Resort & Spa
Vicki Lloyd, Wyndham Garden Inn
Sindia Monarrez-Aquirre, Doubletree Hotel San Antonio

THANK YOU FOR RENEWING

Albert L. Black, Child, Inc. | Joy Hall Bryant, Texas Dept. of Information Resources | Jana Ibarra, Crowne Plaza Hotel | Glynis Morse, Jackson School of Geosciences, The University of Texas at Austin | Tina Teague, Amarillo CVC | Robert J. Casias, National Guard Association of Texas | Linda Deryberry, RETIRED | Robert Gonzalez, Commission on State Emergency Communications | Murray Moore, Texas Education Agency | Mary Panella, RETIRED | Stephanie Pheanis, Historic Menger Hotel | Marian Schlunegger, Inn of the Hills Resort & Conf. Ctr. | Geri Whitley, RETIRED | Connie Fisher, Hilton Garden Inn | Loretta Howard, Irving Convention & Visitors Bureau | Erica Kraus, Holiday Inn San Antonio Downtown Market | Jennilee Latimer, Abilene CVB | Michelle Miller, Radisson Hill Country Resort & Spa | Stephen Mills, Texas Dept. of State Health Services | Stacy Morris, CMP, Institute of County Government, Texas Cooperative Extension | D. Laelonne Parent-Smith, CMP, Texas Municipal League, Program Development Dept. | Robin Quick, Hampton Suites and Convention Center | Linda Rogers, RETIRED | Lydia Starry, CMP, Department of Veterans Affairs | Selina Villarreal, Laredo CVB | Jim Zukowski, Contract Planner

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 2009: The Non-Verbal Advantage: It's What You Don't Say . . .



THE FEBRUARY 12 MEETING will be held at the Renaissance Hotel. Our speaker will be Suzanne Black from The Coaching Center. Ms. Black spoke to our group briefly last February and was an instant hit. Her presentation this time will be *The Non-Verbal Advantage: It's What You Don't Say . . .* which will benefit planners and suppliers alike. You won't want

to miss this interesting and insightful program!!

March 2009: Listen to the Language — Contract Negotiations



THE TEXAS LONE STAR CAPITAL CHAPTER of SGMP is honored to have Tricia Hall, CAE, CMP as the March chapter meeting guest presenter. Too often presentations about contracts are informative, yet dry material, offering the same energy as reading a DVD installation manual. As a Certified Meeting Professional with many years of contract

negotiations experience, Tricia will offer an effective and interactive session around the most important part of contract negotiation. You!

This session will focus on the exchange of information during the contracting process and how to better improve your communication. Tricia Hall's appearance at the chapter's March meeting is a result of the joint sponsorship of the Waco and Plano CVBs.

April 2009: The State of the Airline Industry



OUR APRIL 2009 speaker is Jamy Kazanoff, Assistant Director, Business Development & Customer Relations, with the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA.) She will focus on airline travel today and how the profile of the airline traveler is constantly changing. She will also spend time discussing how ABIA is adapting to all of the new enhanced security procedures, and how the airport is handling traveler complaints.



Furthermore, our SGMP national board liaison, Maria Herring, is planning to attend our April meeting to be held at the Green Pastures Restaurant and hosted by the Crowne Plaza Houston Greenspoint. Please take the opportunity to introduce yourself to Ms. Herring and network with her, along with our chapter members. ★

Don't miss it!

SGMP HELPS WITH THANKSGIVING, BLUE SANTA

Kathy Casarez, State Bar of Texas

OUR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE participated again this year in the 19th Annual Feast of Sharing event sponsored by HEB Grocery Stores. The event was held Tuesday, November 25th at the Palmer Event Center. Each year more than 10,000 men, women



and children are fed a hot Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings including your choice of pumpkin or pecan pie. This is no easy task but with the assistance of dozens of organizations and hundreds of volunteers, this event runs like a well oiled machine. It's amazing to observe the massive undertaking of such a project. Every volunteer is assigned a work station. There are several work stations available — from serving as a host/hostess, row captain, table waiter, pie server, drink server, plate preparation server, to being a part of the clean up crew. This year we had the honor of serving as hosts/hostesses. This involved greeting everyone who came through the doors and escorting them to a table. The holidays really do bring out the best in folks and it was apparent by the gratitude we received from the masses that came through the doors. I'm not sure who enjoyed this event more, those being fed or those of us feeding the hungry.

A special thank you to all those who participated in this year's event: Kathy Casarez, Brenda Dotson, Mary Galarza, Gina Garcia, Debi

Kavanaugh and Jyll Vertuno. This is a great event, and I encourage everyone to volunteer next year.

The committee's December project was the Blue Santa Toy Drive. This year, as in previous years, we collected toys at our December Chapter Meeting/Holiday Party. The event was held on December 4th at the beautiful Renaissance Hotel in the Glass Oaks Room, formerly Tangerines. Many toys were collected and given to Blue Santa. The gifts were then distributed to low income families. Thanks to everyone for their generosity.



These are just a portion of the toys that members donated to Blue Santa.



