

# PRCA MONTGOMERY

March 2011

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

## Letter from the President

**I**n March of 1933, some very powerful words were spoken by President Franklin Roosevelt in his first inaugural address. He said, in an attempt to restore public confidence during the great depression, "Let me assert that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

Ironically, FDR went onto become a pioneer in the world of public relations through his "fireside chats" used to persuade Americans and his expansion of the Office of War Information during WWII. I think about how many people he must have inspired and empowered during such a difficult time.

Nearly some 80 years later, I remind myself of those words every time I feel a fear of trying something new. I hope you all can find inspiration in those words as well. We as PR professionals are faced with more and more difficult decisions every day about how to best communicate with our publics in this ever-changing world of information technology and an ever-expanding global economy.

As a result, we at the Public Relations Council of Alabama are consistently challenged with how to serve you best and keep you up-to-date with the latest information on our rapidly expanding world of communications and needs of our publics.



Lara Lewis

We have implemented many changes based on your requests that you provided us over the year and appreciate all of your positive feedback as we continue to grow and expand our member benefits to you.

I hope you will find value in our quarterly education sessions, our conferences and workshops, our new satellite student learning sessions, and our monthly luncheons that

are originated from topics on which you requested more information.

With your feedback and the strong support of our volunteer board working hard to implement your requests, I know we have nothing to fear, but fear itself at the Public Relations Council of Alabama when it comes to serving your needs and empowering you to continue to do great things in our community. I know many of you are well on your way to becoming pioneers in this new world of public relations and we are glad you are a part of our team at PRCA! Thank you for your membership and continued support of our organization.

All my best,

Lara Lewis  
2011 PRCA-Montgomery President

## CHAPTER MEETING

### The Value of Being an Accredited PR Professional

Tuesday — March 8  
Montgomery Country Club  
11:45 a.m.



**GUEST SPEAKER**  
**Dr. John E. Forde**  
Associate Professor  
Mississippi State University

**Members \$18**  
**Non-members: \$20**

**RSVP to Julie Joyner**  
[jjoyner@riverregionunitedway.org](mailto:jjoyner@riverregionunitedway.org)

RSVP Deadline:  
Noon Friday, February 4

If you do not RSVP  
the lunch cost is \$20

## 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!**

## Member-Get-A-Member 2011 Recruitment Campaign

**T**he long term growth and success of PRCA Montgomery is dependent on sustaining membership from year to year.

Throughout 2011 you can earn chances to win up to \$250 for recruiting new members for our chapter. All of the details are below.

### Entry Rules

- New member applications in any category (Regular, Associate) received between January 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011 will be counted in the 2011 campaign.
- Only current paid members are eligible to qualify. Must be a member at the time the new member joins.
- On the new member application, your name must be listed as the sponsor.
- Recruits are defined as paid new members or former members, but not renewing members. (Renewing members are from the previous calendar year).

### How to Participate

- Give the membership application to a potential new member or direct them to our website for more information and an application.
- Invite a colleague to an event so they can experience the benefits of membership first-hand.
- Write your name on the application, make copies and give to potential members.

- Send DiDi Henry, VP of Membership, ([DIDIHENRY@mc-ala.org](mailto:DIDIHENRY@mc-ala.org)), the name and addresses of colleagues who could benefit from membership. We'll send them information, noting that you are the recruiter.

### What You Can Win

- Recognition: All participants will be recognized in newsletter and at our monthly meetings. All prizewinners will be announced at the end of the year Holiday social.
- Prizes: For every person you recruit who becomes a member your name will go into a quarterly drawing. For example, if you recruit four new members, your name will go into the drawing four times. We will draw names for prizes quarterly: March, June, October, and December.
- Grand Prize: The grand prize is \$250 cash. The grand prize is awarded to the person who has the most recruits, regardless of membership category. Must have a minimum of three paid new member recruits to qualify.
- Second Prize: The second prize is \$200 cash. The second prize is awarded to the person who has the second most recruits, regardless of membership category.
- Third Prize: The third prize is \$150 cash. The third prize is awarded to the person who has the third most recruits, regardless of the membership category.

## Hold the Date Tuesday April 12

**Kori Saucer**, Development Manager for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's Alabama Chapter, will speak about Cystic Fibrosis and their biggest fundraising event of the year, the GREAT STRIDES walk event. Kori could really use additional support in the Montgomery area for getting the word out about Montgomery's fundraising walk on May 22 (at the Zoo).



