

# PRCA MONTGOMERY

January 2008

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

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT...

It's so difficult for me to believe that 2007 will be gone in just a matter of a few short weeks. Where did all the time go?



Lori Quiller

For those of you who don't know, it's been a bit of a rough year for me personally. I had back surgery at the end of May to correct a herniated disc at the base of my spine. The procedure had a 95 percent success rate, which left a 5 percent chance of a recurrence. Somehow, I always manage to find myself in the 5 percent. So, I underwent the same procedure again the week of Thanksgiving. My only New Year's resolution? No more surgery! HA!

To my extremely caring friends (and you all know you are!), who kept checking in on me and sending me sweet little notes; to my wonderful parents who have earned their nursing degrees this summer via Lori's On-the-Job Training Program; and my very patient employer and colleagues at the Association of County Commissions of Alabama – I simply cannot thank you all enough for everything that you have done for me this year – I will always be in your debt.

But, I am not the only one who has a lot to look forward to in 2008. Your board of directors, as well as the conference planning committee for the 2008 Annual Conference, have some big plans ahead for the year, and all you have to do is enjoy them.

While I was unable to attend our first **PRCA After Hours**, I've been told by many of our members that it was

lots of fun, and they are looking forward to the next event – as am I! Keep watching your newsletter for more information as this particular event will change locations each time.

We are also working on a back-to-basics twist to our **Annual PRCA Professional Development Workshop** by returning to our old format of a one-day workshop with breakout sessions. One of the first things that our board decided to do in our early planning sessions was to make as much use of our time together as we possibly could, and that meant that we had to pull together and make sure our training session in the spring was just that – **training**.

And, let's not forget our crown jewel of the year, the **2008 PRCA Annual Conference** on Oct. 2-3 at the Renaissance Montgomery. This conference will be unlike any conference PRCA has seen. We are planning to kick it off on Oct. 1 with an APR Boot Camp, an eight-hour starter course for anyone interested in getting your stripes or just needing a boost to your career. We've all read your SurveyMonkey answers, and the conference committee is already hard at work to make sure THIS conference will be THE conference for YOU!

Part of me is glad that 2007 is behind me, because I can look forward and see what's ahead now. Our chapter is the strongest chapter in the state – has anyone ever told you that? And, we are growing stronger each month. Our members are some of the best in the business, and I can't wait to see what's in store for us in 2008!

## CHAPTER MEETING

Go “Off-the-Record” with One of Alabama's Most Famous Interviewers!

Monday, Jan. 7  
RSA Plaza Terrace  
11:45 a.m.

Guest Speaker:  
**TIM LENNOX**  
Host of Alabama Public Television's “For the Record”

Members: \$12  
Non-members: \$20

Please RSVP to:  
Diane Christy at  
[dchristy@ascpa.org](mailto:dchristy@ascpa.org)

RSVP Deadline:  
Noon Friday, Jan. 4

## SPECIAL NOTE

Members who make reservations for chapter luncheons but fail to cancel by noon the Friday prior to the meeting **ARE** responsible for payment. **We will invoice you!**

## Have YOU Paid Your Dues?

The third and final membership dues notice was e-mailed on Dec. 3. **The final deadline for paying dues is Dec. 31.** After Dec. 31, those who did not renew and wish to continue their membership will have to apply to the organization as a new member. There will be no exceptions to this policy so please do not delay in sending in your renewal. To date, almost 75 percent of our members are current. Thank you to those members who have submitted their payment in a timely matter.

As a reminder, any corrections indicated on your renewal invoice will be made to the Montgomery database. However, the local chapter is unable to make these corrections to the statewide on-line database. You must log in to the members only section of [www.prcaonline.com](http://www.prcaonline.com) and make the corrections to your personal information yourself. In addition, you may continue to update your information online during the year and the changes will automatically be forwarded to the local chapter.