Our January project is Lisa's Hope Chest. This organization collects gently-used clothing to assist those less fortunate looking for employment opportunities. Members helped by cleaning out their closets and bringing items to our January 8th chapter meeting held at the Omni Hotel in downtown Austin.

Anyone interested in joining the Community Involvement Committee should contact Kathy Casarez at kcasarez@texasbar.com. ★



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OCTOBER CHAPTER MEETING: AV Tips & Tricks

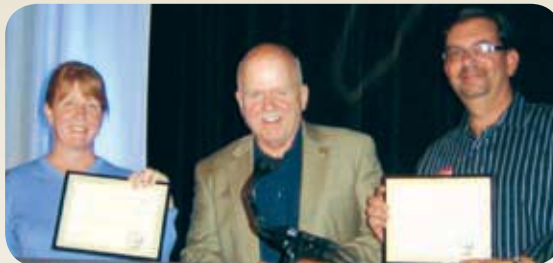
Karla Starkweather, Texas Health and Human Services Commission

THE DOUBLETREE HOTEL AUSTIN and chapter member Jaime Yount hosted our October 9 meeting. The property provided a delectable array of food and beverages and a room that fit with our program quite well. The banquet staff was friendly and attentive creating a welcoming atmosphere for our meeting.

Barbara Glaser Fryer and Mike Van Bramer from Freeman provided the audio visual equipment and an exceptional program entitled AV Tips and Tricks to Enhance Your Meeting. They covered many topics related to AV, including site inspections, presenter's needs, AV nuts and bolts, new stuff, partner relationships and freedom of choice.

When doing a site inspection, you need to take in consideration what kind of audio visual equipment your speaker will need. Be sure to inspect the lighting, find out the quality of the sound system and keep yourself educated on the newest technology available. Also, be aware of the facility rules that may restrict your ability to work with chosen suppliers.

The chapter extends warm appreciation to all who made the meeting successful. A special thank you to Barbara and Mike who presented an informative program. Thanks to Jaime and the Doubletree Hotel Austin for the hospitality. ★



Barbara Glaser Fryer and Mike Van Bramer receive thanks from Jim Zukowski for their presentation.



Jim Zukowski expresses the chapter's appreciation to Jaime Yount and the Doubletree for hosting the October meeting.

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NOVEMBER CHAPTER MEETING: Dream Meetings

Stacy Janecka, CMP, Office of the Attorney General

OUR NOVEMBER MEETING was held at the Hyatt Regency Austin on November 13, 2008, where the food was excellent with an autumnal flair. Rather than share horror stories about meeting nightmares, SGMP brought together a panel of industry professionals to share their insights on what makes their jobs a “dream” . . . things that we can and should do to host a perfect meeting in a perfect world. Stacy Janecka, CMP, moderated the panel made up of Nancy Van Bramer, Renaissance Austin Hotel; Keith Goodale, SWANK Audio-Visual; and Sherry Palmer, Sheraton Austin Hotel.

This interactive session spurred many comments from the audience and created a discussion that opened the lines of communication between the suppliers and planners in the room. Suggestions discussed included:

- Negotiate items such as A/V and food and beverage up front with your salesperson. Once the piece of business is booked and handed over to the CSM is not the time to start trying to negotiate these prices.
- Be honest in your communication.
- Ask to review all of the hotel's documentation on your group including the BEO's, the group resume, and reservation confirmation language.
- Don't think of A/V as an after thought. Communicate with you're A/V contact at the same time you are talking to the sales manager in order to get quotes and work within your budget.
- Working with other groups on a daily basis, your CSM can offer you ideas that other groups have used to turn rooms faster, serve meals faster, set up rooms for efficiently, etc.
- There may be new equipment or technology that you are unaware of that the audio-visual contact can recommend to accomplish your audio-visual goals.
- Even seasoned planners can learn more about the hotel side of things, which will make negotiating even more of a win-win situation.
- Consider the advantage of renting from the in-house A/V company — of course they want your business, but they also have spare equipment and tech help on-site. Also, if you want to bring in your own equipment, please consider purchasing tech support for your equipment either through the in-house A/V company or by bringing a staff person who can help you.

Flexibility

- Understand that a Sunday arrival can sometimes determine whether hotels can bid on a piece of government business. It is a partnership that must involve flexibility on our part to offer the per diem rate, so hotels need you to be flexible on the dates part of the equation, as well as arrival/departure patterns.

The evening ended with SGMP Chapter President, Jim Zukowski, acknowledging our supplier members by giving them each a token of our chapter's appreciation for all they do for us. ★



Jim Zukowski thanks our panel: Stacy Janecka, CMP, Nancy Van Bramer, Keith Goodale, and Sherry Palmer

A TIME FOR GIVING AND A TIME FOR CELEBRATING (CONT. FROM COVER)



Our volunteers were honored at the Holiday Gala.

purchased their raffle tickets. Donna Cottle, CMP, CHSC, reports that the bag raffle brought in \$464 while the silent auction earned us a hefty \$2,955, not too shabby for a two hour event. We will make sure to work hard on breaking that record next year! All the proceeds from the auction and raffle will go towards scholarships that will help make attendance at our national SGMP conference possible for several of our qualified members.

