



The Great Lakes View

June 2011

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from the President's pen...

Dear Michelle,

June Newsletter Sponsor:
The Diamond Banquet and Conference Center at Suburban Collection Showplace is the perfect environment for your next meeting or event. With a 20,000 square foot Diamond Ballroom and 7 additional meeting rooms, the Diamond Center is intimate enough for small gatherings and spacious enough for any general session. Epoch Catering is the exclusive caterer for the Diamond Center and offers an easy planning experience from start to finish with professional sales managers available to customize menus within the government per diem pricing. Contact Erin Ording @ 248-348-5600 x 226 or erino@suburbanshowplace.com



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Plant a Tree

The Department of Natural Resources reports that Michigan currently ranks first in the Odwalla juice company's national Plant a Tree program, but Texas and Pennsylvania are coming on strong in second and third place. With \$100,000 worth of free trees for state parks available this year, every vote counts. If you've already voted for Michigan by planting a tree at www.odwalla.com/plantatree, thank you! There is one vote allowed per e-mail address. If you haven't yet voted, please consider doing so today. It's easy, and every tree planted (or vote cast) means \$1 toward the purchase of trees to help restore the areas of our state parks hardest hit by the emerald ash borer and other exotic forest pests.

Michigan Chapter Wins Big at NEC

The Michigan Chapter picked up several awards during the 2011 National Education Conference. The first honor was in a new category of chapter honors. MISGMP was the only chapter this year to receive the Chapter Excellence award in this category. Another first time award this year was Best Chapter Website and, again, Michigan took the top award for medium-sized chapters. Last, but certainly not least, were the the awards for membership. In this category as well, Michigan took the award for greatest membership increase in the medium-sized chapter category. Another first ever, SGMP President Melody Kebe awarded the President's award to all SGMP members. Members will be able to log into the SGMP website and print a personalized certificate. Finally, prior to the awards ceremony, Chapter President Debbie Kopkau, CMP, GMS, was sworn in to her new position on the Board of the Gilmer Institute of Learning, becoming the first Michigan Chapter member to gain a position on the National level. All in all, a great night for MISGMP!

For two years running, state employees have helped push Michigan to the top of the Odwalla competition but, with a smaller funding pool this year, other states are getting serious about their outreach efforts. There is still roughly \$50,000 worth of free trees available for planting - or voting - in the contest. Please take a minute to do something meaningful and long-lasting for Michigan's great outdoor spaces. Visit

<http://www.odwalla.com/plantatree> and plant a tree today. Let's make Michigan number one three years in a row! Vote today through Aug. 31, 2011.

Supplier Tip

Need some new leads? Call on your vendors! These are folks you already do business with by purchasing their products, it seems like an easy thing to do to ask for the favor in return. Whether you work for a large or small hotel, your department heads have relationships with these folks. Have them introduce you or copy them on an email. Make sure you mention how their product or service has benefited your facility and then find out what opportunities there are to build on the relationship. Do they have sales meetings? Maybe team building? I bet there are more possibilities than you think! Now, go get some new biz!

Planner Tip

Provide your venue a realistic budget:

Don't be afraid to ask for help from your meeting venue when creating an event to fit your budget. You would be surprised how creative and accommodating a venue will be if you provide a realistic budget up front.

Membership Corner



Annual Golf/Bowling Event

Touching base one last time with the membership and remind everyone that the Golf/Bowling Outing is next Monday June 20th in Mt. Pleasant. We are hoping to see everyone there! If you still haven't registered, please do so asap so that we can get our counts into the Golf Course. Click below for a copy of the registration form along with the sponsorship/door prize form. We are still in need of door prizes so if you can donate please do!



Also there are still rooms available for June 19th at the Comfort Inn Mt. Pleasant, call Nick Hussein today to make your reservation. Don't forget the special Networking Reception hosted by the Comfort Inn starting at 7pm on Sunday evening. Rooms are complimentary for all meeting planners and just \$65.00 for suppliers. Call Nick at 989-956-0462 or email at nhussein@labellemgt.com.

