



NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK CHAPTER

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL

Meeting News

July 2008

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President's Message



Dear Chapter Members:

It's with great excitement and enthusiasm that I write my first President's message to you.

What a great year it has been under Mike Snyder's leadership and I would like to extend a personal thank you to him for his guidance

Free Range Change

**Why Should Chicken Have all the Choices?
Wednesday, August 20, 2008**

Save the Date!

Registration information will be released soon!



Presented by
Association Executive, Humorist, Author & Speaker
Michael J. Mendrick

**Are you happy, content or just too tired to worry about it?
Are you passionate about your profession or passive about
your life?**

Too many people imagine a life of choice and growth yet spend their days trying to find "the path" to success and happiness when "the meadow" offers so much more! Even if they find "the path" their lives are spent reacting to change (that is, following the path as it has been laid down for them by others). **Free Range Change** promotes the concept of initiating change in one's life and "wandering a meadow" of choice and opportunity rather than following or creating a narrow and rutted path.

Hey, if free range chickens get to do it, why don't we?! This entertaining and enlightening program will combine anecdotes, observations and interactive exercises to help attendees open their minds to a new way of defining and enjoying success in their lives and careers.

When

Wednesday, August 20, 2008

About the Program

The day will start off with an educational program mid-morning in Saratoga, then we will head over to the Saratoga Racetrack for lunch and an afternoon of networking

Special thanks to all of our volunteers and their employers for allowing them to donate their precious time to help make our organization stronger. **After just four short years as a chapter, we have grown to over 150 members. Based on this year's International Membership Survey, our chapter was ranked #2 on both a regional and global level for overall member satisfaction.** This is really remarkable for such a young chapter made up of 100% volunteers.

So what's next? As I've been thinking about my priorities for the coming year, I've come to realize that I cannot just think in terms of this year, but rather about five years from now or ten years from now. What decisions can our board make this year that will impact our organization and leave it stronger for years to come? What is our future vision and how can we better serve you, our members?

We're so fortunate to have such a strong core of board volunteers. **My vision is to add to this core board by developing key task force groups to work on specific member benefit programs throughout the year.** I believe with more board involvement from our members, we'll be able to deliver even better quality programs and education. This structure will also give us an opportunity for a more defined succession plan. Members will have a clearer understanding of what board opportunities are available and they will be developed into those positions. **Our mission as a board is to create an inclusive community to grow our chapter to the next level.**

with your fellow members.

Locations

Courtyard by Marriott, Saratoga Springs
Saratoga Racetrack

Program Agenda

9:30 AM - Registration at the Courtyard Saratoga
10:00 - 11:30 AM - Educational Program
11:30 AM - 12:00 PM - Saratoga Racetrack
12:00 PM - Lunch at the Paddock Tent
1:00 PM - Post Time

Sponsored by: **Saratoga Convention & Tourism Bureau**



MPI NENY 2nd Annual Golf Tournament

Members and Non-Members alike enjoyed a beautiful day at SNGC

It was a BEAUTIFUL day for a golf tournament, and MPI NENY members and non-members alike, enjoyed a great round of golf at Saratoga National Golf Club. Half of this year's golf tournament proceeds will be donated to the Multiple Myeloma Foundation in honor of Gene Abbate. Below are a few pictures from event!



Carrie Hillenbrandt, CMP swings!



Lunch on the outdoor patio

Finally, I'd like to share with the membership my goal with a special project. Some of you attended our special event showcase event at the Desmond in May where we demonstrated new technology that would allow us to launch a virtual on line job fair/tradeshaw. **Although a virtual world can never take the place of valuable face to face interaction, this technology is a fun futuristic way for people to meet and network.**

The applications for this type of technology are endless and being the first MPI Chapter to develop it is very exciting. I look forward to receiving everyone's feedback and participation on the project in the coming months.

Thank you again for this wonderful opportunity to serve you this year!

Carrie Hillenbrandt, CMP
MPI NENY President

Save the Dates in 2008!
MPI NENY

August 20: 4th Annual Saratoga Track Day

Please refer to the website for more details:

www.mpineny.org

Destination CMP



To get to the next level you need your CMP designation. Don't Delay!

Visit www.mpineny.org for more information!

Upcoming Exam Deadlines



Enjoying their time on the green!