Those in attendance also were given ballots to complete and drop off at some very official looking ballot boxes (where could those have come from?). Guests were able to submit their vote for the Most Creative Silent Auction Donation. This year's winner was Texas Justice Court Training Center, led by Heather Hidalgo, with the assistance of Ken Miller and Jean Bonner, CMP. The silent auction basket contained many items consistent with the "Keep Austin Weird" theme of the basket. Donated items included: "Leslie, the Queen of Austin" magnet doll; Tito's Vodka; Austin Trivet, Salsa Grande Mix; 2009 Austin Events Calendar; Cowboy Boot Candle; Guitar Magnet; Harmonica; Texas Flag; Austin Mini License Plate; Austin Shot Glass; Cinnamon Gum; Texas Armadillo Magnet; Cow Skull Magnet; "Keep Austin Weird" Koozie; and a Cowboy Hat. As winners, the team won a \$100 American Express gift card. Congratulations to the team!!

In another award category, all suppliers that hosted a meeting between November 2007 and October 2008 were eligible to be voted Host of the Year. For 2008, this distinguished honor was bestowed upon the Waco Convention and Visitors Bureau for the September monthly meeting that was held at Chez Zee Restaurant in Austin. As hosts they selected a wonderful venue that fit well with the program. Round of applause please.

Last but not least the Volunteer Appreciation Awards recognized the following individuals at the holiday gala for their contributions to the chapter and their involvement in our chapter committees. They include: Donna Cottle, Barbara Glaser Fryer, Nancy Van Bramer, Murray Moore, Kelly Roche, Rob Casias, Brenda Dotson, Anita Zukowski, Stacy Janecka, Jean Bonner, Heather Hidalgo, Marlon Drakes, Bob Nichols, Grace Nied, Angelia Johnson, Karla Starkweather, Lydia Stary, Willma Harvey, Rose Irrizary, Pat Streetman, Kacie Sicilia, Gina Garcia, Connie Fisher, Susan Greenberg, Kim Kizer, Linda Jackson, Darlene Morgan, Robert Gonzalez, Jaime Yount, and Jim Deuser.



The holiday gala tradition offered an excellent opportunity for planners and suppliers to network in a fun and festive atmosphere and raise money for our chapter at the same time. Thanks to all who contributed, planned and attended the event. ★



The Texas Justice Court Training Center won the best basket award for their Keep Austin Weird basket.

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"Austin Bound" painted in 2005 by Karen Maness

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DECEMBER 2008 HOLIDAY GALA

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There were over 50 bag raffle donations brought to the Holiday Gala.

Thanks to all who contributed!

LOOKING FOR LEADERS

Grace Nied, CGMP, Governor's Center for Management Development

SINCE 1995, SGMP has offered a leadership development program called "Looking for Leaders," with a goal to develop leadership within the organization. The program was delivered only at the National Conference, the first day one year, and the concluding day the following year and there was a \$100 tuition charge for the program. Some participants couldn't attend the conference for the second phase, so they missed out on a significant portion of the experience. A number of our chapter members are graduates of Looking for Leaders and many moved into leadership roles at the chapter and national level. Others applied their learning to their jobs and have advanced in their organizations.

Chapters requested a program that could be delivered at the chapter or regional level to allow more participation by members who might not be able to attend the national conference at all. Trustees of the Gilmer Institute have developed a new format, and will pilot the first phase of the training, a two-hour interactive workshop, at our regional conference in February. There is no additional charge to attend this session.

This interactive session is a pilot of the first phase of the new SGMP Looking for Leaders program. In it we will explore what great leaders do, and relate those characteristics to Sam Gilmer, the founder of SGMP, and subsequent leaders in the organization. We will explore time-tested leadership models and will learn strategies to address common leadership challenges.

Participants who wish to do so will be able to continue with subsequent phases of the Looking for Leaders program including individual projects and assignments and web-based modules (as they are developed).

If you have questions about the program, contact Grace Nied, CGMP, at 512/475-8113, or gnied@mail.utexas.edu. Come take a role in shaping the development of this valuable leadership development program! ★

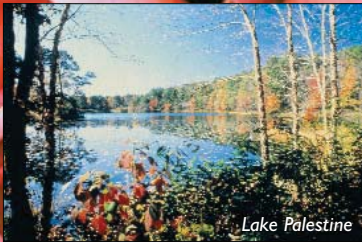


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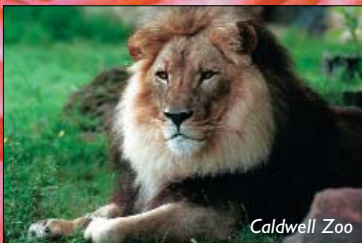
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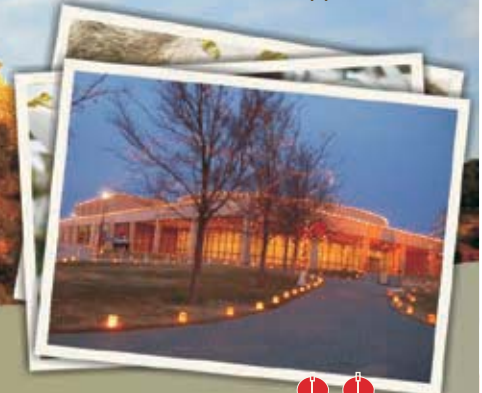
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CERTIFIED GOVERNMENT MEETING PROFESSIONAL (CGMP) CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Kelly Roche, CGMP, Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau

THE SOCIETY OF GOVERNMENT PROFESSIONALS (SGMP), and the Graduate School of USDA have developed a Certified Government Meeting Professional (CGMP) certification program. The CGMP is the first certification that focuses specifically on the field of government meeting planning, encompassing federal, state and local agencies.

