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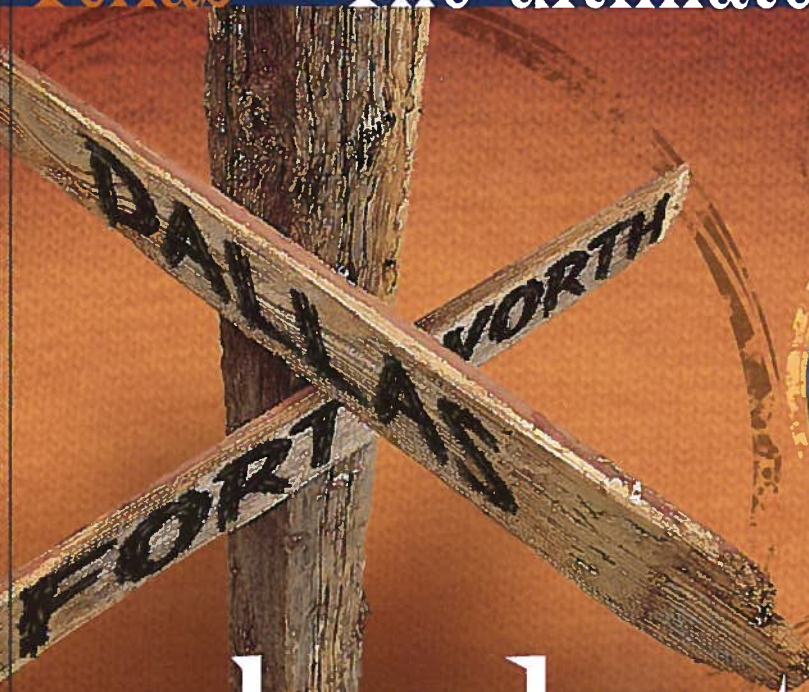
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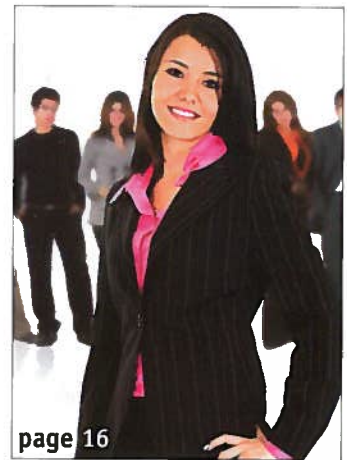
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MPI D/FW is lucky to have among its ranks a few husband-and-wife Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) teams. Find out what makes them tick.
By Charlotte Corn



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By Nancey Hernandez, CMP
Dallas Convention & Visitors Bureau



I'd like to take
this moment
to remind all
of us that the
relationships
you cultivate
and grow in
your lifetime,
do matter.

What Our Future Holds: Making Partnerships Matter!

As I sat down to write the President's Message for the summer edition of the *Current*, I planned to report on Future Watch 2008. MPI Headquarters, along with American Express, rolled out the results from Future Watch earlier this year and presented these findings at the Magnolia Hotel recently. As I was composing my notes, I recalled how Bruce MacMillan addressed the crowd. He reminded us that even since the survey was collected, many things had changed.

This led me to think about a special member of our chapter who always kept "the future" in front of us. She had an eye toward our future and the leaders who will take over to insure our progression. This special person and valued member of our chapter, Crystal Simmons, passed away after a long struggle with breast cancer. Her last contact with me was about how we can elevate the participation of our student members. Crystal was engaged, passionate and purposeful about the future of our chapter – and especially with regard to our students.

I'd like to take this moment to remind all of us that the relationships you cultivate and grow in your lifetime do matter. I'd like to thank and honor Crystal Simmons, from all of us in the meetings and events field, for reminding us of where our future lies. It is in all of our hands, to nurture and grow the future leaders in our industry. Your CALL TO ACTION is this: Be passionate, mentor and create ways to enhance your relationships! If you are new to MPI, become engaged and get involved!

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Nancey Hernandez'.

Nancey Hernandez, CMP
MPI D/FW Chapter President

Crystal Simmons

A Tribute to a Friend and Colleague



Energetic. Lively. Always a smile. Tenacious. Vivacious. Full of ideas. Fighter. Dedicated. These are just a few of the adjectives used to describe Crystal Simmons. As I thought back to the first time we met, I remember she was very excited about being a part of this organization. She was full of ideas and opinions right out of the box. I smile as I think that I had to actually slow her down. Her attitude and smile were contagious. Her dedication and determination in working with the student committee to get it established was a part of her mission. The other part of her mission is her beautiful daughter Sylver, who will be graduating from Richland College this May. Crystal was a wonderful person who left her mark and will definitely be missed.

— Dr. Lawana Gladney

When asked about my memories of Crystal Simmons, the first thing that came into my mind was...dedicated. Crystal was one of the most dedicated individuals I have ever met. When she decided to do something, start something or make something happen, she was relentless and did not stop until she made it a reality. Crystal was a person of big ideals and big dreams. She was always introducing new and improved (and bigger) ways of doing something. When people would question what was sometimes perceived as “grandiose” ideas and why she would even consider them, Crystal would simply reply, “everything had to get started somewhere.”