Posing for the camera



Gina Mintzer, CMP - relaxin'



John Giordano lines up his shot

What a great day it was! Remember to sign up for next year's tournament!

And a HUGE thank you to all the Saratoga National Golf Club staff for accommodating us again this year! To schedule your next golf event, contact **Adelynne Waldie**, Director of Food and Beverage / Sales and Marketing, at (518) 583-4653 ext.632 or email awaldie@golfsaratoga.com.

MPI NENY Chapter Installs New Board of Directors and Presents CMP Scholarship Award



Above (L-R): Carrie Hillenbrandt, CMP, Jack Roddy, Adelynne Waldie, Julie Ann Price, CMP, Cindy Sullivan, CMP, Linda Nelson, CMP and Judy Rucinski, CMP

The **Northeastern NY Chapter of Meeting Professionals International** (MPI NENY) elected new officers, and three new and three returning members to its board of directors on June 12, 2008 during its annual membership meeting held at Lonafellow's

**August 20, 2008 for
January 2009 Exam
February 25, 2009 for
July 2009 Exam**

CMP Question of the Month:

You hire an official general services contractor (GSC) to provide services to your exhibitors and to coordinate these with the convention center. Under normal conditions, the office contractor provides all of the following services **EXCEPT**:

- A. Pipe and draping the entire exhibit area
- B. Padded van shipments
- C. Preparing an exhibitor floor plan
- D. Material handling

CMP Study Group Classes are NOW available for the August 9, 2008 exam. Take advantage of this Members' Only benefit and prepare yourself for the upcoming exam by attending the sessions! Contact Heidi Longton for a schedule at heidi@nrla.org.

CMP Summer Exam August 9, 2008 Deadlines

Examination: August 9

Please visit the CIC website for information on exam locations and costs associated with each application or registration.

Exam materials and applications are now available for download at: www.conventionindustry.org

CMP QOTM Answer: B
Explanation: While the general exhibit contractor will receive and store advance exhibitor shipments and coordinator delivery to the exhibitor's assigned area on the show floor, shipping would be provided by freight carriers.

Upcoming International

Inn in Saratoga Springs, NY.



MPI NENY's newly elected officers include **Carrie Hillenbrandt, CMP** of the Albany Marriott as president; **Jack Roddy** of the Desmond Hotel as president-elect; and **Mike Snyder, CMP** of the Empire State Plaza Convention Center as immediate past president.

Serving new two-year terms on the board are: **Julie Ann Price, CMP** of New York State United Teachers as vice president of education, **Doug McPhee, CMP, CMM** of Experient, as vice president of strategic planning; and **Adelynn Waldie** of Saratoga National Golf Club as vice president of finance.

Returning to the board is **Cindy Sullivan, CMP** of the Saratoga Hilton as vice president of administration, **Gina Mintzer, CMP** of the Albany Convention & Visitor Bureau as vice president of membership and **Vanessa LaClair, CMP** of Independent Power Producers of New York, Inc as vice president of communications.



Past and present leaders of MPI NENY.
(L-R) Michael Snyder, CMP, Judy Rucinski, CMP, Carrie Hillenbrandt, CMP and Darryl Leggieri

CMP Scholarship Winner

In addition to installing its new board of directors, **MPI NENY also awarded Linda Persico, CMP with its annual CMP scholarship award.** The intent of the program is to provide a scholarship award (up to \$550) to a member in good standing of MPI NENY. Tuition reimbursement may be used to cover the expenses of the application and registration by the member so that the burden of individual contributions may be lightened, though not necessarily eliminated.

Linda, a National Sales Manager for the **Niagara Falls Conference Center**, took her CMP exam in February 2008 and was encouraged to fill out the application to receive the CMP scholarship. With the support of her fellow CMP exam-mates, Linda was honored with the award during the MPI NENY annual meeting. Linda has even returned the favor by teaching her first CMP study group class! **Congratulations Linda!**

Linda Nelson & Tracey Caponera Win First Annual Professional Excellence Awards

The Northeastern New York Chapter presented its first annual awards for Professional Excellence in the Meeting Industry during its annual membership meeting on June 12

Events

World Education Congress

Las Vegas, NV

August 9 - 12, 2008

Welcome, New Members!



