

PRCA MONTGOMERY

November 2008

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

Vote, vote, vote!

Can you believe that it's already election time again? With all the campaigning that's been going on for the past two years now, it seems like we haven't really had much of a break since the last run at the White House.



Lori Quiller

My e-mail gets stockpiled with more and more rhetoric about this candidate or that candidate, this political party or that one, did you hear that so-and-so just endorsed THIS guy? Delete, delete delete.

By now, if you haven't already chosen your candidate, you aren't alone. There are millions of Americans out there who are undecided. And, it depends on what newspaper or television station's political poll you believe in as to whether or not YOUR candidate is going to be the one to call 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue home for the next four years.

They (and we all know who "THEY" are) say that this is going to be the most watched and participated in election in recent history. It should be. There's a lot riding on your vote in November.

You know the old saying about there being two things that you just don't discuss in certain situations: politics and religion.

Personally, I enjoy a good debate on anything! Conversation, particularly a good debate on the merits of any topic, is good for the soul, right? Well, I guess that would depend on who's doing the debating and where the debating is taking place.

I was standing in the checkout line of my favorite mega mart (yeah, read through the thin veil of disguise and you'll know where I shop), and I happened to find myself standing behind two elderly

gentlemen who were pointing at the covers of the tabloid magazines sitting in the racks by the candy. I imagined they'd been lifelong friends and were just doing their Saturday to-do lists together.

At first, I couldn't hear what they were saying just that they were having a disagreement about something. It wasn't long before it was extremely obvious that one was definitely a Democrat and the other was staunchly Republican. Party lines drawn between two men with walking canes can prove messy. I moved back a step...but they were so adorable, I wanted to step closer!

"You old coot!"

"Buzzard!"

Oh, my! Fightin' words from the sweet, little old men over the cover of a magazine! I took another step back when one of them picked up his cane, started to shake it at his friend...well wobble it at him is a better description...and turn to the cashier.

Everyone in the line behind me kept our distance while the little guys paid for their items...still fussing...and hobbled toward the door...still fussing. The roar of giggles and laughter from our checkstand could be heard all the way to the front door. Apparently the greeter at the front door said they were still going strong all the way into the parking deck, calling each other names until they shook hands and got into their cars.

Politics at the age of 80...gotta love it! At least they resolved their differences in the end. Wouldn't it be nice if the Red and the Blue could do the same for the greater good? And yes, I like my glasses rosy.

It doesn't matter what **else** you do on **Nov. 4**, but stop by your local polling place and **VOTE!**

CHAPTER MEETING

What's Your Persona?

Who Are You...Really?

Monday, Nov. 3
RSA Plaza Terrace
11:45 a.m.

GUEST SPEAKER

Buddy Sharpless

Executive Director

Association of County
Commissions of Alabama

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

RSVP to Diane Christy
dchristy@ascpa.org

RSVP Deadline:
Noon Friday, Oct. 31

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!**

2008 PRCA State Conference Recap

get in the game

Cunningham Takes Top Honor at Annual Conference

When **Bill Cunningham's** name was called as the 2008 recipient of the Public Relations Council of Alabama's Philip R. Forest Jr. Professional Achievement Award during the group's annual conference in Montgomery in October, it was the latest pinnacle in his 34 years of professional achievements.

Cunningham, the founding partner, president and account executive of Cunningham Group in Montgomery, is responsible for maintaining healthy client and agency relationships. As a member and former board member of the Montgomery Chapter of PRCA, he has mentored students and professionals for many years.

"I've known Bill for many years, and it's truly been my pleasure to serve with him on the PRCA-Montgomery board of directors," said PRCA-Montgomery Chapter President Lori Quiller. "In fact, when I first joined the chapter in 1996, Bill was one of the first practitioners I met, and he's been a mentor and dear friend to me ever since. His knowledge and experience have been invaluable to our student and professional members, and the entire chapter is extremely proud of him for this achievement."

Giving back to his community is not just something Cunningham does because he feels obligated to do; he does it because of his faith, his heart and his character.

For many years, Cunningham has volunteered time and pro bono projects for the Episcopal Church of the Ascension in various capacities, served on the boards of directors for numerous associations such as the

Montgomery Chapter of the American Cancer Society, Alabama Preservation Alliance, Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts Board of Trustees, Alabama State University Advisory Council, Alabama Hospitality Association, Alabama Travel Council, the Montgomery Advertising Federation (of which he is a past president) and the Montgomery Chapter of PRCA.



PRCA State President Deborah Geiger, APR, makes sure that Bill is properly attired with his Philip R. Forest Jr. Professional Achievement Award hardware before he returned to his seat during the awards program.

"I think this nomination for the Professional Achievement Award must rank as one of the greatest successes of my public relations career," Cunningham said. "I am in a professional organization with incredibly talented and devoted people who perform the daily tasks of public relations practitioners with ease, grace and professionalism, all deserving recognition. So, one of my career goals is to continue to give back to all the profession through support of programs that help us all in the business of public relations and support my peers who so strongly support me."