I was fortunate and honored to be one who saw Crystal’s transition up close and personal. I watched Crystal go from a student in my class at Richland College to a professional woman serving on the Young Leaders Board with me at the YWCA. Crystal embodied the saying, “Be the change you wish to see in the world.” She would not sit and wait for change, she went out and created it. She always said, “Making a difference in the smallest of places creates change in the greatest of places.” She was

all about moving forward by making a difference. The most telling of this was in the clearest of forms; Crystal’s e-mail address was simply, “Neverlookback.”

In this past year, I saw this cruel disease cause my friend to walk a little slower and talk a little softer, but it did not diminish her will or her desire. Crystal was a fighter, and she fought until the end. The last time I saw her, she had the largest smile on her face and made jokes about the wig she was wearing because of her chemo treatments. While she openly talked about her illness, she was always careful not to let it take up the entire discussion and would frequently change the subject. She once told me that she did not want to make people feel uncomfortable or self-conscious around her. That was true Crystal. While we worried about her, she worried about us. I will miss my friend dearly. She provided that spark we all need in our lives every now and then that makes us think, wonder and dream.

Farewell, Crystal. May you be the guardian angel we all need to help us “be the change we wish to see in the world!”

— Dvorah A. Evans, CMP

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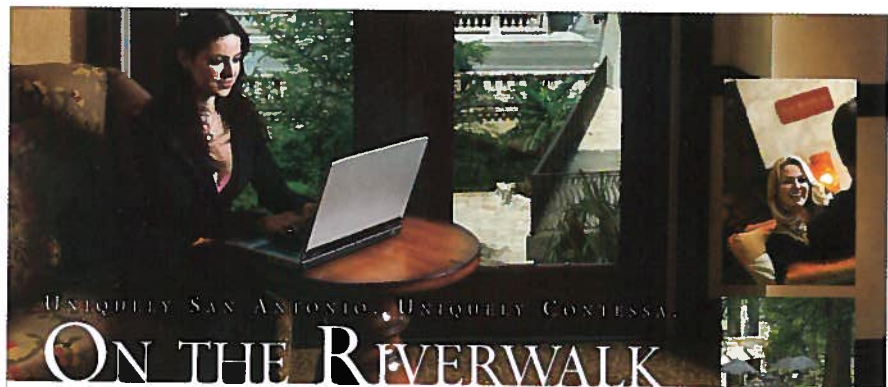
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BENCHMARK HOSPITALITY INTERNATIONAL



By Jennifer Fortman
Gleneagles Country Club, Plano

I Was Scared to Death, and I Don't Flinch...

Do you remember your first visit to an MPI monthly meeting? I do. In fact, I was so traumatized by my first couple visits I stopped going altogether. Later, my boss asked me what I was getting out of the MPI membership that I had so eloquently presented my case to join several months earlier. I had to fess up and tell her I had stopped going to meetings. She couldn't believe that the reason one of her top sales professionals had

stopped attending the networking and educational events was out of pure, unadulterated fear. It was true; I was intimidated – way beyond intimidation really, I was scared to death! For those who know me, this probably sounds as crazy to you as it did to my boss. She told me I was being absurd and swiftly registered the two of us to attend the next meeting. In fact, she went with me for about six months until I was more at ease. She signed me up for committees (when I wasn't paying attention) and forced the issue of "getting involved."

Did you know our chapter has a staggering 590 newer members? This is just astounding because our membership roster sits around 1,000 members! Newer members are those in our chapter who have joined in the past three years. Regrettably, we have not kept all who

joined. Some have left us just as quickly as they arrived. Now, think back to your first few visits. Perhaps you already had a network of industry colleagues and friends involved in MPI or maybe you were like me, scared and lonesome. Bottom line: it can be daunting for a member who doesn't have established relationships to attend our chapter events.

Working in the private clubs industry keeps me cognizant of what an organization needs to do to retain its members. Not only is getting new members a top focus, but just as important, if not more so, is membership retention. We have found that within the first two years, members make the decision to stay or leave. If they don't see the value in their membership during that timeframe they are as good as gone. Easy ways to get this off to the right start is by making them feel welcome and apart of the group or "club": introducing them to others; giving them a sense of ownership by getting them involved; showing them the intangible value of the organization.



Our chapter's strength is in its numbers. Let's continue to grow our chapter and our influence.

Our chapter's strength is in its numbers. Let's continue to grow our chapter and our influence. Let's retain these new members we have worked so hard to recruit. Let's show them all we can offer as an association – our expertise, professional experience and friendships. Besides, think about everything those 590 newer members have to offer. Perhaps a fresh perspective and energy, terrific experience, innovative business solutions and new sales leads? Imagine the possibilities.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Fortman

Jennifer Fortman
Editor, *Current*

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. Become a mentor. (see *President's Message in March/April issue archived at www.mpidfw.org*)
2. Invite a new member to sit with you at a meeting.
3. Introduce a new member to all the great people you have met in MPI.
4. Encourage members to get involved in committees.
5. Go early and attend orientation to meet a few new members.
6. Smile warmly at faces you don't recognize. After all, the next person you meet could be the first step in building a partnership that will last a lifetime!