Christine Nagelsmith

Planning Support Specialists
NYS Assoc. of School
Business Officials
chris@nysasbo.org

Thomas Nicchi

President
Gramro Entertainment
tommy@gramro.com
Referral: **Gina Mintzer, CMP**

Connie Spateri

Sales Manager
Double Tree Hotel
Connie.spateri@hilton.com
Referral: **Gina Mintzer, CMP**

Don't wait to get involved!

Boost your career and
increase your network by
joining the premier meeting
industry association today!

[Download the MPI
Membership Application Today!](#)

Late to Work? You're not Alone

The alarm didn't go off, I
swear. And the kid was sick.
And there was traffic - a lot of
traffic. The clock just hit 8:30
AM, and you're still in your
slippers and bathrobe. But at

The award for **Planning Professional** was presented to **Linda Nelson, CMP**, owner and operator of To PLAN Ahead LLC.

The **Supplier of the Year** winner was **Tracey Caponera**, Assistant Professor at SUNY Delhi at Schenectady County Community College

The presentation of awards was made at the 2008 Annual Meeting on June 12, 2008 at Longfellow's Hotel and Conference Center in Saratoga.

These awards are presented annually to a member of MPI NENY in recognition of outstanding association/industry contributions, leadership and professionalism. The awards are based on both international and chapter participation, presentation relating to the industry in general, articles written in the hospitality industry press community service and industry recognition previously received.

Planning Professional of the Year, Linda Nelson, CMP has made contributions to MPI that predate her involvement with the NENY chapter as she was associated with the Northern California chapter for 10 years.

As the **first VP of Communications for MPI NENY won the "best newsletter award" from MPI International**. She was a founding board member of our chapter and initiated the chapter newsletter which she has continued to serve on the communications committee submitting articles and serving as co-speaker for Chapter Events. **As Committee Chair/Consultant for the 2007 Special Event Showcase** we all became acquainted with her skills as a planner. She has utilized the MPI web tools, attended monthly meetings, serves



on the Communication Committee, and coaches CMP candidates during chapter study groups.

In her application, Linda said that she joined MPI and stayed motivated to be involved because "...as the foremost organization in the meetings industry I joined MPI primarily to stay in touch with what's current in the industry, to network with my peers and for the educational programs and resources that MPI provides. Additionally, I feel very strongly about the professionalism within the industry and so becoming a member I feel I can reach out to others and help to raise the awareness of our profession and what we have to offer."

least you're not alone. **According to a recent CareerBuilder.com survey, 15% of workers say they arrive late to work at least once a week, and 24% admit to making up fake excuses to explain their tardiness.**

While 43% of hiring managers say they don't mind if their employees are late as long as work is completed on time, others are much stricter, and would consider terminating employees who arrive late several times a year. **When asked to identify the primary cause for coming in late, more than 32% of workers claimed traffic was the culprit.** Falling back to sleep was the reason cited by 17%, and 7% pointed to a long commute. Less popular reasons cited by hiring managers included the following:

While rowing across the river to work, employee got lost in the fog

Someone stole the employee's daffodils

Employee went to an American Idol audition

Employee's ex-husband stole her car

Employee's route was shut down by a presidential motorcade

Employee wasn't thinking and accidentally went to her old job

Employee was indicted for securities fraud

The Starbucks line was too long

Employee was trying to get his gun back from the police



The **Supplier of the Year**, Tracey Caponera joined MPI NENY in 2006 and became **co-chair for the Education Committee by 2007** where she continued through 2008. She has been a **table sponsor, registration volunteer, submitted articles for the newsletter, and is a tireless recruiter for MPI.** Tracey was also **Co-Chair of the Virtual Job Fair Project in 2008**, attended the WEC conference, and utilizes the MPI Member Profile and the MPI Web community groups.

She joined and stays involved by "...initially joining to network with meeting planners and suppliers, and found the workshops at WEC and through my local chapter to be very beneficial. I utilize the community tools on the MPI International as a way to connect

with other professionals in the industry. My motivation for continued involvement is not only the valuable education programs but also to encourage my students to become MPI members and benefit from the networking and career opportunities they will find through the local chapter."

Please congratulate our first recipients of the Professional Excellence in the Meeting Industry and start thinking about who you might nominate in 2009.