Also, please complete and return to **Belinda Bazinet** an update form if you've changed jobs recently. The form is available online at [www.prcamontgomery.org](http://www.prcamontgomery.org). If you have any questions, feel free to contact Belinda Bazinet, vice president of membership, at 953-9482 or [bazinetb@maxwell.af.mil](mailto:bazinetb@maxwell.af.mil).

## Jobline...

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

The Blount County Economic Development Office, a new organization recently formed to develop and implement a comprehensive industrial and retail development program, is seeking an aggressive, dynamic, and self motivated individual for the position of Economic Development Manager.

The Economic Development Manager will perform a variety of professional, administrative and managerial duties related to economic development including the recruitment and retention of industrial and retail businesses.

Preferred candidates will possess a four-year college or university degree in Real Estate, Marketing, Public Relations, Public Administration or a related discipline, plus at least two years of related experience. Need excellent written and verbal communication skills, as well as proficiency with Microsoft Publisher and Powerpoint or similar software. Previous experience in a local economic development organization is preferred. A good understanding of local city and county government is also desirable. Starting salary range is \$50k (DOQ) plus a competitive benefits package. Interested applicants should submit a resume electronically to [egardner@stclairedc.com](mailto:egardner@stclairedc.com) or for more information contact Ed Gardner, the St. Clair County Economic Development Council's Executive Director at (205) 814-1440. **Resumes accepted until Dec. 31.**

## Member Profile...



**Kay Yarbrough** is the director of corporate marketing and public relations for Jim Wilson & Associates, LLC. Kay is responsible for the PR and marketing for one of the largest commercial real estate developers in the southeast. She writes press releases, media kits, trade articles, convention packets and websites...not to mention being the spokesperson for the company. She also plans all the special events, and even the skit at the annual Christmas party.

### *Do you have any tips to being a top PR practitioner?*

**Kay:** That it's okay not to know all the answers; that every situation is unique and must be handled as such; that public relations is a career that requires constant learning; and always return phone calls and e-mails in a timely manner.

### *What are the top three skills needed in PR?*

**Kay:** To be a good listener, a great writer, and have an excellent sense of humor!

### *From where did your interest in PR originate?*

**Kay:** I was born into PR. As the middle child of three girls, all within a five-year age span, I learned early to negotiate, get the facts (usually to use against my siblings), and make your voice be heard to your advantage.

### *Why did you join PRCA?*

**Kay:** I was a five-year member of the Emerald Coast Public Relations Organization in my previous position. PRCA has allowed me to make friends in the profession, network and learn from others. It has been the most valuable organization I have joined since moving to Montgomery.

### *What experience most shaped your career?*

**Kay:** Almost 20 years ago, I was the marketing and PR director for a large mall in the southeast. I hired the first African American Santa Claus for the center. With it, I created a PR/Holiday campaign that, "Santa's Love Comes in All Colors." Since non-traditional Santa images were not the norm, I was told that I may receive some backlash. That Christmas, we received more positive holiday publicity than in any previous years, were trumpeted for our diversity, and were copied by our competition. I learned that there is almost always a positive and beneficial angle to every PR situation. Some may call it "spin," but I call it good public relations.

### *What would you like to be doing in five years?*

**Kay:** I don't have that information right now. Can I get back with you?

### *What was the greatest lesson you learned through PR?*

**Kay:** Honesty – to be truthful and a trusted source.

### *What is your greatest achievement?*

**Kay:** That I am respected as a professional by my employer and my fellow public relations professionals.

# PRCA Gets Into the Holiday Giving Spirit...

This year, the PRCA Board of Directors voted to split our chapter's annual holiday contribution this year between two very deserving charities.

Each year, the Montgomery Chapter donates either goods or money to a local charity. However, this year the Board had a very difficult time choosing among all the charities in our area. So, we decided to spread as much holiday cheer as our bank account would allow.

The Board decided to give **Brantwood Children's Home** and **The Salvation Army** each a check for **\$125**.



Montgomery Chapter President Lori Quiller presents PRCA's donation to Brantwood's Executive Director Kim Herbert.