## Educational Mini-Session after March Luncheon

New for 2011, PRCA Montgomery is offering educational mini-sessions after one luncheon every quarter! Stick around for 45 minutes after the luncheon to dive further into such topics as crisis management, media relations, ethics, research and evaluation, and more. These sessions will be offered at no additional cost and are perfect for practitioners wanting to increase their education in a particular area or for those working toward accreditation.

Make plans now to participate in the first educational mini-session at the March luncheon. Dr. John Forde, APR, associate professor and head of the department of communication at Mississippi State University, will present information on the benefits of and steps to attaining accreditation in public relations.

The second educational mini-session will be after the June luncheon, when intellectual property lawyer J. Nevin Shaffer, Jr. will talk about everything a communications professional needs to know about patents, trademarks, copyrights and trade secrets.

## Wanted: Workshop Volunteers

Did you have a great time at the educational workshop last year? Want to help make this year's even better? Nia Johnson, vice president of education, is looking for volunteers to serve on this year's workshop committee! We'll need everything from promotional and logistics planning to registration and sponsorship help. If you're interested, please contact Nia at [niamjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:niamjohnson@gmail.com). Also, contact Nia if you know of someone that would make a great workshop speaker!

## Interview Skills Workshop - April 8

It's time to put your game face on, leave the huddle and get out on the field. Let the Montgomery Chapter of the Public Relations Council of Alabama coach you as you enter THE game -- your career.

Join us from 2-4 p.m. April 8, at the auditorium of the Montgomery Cardiac Institute at Baptist South, 2119 East South Blvd., for an Interview Skills Workshop.



The workshop will include tips on resume writing, professional etiquette, business dress, and on the impact that social media can have on your success. You'll have a chance to test your interviewing skills with PR veterans in a speed-dating format - as many 10 minute mock interviews as we can squeeze into an hour! Afterwards, we'll recap your

strengths and weaknesses as a group.

We promise you'll leave with more confidence and be better prepared to score an outstanding PR position. For more information contact Melody Kitchen, 334.273.4389 or Diane Christy, 334.386.5752.

## Star of the Quarter

The Public Relations Council of Alabama is filled with many talented and dedicated practitioners and we want to recognize you for all of your hard work! Each quarter, we will present one hard-working member with a "Star of the Quarter" plaque at our general membership meetings.

The award recipient will have gone above and beyond in their dedication to the practice and to PRCA through attendance at meetings, socials, participated in PRCA-driven events and initiatives, and donates their PR skills and time to the community. The inaugural award will be presented at our March 8, 2011 meeting. If you have a nomination for the award, please send it to Carol Gunter—[cgunter@montgomeryal.gov](mailto:cgunter@montgomeryal.gov) or Lori Moneyham—[lori.moneyham@arec.alabama.gov](mailto:lori.moneyham@arec.alabama.gov) by February 28, 2011. .

## PRCA State Conference 2011 April 3-5

**I**n a word...PRCA conferences are educational. Informative. Entertaining. And in 2011, it's all about *the words*.

The 2011 conference theme, In A Word, is a nod to the various forms of writing we all encounter in our practice of public relations. Writing for news media. Writing for the Web. Speechwriting. Visual communications. Telling your story. Telling your company's story. It's all about the words.

The 2011 Conference will take place April 3-5, 2010 at the Embassy Suites Birmingham-Hoover in Birmingham, Alabama.

What's the best word to describe PRCA's conference registration fees?

The full conference rate is \$275.

Your registration includes all keynote

and breakout sessions, social activities, networking opportunities with fellow PRCA members, as well as the Student Awards and Medallion Awards luncheons.

Watch your e-mail inbox for your registration invitation.

Find us online at [bit.ly/Facebook\\_InAWord](http://bit.ly/Facebook_InAWord) <[http://bit.ly/Facebook\\_InAWord](http://bit.ly/Facebook_InAWord)> and [twitter.com/PRCA\\_InAWord](http://twitter.com/PRCA_InAWord) <[http://twitter.com/PRCA\\_InAWord](http://twitter.com/PRCA_InAWord)> .

Sponsorship Opportunities: Does your company provide a service to PR professionals? As a sponsor of PRCA's annual conference, you will have the opportunity to interact with some of the state's leading PR professionals. PRCA mem-



bers regularly work with vendors for a variety of public relations-related needs .

And don't forget – chapters can earn a 10 percent commission on any sponsors they bring in. Send any sponsorship leads to Association Manager Hugh Rushing at [hugh@prcaonline.com](mailto:hugh@prcaonline.com). For more information about sponsorship opportunities, please visit [http://bit.ly/PRCA\\_Sponsors](http://bit.ly/PRCA_Sponsors).