- **Leslie Miller**, Director of Sales
Residence Inn by Marriott, Saratoga Springs

Taste of the Northeast:

The Crowne Plaza Albany Presents Pickled Baby Beet Salad

Pickled Baby Beet Salad with Lemon Verbena Vinaigrette

For Salad

- 2 cups arugula or mesclun greens
- 1/2 lb chevre goat cheese (preferably a log)
- 1 cup fresh chopped herbs- any combination of fine flavored herbs such as parsley, chive, chervil, tarragon, thyme
- 1 recipe pickled beets - *See Below*
- 1 recipe honey verbena vinaigrette - *See Below*

Roll Goat Cheese Log in chopped herbs & reserve or crumble goat cheese with herbs and reserve.

In a large bowl, toss greens with half of the beets, a drizzle of dressing to coat, and kosher salt and fresh black pepper to taste. Divide salad between 4 large or 6 small plates. Top with slices or crumbles of goat cheese and remaining beets. Drizzle with more dressing to taste.

Honey Verbena Vinaigrette

Ingredients:

- 1 cup olive oil

Employee didn't have money for gas because the pawnshop was closed

- **The Meeting Professional**
The Scoop
June 2008

Tips for Planning "Greener" Meetings

Establish an environmental policy for the program, outlining how you will minimize the environmental impact. This can include decreasing the amount of solid waste produced, reducing energy and water consumption, and not using harmful chemicals.

Increase your application of paperless technologies to cut down paper use, such as offering electronic registration.

Ask the hotel to reduce, reuse and recycle paper, metal, plastic and glass.

Use bulk dispensers for sugar, salt, cream and other condiments.

Have meals using local, seasonal produce.

Print materials on recycled paper, using vegetable-based inks, and on both sides of the page.

Work with the venue to ensure air conditioning and lights are turned off when rooms are not in use.

Source: BlueGreen Meetings
(www.bluegreenmeetings.org)

A Little Bit of Funeral Humor...

A Packer fan was enjoying himself at the game in a

- 1/4 cup champagne vinegar
- 2 Tbs honey
- 1 Tbs fresh chopped verbena
- 1 fine mince shallot
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

Prep:

Whisk together honey, champagne vinegar, and chopped shallot. Slowly whisk in olive oil. (You may use a blender for this if you wish.) Season to taste with salt and pepper. If the vinaigrette tastes too sharp, add a touch more honey and whisk until dissolved.

Pickled Baby Chiogga Beets

Ingredients:

- 1 lbs peeled baby chiogga beets with tops., or peeled and quartered standard beets with tops
- 1 thinly sliced red onion
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup champagne vinegar
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 Tbs kosher salt
- 1 Tbs pickle spice
- 1 stick cinnamon

Prep:

Place beets in steamer for 5-10 min or until tender yet still firm. Rinse in cool water, drain, and place in a 4" hotel pan. Meanwhile- heat vinegar, water, sugar, onion, and spices. Bring to a boil and pour over beets to cover. Let sit covered in water for 24-48 hours before using.

The Crowne Plaza Albany

State & Lodge Streets
Albany, New York

Contact **Tim McCollough, Sales Manager** to book your next event today!
tmccullough@lodgian.com
(518) 427-3008

Turning Stone Resort & Casino

Offering an extensive line of unique restaurants for all to enjoy

packed Lambeau Field until he noticed an empty seat down in front. He went down and asked the guy next to it if he knew whose seat it was.

The guy said, "Yes, that's my wife's seat. We have never missed a game since the Lombardi days, but now my wife is dead." The fan offered his sympathy and said it was really too bad he couldn't find some relative to give the ticket to so they could enjoy the game together. "Oh no," the guy said, "they're all at the funeral."

- NYS Funeral Director's Association

We Want You!



**Are you creative?
Innovative? Motivated?
Are you ready to make a
difference?**

Join a Chapter Committee Team Today! If you are interested in learning more about Chapter Teams, please contact any of the following:

VP MEMBERSHIP

Gina Mintzer, CMP, Director of Sales
Albany County CVB
518.434.1217 x301
gmintzer@albany.org

VP EDUCATION

Julie Ann Price, CMP, Manager, Travel & Conference Svc.
New York State United Teachers
518.213.6000 x6625
jprice@nysutmail.org



MPI NENY members who enjoyed an overnight stay at the Turning Stone Resort & Casino in May - **as part of the Chapter's Member-Get-A-Member program** had the chance to experience **one of Turning Stone's nine unique restaurant's, Rodizio**. This restaurant features the Brazilian style Churrascaria method of serving different cuts of meat. Read below for more about this tasty cuisine.