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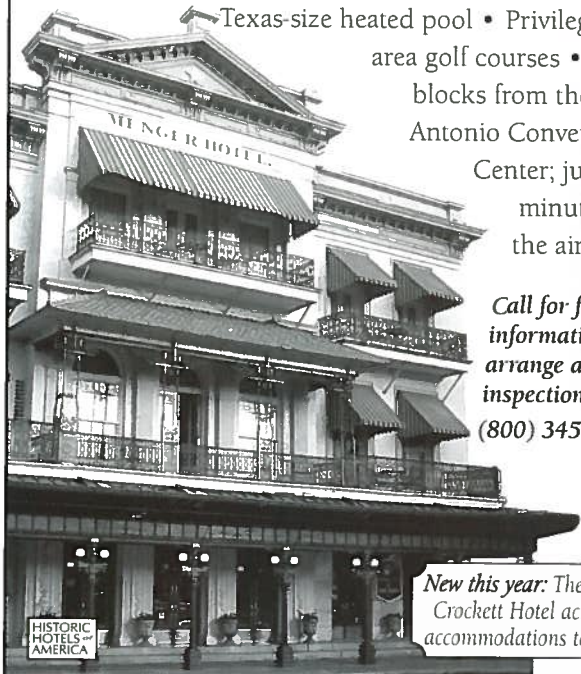
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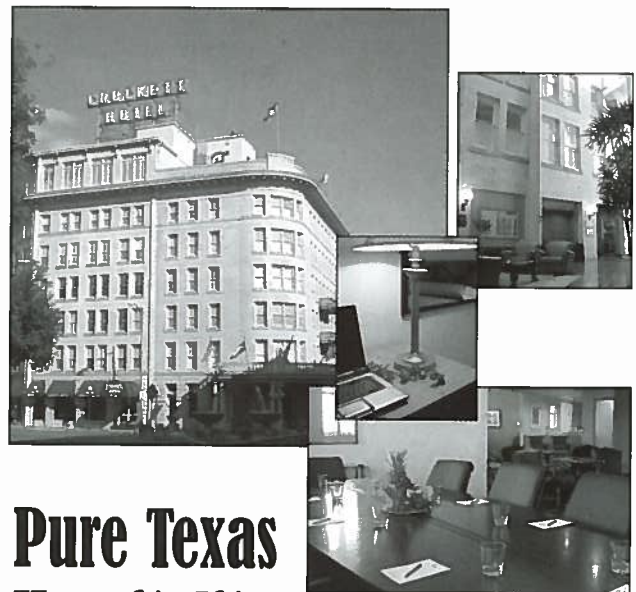
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6 p.m. Opening Reception

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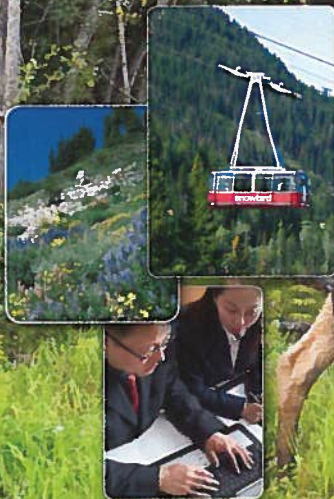
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MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL

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City Talk is a spotlight on the new development and upcoming events in our chapter's cities, brought to you by your local Convention and Visitors Bureaus.

Upcoming Developments: City of Grapevine

By Lisa A. McCowan



Sample some of Texas' finest wines at Grapevine's 10 winery-tasting rooms.

Historic Grapevine is a go-to destination when planning a meeting in North Texas! Nestled between Dallas and Fort Worth, Grapevine continues to grow its hospitality opportunities for meeting planners, convention attendees, as well as leisure travel.

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Home to Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, Grapevine is an exceptional destination for business travelers and families alike. The extraordinary Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center on Lake Grapevine boasts 1,511 hotel rooms and 400,000 square feet of convention space. Gaylord Texan is expanding its meeting space as well as adding new sleeping rooms. The expansion will add more than

200,000 square feet of meeting and convention space, approximately 500 luxury guestrooms, a resort pool and other recreational amenities. Upon completion of the expansion, Gaylord Texan will offer convention customers and meeting planners approximately 2,000 hotel rooms and more than 600,000 square feet of convention and meeting space.

Grapevine currently has more than 5,000 hotel rooms available and five luxury hotels: the Embassy Suites Outdoor World, Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center, the Hyatt Regency DFW, the Grand Hyatt DFW and the recently opened Great Wolf Lodge. The eight-story Great Wolf Lodge resort opened with 402 rooms and nearly 10,000 square feet of meeting and banquet space, which will be expanded to approximately 27,000 square feet, slated to be complete by December. The new conference center will offer space for groups from 10 to 750 and features a 7,500-square-foot grand ballroom, six breakout and meeting rooms and two boardrooms.

In addition, Grapevine offers upscale rooms and meeting space at the Idearc Hotel and Conference Center, AmeriSuites, Baymont Inn, Comfort Suites, Hampton Inn & Suites, Holiday Inn Express & Suites,



The awe-inspiring Lone Star Atrium at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center is complete with 2.5 acres of lush gardens and fountains.