Ms. Herbert and Capt. Harris both thanked PRCA and its membership for the generous donations, especially at a time when donations



Salvation Army Capt. Roy Harris receives PRCA's donation from Montgomery Chapter President Lori Quiller.

to charitable organizations are at an all-time low.

---

## AUM Students Host Christmas Benefit for Children of Incarcerated Mothers

Auburn University Montgomery's Student Chapter of the Public Relations Council of Alabama recently hosted a fundraising event for Aid to Inmate Mothers, Inc.

On Nov. 29 at the AUM campus, PRCA students collected toys, monetary donations and sold tickets to benefit Aid to Inmate Mothers, Inc.

Aid to Inmate Mothers, Inc. is a non-profit organization based in Montgomery that encourages relationship building between inmate mothers and their children.



The organization provides rehabilitative services to help inmate mothers overcome addictions, cope with emotional trauma, and develop life skills. The group also sponsors outreach programs for the children of these mothers.

During November, AUM students collected toys for the children of incarcerated women, and on Nov. 29, student members of the Montgomery Chapter of PRCA sponsored an all-day fundraising drive on the AUM campus in front of the Business Building.

Tickets were available for purchase at \$1 each,

and were given for each new/unopened toy donated throughout the day. The winner of the grand prize split the money evenly with Aid to Inmate Mothers, Inc.

Other prizes included gift certificates from local businesses.

The Booker T. Washington Magnet High School Show Band also performed at the fundraiser, which brought students from across the city of Montgomery to the AUM Campus for the afternoon.

**WAY TO GO AUM STUDENTS!**

## In Memoriam...

Montgomery PRCA member **Mike Sherman** died Tuesday, Dec. 4, at the age of 64. For the past three years, Mike had worked as communications director for Summit America. It was then he joined the Public Relations Council of Montgomery.

However, many PRCA members first knew him as a journalist. He spent 34 years in the newspaper business. He served as city editor of *The Anniston Star*, state editor of the *Alabama Journal* and associate editorial page editor and business writer for the *Montgomery Advertiser*. He also covered state politics for the Advertiser.

Unfortunately, it wasn't too long after he became a PRCA member that he was diagnosed with stomach cancer.

For those of you who didn't know him, he was a quiet professional with a dry wit and a way of instantly making you his friend. You can learn more about him at [www.caringbridge.org/visit/mikesherman](http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/mikesherman).

He is survived by his wife of 36 years, Anita Sherman, who many of you may know through her long career in career technical education; a son, Merrill Sherman, a graphic artist with the Associated Press, who now lives in Brooklyn, N.Y.; and a daughter, Amelia Sherman of Birmingham.

Memorials to Mike Sherman may be made to:

- **Friends of Alabama Archives**  
624 Washington Avenue  
Montgomery, Ala. 36130
- **Hospice of Montgomery**  
1111 Holloway Park  
Montgomery, Ala. 36117

*Thankfully contributed by Nancy King Dennis, director of public relations, Alabama Retail Association*

## Mark Your Calendars...

Mark your calendars now for the 2007-08 Montgomery Chapter monthly meetings! All meetings are at the RSA Plaza Terrace beginning at 11:45 a.m. There is free parking in the parking deck. Cost to attend meetings is \$12 for members and \$20 for non-members and guests. *RSVP your attendance to Diane Christy at [dchristy@ascpa.org](mailto:dchristy@ascpa.org) no later than noon on the Friday prior to the Monday meeting.* Members who make reservations for chapter luncheons, but fail to cancel by noon the Friday prior to the meeting, will be responsible for payment.

**Jan. 7   Feb. 4   March 3   April 7   May 5   June 9   July 7   Aug. 4   September TBA**  
**Oct. 2-3 PRCA State Conference**



**PRCA Montgomery** is a monthly publication for PRCA's Montgomery Chapter members. For the most up-to-date information, visit [www.prcamontgomery.org](http://www.prcamontgomery.org). Please send all job announcements, news items, updates and comments to Neil Probst at [nprobst@capnhq.gov](mailto:nprobst@capnhq.gov) and indicate "PRCA" in the subject line.