Obtaining the CGMP designation further defines one's ability to "get the job done" and establishes one's level of knowledge and expertise in planning and executing government meetings. Participating in the CGMP class enhances your credibility as a meeting planner and also reflects an achievement of professional competency within your agency.

Course content includes overview/administration, financial management, event management and coordination, federal travel regulations, ethics, RFPs, site selection and negotiation, logistics, marketing & promotion, sponsorships, registration/reservations/housing, program materials, speakers and press, special events and risk management. Classes typically run from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. each day with the exam on the last day from 8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

Course Benefits

- Demonstrates your commitment and ability to perform the duties of a meeting planner.
- Enhances the image of excellence in coordinating and planning government meetings.
- Reflects professional and personal achievement designed for the federal/state/local government meeting planner.
- Builds self-esteem that measures the quality of education, experience, and ethics required of a meeting planner.
- Establishes a professional credential that serves as an endorsement of your knowledge and experience.
- Improves career opportunities and advancement that gives you an edge when being considered for promotion.
- Prepares you for greater on-the-job responsibilities indicating your willingness to invest in your professional development.
- Provides for greater earnings potential, monetary incentives and recognition.
- Improves skills and knowledge by confirming proficiency and knowledge.
- Offers greater professional recognition from peers and superiors. Tuition: \$650 (Includes 3 days of classroom training, materials, CGMP exam).

The CGMP course is always offered as a pre-conference course at the National Conference. Additionally, the SGMP National Headquarters hopes to offer the course more frequently. ★





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15 PERSONAL SKILLS YOU NEED ON THE JOB

Jean Bonner, Texas Justice Court Training Center

THESE ARE THE DAYS OF BAIL OUTS, lay-offs and company closings. Employers are looking and retaining workers who have that special something: the skills, tendencies and attributes that help to keep productivity and profits up. What are they? Businesses are looking for employees with strong “personal” skills, according to ACT research. Keep these in mind, because employers certainly are.

- **CAREFULNESS:** Do you have a tendency to think and plan carefully before acting? This helps with reducing the chance for costly errors, as well as keeping a steady workflow going.
- **COOPERATION:** Willingness to engage in interpersonal work situations is very important in the workplace.
- **CREATIVITY:** You’ve heard of “thinking outside the box”? Employers want innovative people who bring a fresh perspective.
- **DISCIPLINE:** This includes the ability to keep on task and complete projects without becoming distracted or bored.
- **DRIVE:** Businesses want employees who have high aspiration levels and work hard to achieve goals.
- **GOOD ATTITUDE:** This has been shown to predict counterproductive work behaviors, job performance and theft.
- **GOODWILL:** This is a tendency to believe others are well-intentioned.
- **INFLUENCE:** Groups need strong leaders to guide the way. Influence includes a tendency to positively impact social situations by speaking your mind and becoming a group leader.
- **OPTIMISM:** A positive attitude goes a long way toward productivity.
- **ORDER:** “Where did I put that?” A tendency to be well organized helps employees to work without major distractions or “roadblocks.”
- **SAFE WORK BEHAVIORS:** Employers want people who avoid work-related accidents and unnecessary risk-taking in a work environment.
- **SAVVY:** This isn’t just about job knowledge, but knowledge of coworkers and the working environment. It includes a tendency to read other people’s motives from observed behavior and use this information to guide one’s thinking and action.
- **SOCIABILITY:** How much you enjoy interacting with coworkers affects how well you work with them.
- **STABILITY:** This means a tendency to maintain composure and rationality in stressful work situations.
- **VIGOR:** This is a tendency to keep a rapid tempo and keep busy.

For more information on how to assess and build upon these and other “personal” skill areas — as well as “foundational” skills such as math, reading and writing please visit www.act.org/workkeys. ★



REV UP YOUR STRENGTHS

Excerpted from an article by Jay Guburd

WE FREQUENTLY COUNT ON OTHERS to highlight our strengths. It could be friends bragging about us or leaders during our annual review. Some of you may not be as intimate with your strengths, but you still know what they are. If not, take two minutes right now and right down five of them. Then narrow it down to two or three of your strongest.

Here are some strengths of people I know and come in contact with. Which ones apply to you?

Diplomatic — Use this to build partnerships among people, departments, divisions, companies. Smooth over the obstacles to collaboration.

Task Oriented — You know how to get things done whether it is a project at work, a new initiative or refining the processes you are already involved in.

Organized — Create some new efficiencies. Step back and eliminate redundancies for yourself and those around you.

Resilient — You deal with difficulty well and bounce back quickly. Share this with others.