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Grapevine hotels currently offer more than 800,000 square feet of meeting space, all of which are convenient locations to other great Grapevine attractions. Grapevine also offers a newly renovated, 23,500-square-foot convention center to meet your meeting needs. Right in the center of the D/FW Metroplex and south of Historic Downtown Grapevine, the Grapevine Convention Center is a flexible, multi-use facility. Pre-function areas are generous in size and finely appointed in decor, perfect for registration or entertaining prior to an event.



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For More Information

For more information regarding accommodations, attractions, or any of Grapevine's hotels and meeting space, please contact the Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau at 817-410-3185 or 800-457-6338, or visit GrapevineTexasUSA.com. Photos are courtesy of the Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau.

MPI D/FW Website: Continually Improving to Meet Your Needs



By Karen Fogle, CMP
MPI D/FW Website Manager

We hope you are enjoying the MPI D/FW Website and the information it provides our members. The Website is a continually evolving entity, so your input and suggestions will be instrumental in keeping this new communication tool pertinent to our chapter. Special thanks go to our Website Committee, especially Marcia Bradley with the Hilton Anatole, for their hard work in bringing about this new Website, learning behind-the-scenes maintenance and looking constantly for improvements!

Recent improvements to the Website include the building of a FAQ area. Currently, the FAQ under About MPI is active, but soon there will be FAQ areas in other locations. Do you have a FAQ to add? The News navigation bar has changed to Communication with listings for *Current*, our chapter magazine. Look in the Communication area for PDF versions of the *Current* magazine, the most recent issue and archived issues as well. An e-newsletter is in development, and information regarding this new version will be listed under Communication.

Recent news articles have now been added on the home page; be sure to scroll down to see upcoming chapter events and news articles of interest in our industry.

If you spot an interesting article, please forward it to the Website Committee. The Buy MPI area of the Website now contains a listing of your chapter sponsors for the current year. Please do business with these generous companies whenever you can. Updates have been made to the Career Center with the newest job openings listed first. Members are reminded that they can post their resume at no charge. If you want to post an "anonymous" resume, just contact careercenter@mpidfw.org – they can help.

Your Website Manager and Website Committee can be reached anytime at website@mpidfw.org. We look forward to answering your questions and hearing your comments and suggestions! ▶

TECHIE TIP

Do not use "/" between the area code and phone number in your e-mail content or Outlook address book. BlackBerry and similar devices recognize the "/" as a separation and will not pick up the entire phone number for dialing direct.



NEW CMPS

Please congratulate the newest class of Certified Meeting Professionals (CMPs). This prestigious credential recognized throughout the meetings, conventions and exhibitions industry demonstrates an individual's comprehensive knowledge of meeting management.

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How to Influence People to Do Business With You



By Dvorah A. Evans, CMP
 Director, Conventions & Tourism
 Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce

Your Reputation Precedes You.
 Are You Following Your Reputation
 or Is It Following You?

*"The key to successful leadership today is influence...not authority."
 – Kenneth Blanchard, author, speaker*

What is influence? Influence is defined as the power to affect others or the power to produce effects because of ability, wealth, position, etc. It is the ability to proactively shift the thinking, actions and even emotional states of other people. Most of your success in life will come from your ability to deal effectively with other people and will be determined by the number of people you know and who know you in a favorable way. How you are perceived by others can determine your influence and credibility.

Everything you do or don't do either adds or takes away from your credibility and capability to influence others. The following are some important factors to know about creating your own sense of influence and influencing others to do business with you:

You Never Get a Second Chance to Make a First Impression!

When you meet someone, an initial judgment is made in four seconds and a final judgment within 30 seconds. Appearance is one of the most important factors in influence and credibility, and if it's not helping you, it's hurting you.

Are You Proactive or Reactive?

Reactive: Going along with other people.
Proactive: Getting other people to go along

with you. One of the most common qualities that all leaders possess is the ability to get other people to go along with them.

Balance Results and Relationships

You have two goals: 1) achieve a specific result and 2) strengthen the relationship. Don't be too forceful; this comes across as obnoxious and may damage the relationship. Don't be too meek; this comes across as passive and rarely achieves objectives.

Influencing=Finesse

Through "finesse influence," the other person is not prodded into seeing your view but is persuaded into understanding it. Building influence starts with empathy – showing genuine interest in others' needs and desires.

Two Fundamentals of Influencing People

a) **PUSH:** Making suggestions; telling the other person why they should listen to you, and b) **PULL:** Attracting people to you by asking questions and understanding their needs. Pulling is almost always more influential than pushing.

People Really Do Things for Emotional Reasons, Not Logical Ones

You can influence people two ways: Through their **HEAD** and through their **HEART**. The

emotional not rational side kicks in first when we're being persuaded. People do things for their reasons, not yours.

People Are Influenced By "Social Proof"

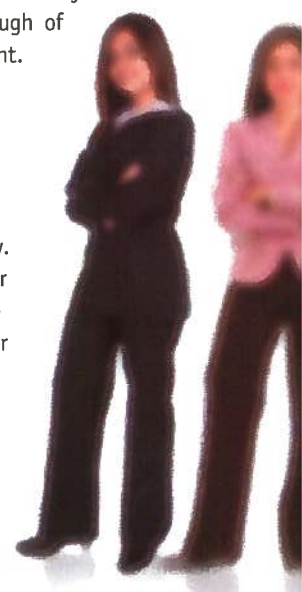
People are influenced by and typically believe respected, third-party sources. They may even believe sources they don't respect if enough of them are in agreement.