Turning Stone Resort & Casino was also featured in the February 2008 issue of *US Business Review*. A great article that can be downloaded here: [Turning Stone News](#)

Call **Kim Keenan**, Convention Sales Manager at Turning Stone Resort & Casino to book your next event!
kim.keenan@turningstone.com / (315) 361-8505

RODIZIO CHURRASCARIA at TURNING STONE

Churrascaria (*choo-rah-scah-ree-ah*) is the name used to describe a restaurant that serves meat, mostly grilled and rodizio is a method of serving the different cuts of meat that originated in the south of Brazil in the early 1800's – the tradition of the Gaucho's.

Rodizio serves a wide variety of different cuts of beef, pork, chicken, etc., in succession, to each diner individually right at their table, thus there is not a traditional menu. Our restaurant features a fixed-price continuous tableside service.

Rodizio's menu offers two course meals "all you can eat."

The first course is the Salad Bar. It has many Brazilian style salad items with fresh, scrumptious greens with a variety of dressings and two hot dishes. Try the famous Brazilian national dish "Feijoada" (black beans cooked with pork) served everyday in the Churrascaria. The salad bar is so scrumptious, even Vegetarians would love it.

The second course is the famous Rodizio. Several meat selections are offered that are served to you hot off the grill on sword-like skewers and carved by Gauchos' who provide you with as much as you can eat. All meats are grilled to perfection on custom made charcoal grills.

To complete your dining experience there are always the scrumptious and tempting desserts that are freshly made including cake, tarts and pies!

Come and experience the Gaucho lifestyle of the Pampas at Churrascaria at Turning Stone.

For more information on the restaurants available at **Turning Stone Resort & Casino**, please visit their website at www.turningstone.com.

Meet the Members of MPI NENY!

And then get yourself featured in a future newsletter!

VP ADMINISTRATION

Cindy Sullivan, CMP, Sales Manager
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VP MARKETING / COMMUNICATIONS

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VP FINANCE

Adelynne Waldie, Director of Food &
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Got News?

We'd love to hear from you! Please e-mail your announcements to [Vanessa LaClair](mailto:Vanessa.LaClair@ippny.org), CMP, VP Communications.



Click here: [\(Production Schedule\)](#) to view the 2008-2009 MPI NENY Newsletter Production Schedule.

If you are having trouble viewing this newsletter with graphics, please visit www.mpineny.org to download a PDF version.

Quick Links...

- [Our Website](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [CMP Information](#)
- [Chapter Leadership](#)



Rachael Seiler
Environment One Corporation

What steps have you taken to evolve your career in the meetings industry? Or plan to take? It goes without saying that joining MPI is one step, and that I'm looking forward to obtaining my CMP designation.

What is your favorite hobby or past time and how have you incorporated that into your career if at all? I'm all about food – cooking it, reading about it and, of course, eating it! Happily, my career choice has put me in close contact with people who share all three pursuits.

What is one of the biggest differences now compared to when you started in the meeting industry? The rise of technology and the decline in face-to-face encounters – especially when it comes to RFPs. Electronic RFP's can be super-efficient, but run the risk of taking relationship-building out of the equation. It's nice to be able to "sell" your event face-to-face or over the phone and build equity with meeting and event partners.

How has the recent hotel chain consolidation or airline bankruptcy affected your business? If anything, it's strengthened the relationships with our meeting and event vendor partners. Secretly, we're all in this together!

What would our readers be surprised to learn about you? My first job in high school was making orthodontic study models and developing X-rays. Wheee!

What advice would you give to someone thinking about entering the meetings industry? The relationship is paramount: Don't be afraid to have real, live conversations. Oh -- and join MPI!

Tommy Nicchi (photo not available)
GRAMRO Entertainment



What is your favorite hobby or past time and how have you incorporated that into your career if at all? I am passionate about entertainment and when I'm not working; my hobby is experiencing entertainment as a fan. I suppose my hobby and my career are the same. When I need to turn off musicians and comedians completely though, I watch Penn State Football.