Connector — Link need and opportunity together to create something new and exciting. Connect customers, coworkers or friends.

Leader — Show a vision, provide support, be honest, give feedback and updates. People are counting on you, don't hide from them! Recalibrate your vision and share it to get people on board.

Team Player — Let your leaders know that you are ready to contribute during these challenges. Tell them that you have their back and are willing to grow.

Passionate — Inspire yourself and others by immersing yourself in that passion. What have you been focusing on lately? Make sure others feel some of your enthusiasm.

Communicator — Now is the time when people need to know the facts and updates on the situation or status of things. Put yourself in their position and ask yourself "What do they need to know?"

Strategic — What new opportunities are showing themselves? Challenging times are the perfect setting for putting ideas into action.

Objective — You don't take things personally or get overly emotional. Help others see the current situation in perspective.

Sensitive — During tough times, people frequently gloss over the sensitive issues and focus on survival. What details and nuances can you remind the rest of us of? What can you teach us? Share these details.

Abundant — If you are one of those people who constantly creates wealth and opportunity, share it! Get other talented folks involved and share the wealth, even if their contribution is not financial.

I don't want to deny the fear that exists with job cuts, financial hardship and a slow economy. However, the only thing we can control in life are our reactions! Embrace the God-given talents that you have and use those to the fullest. I believe that is what will bring you to the future you want.

For over 12 years, Jay Guburd has helped corporations, associations, their boards and members eliminate roadblocks to their success. His theme is very unique and one everybody can relate to . . . Cars and Driving! Jay's articles on performance improvement have been in numerous publications nationwide. You can reach Jay at www.jayguburd.com and 651-635-9939. ★



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PLANNER SPOTLIGHT: Terri Stafford

Tina Teague, Amarillo Convention and Visitors Council



LIVING APPROXIMATELY 500 MILES FROM AUSTIN, Terri Stafford is not always able to make the monthly SGMP Texas Lone Star Capital chapter meetings. So, for those of you who have not yet had the opportunity to meet Terri, please allow me to introduce her.

Terri earned her first degree from Grayson County College in Denison as a Medical Lab Technician. She later decided to go back to school and earned her bachelors degree in science from West Texas A&M and became a science teacher at Horace Mann Middle School in Amarillo for 4 years. During this time, Terri found her love for education and helping students succeed.

“She is a people-person and REALLY cares about other people and wants to see them be successful,” said Skip Forsythe, a co-worker of Terri’s.

While teaching at Horace Mann, Terri went back to school for counseling and served as the drug and alcohol counselor on the middle school campus. She went on to earn her master’s degree in psychology with a minor in counseling, as well as earning her Texas Association of Drug Counseling (TADC) state certification.

Now, Terri works in the Region 16 Education Support Center office in Amarillo where she’s been employed for 12 years. Needing to obtain a Mid-Management degree, she went back to school again, where she completed her Mid-Management certification at Wayland Baptist University. She is currently the coordinator for the Title I Statewide School Support/Parental Involvement Initiative and has been with this program for four years.

Terri, along with a great team, is responsible for the Statewide NCLB Parental Involvement Conference, which draws about 1,000 people. In addition, she coordinates two yearly summits, which draw 150-300 people for three full days in Austin. Terri is the chairman of the Committee of Practitioners at the Texas Education Agency and she serves on the board of IDRA (Intercultural Development Association) and PIRC (Parental Involvement Resource Center)

In her spare time, Terri likes to spend time traveling and camping with her son, Cody who is currently in the eighth grade. According to a co-worker, “Cody is the absolute light of Terri’s life” and is a very talented musician who plays bass in the Amarillo Philharmonic Symphony. Terri is also very active in her church and is an avid scrap-booker.

Terri joined SGMP a little more than two years ago because she was looking for a conference planner and was going through a transition in which the entire bid process for her conferences would be handled in-house. In addition to meeting planners and suppliers, Terri saw SGMP as a great opportunity to learn.

“My biggest challenge was learning everything involved in the bid process, hotel proposals, the functions of the CVBs and the language and lingo used,” Terri said. According to Terri, SGMP’s educational offerings have been key in her professional development and have been a great arena for networking with planners and suppliers alike.

Terri’s best advice to anyone who is new to the industry would be to “ask questions.” She says, “You have to know the business inside and out to be successful; if you don’t know something . . . ask.” ★

“She is a people-person and REALLY cares about other people and wants to see them be successful . . . ”



SUPPLIER SPOTLIGHT: Rebecca McLaughlin

Karla Starkweather, Texas Health and Human Services Commission



You have probably seen the smiling face of Rebecca McLaughlin at one of our monthly meetings. She has been the Director of Sales at the Holiday Inn South Broadway in Tyler for the past three years. She is responsible for directing the sales effort for the 183-room convention hotel with 10,000 square feet of meeting space and supervises a sales force of six people.

A member of SGMP since December 2007, Rebecca joined for the educational and networking opportunities. Her favorite aspect of SGMP is the education. "I have learned so much," she says. "I feel like when I miss a meeting (because of the four hour drive), I'm really missing something important." SGMP is an asset to her as a supplier because she learns from other industry professionals about how to work with the government. "I get great ideas for my sales team and I get my batteries recharged," says Rebecca. She encourages new members to not miss a meeting and participate with the group.