Credibility rests on Two Pillars:

Trust: Establish trust – credibility breeds believability.
Expertise: Sell your expertise – become an authority in your field.

Two Questions People MUST Answer Affirmatively Before They Will Hire You

a) Can you do the work? and b) Do I want to work with you? Whether you are likeable goes a long way toward answering the second question – and may even influence the first.



People Listen More to Those Who are Similar to Them

To be more influential, try to be more like the people you want to influence. Show common ground and values.

People Typically Listen More to People They Like

The six main characteristics of likeable people are: 1) Humble; 2) Take an interest in others; 3) Have a "can-do" attitude; 4) Grateful; 5) Acknowledge and validate others; 6) Empathize with others' problems.

Communication, Verbal and Non-Verbal, Is the Key to Winning Over People

Know the four communication styles.

- a) **Authoritarians** like control and make decisions quickly – they don't want to get lost in the details, they want solutions.
- b) **Analyzers** focus on facts and act logically and carefully – they want complete information before making decisions.
- c) **Visionaries** like dealing with the "big picture" and focus on ideas and imagery rather than details and specifics – they often make decisions impulsively.
- d) **Supporters** focus on building relationships – they seek input from all involved parties before making decisions.

Most people operate with at least a primary and secondary style. Know both your own style as well as that of the person you are attempting to influence.

Remember the 80/20 Rule!

Listen 80 percent of the time and use the other 20 percent to respond and ask questions. People want to know that you care about their concerns and are willing to give them time to express them. Use "you" twice as often as you use "I."

Follow the Rule of Three!

To be more effective, make no more than *three* points or give no more than *three* reasons. People usually can't absorb more than that.