The Philip R. Forest Jr. Professional Achievement Award is the highest honor bestowed by the Public Relations Council of Alabama to a single practitioner. The recipient is selected from the six nominees presented by each of the organization's chapters: Birmingham, East Alabama, Mobile, Montgomery, North Alabama and West Alabama.

The award recognizes a public relations practitioner who is outstanding in the field and who exhibits excellence in community service, professional activities and career achievement. It has been given to one Alabama public relations practitioner each year since 1973.

2008 PRCA State Conference Recap

get in the game

Montgomery PR Practitioners Shine at Medallion Awards Competition

Many of Montgomery's public relations practitioners received awards and honors during the 2008 PRCA Annual Conference. There are five categories of awards, each honoring the applicant's use of research, planning, implementation, evaluation and creative principals of public relations as determined by a panel of outside judges. The Award of Merit, Award of Excellence and Medallion Awards are not competitive awards, but the submissions are judged on their own merits. The Judges' Awards and Best in Show are competitive awards selected from the Medallion Award winners. Only two Judges' awards and one Best in Show Award are awarded.

Montgomery's top award recipients were:

Lori Quiller of Association of County Commissions of Alabama – Judges' Award for Short Term Internal Communication Program; two Medallion Awards for Internal Communication Programs (Short Term); and Award of Excellence in Publications (External Magazine)

Civil Air Patrol NHQ and PA and **Creative Services** – Award of Merit in Publications (External Magazine) and Special Purpose Single Issue; and Medallion Award in Annual Report with a budget of \$5-\$10,000

Cunningham Group – Award of Merit in Brochure / Folder \$10,000 Budget; Awards of Excellence in Special PR Program 90 with a budget of \$25,000 or more, and Annual Report with a budget of \$10,000 or more; and Medallion Awards in Special PR Program 90 days with a budget of \$10-25,000, Special Purpose Invitations and Organizational ID (Promotional Products)

Civil Air Patrol NHQ together with Cunningham Group – Medallion Awards in Reputation Brand Management (Crisis Planning), Writing for PR (Public Relations or Marketing Plan) and Broadcast Production Internal Video

Alabama Retail Association – Award of Merit in Regular Electronics Publication

Carolyn Kinney of Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama – Award of Merit in Publications: External Newsletter

Marty Sullivan, Lenore Vickery and **Rod Webster** of Business Council of Alabama – Award of Merit in Broadcast Production (Internal Video)

Nia Johnson of Community Bankers Association of Alabama – Award of Merit in Interactive Media CD or DVD; Awards of Excellence in Brochure/Folder with a budget under \$5,000, Publications (External Magazine) and Writing for PR (Feature Story)

Marty Sullivan, Lenore Vickery and **Scottie Mitchell** of the Business Council of Alabama – Awards of Excellence in Special Events under \$20,000, and Special Purpose Publication (Invitation); Sullivan and Vickery also won an Award of Excellence in Internal Newsletter

Mark Johnson and **Lara Lewis** of the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts – Award of Excellence in Publications (External Magazine)

Square Root Interactive – Award of Excellence in Regular Electronic Publications

Square Root Interactive and **Alabama Retail Association** – Award of Excellence in Web site Development (Internet)

Nancy Dennis of Alabama Retail Association and **Bill Cunningham** of Cunningham Group – Medallion Award in Special PR Program 90 days with a budget of \$25,000 or more

Marty Sullivan of the Business Council of Alabama – Medallion Award in Special Purpose Publications (Programs)

Congratulations to everyone for your hard work, dedication...and recognition!

Let's give back...

...and make a difference in our community!

We already know that the members of the Montgomery chapter are the most big-hearted PR pros in the state. Now, let's prove it!



The Montgomery Chapter Board of Directors is challenging our members to help us help our community. We are sponsoring **TWO food drives** to correspond with our final two events of the 2007-08 year, and we want to pack some pantries with some much needed food before the year ends.

If every member who attends the November Chapter Meeting and the December Christmas Party will commit to bringing just five canned and/or dry-good items, think about how many families we can help!

And, we don't have to keep this in the PRCA family. You have resources in your offices as well. Challenge your colleagues. It's definitely for a worthy cause.

The challenge has been issued! Are YOU willing to accept? Help us help our community!

We've had a fantastic year, and now it's time to celebrate with a little holiday cheer!

Come and celebrate the holidays with your PRCA family! **Jim Yeaman**, owner of **The Lattice Inn**, has graciously donated the use of this beautiful property for us to celebrate our year's accomplishments. What a wonderful way to end our year! Food, fun and fellowship!

Monday, Dec. 8
The Lattice Inn
1414 S. Hull Street
Montgomery, Ala. 36104

**Remember to bring five canned and/or dry goods for our food drive challenge!*

Mark Your Calendars...

Mark your calendars 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 no later than noon on the Friday prior to the Monday meeting.* Those who make reservations for chapter luncheons, but fail to cancel by noon the Friday prior to the meeting, **will** be responsible for payment.



Nov. 3 – Regular Chapter Meeting

Dec. 8 – Chapter Holiday Party at The Lattice Inn

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