Rebecca was born and raised in Indiana. "When I was 15 years old and a member of the Civil Air Patrol, I flew a T-33 jet with the Hat in

the Ring Squadron!" she says. In fact, she thought she would be an Air Force pilot when she grew up. A mother of three children, Rebecca has 14 grandchildren. Do you think she has photos of all of them in her wallet? She is also the mother of a Golden Retriever pup, Beau, who keeps her amused on a daily basis.

While living in Alaska, Rebecca married her current husband, William. They decided to search for the perfect place to live and got in an RV and crisscrossed the country several times before finding Tyler. Rebecca instantly fell in love with the beauty of the region and the friendliness of the people. While working as a pharmacy technician in 2001, a hotel Director of Sales walked into the store and stole her away. After being in the hospitality industry for only three years, Rebecca was recognized as a top Catering Director and given the reward of a trip to Jamaica.

Rebecca recommends that planners be specific in what they ask for and to remember that suppliers are in business as well as wanting your business. "Remember, we are all in this together," she says.

Be sure to give Rebecca a warm welcome next time you see her. You can probably get her to tell you about her travels from Alaska to Maine!! ★

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IS THE DOWNTURN IN MEETINGS AFFECTING THE GOVERNMENT MARKET?

Jim Zukowski (Adapted from several online web articles in the meeting industry arena)



THE CORPORATE MEETING INDUSTRY is a \$175 billion market. Companies are seeking to cut back on expenditures by reducing the number of conferences they hold. By organizing fewer meetings in distant cities, companies are saving millions on airline seats, conference hall bookings, hotel rooms, and a range of smaller items. While these savings are smart for the companies, they are provoking a crisis in the industry that provides the services.

Tammy Runzier, vice president of convention sales and services at the Orlando Convention and Visitors Bureau, compares the situation to the weeks after the attacks of September 11, 2001. A total of 64 percent of companies globally will reduce spending on meetings in 2009. This figure has doubled since this past August, according to Meeting Professionals International (MPI). Many companies have slashed their meetings budget based on the experiences of insurance company AIG.

AIG ran into a storm of negative publicity this past October, when it flew top independent brokers and some of its executives to

California for a lavish week-long retreat shortly after it received an \$85 billion government bailout. This situation was made worse by media coverage of a conference in November 2008 for 150 of AIG's top independent brokers at the Pointe Hilton Squaw Peak Resort in Phoenix.

Among other signs of a downturn in corporate meetings, new business leads are down 21 percent from 2007. Bad news breeds more bad news. When companies see other companies

stop spending, they stop spending too.

The only city to see an increase in the hotel business is New Orleans, which had a 10 percent increase for 2008. The city is expecting a 7.5 percent increase in their meetings for 2009. Their convention market is primarily composed of large state and national associations.

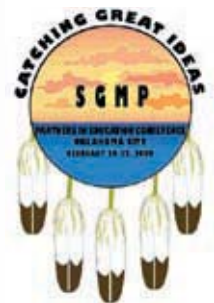
Will this downturn affect the government meeting arena? Many states are experiencing budget shortfalls and are requesting monetary aid from the federal government. Although the Texas economy is experiencing a slower downturn than other states, our state government will be at a crossroad in 2009. With the legislature in session in 2009, legislators will be looking at ways to cut costs. Meetings and appropriations for travel will be targets for budget reductions. Some small meetings are legislatively mandated, so they will continue on a much reduced level. However, the value of larger meetings and conventions on the part of state agencies will certainly come under scrutiny. ★

REBECCA PACE SET TO SPEAK AT REGIONAL CONFERENCE

By Karla Starkweather, Texas Health and Human Services Commission

NATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESENTER REBECCA PACE has been confirmed as a keynote speaker for the 2009 Partners in Education Conference. This regional conference, hosted by the Wild West Chapter and co-hosted by the North Texas Chapter and our chapter, will be held February 20-22 in Oklahoma City at the Crowne Plaza Oklahoma City.

Lynette Schick, CMP, a former national president, is scheduled to speak on emergency preparedness and Adrian Andrews from the U.S. Secret Service will present on protecting your customer's identity. These are just a few of the fantastic learning opportunities that will be available at this conference. And, as usual, there will be plenty of networking and socializing opportunities as well. Make plans to join us in Oklahoma City! ★