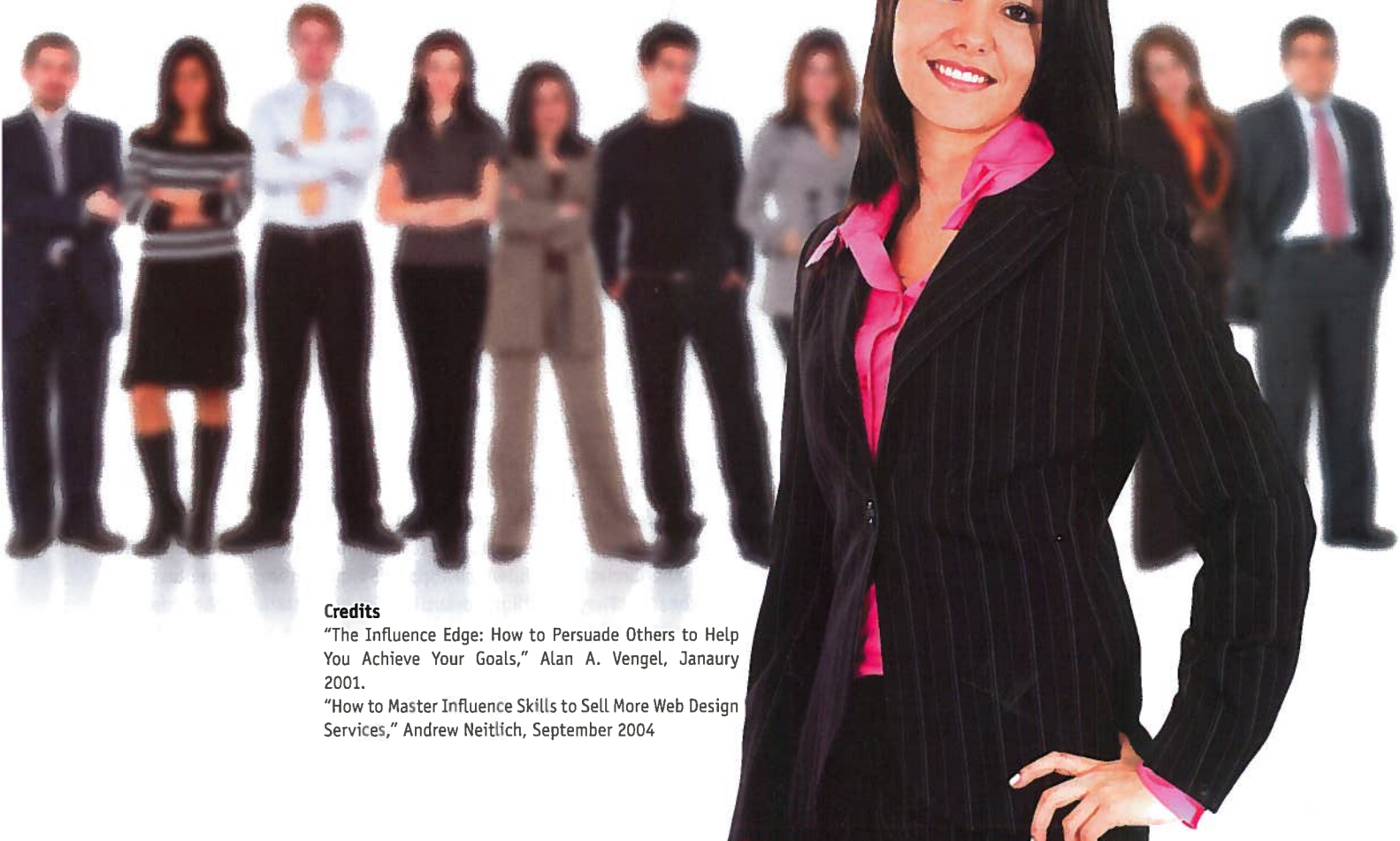
Differentiation=USP

Develop a "USP" (Unique Selling Proposition). Differentiate yourself from others who do what you do. You must give the customer reasons why they should choose to work with you rather than someone else.

There's one thing we know about influential people – they always end up on top. Influencers show they care, can solve problems and make it easy for people to say, "Yes." Influencers have enthusiasm and a passion for what they do. There is no

right way and no one way to influence others. Everything is a factor when influencing people, and we are all influenced by events, people, places and situations every day. Influencing others begins with influencing yourself and conveying that confidence to those around you. Success in every aspect of your life will depend a great deal on the quality and quantity of the relationships you can initiate and develop over time. Business is about people. If you are going to achieve happiness and prosperity in life, it will be through the relationships you have with others. No matter what industry you're in, you are in the relationship business and making a positive and a lasting impression on those you do business with is essential to your future success! ▶

Dvorah A. Evans, CMP, is director of Conventions & Tourism for the Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce. Evans joined MPI in 1999 and served three years on the MPI D/FW Board of Directors and two terms on the MPI International Board of Directors.



Credits

"The Influence Edge: How to Persuade Others to Help You Achieve Your Goals," Alan A. Vengel, January 2001.

"How to Master Influence Skills to Sell More Web Design Services," Andrew Neitlich, September 2004

POWER Couples



By Charlotte Corn

What makes a power couple? How do they handle the challenge of balancing family life and successful careers in a “24/7” world? MPI D/FW looked at a few of our very own husband-and-wife Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) teams to find out what makes them tick.



Wendy and Steven Foster are the very definition of power couple. They were the first married couple in MPI history to both receive their CMP certification. Not only that, but they both have been named Supplier of the Year and both won a President’s Award by the MPI D/FW Chapter. They are the only couple to have won these awards. Beyond this, both Wendy and Steven have a full resume of awards, achievements and leadership positions. They have been married 13 years and are managing partners of the Circle R Ranch, which topped \$4 million in revenue last year. The two know each other’s strengths and weaknesses. They have figured out how to make their partnership work both personally and professionally. Wendy points out that it is refreshing to work with your spouse, and Steven adds, “She can tell me, ‘No’ at home and in the office!” Their approach to working together starts out separately and comes back full circle, when they come back together and close the deal. Wendy states for the two of them, “The dots just connect.”



Jayna and Jim Monroe can absolutely be called a power couple! They have been married for 41 years and still going strong. After years in the industry, Jim decided to go out on his own and founded his company in 2002. About a year later he asked his other half to join him, and she did just that. Today, J Monroe Designs helps many event and meeting planners coordinate details from A to Z. Together these two just “fill the gaps in.” Jayna mentions, “Jim looks at the big picture, and I focus in on the details.” Jim in his 36 years of experience has seen things come, go and then come back again. Jayna gives Jim new perspectives and fresh ideas – not bad after 41 years! They work together, balance each other and provide a great eye, or shall we say eyes, to any event they are planning. Jim has been a CMP for 10 years and just recently completed his re-certification. He has been instrumental in many of our own chapter’s members reaching their CMP certification goals! Jim has earned a tremendous amount of respect for his contributions and commitment to this certification program. It’s only fitting his wife would go on to receiving her certification in July 2007. ▾



On the other end of the spectrum are planners Séverine and Matthew Massengale. Married three years – going on 33 – these two have the strength to play off each other and manage to have fun no matter where they are (check out page 13). Séverine and Matthew both received their CMP accreditation in July 2007. Few who know the couple would doubt their ability to balance each other. Between Séverine’s position in External Meeting Services at JCPenney and Matthew’s in Global Group Meeting Services at EDS, they contribute to the success of countless programs throughout the year with combined event budgets in excess of \$15 million! After all that, they still find time to attend events that are outside the realm of work. Friends call them “social butterflies,” and they are always the life (and laugh) of the party. When asked how they manage their busy schedules and still find time for each other, Matthew says, “It is all about the communication and working around each other’s schedules.” This couple is always on the go. ▾

We salute these power couples that seem to have it all. Congratulations on your success!

Tonya Batten of Worthington, a Renaissance Hotel



Q. WHAT IS YOUR BEST ALL-TIME MEMORY?

WHEN I MARRIED MY HUSBAND, WILL, LAST SEPTEMBER. IT WAS AT OUR HOME, AND THE CEREMONY WAS UNDER AN OAK TREE IN THE FIELD BEHIND OUR HOUSE. HIS THREE CHILDREN WERE OUR BRIDAL PARTY, AND ALL FAMILY AND FRIENDS WERE THERE. I WISH I COULD DO IT AGAIN.

