

## IABC/CPRS Holiday Party Reads a Success

By Amy Tillotson

The CPRS/IABC Holiday Social not only proved the ultimate networking opportunity of 2003, but was also a highly successful fundraising initiative for Calgary Reads.

Held December 11<sup>th</sup> at the Metropolitan Grill in Mount Royal Village, the social was marked with savory appetizers, festive cocktails and insightful conversation as Calgary's finest communicators gathered to share their holiday spirit.

Considered one of the best holiday socials yet, the event was attended by over 100 guests from IABC and CPRS Calgary. Proving itself the perfect venue for the event, the Metropolitan Grill's trendy upstairs lounge was the ideal size to comfortably accommodate all attendees. Relaxed yet classy, the restaurant's ambiance was perfect for mingling, sipping cocktails and nibbling appetizers.

Providing exceptional food and service, the venue's professional and attentive servers ensured your cup was more than half full and regularly drifted by with trays of mouthwatering delicacies. Serving up appetizers that were not only delicious but also marvelously presented - gingered chicken skewers, flavorful crab cakes and zesty bruschetta were among the favourites.

Calgary Reads is very grateful to IABC and CPRS for choosing their organization as the "charity of choice" for the holiday party. The event raised a large and overflowing crate full of materials including pencils, markers, books and more than \$100 in cash. Calgary Reads also valued the opportunity to speak to a group of professional communicators about their cause, which is -- to improve the confidence and ability of struggling young readers and promote literacy as a benefit to our community.

Calgary Reads pairs children in grades one and two with trained adult volunteers for tutoring in a nurturing learning environment. Time is spent coaching these 'budding bookworms' while providing a strong adult role model in each child's life.

For more information about Calgary Reads, visit their website at: [www.calgaryreads.com](http://www.calgaryreads.com).

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## CPRS Consultants: Rev your Engines with Indy500

By Monique Chenier and Susan Elford, APR

Did you know that 25 per cent of CPRS Calgary's membership consists of independent consultants? It won't surprise you if you've attended a networking event lately. During the research phase of this initiative, we heard feedback from long-time consultants that membership in CPRS wasn't providing business-creating opportunities because consultants networked along with all their competitors. But if there were benefits to networking and promoting your services to other consultants, would you be interested? Would you consider collaboration to accelerate your business?

Collaboration is defined as working jointly with others especially in an intellectual endeavour. It is also defined as co-operating with the enemy. To look on the positive side, let's think of our competitors as opportunities rather than enemies. There are numerous benefits to independent consultants working together in a collaborative environment:

- Complementary skills and experience to pursue larger or more diverse projects that may not be possible alone
- Sounding board for strategies and ideas to better service both practitioner's existing clients
- Qualified and professional back-up for vacations or during busy periods
- A peer to encourage ongoing marketing efforts
- A networking partner

In fact, two local independent consultants started collaborating back in October 2003 and have been reaping the rewards ever since. Gord Hawker, APR and Monique Chenier decided to begin meeting on a regular basis. The original premise of the meeting was similar to the production meetings held in agencies to track projects and marketing efforts as well as to encourage brainstorming. "We call them our 'Prod Meetings', short for production meeting," explained Hawker. "But the meetings are also a way to 'prod' each other along in our marketing efforts." Their prodding on the marketing front has resulted in many new contacts through networking as well as several strong prospects and a few new clients. And from a "share-of-customer" perspective, they have both garnered new projects from their existing clients that may not have been realized without brainstorming on strategy and leveraging each other's experience. "As an independent consultant, marketing has to be an ongoing priority to ensure your business is sustainable long-term," emphasized Chenier. "Having another consultant to be accountable to makes it a lot easier to keep yourself motivated to continue marketing efforts, especially when you're busy."

Ready to accelerate your business through collaboration? One of the first initiatives being implemented is an online consultant directory on [www.cprscalgary.org](http://www.cprscalgary.org). The directory will serve as a medium for independents to promote their services free of charge to prospective clients and to other consultants. If you are a CPRS member in good standing and would like to promote your consulting business with CPRS Calgary, then please contact Susan Elford, APR of Elford Communications. She can be reached at 217-3913 or at [sjelford@telus.net](mailto:sjelford@telus.net). Send Susan an email with the following information: your name, designation, company name, contact information, website address and a 100-word profile (e.g. industry experience, education, and area of expertise or special interest).

We will also be setting up a networking event specifically for consultants to meet other consultants. Many consultants have found their niche and don't practice in every area of public relations. This is where networking with other consultants can be so valuable. Here's an example: you don't practice crisis communications and your client requires a crisis communications plan. Your in-depth knowledge of your client's organization, coupled with the skill-set of another consultant who specializes in crisis planning, allows you to provide the very best solution for your client. It's a win for you, a win for a fellow consultant and most importantly, a win for your client – a win/win/win situation.

Look for an upcoming email with more details on the launch date of the online directory and details of Indy500 events.

*The goal of the Indy500 program is to provide resources to help CPRS Calgary's independents accelerate their businesses through business development opportunities, online consultant directory, business management support, online resources, networking, and problem-solving support. If you would like to join the "pit-crew" helping drive the ongoing development of this initiative, please contact Monique Chenier of Chenier Communications at [mpchenier@shaw.ca](mailto:mpchenier@shaw.ca).*

## Web Review: CornerBarPR.com

By Darby Semeniuk

There are few professional websites that are as much fun to visit as [www.cornerbarpr.com](http://www.cornerbarpr.com). The self-proclaimed 'Sassy Source for PR Pros' takes a metaphor and turns it into a virtual community by delivering public relations information through bar rooms, news munchies, and spiked articles. CornerBarPR is definitely one place for public relations professionals to quench their thirst.

