



**Public
Relations
Association
of Central IL**

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2010

WWW.PRACENTILLINOIS.ORG

Dear PRA Member,

I hope everyone survived and enjoyed the holidays. I know that's how I've described the season for myself this year. Lots of stress and competing priorities that sometimes made everything seem like a survival exercise. And yet, we were able to make time for those family traditions and connections that made it all meaningful and worthwhile.

And now we face the prospect of a new year accompanied by those many new expectations and resolutions. While these can add to the stress, these can also make life more meaningful and worthwhile. I'll leave the personal resolutions up to each of you, but I want to offer some professional resolutions that might help you improve your practice over the coming year.

I've already talked in past columns about the importance of planning for the year as well as planning for potential crises. If you haven't already done so, try to identify an appropriate time to do that planning and then periodically return to update your plan. For most of us, the typical week (if there is such a thing) is too full of unplanned projects and responding to unforeseen demands to honor our own schedules. Try to identify and then protect a dedicated time to regularly plan and review.

Along the same lines, many of us are so hurried that we never get the time to evaluate the degree that our recent efforts achieved desired objectives. This critical evaluation step at the end of the public relations process helps ensure our efforts are on target, lays the groundwork to improve future performance and results in tangible evidence of the value of your efforts that you can provide your boss at budget and personal evaluation time. But, like everything else, effective evaluation requires time and you have to build in and protect a slot on your calendar to support regular evaluation efforts.

Do you make time to keep yourself up to date with new developments in the practice? We try to ensure that time spent attending monthly PRA meetings help you in this regard, but I'd encourage everyone to look for additional sources to gain current information on developments in the industry. The good news here is that there are a number of available avenues. Regular attendance at PRA and other professional groups provides an excellent source. Consider trying to work in a workshop to hone your skills in a practice area and to meet others in the profession. And take advantage of technology.

There are several informative podcasts focused on PR that are available free of charge from iTunes and other sources. I find that downloading and plugging these into my car's sound system to listen to them during the commute helps keep me current and makes the traffic a bit easier to take.

And since everything I've suggested takes time, developing a better time management system is another critical goal. Finding inventive ways to improve my efficiencies and work smarter is once again at the top of my list of resolutions for the upcoming year.

Upcoming Member Events:

Watch for Windows 7
Events in January by
Pearl Technology

Free Power Tool Safety Class
January 16 • 1-4pm
Pekin Sears
Provided by OSF Saint Francis
Medical Center Trauma
Services

Joyce Thome Benefit for
Children;s Hospital of IL
January 16 • 6pm
Peoria Civic Center
Hosted by Jim Thome

Care Seat Safety Checks
January 18
Pekin Fire Station

Family Fest presented by
Children's Hospital of IL
January 23 • 10am-7pm
Peoria Civic Center
Exhibit Hall • \$5 per person

Tea Tasting Class
January 30 • 10am-11:30am
RiverPlex • \$10 per person

Orchid Event
Saturday February 6
10am • 11am • 12pm
FREE Seminars provided
by the Peoria Orchid Society
Green View Nursery

While you're filling in that Daytimer and updating your Blackberry, make sure to include this month's PRA Roundtable Meeting on Wednesday, January 20th at Barrack's Cater Inn. We have a good lineup of timely topics this year and I'm looking forward to some interesting exchanges at that meeting. RSVP's are already being taken and please note that you need to indicate the roundtable topic you're interested in as part of your RSVP.

Further down the road, we have an interesting program featuring Maggie Whalen from Simantel for February. Mark your calendars now for that meeting on Wednesday, February 17th.

I wish you all a happy and productive 2010!

Mike Thurwanger
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January Meeting Topic PRA Roundtable Discussions

Wednesday, January 20

*At Barrack's Cater Inn in Peoria, IL from 11:45 a.m-1 p.m.
Networking, Noon Program & Lunch*

Join us for discussions about current PR issues and ideas that you can benefit from. Facilitators at each table will begin the discussions and everyone is encouraged to bring their own experiences to the mix.

Roundtable topics include:

- **Employee Morale** Dawn Klimaszewski, Maui Jim
- **Crisis Communications** Mike Thurwanger, Ph.D., Eureka College
- **Social Media Policy** Vickie Parry, OSF
- **Swap & Shop** Jamie Cecil-Monari, Catholic Charities Of the Diocese of Peoria and Meghan Turner, Peoria County
- **How To Work With Interns** Sharon St. Germain, Bradley University

Lunch is \$17 for members and \$22 for non-members.

When you RSVP, please provide your topic of choice.

Please RSVP by Friday January 15 by emailing
pracentillinois@gmail.com.

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