

FEBRUARY
2003

A report from the Montgomery Chapter of the Public Relations Council of Alabama

Do You Qualify as a Senior?

Your time as a public relations professional may qualify you as a senior PR practitioner. While there are no senior discounts involved, this status does give seasoned practitioners the recognition they so richly deserve.

The senior practitioner designation was established to honor members of the Southern Public Relations Federation (if you are a member of the Public Relations Council of Montgomery, you are a member of SPRF) who are recognized by their peers as veteran public relations professionals with high ethical standing. Nomination and selection is made by each local chapter based on criteria set by the federation.

Our current senior practitioners include: Susan Andres; Charles Barnette, APR; Rosemary Blackmon, APR; Bill Cunningham; Julie Debardelaben; Doug Freeland; Darryl Gates, APR; Minnie Lamberth; Linda Lee, APR; Holley Midgley, APR; Marty Sullivan and Paul Till.

If you qualify or know of a fellow chapter member who qualifies based on the criteria below, please forward his or her name to Linda Lee, vice president for education and accreditation, at llee@onlinemep.com.



QUALIFICATIONS

- 15 years of full-time public relations experience
- Accreditation
- Officer or board member at chapter, state or SPRF level
- Recognition of professionalism as evidenced by such awards as Practitioner of the Year, Lantern Award or similar honor.

APR UPDATE

By Linda Lee
VP for Education and Accreditation

The beta test for the re-engineered Universal Accreditation in Public Relations exam will be administered nationwide between March 6th and 26th. A Montgomery PRCA member has been accepted among the many applicants around the country to take this exam.

The details aren't quite final yet, but here's what we know about the test itself:

- The written exam will no longer be proctored by a local APR. The exam will be administered at a designated testing center via computer, probably the Sylvan Learning Center on Zelda Road for the beta test. Once the permanent exam is in place, candidates can take the test AT ANY TIME of the year.
- The oral exam will continue to be proctored by local APRs and will be considered something of a mentoring process and a true assessment of the candidate's preparedness for the written exam.
- The exam will be based on four textbooks - "This is PR: The Realities of Public Relations" by Doug Newsom; "Effective Public Relations" by Cutlip, Center and Broom; "Practice of Public Relations" by Fraser Seitel; "Public Relations Strategies and Tactics" by Dennis Wilcox.
- The written exam will be completely multiple choice.



The love month is finally here. You can openly wear your love on your sleeve and be in vogue. Finding clever ways to tell someone you love them is expected in this month. For certain retailers, this is among the busiest months of the year, rivaling Mother's Day and Christmas.

My challenge to you is to share the love with more than just your significant someone. Show your love for your community through service. If you don't know where to begin, contact Kathy Midgley. As vice president for projects, she coordinates the Public Relations Council of Montgomery's service and professional projects. Several community groups have approached us for help and Kathy needs volunteers to fill those needs.

Service is a positive public relations tool. If those in the community see PRCA members actively involved in service, they begin to identify our profession as one with integrity and merit.

Show your love to this chapter by selling raffle tickets for our Valentine's baskets. Our treasury needs a transfusion and your efforts will be greatly appreciated. As an added incentive, the person who sells the most tickets, gets a basket of goodies to take home. Be sure and show your love to the businesses that donated our goodies - Two Sisters Creations of Prattville and Peppertree Steaks 'n' Wine.

Another Valentine gift you can give this chapter is your presence at our February meeting. Doug Freeland has once again booked a great speaker on a relevant topic. Besides, we all love you and miss you. Make us happy - come see us.

If none of these ideas for spreading the love appeal to you, give blood this month. It's easy. It's needed, and it's from the heart. Remember, in February, you can't go wrong if you show a little love.

Nancy King Dennis

PRCA Board Directory

Nancy Dennis, President	240.8740
Doug Freeland, VP Programs	280.4422
Kathy Midgley, VP Projects	215.0406
Stacy Benefield, VP Membership	272.8781
Linda Lee, VP Education & Accreditation	271.3804
Peggy Collins, Secretary	242.4545
Carol Gunter, Treasurer	241.2300
Susan Cline, Communications	356.9681
Michael Boatfield, Publicity	264.1500
Derek Brown, Students	
Belinda Bazinet, Historian	416.4319
Lynn Perret-Cox, Fund-Raising	270.0869
Hank Schmitt, Past President-Ethics	264.7318

**CHAPTER MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 2003**

CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Guest Speaker: Jamie Durham

11:45 a.m. | RSA Plaza Terrace

\$12 | member

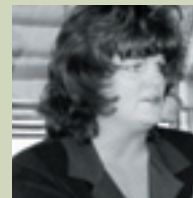
\$15 | non-member

RSVP: February 6

pcollins@tourism.state.al.us

PRCA COOKS UP SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM!

by Doug Freeland, VP of Programs



When it comes to success, you can't have too many cooks in the kitchen. And it all boiled down to a great January program thanks to a great turnout and the presentation prowess

of communications trainer Kendall Haywood.