## Six rules of effective future media relations

**A**ccording to the Bad Pitch Blog, the media is and will continue to be a mess...forever. For starters, the landscape is no longer dominated by a bunch of white wealthy guys smoking cigars, but by that 17-year-old with a blog about electronics read by 20,000-- or the stay-at-home Dad who writes eNewsletters about techniques for other stay-at-homes...

How does this affect us? For one, content now moves upstream. Anyone can affect, drive or create news now. The upshot of this We The Media paradigm is that as The New York Times shrinks to matchbook size, anyone with tech capabilities can deliver stories, unfiltered, to whoever wants them -- a sure threat to the erstwhile big guys, and one with significant implications for those of us who practice what used to be called "media relations."

Welcome. We now exist as practitioners who rule—as opposed to being the ones who send out information we “hope, cross fingers,” will take care of our needs, or our clients’, or our bosses’. Over the next decade media will begin turn to us as actual sources, rather than just as conduits for facts or spin. What does that mean? How will this manifest? The following are Bad Pitch Blog’s six rules of effective future media relations to illustrate what it will take to become the source journalists will depend on in the months/years ahead.

**1) Releases (must feature reportage).** From the beginning of PR time, our folks have been tasked with writing releases and distributing them. Sounds good, right? Not anymore. The material we put out will need to have real knowledge ("intelligence") reporters can use in stories—not pre-crafted material that, well, just sounds good. One factor driving this will be continued newsroom downsizing, with journalists becoming desperate for help with original reportage as they do triple duty.



**2) Relevance (must drive every pitch).** When we pitch in the near future, everything will be about relevance. We must carefully consider our own words; it will no longer be about the perfect quote or comma placement. Now it's the facts as they're relevant to specific, niche audiences online (and off). Since we are placing our own words into a vertical repository (e.g., narrowcasting versus a wire service release), personalized thoughts will be paired with other relatable messages—so we reach micro-targeted audiences, as well as those you never even considered. Unlike now, when throwaway lines disappear into the ether as rhetoric or vapor, we will now need to have a tailored, audience-specific tale to tell.

**3) Research (must occur online and off).** We will need to comprehend a lot more than we do today about clients, their businesses and customers. What's more, we will need to reach out and touch actual consumers. Translation: For the first time, we will have to climb out of our comfy ivory tower ("We deal with the media") and get our hands super dirty.

Consequently, we have to get to know customers and discover what they're saying about products firsthand. As "the PR person," we need to be able to solve customer problems by bringing them directly to those who can make changes in the company. That's new. How will we find them? Really? It's so easy to do this – easy to find people, easy to see how good they are—and don't rely on Klout.

By going online and forming groups and asking people—that's another way. Unlike today, where real world focus groups are so coldly depended upon, soon (real soon) will be in virtual worlds.

**4) Response (must be rapid and brief).** People who report, blog, post or write in any way about a company or client will respond only if you're speedy—and terse. That means no next day call backs. That means constant access. It also means words have to make its absolute point on someone's device without having to scroll. If what you say is too long for a window, it won't translate into a strong sell for a reporter, blogger, cyberjournalist or whatever you want to call that online influencer.

**5) Rankings (must inform outreach).** Everything will be more than ever about 1s and 0s and how they are spread around. If we can get your words onto a single screen, the PR person will drive revenue—in the form of more clicks for the reporter. Definition of viral: we are not only spreading a message or brand, but we are also working WITH the big cheese spreader (blogger, publisher, journalist, newsletter biggie, guy who talks a lot) so he stays in business—and the way he will do that in the future will be via clicks, and more clicks, and even more clicks. You eat what you kill and if you're up in the rankings, it means you got results!

**Continued on page 6—Six Rules**

## Managing the Generational Divide

**S**harleen Smith, Associate Director of the Alabama Training Institute, shared valuable information on working with and managing the multi-generational work place at the February PRCA chapter meeting.



*Sharleen Smith*

Sharleen described each of the generational groups from The Greatest Generation to Generation Y, explaining the characteristics of each. She also explained how to integrate this

knowledge of generations into working relationships.

She covered the three areas of management: rewarding high performers tangibly, reinforcing competent performers intangibly and counseling poor performers. Knowledge of each generation's motivational needs aids in successful execution of the three areas of management.

