

August 2006

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

PRCA MONTGOMERY

CHAPTER NEWS

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



PEGGY COLLINS
PUBLIC INFORMATION SPECIALIST
AL. BUREAU OF TOURISM & TRAVEL

Hello All,

The Tuscaloosa PRCA chapter gave the state board an overview of the state conference recently. It is going to be an exciting event – and only partly because it is our 50th anniversary. The Bryant Conference Center is an excellent venue for the conference and the speaker line-up is a winner. Please go online to www.prcaonline.com for more info.

We all need to give serious consideration to accreditation. Not only does it help our organization as a whole and make us more desirable as individual PR professionals, it is becoming a requirement in some job markets. There will be a special time at the conference devoted to taking the fear out of the process.

Our mini-seminar on crisis management with Alan Ullman is a don't miss event. This is short notice but please make every attempt to attend Friday, August 11. See the notice elsewhere in the newsletter for details. I hope to see you there.

Crisis Management - It's a Fact of Life in PR

Don't miss the upcoming Crisis Management Workshop to be held August 11, 2006 at Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT). The workshop will be led by Alan Ullman, with Ketchum-Atlanta. For more information on Ketchum, visit www.ketchum.com.

Participants are asked to arrive at 8:30 a.m. for a continental breakfast and networking, with the workshop to begin at 9 a.m. and lasting until 11:30 a.m. The workshop will be held at AIDT's Training Center. Driving directions to AIDT and maps of the facility are posted on the events and meetings page of the Web site, www.prcamontgomery.org.

This workshop is an added benefit to our members, which means it is free! Guests are asked to pay the usual \$10 fee. Please rsvp to Kay Yarbrough by Wednesday, August 9 to attend. This exciting and informative opportunity will provide you with the resources to handle those tough media situations we will all deal with at one time or another.

CHAPTER MEETING

Crisis Management Workshop

Friday, August 11, 2006

Guest speaker:

Alan Ullman

Ketchum-Atlanta

AIDT Training Center

8:30-11:30 a.m.

No cost to attend for members.

Guests: \$10

RSVP to Kay Yarbrough:

k.yarbrough@jwamalls.com

RSVP Deadline:

Wednesday, August 9, 2006

It's a Boy!

PRCA Montgomery members Donna and Brian Key welcomed Zachary "Zack" Taylor Key into their family on August 2 at 1:30 p.m. Zack weighed 8 lbs. 15 ozs. and was 20 1/2 inches long.

Congratulations to Donna and Brian!

APR Pilot Program for PRCA Montgomery members!

If you have considered pursuing the Accreditation in Public Relations credential, a pilot program approved by the Southern Public Relations Federation Board of Directors may be of interest to you. As a means of increasing the number of APRs in our chapter, SPRF will fund the enrollment fee for one member of our chapter!

This pilot program is open to SPRF members who are new applicants to the Accreditation process. Members who have pending or approved applications, are currently progressing through the Accreditation process or have taken the computer-based Examination in the past are not considered eligible to participate in this study.

The first step in participating is expressing an interest in the study. That interest, as well as subsequent application to the Universal Accreditation Board and participation in SPRF's study, comes with conditions. Please view more information about the program, and how to enroll by visiting www.prcamontgomery.org and clicking on the accreditation page. If you are interested, enrollment is time sensitive and based on a first-come, first-served basis, so please do not delay if you are serious about participating. Interest must be expressed by e-mailing SPRF Accreditation Vice President Michael Tullier, APR, by August 11 at mtullier@auburn.edu.

PRCA Montgomery Member Earns Designation

Lisa Miller, Central Alabama Electric Cooperative's (CAEC) Community Relations Coordinator, and a member of the Montgomery chapter of PRCA, received her Master Cooperative Communicator (MCC) certification from the Cooperative Communicators Association (CCA) this month. Miller, a 17-year employee with CAEC, and a member of CCA since 1995, was notified May 30 that she received the MCC certification. Miller serves as CCA's Southern Region Assistant Representative.

CCA launched the MCC program in 2005 to provide professional development opportunities for cooperative communicators. Points for the MCC certification are earned by a combination of continuing education through seminars, workshops and credit courses; service to CCA; awards and a portfolio.

Founded in 1954, CCA is an organization of 350 professionals who communicate for cooperatives. CCA works toward helping members excel in communications — from writing, photography, and editing to video, layout, and design. CCA emphasizes ideas and strategies aimed at making communications more successful for cooperatives.