Kendall, a management trainer with Alabama Industrial Development Training, delivered her "Recipe for Success" Jan. 13 at the RSA Plaza to an enthusiastic crowd of hungry practitioners. Many, in fact, even had their appetites sated by candy rewards for actively participating in the session.

Participation was key to Kendall's dynamite presentation style as she led a vigorous discussion of the elements for success in life. Role-playing, compliments, and word games all played a part as recipe cards were filled with these ingredients for success:

- S - Self confidence
- U - Understanding
- C - Consideration
- C - Communication
- E - Enthusiasm
- S - Smiles
- S - Sincerity
- F - Fairness
- U - Uniqueness
- L - Loyalty

Many thanks to Kendall for a fantastic start to 2003!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

Part of our mission in PRCA is to provide community service through special projects or specific support to local organizations. We have already received numerous requests for assistance with various PR and community service projects in the Montgomery area. Our chapter is blessed with an abundance of, not only enormously creative and talented individuals, but those who are compassionate and giving, as well.

Service projects are an enormous part of the scoring for the Chapter of the Year Award—appropriately named after Sharon Heflin, a spirited PR professional who believed in community giving. It is time to step up to the plate and do our part. It will take many volunteers throughout the year; no one person can fulfill all the requests for PR that we are receiving. If you would be willing to design a brochure, work on a media campaign, design a newsletter, perform community service, etc, please contact Kathy Midgley at kmidgley@bellsouth.net or 215-0406. It's time we bring the Heflin Chapter Award back to Montgomery!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

PRCA-Montgomery would like to welcome the following new members, pending approval at the state and regional levels:

- **Mandy Harrison**, System Public Relations Coordinator, Baptist Health
- **Lisa Watkins**, Public Relations Director, Home Builders Association of Alabama

In addition, Derek Brown has transferred his membership to a new job. Derek is now president for The Ink Tank.

PRCA DATABASES UPDATED

With the completion of the 2002-2003 membership renewal process, the PRCA-Montgomery database has been updated to reflect the current membership (those not renewing have been deleted). In addition, the state PRCA online database is in the process of being updated as final renewals are received.

Any corrections indicated on your renewal invoice have been made to the Montgomery database. However, the local chapter is unable to make these corrections to the statewide online database. You must log in to the members only section of www.prcaonline.com and make the corrections to your personal information yourself. In addition, you may continue to update your information online throughout the year and the changes automatically will be forwarded to the local chapter.

Accessing the database requires a username and password, which all members should have received. If you have misplaced this information, please e-mail membership@prcaonline.com.

PRCA TAKES ACTION

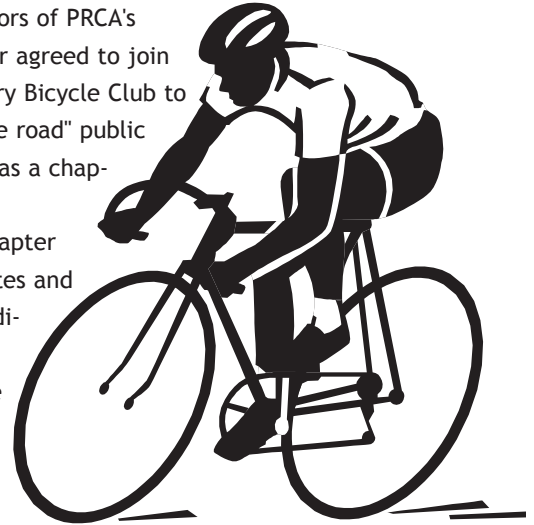
MONTGOMERY CHAPTER PROMOTES SAFE ROADS FOR CYCLISTS

The board of directors of PRCA's Montgomery chapter agreed to join with the Montgomery Bicycle Club to develop a "share the road" public relations campaign as a chapter service project.

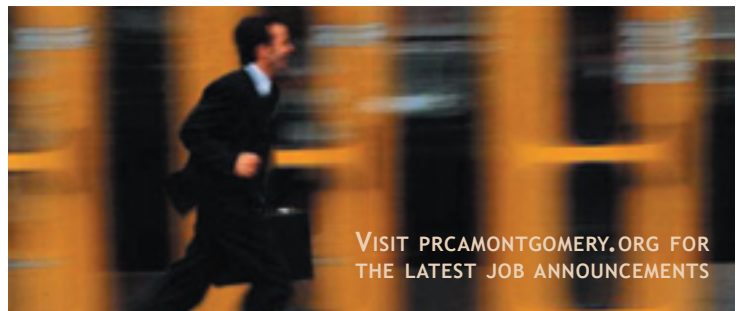
Montgomery chapter members Darryl Gates and Linda Lee will coordinate the project.

Speaking to the board during its January meeting, Gates urged the

adoption of the project both to honor the memory of Montgomery physician Jim Glassner, who was killed by a motorist while cycling in late 2001, and to help make Montgomery more of a "bicycle friendly" city. Gates and Lee will explain the project in more detail to chapter members during the February meeting.



