

June 2007

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

PRCA MONTGOMERY

CHAPTER NEWS

Laissez Les Bons Temps Rollez!

PRCA-Montgomery Professional Development Workshop

LAISSEZ LES BON TEMPS ROLLEZI!

Friday, July 13, 2007
8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
AIDT Training Center

Members: \$75
Students: \$25
Non-members: \$100

You can bet that when the good times aren't rolling, the cameras will be. Are you prepared to speak on behalf of your organization in the face of a crisis event close to home? Workplace shootings? Terrorists attacks? Life threatening accidents? Hurricanes? Tornadoes? Recalls? Scandals?

You don't want to miss this interactive workshop that will include media role-playing exercises for crisis situations. Our keynote speaker will be Dr. Joseph Trahan, III, APR, Fellow, PRSA, who is a

media relations, crisis and risk communications expert trainer. Dr. Trahan, III is a New Orleans native with more than 20 years of experience in governmental, association, educational and non-profit public relations.

The workshop will be held Friday, July 13, 2007, from 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the AIDT Training Center. The cost for PRCA members is \$75, with PRCA student members paying \$25 and non-members paying \$100. Bring the CEO or spokesperson from your company at the PRCA membership rate (limit one additional attendee per PRCA member.)

If you have any questions about this workshop, please contact Heather Holcomb at heather.holcomb@uss.salvationarmy.org or call her at 334-799-9058.

Calling All "Lost" PRCA Members!

Are YOU lost? A lost member is one who has not been to a PRCA-Montgomery meeting or event since October 2006. There's no desert island in Montgomery and no reason for missing one of PRCA's outstanding meetings on the 1st Monday of each month at the RSA Plaza Terrace.

We miss you, we want to see you and learn from/with you. Please return to a meeting SOON. No need to put a note in a bottle, just RSVP secretary Diane Christy, dchristy@ascpa.org, that you WILL be at the next meeting.

Next month, we'll be asking members to launch a raft and go out in search of stranded PRCA members. Look for a list of castaways in next month's newsletter. Rescue one, and you might just win a prize! Helloooooo Gilligan!

CHAPTER MEETING

Successfully Working with the Media

Wednesday, June 6, 2007

Guest speaker:
Ken Selvaggi

Vice President and General
Manager of WSFA 12 News

RSA Plaza
11:45 a.m.

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

RSVP to Diane Christy:
dchristy@ascpa.org

RSVP Deadline:
Noon on Monday, June 4

NOTE: Members who make reservations for chapter luncheons but fail to cancel by noon the Friday prior to the meeting will be responsible for payment.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



I've just returned from a much-needed beach vacation. I have to say I wasn't quite ready to head North when check out time rolled around. But, now that I'm home, I'm gearing up to face life with renewed gusto. And when I say "life," I don't just mean blue skies, smiling faces and all of the other stuff you might expect to find in some sappy greeting card commercial. The Florida sun is hot, but I didn't bake in it so long that I've forgotten that with life comes responsibilities and obligations, and with those, sometimes comes difficulties and obstacles. In life, ups and downs are inevitable. And, since most of us spend the majority of our waking hours focused on our professions, I think it's safe to say that we'll deal with our share of professional hardships, big and small.

I think one of the most universal challenges in life, both personal and professional, is busyness. If my personal experience is any indication, then work is...well...a lot of work these days. It's a constant quest to empty your Inbox and cross off your "to dos," and sometimes, it seems like tomorrow starts before TODAY ends. And then there are the hours beyond 8 to 5. After all, we're not just PR professionals. We somebody's parent...spouse...friend. We're involved with our child's school...charities...civic groups...our church. We can't miss a workout...a walk with our dog...girls' night out...game night...date night. All of this, and we still have to find time to watch our favorite TV shows! No wonder we're all burned out!

I say all of that to say this: I know you're busy. I am, too. In fact, we're ALL in this together. Sometimes we need a break from life, so we take a vacation. Sometimes we take a break from just one area of our lives, like professional development. If this is you, and you haven't been to a PRCA meeting in a while, I encourage you to come back. I challenge you to commit just 1 hour and 15 minutes a month to PRCA. Meetings are a time for learning from each other, and each of you has something unique to teach. Meetings are also a time for networking and encouragement among like-minded peers and friends, so come to the meeting in June, and compare notes about the busyness of life!

Stacy

Enjoy the Rewards - Sponsor a Potential New Member

Get involved in a campaign to boost membership and participation in PRCA and become eligible for a prize. Participating is easy. Just tell your friends and colleagues about the many benefits of PRCA membership and invite them to join.

You'll receive three door prize tickets for each potential new member you bring to a meeting, plus you'll get a ticket just for attending the meeting. The more members you recruit, the more tickets you earn! And, beginning with the July workshop, five tickets are also rewarded for each "lost" member you persuade to come back to a meeting.

The tickets will be collected at the June and August meetings, as well as the workshop in July, and a drawing will be held in August. Call a friend today to increase your chances of being the lucky prize winner. If you have any questions, please contact Belinda Bazinet at 953-9482 or bazinetb@maxwell.af.mil.