The website is designed for – and by – PR practitioners. It offers practical advice on client interaction, tips for designing communications plans, and real-world examples of PR in action. Aside from being extremely current (Donald Rumsfeld, Rosie O'Donnell and Janet Jackson occupy the front page), the site's many sections guide the visitor from

brainstorming tactics to brand management to modern communications technology, all while providing the humour and entertainment that any bar should.

From a Canadian perspective, the site seems somewhat centred around American issues and icons. The occasional focus on celebrity PR and U.S. politics mirrors the American media inundation that Canadian audiences have grown accustomed to, but it doesn't hinder the relevant and plentiful information found within. CornerBarPR will supplement any public relations practitioner's day and will probably provide a smile or two as well. After a hard day of work, leave your car keys at home and drop by the Corner Bar for an engaging dose of PR.

**Do you have an idea for a maxim article or review?  
Contact Bonnie Elgie, APR at [bonnie@openminds.ca](mailto:bonnie@openminds.ca)**

### Members on the Move

Mona Gauvreau, APR, has moved to Hill & Knowlton's Calgary office. Beginning in early February, Mona will assume the role of VP, Public Relations for the firm.

Jennifer Peters has joined Weber Shandwick, bringing her experience in the education and law enforcement sectors to Calgary's practice. Peters' well-rounded skills in communication planning, event management and media relations will provide Weber Shandwick's clients with fresh, innovative ideas.

Jasmine Antonick also become a member of Weber Shandwick's Calgary office in September of this past year. She adds to the Calgary team knowledge in media relations, fund development, event planning and communication planning which she gained from previous work in the not-for-profit, government, entertainment and energy sectors.

### Congratulations!

CPRS Calgary would like to put a big congratulation out to the following newly accredited members:

Dan Muys, APR   Shirley Popadiuk, APR   Del Simon, APR   Carmelle Steel, APR   Peter Symons, APR

### Calling All Students

Did you know that the National Society offers awards for CPRS local society student members? This year there are three awards. The CPRS/CNW Student Award of Excellence, The Edelman/Stanley Houston Award and a new CPRS/Frontline Risk and Crisis Communication Student Award. Each award includes a cash payment of \$1,000, a CPRS certificate and the Edelman award offers a three-month internship at either their Montreal or Toronto office. The awards will be presented during the Canadian Public Relations Conference held in Quebec City on June 12, 2004.

CPRS student members who are in their final year of study in a recognized PR program are eligible. All entry forms are also available in French. Visit the CPRS national web site [www.cprs.ca](http://www.cprs.ca) for more information on these awards.

**Deadline for entries is Monday, March 22, 2004 at 5:00 p.m. EST. All entries must be sent to the National Office.**

## MAKE YOUR EVENTS SPECIAL

Build your special events management skills or train others on your team with Bow Valley College's new, part-time Special Events Certificate. Our courses are taught by industry experts and will give you the background and hands-on experience you need to put on stunning shows, fabulous festivals and memorable meetings.

### **ORGANIZING AN EVENT**

MAR. 15 - APR. 19 (MON/WED), 5:30 - 8:30 P.M.

Course includes marketing plans, sponsorship proposals and event objectives. Fee: \$235.

### **SPECIAL EVENT LOGISTICS**

MAY 3 - JUNE 7 (MON/WED), 5:30 - 8:30 P.M.

Learn about logistics for catering, accommodations and transportation, onsite communications plans and audio/visual and entertainment. Fee: \$235.

### **LEGAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF SPECIAL EVENTS**

JUNE 16 - JUNE 30 (MON/WED), 5:30 - 8:30 P.M.

Course includes conducting event negotiations, licences, permits and insurance. Fee: \$165.

For more information or to register,  
visit [www.bowvalleycollege.ca](http://www.bowvalleycollege.ca).



332 - 6TH AVENUE S.E. | CALGARY | (403) 410-1400  
[WWW.BOWVALLEYCOLLEGE.CA](http://WWW.BOWVALLEYCOLLEGE.CA)

The local CPRS chapter website is:  
[www.cprscalgary.org](http://www.cprscalgary.org)

The national CPRS website is:  
[www.cprs.ca](http://www.cprs.ca)



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## MEMBERS ON THE MOVE!

Have a new job? Changed companies? Been promoted? Let your CPRS colleagues read about it in *maxim*. Send your new contact information to *maxim* Chair, Bonnie Elgie, APR at:

[bonnie@openminds.ca](mailto:bonnie@openminds.ca)

### 2003/04 CPRS Calgary Board members:

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**Joanne Stanzeleit, CMA – Treasurer (non-voting position)**

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*Please note that we are currently seeking a member to join the board to manage the Sponsorship & Promotion portfolio. If you are interested, please contact Mona Gauvreau, APR.*

If you like writing or editing and would like to become involved in *maxim*, contact Bonnie Elgie, APR at [bonnie@openminds.ca](mailto:bonnie@openminds.ca)