Congratulations, Lisa!

A Golden Opportunity at This Year's State Conference

PRCA turns 50 this year and you are invited to be a part of this golden anniversary. Please join us in Tuscaloosa on September 28 and 29 for the 2006 State Conference and Anniversary Celebration. One of PRCA's founding members, Star Smith, will tell the story of how it all began during an anniversary event Thursday night. Featured speakers, programs, an APR jump-start class, new member session and plenty of networking will help us carry the tools of our trade into the next 50 years.

You'll have time to explore the city and enjoy visiting with friends amid Tuscaloosa's rich culture and delicious restaurants. The conference will be capped off in Hollywood style with the Medallion Awards held at the historic Bama Theatre.

The conference itself will be held at the Bryant Conference Center, on the campus of the University of Alabama. Information about registering and lodging, as well as detailed schedules are available at www.prcaonline.com. Be sure to register by August 25, as fees for the conference will increase after that date.

Find Out Why “People are Weird”

The Montgomery Advertising Federation has invited PRCA Montgomery members to attend their August meeting which will feature a presentation on “Why People are Weird.” The presenter will be Mark Alison, President of Alison and Associates, Inc. in Augusta, GA. Learn why people buy what they buy, wear what they wear and even speak the way they speak. Why is their desk always neat or cluttered? Why are they polite or snippy? And, how can knowing this about a person help us to communicate with them better?

The meeting will be held Thursday, August 17, at the RSA Plaza Terrace. It will start at 11:45 a.m., and the cost to non-members is \$22. If you would like to attend, please rsvp to rsvp@montgomeryadfed.com by August 15.

Message From the Soon-To-Be President

When I first became a member of PRCA, I quickly learned that you get out of an organization what you put into it. Read my story below, and then ask yourself, “Am I getting the most out of PRCA?” If not, I invite you to commit to becoming more active in PRCA in 2006-2007. Whether it is serving on the board or a committee or participating in a project, or simply committing to attend the monthly meetings, do something. I’ll be sending out a survey later this week to gather information about your past PRCA activities (board, committees, etc.) and to gauge your interest in serving on the upcoming board of directors or becoming active in other ways. I ask that every member please take part in this survey.

My story started when I joined PRCA more than six years ago, I was a recent college graduate embarking on my first “real” job. Everything about the professional world and public relations was new to me, so I was a little surprised when I was asked to serve on the PRCA-Montgomery Board of Directors just a few months after becoming a member. I decided to take the plunge and accepted the position, and I’m still enjoying the benefits of that decision today.

One of PRCA’s main objectives is to provide a forum for PR practitioners to get to know one another and to exchange ideas and experiences – in other words, to network. Ideally, this could be accomplished simply by attending PRCA’s monthly luncheon meetings; however, the meetings alone don’t allow enough time for networking, and I, personally, am a tad shy and not terribly proactive about meeting new people. Serving on the board gave me a great opportunity to get to know my fellow board members and build relationships that have continued through the years. Through my service on the board, I was also encouraged early on to serve on committees and take part in various PRCA activities, which also helped me to get to know fellow PRCA members and build on my professional skills and knowledge. For the past two years, I’ve served on the State PRCA Board – a door open through my local leadership experience – and have developed professional relationships, as well as made friends, with fellow PR practitioners throughout the state. And now, I will have the pleasure of leading PRCA-Montgomery in what promises to be one of our best years yet. The experiences, relationships and friendships I’ve gained through PRCA over the years have been invaluable, and I owe thanks largely to those people who, six years ago, decided I might make a good board member.

What’s your story? Are you a new member looking to get your foot in the door? Have you been around a few years and are wondering when you’ll realize the benefits of joining this organization? Have you been around for a lot of years and are ready for something new? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, committing to becoming more active in PRCA could be the answer. If you are a new member, you will find that your member benefits will quickly multiply by getting to know people and getting active. If you are a long-standing PRCA member who is burned out and ready for something new, I invite you to help make it happen.

If you have any questions, please e-mail me at stacy@squareroot-inc.com. I look forward to receiving your survey.

Stacy Benefield, President-Elect

Montgomery Chapter News is a monthly publication for PRCA-Montgomery members.

For the most up-to-date information, visit prcamontgomery.org. Send all job announcements, news items, updates and comments to Kristi Gates at kgates@gssca.org and indicate “PRCA” in the subject line.