Describe an unusual meeting challenge and how you overcame that? In addition to corporate events and meetings, I also am contracted to handle the entertainment for the City of Albany. My responsibilities include the Tulip Festival, Jazz Festival and Alive at Five concert series. When I first started working with the city, I was asked to improve attractions for children in particular. Up until that point they did a great job with entertainment for adults, but the children's areas seemed a bit empty. I increased the size of the children's areas not only geographically but also the size of the attractions. I

the children who attended but it also made it more inviting for parents to bring their children to.

What is one of the biggest differences now compared to when you started in the meeting industry? **Communication.** When we started eight years ago everyone who tried to provide talent was sending out mass emails and hoping someone would respond to begin their relationship. We learned that simpler and more personal is better and we try and meet all of our clients in person when possible, but at the very least treat everyone as an individual.

How is technology helping or changing your business? Today we are able to have video conversations with our clients at their request through our computer. We also have the ability to make our performers bios, photos and video/audio much more accessible through the internet. This helps when a meeting planner needs to put together a sharp brochure or agenda, or when they are just browsing for new talent. We're proud of our new website which launches August 1st.

What advice would you give to someone thinking about entering the meetings industry? **Take care of people.** In this industry, if you do right by your clients you can have a long and enjoyable career. If you don't take care of people or are only concerned about your interests, you should update your resume because you won't last long.



If you would like to be featured in a future newsletter, download the [Spotlight](#) Questionnaire and return with a digital photo and company logo to **Megan Kiessling** at megan@sitesolutionsworldwide.com

"The Green Scene" - Green Meetings

A personal snapshot of then and now by Michelle Scott, CMP



In January '07 a small group of chapter members, including me, took the highly esteemed (and somewhat infamous) CMP exam. Prior to that exam, we participated in a study group that MPI NENY offers members to help ready us for the test. **At that time, there was little information or emphasis devoted to the topic of Green Meetings.** In fact, when it came up, a few of us in the group had to think for a moment as to what the term "**Green Meeting**" could be referring to. (Of course along the way we were also questioning what hidden meaning CIC might have by phrases containing words such as "and" or "if" or "but" – but that is another subject altogether.)

Anyway, the point is that some of us hadn't even heard the term before and the idea of Green Meetings, though

it had been around for several years, remained to a great extent on the periphery of the meetings industry - thought to be requested mainly by "tree-hugger type groups". Many of us, planners and suppliers alike, did not – and still may not – believe that it would ever have anything to do with us or become a mainstream standard in the Meetings

bible that my study group peers and me poured over in preparation for the exam) only really made brief mention of the idea of Green Meetings.

Today, just a year and a half later, MPI has given me the opportunity to help support a group of individuals also preparing for their CMP exams by allowing me to facilitate a study group session. I requested the session that included Green Meetings of course. A new study manual has come out so I requested a copy in order to prepare to address some of the elements of the topic as they related specifically what might be covered on the test. **I was surprised to find that there is now an entire chapter devoted specifically to Green Meetings in the newest edition of the manual (Chapter 14, Green Events, Convention Industry Council Manual, 8th edition).**

In brief, detailed instruction is given on:

- The Benefits of Green Events (including cost savings for both organizations and vendors)
- Establishing an organizational commitment to environmental responsibility
- Developing Guidelines (for RFPs with a multi- point site selection criteria)
- Communicating Objectives
- Negotiating Practices (with vendors)
- Measuring (and publishing) Results

I guess my point is, to those of you who may have been waiting to see if the green idea would catch on, it has. And for those of you who may wonder if this is a passing trend? Well, you will have to decide that for yourself. I know that for me, I am going to do all that I can to try to prepare myself for what appears to lie ahead (after all, I am a planner).

For those of you who would like to do the same, I have committed to writing a periodic column to be published in our chapter newsletter. In it I would like to provide you with important and realistic information that will answer your questions on how to get started and perhaps stretch you a bit to take further steps in greening your meetings. I would love to hear from you if you have any questions or ideas on what you would like to see covered. Please email me at msscott@gatheringsbydesign.com. I look forward to journeying this road with you.

- Michelle Scott, CMP
Gatherings by Design, LLC
www.gatheringsbydesign.com