JOBSOURCE



VISIT PRCAMONTGOMERY.ORG FOR THE LATEST JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

PUBLIC RELATIONS SPECIALIST

Family Sunshine Center (Posted 12/19/2002)

The Family Sunshine Center is seeking a full-time (30-hours per week with full-time benefits) public relations specialist. Responsibilities includes writing articles, layout, design, printing and mailing procedures for the FSC newsletter; coordinating media events and writing scripts and public service announcements when necessary; attending and assisting in coordinating the monthly Associate Board meetings; and maintaining the FSC Web page to name a few (more details available online at prcamontgomery.com). Contact Tara Johnson, Outreach Supervisor 206-2121 or fax 206-2111.

Let us help you fill your vacant PR position. Job announcements are printed in PRCA-Montgomery's monthly newsletter and posted on its Web site. E-mail details to susan@squareroot-inc.com

MAKE RECRUITING A MARKETING & PUBLICITY EVENT

by Joan Stewart, *The Publicity Hound**

The next time you hear someone on your management team grouching about not being able to find and keep enough qualified employees, don't just commiserate for the sake of being polite.

Instead, start compiling a list of your company's "good stuff"—reasons why people would want to work there or why employees stay. Then develop a publicity campaign around it.

As unemployment rates drop to under two percent in many communities and the need for more workers rises, media-savvy companies like the giant United Parcel Service and even mom-and-pop businesses have discovered that publicizing their job openings and pleasant work environments can be just as important as marketing their products and services.

At UPS, for example, telephone inquiries about jobs paying from \$8.50 to \$9.50 an hour—some of the most difficult positions to fill—were up 11 percent last year over 1997 in the Chicago region. The jump was due largely to a proactive media campaign touting everything from the benefits of being a package handler to the company's generous tuition reimbursement. A Chicago PR and marketing firm worked with UPS to target the Chicago media with its message. The company snagged 40 media hits, many painting a picture of UPS as a great place to work and a good corporate citizen. A few of those stories were picked up nationally or printed in major papers like *USA Today*.

Dave Chisholm, staffing and development manager for UPS's North Central Region, says the company doesn't know exactly how many people apply for jobs because of media publicity, "but we suspect strongly that combining this recruitment PR with recruitment advertising is a very potent strategy."

The real benefit to UPS isn't only a pile of news clippings.

"It's what those articles actually stimulate," Chisholm said. "They've given us a lot of credibility with people who have job training programs, with city leaders, with people who can fund programs to get more trainees into UPS."

Once employees are hired, the strategy includes doing everything possible to keep them, including promoting from within. Chisholm and UPS chairman Jim Kelly, like many other senior executives at the company, started as package handlers or sorters, received extensive training and were promoted through the ranks.

Developing and training managers is also high on the list at General Electric divisions around the world. The company's innovative New Manager Assimilation program caught the attention of *Fast Company* magazine, which explained the retention strategy in the October 1998 issue.

Soon after a new manager starts a job, team members meet without the manager to brainstorm a list of questions designed to uncover as much as possible about the manager in only a few

hours. No topic or question is off limits. The manager then meets with the team and talks informally about the concerns that were addressed.

Small companies, too, like Celtic Advertising in Brookfield, Wis., are finding that promoting the casual and comfortable work environment helps the bottom line. Partners Martha Smith and Marlene Byrne—both of Celtic origin—attributed the agency's rapid growth to the casual and comfortable work environment. Employee perks include gifts and a half-day vacation on St. Patrick's Day.

Other ways to promote your company's "good stuff" include:

- Pitch story ideas to industry publications, which are read by potential job applicants.
- Publicize alluring perks to attract and keep workers.
- Promote innovative employee training programs.
- Discuss family-friendly policies.
- Explain how the company takes care of employees. SAS Institute, a software company in Cary, NC, staffs a health center, for example.
- Publicize non-traditional corporate practices. Badger Electronics in Racine, Wis., literally opens its books and shares profitability figures—and profits—with employees.
- Let the media know about offbeat recruiting strategies, like advertising on the back of grocery store cash register receipts and sending corporate recruiters to Florida during spring break.
- Apply for "best places to work" awards that are offered by magazines such as *Working Woman*. If you win, you can use the award as a springboard for a marketing campaign to potential employees.
- Post publicity about your company at your web site so it can be seen by job-hunters.

**Reprinted from "The Publicity Hound's Tips of the Week," a free ezine featuring tips, tricks and tools for generating free publicity. Subscribe at <http://www.PublicityHound.com> and receive free by autoresponder the handy list "89 Reasons to Send a News Release."*

Be sure to visit prcamontgomery.org for the latest news information. Send all job announcements, news items, and comments to susan@squareroot-inc.com and indicate "PRCA" in the subject line. Hard copies printed by ColorBox Press (formally known as Digital Color Printing).
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