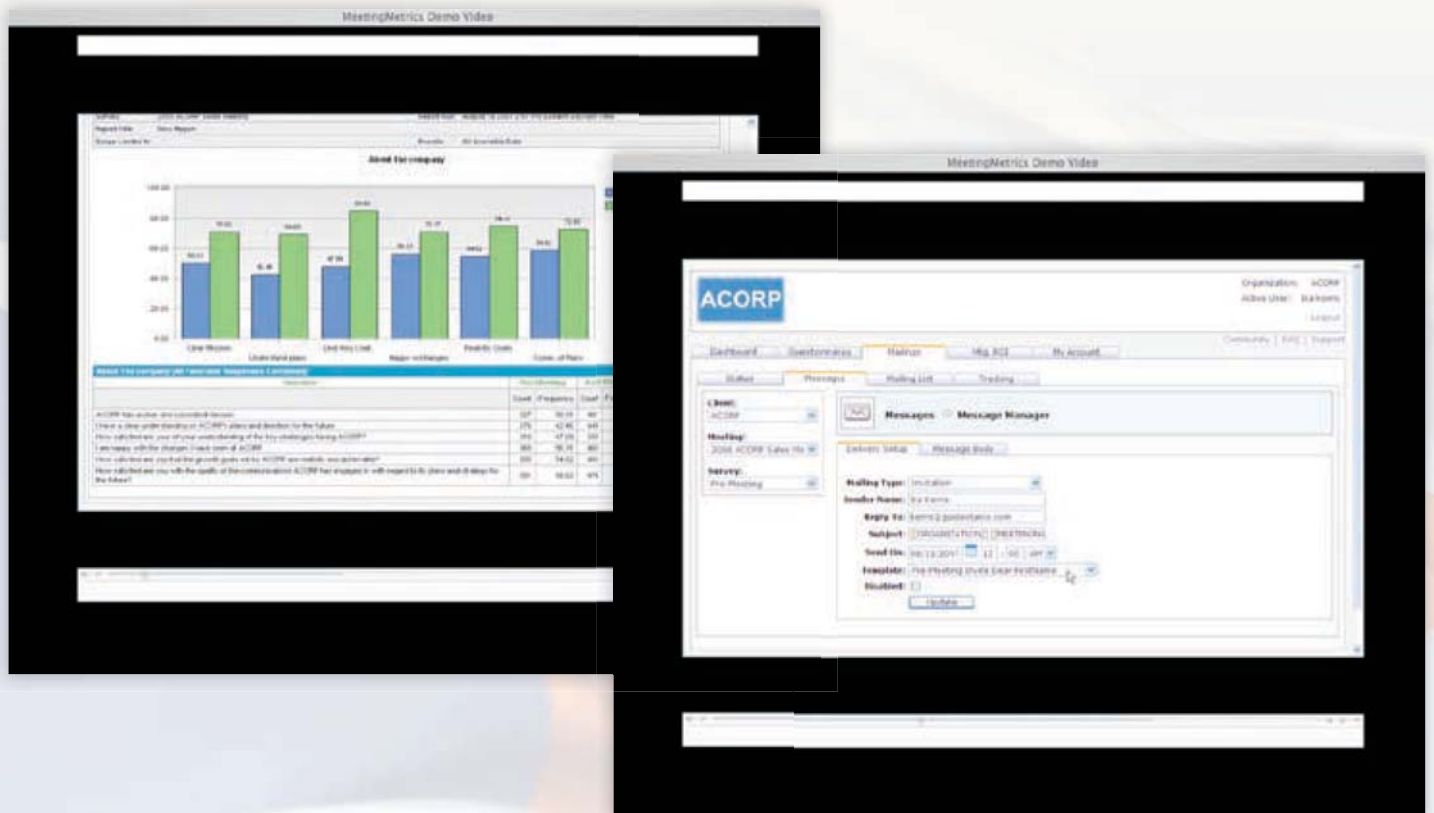
NEW EVALUATION TOOL GOES GREEN

Heather Hidalgo, CMP, Texas Justice Court Training Center – excerpted from *Successful Meetings Magazine*, August 2008

WHILE THUMBING THROUGH an edition of *Successful Meetings* magazine, an article regarding a new evaluation tool caught my eye. Not only do we at TJCTC want and need to capture input regarding our speakers and the effectiveness of their presentations, we are also required to present a summary report of the overall success of each aspect of our seminars to our grant funder, the Court of Criminal Appeals. Requirements have changed throughout the years from an expensive complicated computerized Scantron system to the high-tech method of drawing lines on paper, manually figuring ratios and typing in individual comments. Therefore, I am always on the lookout for alternatives that would simplify the process but also present a professional and versatile outcome.

MeetingsMetrics, who has been around for a while through Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), has a new online evaluation survey that enables meeting planners to automate their on-site session evaluation feedback. It is paperless, convenient and timesaving and requires no additional hardware. Meeting professionals are freed from distributing paper-based surveys, receive immediate attendee feedback and reduce paper waste, therefore making it more cost effective. Attendees can use their own PDA's, laptops or internet connected computers provided in a cyber café to complete a brief questionnaire online. The data for a full day's sessions can be entered and transmitted to the Online Report Center (ORC), making it available in real time. Reports can be printed, saved or sent by e-mail directly from the system and can be copied to Excel, Word or PowerPoint. This allows the data to be presented in various formats. Numerous "one-click" reports can be generated including individual session score and summary reports as well as custom reports and even participant comments. Since all data is collected online, thousands of sheets of paper can be saved contributing substantially to a "greener" meeting. In addition to the on-site session tools, other non-meeting surveys can be built for any purpose such as membership or exhibitor surveys.