Q. How long have you been working for Worthington, a Renaissance Hotel?

A. I started in 2004.

Q. What is your position?

A. Sales Manager.

Q. What are your job responsibilities?

A. Sales and marketing to all corporate accounts in the D/FW area.

Q. What is the most rewarding aspect of your position?

A. Fort Worth. I love this city and talking about it to anyone who isn't familiar with what we have. (Especially if they are from Dallas. Wink.)

Q. What accomplishment are you most proud of in your industry?

A. Exceeding sales goals every year as individual and as a team.

Q. What is the last book you read?

A. *The Four Agreements* by Miguel Ruiz.

Q. Where is your favorite destination to get away from it all?

A. New York for nightlife, Mexico for sun or Angel Fire for snow.

Q. What picture or artifact do you have on your desk?

A. Old photos of cowgirls decorate my office. My favorite is of famous horsewoman Tad Lucas holding her daughter, Mitzi Lucas Riley, in her hat.

Q. Do you have a mentor or someone you admire?

A. The first thing that comes to mind is the group of women I work with in our sales office every day. I truly admire each one for something different, but all for their strength and tenacity. I'm lucky to have such great female comradery – you, too, Brian.

Q. What is your favorite meal?

A. Italian, it goes the best with red wine. Veal saltimbocca from Sardines or Buffalo steak from Bella Italia.

Q. What is your favorite pastime?

A. First love and passion in life are my horses. They keep my heart full and my pocketbook empty.

Q. If you had to TIVO a show, what would it be?

A. I don't watch much TV. I guess I could put one in my barn, though.

Q. Who is your favorite singer?

A. That's a tie between Sara Evans and Martina McBride.

Q. What is one interesting fact about yourself that no one may know about you?

A. I am a florist by trade.

What's Cooking With Chef Dean Fearing of Fearing's

Join us as we turn over a new leaf. Welcome to "Off the Vine," the hottest place to come for the latest trends in food and beverage, cool tips from great local chefs and the latest news from the culinary world. "Off the Vine" is proudly sponsored by The Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau.



By Matthew Massengale, DMCP, CMP EDS

The creator of "Elevated American Cuisine – Bold Flavors, No Borders," and chef/partner for *Esquire* magazine's 2007 "Restaurant of the Year," Dean Fearing has served celebrities, presidents and rock stars. He has been featured in culinary media worldwide, has cooked on every national morning television show and, when not in his restaurant, leads his own all-chef band, The Barbwires, who have recently released their first CD.

Long known as the "Father of Southwestern Cuisine" and now the creator of a new generation of highly flavorful dishes, Chef Dean Fearing has spent his life cooking for people who love good food. After 20-plus years at The Mansion on Turtle Creek, he opened his own acclaimed restau-

rant, Fearing's, in August 2007 at the new Ritz-Carlton Dallas. The lively, comfortable restaurant offers seven stylish dining settings, including the most distinctive alfresco experience in Dallas, as well as a hugely popular interactive display kitchen offering ringside seating for true foodies. Fearing's Restaurant was nationally reviewed in just its first few days of operation and received its first major award just weeks later, winning America's "Restaurant of the Year" and "Table of the Year" ratings in the November 2007 issue of *Esquire* magazine.

The son of a Kentucky innkeeper, Fearing grew up with grandmothers who knew all about food and who appreciated the finer details of Southern cooking and barbecue. He still uses and treasures their recipes, and they remain one of the most important inspirations of his culinary life. A graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, he can be seen these days in Fearing's wearing a crisp white chef's coat with colorful boot embroidery, blue jeans and brightly-hued, custom-tooled Lucchese cowboy boots. When not in the kitchen, he is often found strumming his vintage Fender Telecaster guitar, one of an impressive such collection, or searching the countryside for farm-to-market Texas culinary inspiration. The state's rich variety of peppers, dried chilies, jicama, cilantro, tomatillos, fruits and vegetables, cheeses, Gulf of Mexico seafood and Hill Country wild game play a major role in his ever-changing cuisine.

The exuberant, friendly Fearing was winner of The James Beard Foundation Restaurant Award for "Best Chef in the Southwest" and led a team winning the Mobil "Five Star Award" from 1995-2001 and the AAA "Five Diamond Award" from 1990-2006. Fearing's Restaurant has staked early claims in Dallas for "favorite local dish" designation, with its

Barbecued Shrimp Taco, Rib Eye Mopped Over Live Mesquite (and featuring a memorable beer and molasses glaze), Scallop with Tangerine Essence and Chicken-Fried Maine Lobster with Queso Fresco Mashed Potatoes all vying for first place as the area's favorite new menu item.

Off The Vine: Chef Fearing, what do feel is currently "HOT" in food and beverage?

Chef Fearing: Simple and comfort foods. Foods with taste. Spicy!

Off The Vine: What future trends in food and beverage do you see?

Chef Fearing: Farm-to-market, regional-specific foods from a variety of areas in the United States.

Off The Vine: Do you have a culinary tip or trick that you would like to share?

Chef Fearing: Smoke flavoring. This process does not cook the vegetables; it flavors them! The vegetables should still be crisp when taken from the smoke. This process can also be used to impart a smoke flavor to meat or seafood, such as sweetbreads or shrimp, which will be cooked through using a different process, often stir-frying.