### Greatest Generation (1920-1938)

- Loyalty and commitment toward employee
- Interest in employee's knowledge and experience

- Work that furthers the mission

### Baby Boomers (1938-1955)

- Opportunities for training and development
- Opportunities for promotions
- Serve as mentors in mentoring program

### Generation Jones (1955—1965)

- Opportunity to problem solve pragmatically
- Opportunities to grow in job
- Work with innovation and change

### Generation X (1955—1978)

- Basic necessities for living (health insurance, bonuses, etc.)
- Goals for accomplishment
- Family friendly work environments

### Generation Y (1978—1993)

- Role models they can trust and follow
- Challenging opportunities
- Social networks
- Flexible job environments

A good takeaway was the handy formula: job performance = f(ability) (motivation). "Motivation is a lot like bathing. We recommend you do it daily." *Zig Ziglar*



## Welcome New Members

The following people are new members of the PRCA Montgomery Chapter for calendar year 2011:

- **Tiffany Bell**, director of communications, Town of Hampstead
- **Victoria Belton**, marketing director, Montgomery Area Transit System
- **Jina Clark**, marketing director, Montgomery Convention and Visitors Bureau
- **Daniel Dye**, communications and social network manager, Online Commerce group
- **Megan German**, division coordinator for events and promotions, Auburn University Montgomery Outreach
- **Brooke Glassford**, communications specialist, Baptist Health
- **Sallie Gowan**, communications director, Association of County Commissions Alabama
- **Buffy Lockette**, manager of external communications, Auburn University Montgomery
- **Brooke Thorington**, communication director, Montgomery Chamber of Commerce

### New Associate Members

- **Taylor Blackwell**, Walker Printing
- **Jennifer Middleton**, catering sales manager, City of Montgomery
- **James Riley**, chief marketing officer, Great Southern Wood Preserving, Inc.

## Does Your Company Offer Internships?

To help our student members gain valuable experience, PRCA would like to begin keeping track of companies that offer internships.

If your company offers public relations internships, please send that information to Melody Kitchen at [mrkitchen@baptistfirst.org](mailto:mrkitchen@baptistfirst.org).

## Member Job Changes and Promotions

Please forward any job changes, promotions, and recognitions you receive to our VP of Communications, Robert Burns at [rburns@hmmausa.com](mailto:rburns@hmmausa.com) and we will publish them in our monthly newsletter and announce them at our monthly meetings.

Continued from page 4

## Six Rules

6) **Skillset (must do more).** We need to be multimedia producers (format and quality content), we need to understand search, we need to understand analytics on the back end, we need to be strategists, we need to be tacticians, we need to be story tellers.

It's a new world, baby! As we get to the bottom of the first month of the new decade (the world did not start at 0), changes are a lot faster than ever before.



St. Patrick's Day

# Wine Tasting

When: Thursday, March 17, 6-8 p.m.  
 Where: Ted the Wine Guy  
 Zelda Road  
 What: Wine Tasting & Hors' d'oeuvres  
 Cost: \$5 PRCA members/  
 \$8 non-members  
 RSVP: Email [aingle@ahfa.com](mailto:aingle@ahfa.com)  
 by Friday, March 11

## Volunteers Needed Great Strides Walk - May 22

The Montgomery Chapter of PRCA is in the process of gathering volunteers for its second community project of 2011. Members will be assisting the local Cystic Fibrosis Foundation with its annual Great Strides walk on Sunday, May 22nd.

PRCA volunteers will be forming a walking team as well as assisting with promotional needs and event help. If you are interested in walking or helping out on this day, please contact Morgan Berney, VP of Projects at [mberney@montgomerychamber.com](mailto:mberney@montgomerychamber.com).



## Meeting Survey Results

Thirty-seven people attend the February luncheon. Twenty-seven people filled out the survey, so a 73% return rate.

**Food: 100% good**

**Service: 81% good; 15% fair**

**Topic: 96% good; 4% fair**

**Speaker: 100% good**

**Overall: 100% good**

**Comments:** Would have loved to hear Sharleen speak more about generational difference and less about managing; The speaker was very energetic and interesting to listen to; Enjoyed today's topic—relates to us all; She was an awesome speaker—kept the topic interesting and I would love to see more speakers like her; Love teacher speakers; Definitely look forward to the next luncheon; Great enthusiasm; The speaker was very knowledgeable and humorous;

**Suggested Topics/Speakers:** Pros and cons of social media; Advantages and Disadvantages of hiring new graduates

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 Robert Burns at [rburns@hmmausa.com](mailto:rburns@hmmausa.com) and indicate "PRCA" in the subject line.