A limited number of complimentary trial licenses are available from PCMA for qualified meeting professionals. For more information contact www.meetingmetrics.com. ★



Arlington CVB's Joe Bedsole moving to Austin

From Arlington CVB Press Release (Dec. 4, 2008)

Joe Bedsole, the Director of State Accounts for the Arlington Convention & Visitors Bureau, will be based in Austin starting in early 2009. The move is designed to create a connection between the Arlington region and the State of Texas Association market, one of Arlington's strongest markets. Bedsole was appointed to the MPI Hill Country Chapter Board of Directors, and will serve as the Director of Advertising & Publications for the chapter. He was recently named to the Texas Society of Association Executives (TSAE) Association Leadership Committee.

We Want You . . . to run for the Texas Lone Star Capital chapter board



According to SGMP bylaws, any member in good standing, for at least six (6) months prior to nomination, shall be eligible for nomination and election to an office of their chapter.

The nomination period is now through February 27. You may nominate yourself or someone else may, but please obtain support from your supervisor if you intend to run for office. If you would like to discuss board membership prior to March, you may contact Karla Starkweather, Nancy Van Bramer or Stacy Janecka, CMP. We will point you in the direction of bylaws, policy and procedures manuals and other resources that will help you make your decision.

The term of office will be July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2011. Board membership can be very rewarding and provide numerous opportunities for professional and personal growth. We are looking to fill the following positions:

- President – Government Meeting Planner or Contract Meeting Planner
- First Vice President – Government Meeting Planner or Contract Meeting Planner
- Second Vice President – Supplier/Contract Meeting Planner
- Secretary – Government or Contract Meeting Planner
- Treasurer – Supplier or Contract Meeting Planner
- Director – Government Meeting Planner
- Director – Supplier
- Director – Government Meeting Planner, Contract Meeting Planner or Supplier

Karla Starkweather, karla.starkweather@hhsc.state.tx.us; Stacy Janecka, CMP, stacy.janecka@oag.state.tx.us; Nancy Van Bramer, nancy.van.bramer@renaissancehotels.com.

Bread Pudding With Whiskey Custard Sauce

Linda Wade, Convention Decorating Service, Inc.

8 large day old croissants, buttered, torn into small pieces
 4 cups half and half
 5 large eggs, slightly beaten
 2 cups granulated sugar
 1 cup pecans
 1 cup raisins
 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
 (Sometimes I drain 1 tin of peach slices and add them for variety)

Place bread in a lightly greased 9 x 13 pan.
 Pour milk over bread and let stand 10 minutes
 Blend mixture well, using hands
 Stir eggs and next 5 ingredients into bread mixture
 Bake @ 325 for 40-45 Minutes or until firm
 Serve with custard sauce

Custard Sauce

1 cup granulated sugar
 ½ cup butter
 ½ cup half and half
 2 tablespoons whiskey or ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Bring first 3 ingredients to a boil in a heavy saucepan over medium high heat, stirring until sugar dissolves. Reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes. Cool; stir in whiskey

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<p>February 12, 2009</p> <p>Body Language: Reading & Understanding Suzanne Black Renaissance Hotel</p>	<p>February 20-22, 2009</p> <p>Regional Conference</p> <p>Crowne Plaza Hotel 2945 NW Expressway Oklahoma City, OK</p>	<p>March 12, 2009</p> <p>Listen to the Language: Contracts Tricia Hall</p> <p>Location TBD Sponsored by McAllen CVB Keena and Company</p>
<p>April 9, 2009</p> <p>What's Going on in the Airline Industry? Jamy Kazanoff, Business Development, ABIA</p> <p>Green Pastures Sponsored by Crowne Plaza Houston Greenpoint</p>	<p>May 7, 2009</p> <p>Alcoholic Beverages at Events: How to Handle Gloria Moore</p> <p>Sheraton Hotel</p>	 <p>National Conference May 13-16th, 2009</p>
<p>June 11, 2009</p> <p>Installation of Officers and Recap of National</p> <p>Norris Conference Center</p>	<p>July 9, 2009</p> <p>Silent Auction and Volunteer of the Year Program</p> <p>Doubletree Hotel</p>	<p>August 2009</p> <p>SGMP TLSCC Professional Development Seminar</p> <p>Location TBD</p>
<p>September 10, 2009</p> <p>Legislative Update Stacy Napier, Deputy AG for Government and External Affairs</p> <p>AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center</p>	<p>October 8, 2009</p> <p>What to do in Case of a Hotel Fire "Fire Prevention Month" Tony Callaway</p> <p>Bosses Appreciation Night</p> <p>Radisson Hotel Town Lake</p>	<p>November 12, 2009</p> <p>Supplier + Planner = Win/Win Supplier Appreciation Night</p> <p>Hilton Garden Inn</p>
<p>December 3, 2009</p> <p>Annual Holiday Party & Awards Cermony Silent & Live Auction/Blue Santa</p> <p>Crowne Plaza Austin</p>	<p>Schedule is subject to change.</p> <p>Please visit www.sgmpaustin.org</p>	

SGMP National
Society of Government Meeting Professionals
www.sgmp.org
SGMP Mission Statement

To improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of government meetings through education, networking, and professional development.

Chapter Information
Texas Lone Star Capital Chapter
www.sgmpaustin.org
Chapter Vision Statement

Meeting professionals boldly leading the way in education, effective communication, and efficiency in government meetings and conferences.