Take advantage of PRCA's grandfathering clause. New members who join now through Sept. 30 are exempt from paying dues again until October 2008. That's four months free if you join now!

Biscuits Marketing Director Shares Insight

Last month PRCA-Montgomery was treated to a special presentation by Marla Terranova, marketing director for the Montgomery Biscuits. A native of Michigan, Marla became the very first employee of the Biscuits in May of 2003. Both she and the Biscuits marketing department have been recognized regionally and nationally for their exceptional and innovative marketing campaigns.

Marla shared with us how public relations and marketing have helped make the Biscuits a success in the River Region, and how we can apply some of their creative strategies when implementing our own projects. We thank Marla for taking time to share with us an excellent presentation that was both educational and entertaining.



Marla Terranova talks about the challenges and successes of branding the Montgomery Biscuits.



After speaking at the May meeting, Marla Terranova takes time out to talk with members.

Don't Miss the June Meeting

PRCA-Montgomery is excited to announce the June speaker will be Ken Selvaggi, vice president and general manager of WSFA 12 News. Ken has extensive experience in the television news industry. He recently came to Montgomery from Topeka, Kansas, where he was president and general manager of NBC affiliate KSNT Television.

Since coming to Montgomery, Ken has become very involved in the community. He serves on several local boards and can be seen regularly on WSFA 12 giving editorials on issues affecting our citizens. He will share with us ways to successfully work with the media, as well as his advice for keeping our community heading in the right direction.

Scenes from PRCA-Montgomery Night at the Montgomery Biscuits



Danielle Cole and family.



Lori Moneyham and Keron Forte.



Linda Lee, Nancy Dennis and Julie DeBardelaben.



Melissa George and guest.

LWT CreateAthon Looking for Organizations to Help

LWT Communications is calling for applications for their Sixth Annual CreateAthon event, scheduled for September 6 & 7. During the CreateAthon, LWT staffers work 24-hours straight donating its advertising, Web and marketing services to a select group of area non-profit organizations. The deadline to apply is Friday, June 15.

For more information on this event and an application, please visit www.lwtcom.com or email Cindy Scott at cscott@lwtcom.com.

PRCA Member Profile

Neil Probst is staff writer at Civil Air Patrol National Headquarters on Maxwell AFB. He writes features for Civil Air Patrol's Volunteer magazine, which tells the stories of members across the nation. He also assists with other writing projects. Neil has a bachelor's degree in English, as well as a master's degree in education, both from Auburn Montgomery.



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

Neil: I think these days, if you have extra skills, such as understanding Microsoft Excel, really knowing all the capabilities of your Outlook program, and having a grasp of photography, you have an extra edge. You've absolutely got to be a versatile, utility player who can do anything. I've also learned that being a friendly, caring colleague and a "team player" is equally as important as the actual work you do.

What are the top three skills needed in PR?

Neil: In my job, kindness to our volunteers and a good listening ear are essential. Accuracy is very important as well, so you build trust with your colleagues and membership. Of course, clear, focused communication in print material is a must as well so that everything you write promotes your organization 100 percent.

From where did your interest in PR originate?

Neil: My true love is journalism but God led me into public relations. Here at CAP I am fortunate to combine skills of journalism and public relations in my writing.

Why did you join PRCA?

Neil: I joined PRCA because I wanted to get to know and learn from professionals in my field. I've always enjoyed learning from others.

What experience most shaped your career?

Neil: Dr. Robert Evans, my English adviser at AUM, helped me get my foot in the door at the Montgomery Advertiser, where another AUM student Gary Goodson worked on the Copy Desk. Thus began my journalism career, which later led me into public relations.

What would you like to be doing in five years?

Neil: I would love to still be writing, perfecting the craft, and still learning and enjoying the fellowship of the excellent colleagues I have at CAP NHQ.

What was the greatest lesson you learned through PR?

Neil: My biggest lesson is to "know when to do what." At Colonial BancGroup, I was new to PR and I ticked off some people by trying to turn press releases into feature stories. Later I learned more about press releases and realized they're not supposed to be light and fluffy.

PRCA Membership Database

One of the many benefits of your PRCA membership is access to the organization's statewide database. This database is available online and replaces the printed version from several years ago.

To access the database, you'll first need to enter the "Members Only" section of the PRCA Web site.

- 1.) Go to www.prcaonline.com
- 2.) Click on the "Members Only" link on the left-hand side of the page.
- 3.) You will then be prompted for a user name and password. The user name is prca. The password is greatprca.
- 4.) This user name/password combination is valid for all dues-paying members. There are no individual combinations to access this part of the site.

Once you are in the Members Only section, you will be able to enter the database.

- 1.) Click on "Search the PRCA Database" to begin.
- 2.) Your user name is the e-mail address you've shared with PRCA.
- 3.) Unless you've already changed it for your account, the default password is council.

Once you access your personal entry in the PRCA database, please change the default password to something you can easily remember.

Please contact VP of Membership Jody Seal at jody.seal@energen.com or Webmaster Pat Smith at pat@designsouth.com for assistance with the database or Web site.