[Registration Form](#) [Sponsorship Form](#)

Service Animals and ADA

May 24, 2011

Redefining the Rules Governing Service Animals Covered By the ADA

By Guest Blogger Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division



Service animals play an integral role in the lives of many individuals with disabilities, providing assistance in a wide variety of ways so that they can have the freedom to go about their daily activities. For this reason, [Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA) requires that places of public accommodation, such as hotels, restaurants and retail stores, accommodate individuals with disabilities who use service animals.

However, when the Department of Justice (DOJ) originally issued its Title III regulation in the early 1990s, the Department did not define the parameters of acceptable animal species. Few anticipated that everything from pigs and miniature horses

Did you know that you can renew online with a credit card? It is super simple! Just go to www.sgmp.org and click on the Membership tab, Log in on the MEMBERS ONLY section using your email and password (don't worry, if you don't know your password, just have them email it to your email address that is listed with your membership), and click on your account where you will see where you can renew online. If you ever need help with this process, feel free to email your friendly membership chair, Leslie Thompson, at leslie.thompson@hilton.com Good Luck!

What is Cloud Computing?

Having you been hearing all this information about the "Cloud" and are just not sure what it is all about? Click on the You Tube link below and see a video explanation.

[Cloud YouTube Video](#)

NEC Contest



Though Michigan did not win the Life Jacket Contest at NEC, we put forth a strong effort as modeled above by Board member Nick Hussein.

ORGPPO 2011

There will not be a July Program for MISGMP as the Board is encouraging attendance at the 2011 ORGPPO Conference, July 18-20 at Shanty Creek Resorts.

to snakes, iguanas and parrots would be used as service animals in the years to come. Some individuals, who do not have disabilities, have claimed, whether fraudulently or sincerely (albeit mistakenly) that their animals are service animals covered by the ADA, in order to gain access to hotels, restaurants and other places of public accommodation.

The proliferation of individuals who do not have disabilities claiming that their animals are service animals covered by the ADA, as well as the original vague definition of a service animal, has led to confusion throughout the years about the obligations of public places to accommodate individuals who use service animals. Additionally, individuals with disabilities who use trained guide or service dogs have expressed concern that if untrained or unusual animals are termed "service animals," their own right to use guide or service dogs may become restricted or questioned.

[Click here to continue reading article](#)

from the President's pen...

Government Meeting Specialist goes National



I am saddened but excited to tell you that I need to resign as your President of the Michigan Chapter. It has been a wonderful growing experience for me. We are in very challenging times but full of opportunities. You as a member of MISGMP have been supportive as we took on new endeavors and done some "out-of-the-box" thinking to provide educational opportunities that have proven to be beneficial to you as an individual and to changing the government meeting industry forever.

Of course, this all could not have been done without a board full of trust and taking risk to making the association all about the members. We hope we have kept you informed, set up partnerships and growing the organization at a time when all indications in the industry show we should have gone away.

As I step down in July, I will move on to be a National Representative for the Gilmer Institute of Learning through June 30, 2012. The mission of the Gilmer Institute of Learning (formally called the Rance R. Willis Education Foundation) is to enhance the purpose and goals of the Society by providing support to SGMP's members and chapters through educational opportunities, certifications, training, resources, scholarships and endowment funding.

With my departing, of course, I am not leaving Michigan nor my current position but will help guide 30 other chapters throughout the United States in setting up the process and promoting educational programs that are necessary for any meeting professional to succeed. For those of you who have already received the GMS, it will even show the importance and integrity of the program when it gets the recognition of what the CMP or CGMP has shown in the industry.

I am leaving you in great hands of your First Vice President, Michelle Milligan from Third Circuit Court who behind the scenes has kept the Chapter very well focused on timely newsletters and monthly meeting notices. Her straight forward approach kept us grounded and moving forward. She has the energy and exceptional leadership skills.

I look forward to seeing you at monthly meetings and keeping you informed on a National level.

Your President,

Donna K. ...

[Click Here for More Info](#)

Debbie Kopkau

Welcome New Board Member

As of July 1st Laurie Nickson joins the MISGMP board as the First Vice President. Look for great things coming from Laurie.

Debbie Kopkau, MBA, CMP, GMS

MSBO/MIEM

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