

## Northeast Wisconsin Chapter

### E-news for March 2007

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#### From the Prez

by *Don Klein*

This month I'd like to talk with you about our upcoming Professional Development (PD) Seminar, scheduled for Tuesday, April 17. If you've attended our PD Seminars in the past, you know they've been good. I know I've learned something valuable at each one I've attended.



We're hoping to exceed your expectations once again in 2007, and in a big way. If there's one PRSA event you attend this year, make it this one.

In late 2006, the Northeast Wisconsin chapter linked with the Madison and Milwaukee PRSA chapters to begin planning an unprecedented event for any of our organizations. We envisioned a daylong series of

programs designed to attract national level presenters, distinguished media members and scholars, and provide an opportunity for members to attend workshops based on their level in the profession – entry level, mid-career or senior.

As the event took shape, and the planning got under way, our chapter's Programming Committee took a leading role in making things happen.

The end result, now more appropriately entitled a Professional Development Conference, will run from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on April 17. The day starts with a networking opportunity, followed by the keynote speaker, John Paluszek, APR, Fellow PRSA, senior counsel at Ketchum Communications in New York. He'll cover a variety of strategic communications issues from an international perspective. Next is a lunch panel with representation from CNN, Forbes and other outlets discussing the future of media in the digital age.

In the afternoon, we'll offer workshops on viral marketing, PR best practices, investor relations and, for more senior members, sessions on how to become

a PRSA Fellow. At day's end will be a second networking social. Please see the attached document for more information, including how to register through an online process.

Where is the conference, you ask? Good question. It will take place at the Italian Community Center in downtown Milwaukee. Because of the considerable distance for most of our members, our chapter is considering providing transportation to and from Milwaukee. If you're interested, please send me an e-mail message when signing up ([don.klein@associatedbank.com](mailto:don.klein@associatedbank.com)). If there's enough interest, we'll likely offer transportation there and back.

I want to offer special thanks to Schneider National for stepping up as a sponsor.

Again, please consider joining us on April 17. We think it will be worthwhile and a good demonstration of the value of PRSA in furthering your professional growth.

Until next month,

*Don Klein*

# Upcoming Chapter Programs

**Tuesday, March 27, 2007**

***Media Training: Successful vs. Survival***  
**Howard Johnson Inn, Green Bay**  
**5-8 p.m.**

## **Presenter**

Mark Threlkeld, Principal/Media Coach  
*Threlkeld Communications Coaching*



## **The evening includes:**

5:00 p.m. Registration  
5:30 p.m. Dinner  
6:00 p.m. Speaker

For some, media training is about successfully delivering key messages. For others, it's all about survival. Whether you're in front of the camera on a regular basis or on point to coach your organization's spokespersons, a little media training can go a long way.

Media Coach Mark Threlkeld will lead small groups through a hands-on session including key message development, interview role playing, videotaping and critiquing. With 30 years of experience including time as an active journalist as well as a stint as a senior public relations manager for a Fortune 500 company, Mark brings valuable perspectives from both sides of the table.

Cost is \$20 for members, \$18 for students and \$40 for non-members and guests. Meeting fees are payable at the door. RSVP to Nadia.Farr@nsight.com by March 23rd.

# Welcome new members

## **Roz Barker**

Business Development Specialist  
Schenck Business Solutions

## **Abby Gutowski**

Marketing Communications  
AIG Travel Guard

## **Nancy Whitton**

Director of Corporate Communications  
Menasha Corporation

We are so excited to include these three public relations professionals as part of our organization. Be sure to welcome them at our next monthly meeting.

If you or someone you know is interested in joining PRSA - Northeast Wisconsin Chapter, please contact membership chair Scott Rice at [rice@wipapercouncil.com](mailto:rice@wipapercouncil.com) or 920.722.1500. You can also visit our website at [www.prsanewis.org](http://www.prsanewis.org).

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## Ask the Pro

### What are the top three things you emphasize when preparing employees for media interviews?



By **Erin Elliott**,  
Marketing Communications  
Specialist,  
Wipfli LLP

By nature and by trade, most of us as PR professionals are very comfortable giving interviews and statements to the media. However, there are often times when the appropriate person to speak on a particular subject is not located in our mirror but is located somewhere else within our organization. The types and length of media training you give these individuals will vary based on a few factors:

- How much time do you have before the interview?
- How comfortable is the person in front of the media?
- How articulate is this person?
- How complex is the message?

Yet no matter what the answers are to these questions, it's important to prepare each person about to be interviewed on three key things:

#### **1) Importance of staying on message**

– Know the key points you want to hit during the course of the interview and be sure to weave them into the answers you give. It's just as important to know what you don't want to say ahead of time so you can realize you don't want to say it! It's amazing what slips out if you're not thinking carefully.

#### **2) Importance of avoiding NO**

**COMMENT** – Never utter those two words, as it only makes it look like you have something to hide. If the situation is fraught with tension, prepare a

statement to the tough questions you're expecting and stick to those statements. If the reporter asks questions you don't want to answer, turn them back around to the prepared statements.

#### **3) How to handle being stumped - If**

you're asked a question you don't know the answer to, it's OK to say you don't know. Ask the reporter what his/her deadline is and commit to getting back to them by that time with more information. (And then DO get back to them.) This is ALWAYS better than vocalizing something you're not certain about, because then it's documented as a fact you stated. This can come back to haunt you – and the organization.