Several types of outdoor grilling equipment can be used. There are small, dome-covered cookers are designed primarily for grilling steaks and chickens on decks or patios, but their convenient size and design makes them ideal for imparting a smoke flavor to vegetables usually smoked in small quantities.

Light four to five pieces of charcoal (a chimney-type starter that uses newspaper to ignite the coals is very handy for this). Mound the hot coals in the bottom of the cooker and let them burn down to gray ash. Spread them into a single layer and lay soaked or green wood chips or pieces

continued on page 22



Chef Dean Fearing

OFF THE VINE


continued from page 21

(such as hickory, pecan, apple or cherry) over the ash. You may also use pieces of fresh or dried fruit and/or fresh soaked, dried herbs. This process lowers the heat of the coals to "cold smoke." Usually, the bottom damper should be closed. The top vent, in the lid, should be open just a crack to draw the smoke. Place the vegetables to be smoked on the grate above the coals, to the side, not directly over the coals. (When

smoking vegetables that have been diced, place them on a layer of foil so they do not fall through.) The grate should be very clean so it does not leave black marks on the vegetables. Smoke for the amount of time specified in each recipe, usually about 20 minutes. If wood chips burn down, add fresh chips to keep smoke constant.

Gas grills can also be used for this process. Preheat one side of the grill for about 10 minutes or until thermostat registers "low." Turn off heat. Place soaked or green



wood chips or pieces on the preheated grill rocks. Place the vegetables to be smoked on the cool side of the grill or on the small warming rack that sits above the cooking grate on some models. **D**




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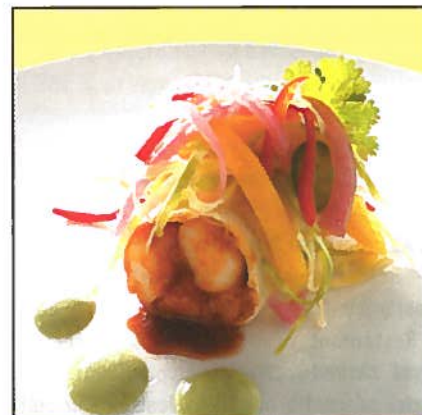
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Off The Vine: Would you like to share your favorite hors d'oeuvres recipe?

Chef Fearing: Shrimp Taco.

Ingredients

Shrimp, tortilla, shredded jalapeno jack, Sonoma cheddar cheese, smoked citrus vinaigrette, pickled onion and mango salad.

Assembly

Place oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add onions and sauté for three minutes or until onions are translucent. Stir in barbecue sauce and bring to a boil. Immediately after coming to a boil, add shrimp then quickly remove from heat. Keep warm.

Place a warm tortilla on plates. Spoon equal portions of shrimp mixture into tortilla. Then add a small portion of Mango-Pickled Red Onion Salad on top of each grilled shrimp. Sprinkle with St. Pedro cheese and Mexican pumpkin seeds and garnish with fresh Serrano chilies.

For More Information

For more information on Chef Fearing and Fearing's, visit www.fearingsrestaurant.com or www.ritzcarlton.com.

COCKTAILS, COUTURE AND CANAPÉS

Cocktails, Couture and Canapés is our publication's Society Section. Sandie Fouke and Lisé Lang will bring you the latest in event trends, keep you posted on what's hot, what's not and, generally speaking, keep you "in the know!"

Charity Event to Support Ronald McDonald House

Please join our Chapter Charity Committee on June 12 to support Ronald McDonald House. We will be serving dinner, with food donations from our own chapter members.

By creating, finding and supporting programs that directly improve the health and well-being of children, Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) is working to better the lives of children and their families around the world. The three core programs of RMHC – the Ronald McDonald House, Ronald McDonald Family Room and Ronald McDonald Care Mobile – are focused on helping families in need.

The cornerstone Ronald McDonald House program began in 1974 based on a simple idea: Provide a "home away from home" for families of seriously ill children receiving treatment at nearby hospitals. Since that time, more than 10 million families around the world have benefited from the comfort provided by a Ronald McDonald House.



For More Information

For more information, please contact Chapter Charity Relations co-chair Kelly Roche at kroche@irvingtexas.com or (972) 252-7476.

Images courtesy of Ronald McDonald House Charities.

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We'd like to recognize and honor our Chapter Partners! The following organizations have strategically partnered with MPI DFW during the 2007-08 term as of press date. Please be sure to "Buy MPI" and support the following companies who help make our chapter so successful.

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Dallas Marriott Las Colinas	Ken Thornton – Fun Factory	Stevens, Melba
Dallas Stage Right	Lennox Industries	Studio Movie Grill
Dallas Stage Right	Levy Restaurants at TX Motor Speedway	Susan Henderson – Atlanta Arrangements
Double Diamond Resorts	Lilans Special Events	SWANK Audio Visuals
Eddie Hill – Team Up	Lowes Hotel	Texas Motor Speedway
Edwards Design	Magnolia Hotel	The Adolphus
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Fabulous Las Vegas Casino Parties	Mr. Gatti's – Frisco	The Woodlands Resort
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