

CAPIO'S Official Newsletter *Communicator*

October 2006

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CAPIO'S PIO Institute getting a new look

With increased member interest in CAPIO's PIO Institute, the Board of Directors established a better-defined outline of courses required to receive the Certificate. This involves both required courses and electives.

"Since this outstanding program began, we've had a list of courses but no real definition," said CAPIO President Bill Polick. "Our goal was to identify the core skills we as PIOs need and require classes that improve our knowledge in those areas. We've also provided electives that enhance our professional abilities."

Many of the courses are the same as in the past, so members already enrolled in the program can still follow the old or new requirements. New enrollees will go by the new standard. Ten courses are required for graduation.

Some categories include a variety of topics. For example, the 'Writing' course may be for news releases, brochures and annual reports or publications. The 'Public Presentations' course can be for event planning, community groups or boards and committees.

"Quantifying the requirements should make it easier for our members to determine what they need to take so they can plan for regional workshops and the annual conference," Polick said.



PIO INSTITUTE

Required courses

Intro to PIO Institute
Media Relations
Writing
Web Site Basics
Public Speaking
Basic Photography

Elective courses

Public Presentations
Communication Strategy
Selling Your Idea
Legal Issues & Ethics
Crisis Communication
Measuring Results
Dealing with Elected Officials
Dealing with Irate Citizens

CAPIO: We're here to help deliver the message

It's not just *what* you say ...it's also how you say it.

During the recent League of California Cities conference in San Diego, I had the opportunity to work with many CAPIO members in the media room. These hard-working professionals cranked out newsletters, news releases, covered seminars and taught interviewing skills.

One thing that really struck me during the conference was how much many of the elected officials and non-PIO staffers I talked with and interviewed need to improve their communication skills. One city official could not explain the aspects of a downtown redevelopment project without getting lost in bureaucratic jargon. Another



Bill Polick
President

referred to people who live in a city as "residents" or "citizens" while referring to people who need low income housing as "those people." We, as PIOs, can really help them.

The most common communication skill I saw lacking was the ability to state a message in one simple sentence. We know that reporters need concise statements or they may misinterpret our convoluted explanations, and television and radio interviews give us between eight and 15 seconds to

deliver our message. We need to be prepared. We need city, county and agency spokespersons prepared to communicate effectively.

CAPIO can help. Our organization has many experienced communicators willing to train you in important skills so you can train your spokespeople. Use the resources. If you don't see what you want in an upcoming regional workshop or at the annual conference, call or e-mail your Regional Director and set up a session. Chances are if you want training, others do too.

Don't be afraid to take advantage of the resources you have as a CAPIO member.

Cutting Edge Communications

Cruise Back to Your Agency with Tips from the Port of Long Beach

The California Association of Public Information Officials invites you to a two-hour workshop at the Port of Long Beach on October 17, 2006 that will deliver proven techniques, strategies and tips for effectively communicating your agency's top strategic goals to the public and media.

The workshop will feature lunch and a 90-minute boat tour of the Port.

You'll bring home some great ideas that the Port of Long Beach is using to better deliver its messages. These tips can be put to use in any local government agency, whether it's a city, county, or special district. And you'll be surprised to find that enhancing your communications efforts doesn't have to cost an arm and a leg (or a yacht).

The Port of Long Beach, operated by the City of Long Beach Harbor Department, is a key hub in the national and global economy. Like many public agencies, it is facing pressure from its surrounding communities to improve its public safety/security operations and environmental performance.

The ongoing challenge for the Port's communications and media relations staff is to

You'll bring home some great ideas that the Port of Long Beach is using to better deliver its messages.

communicate to Port stakeholders the successes of various security and environmental programs while also stressing the need for additional federal funds to further the Port's strategic goals.

The workshop will cover:

- Developing, integrating, and promoting a key message culture in your organization
- Staying ahead of the news with proactive media strategies
- Training your agency's key communicators in media relations
- Using Q&As to standardize the delivery of your messages and to crystallize thinking within your agency

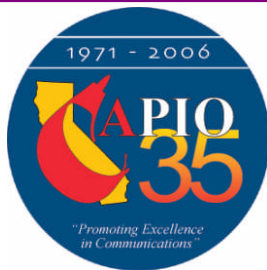
- Making elected/appointed officials part of your communications effort and arming them with tools to deliver your messages
- Crisis communications planning
- Coordinating messages among multiple public agencies
- Effective media relations in a changing newspaper landscape

We hope you'll join us - we guarantee you'll sail away with some great information!

When: October 17, 2006 from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Where: Spirit Tour Landing in front of Parker's Lighthouse, at Shoreline Village, 429 Shoreline Village Dr., Long Beach, CA 90802

RSVP: By October 15 to John Pope, Port of Long Beach Media Relations Manager, at pope@polb.com or (562) 590-4126.



SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 18-20, 2007

Now is the time to pencil in the 2007 CAPIO Conference, to be held Wednesday through Friday, April 18-20. The Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite is a spectacular conference venue.

Inspired by Yosemite, our conference theme is, "Public Information in the Age of the Environment." PIOs are often called to be subject matter experts, meeting facilitators, professional mediators and expert communicators during controversy and crisis. Let us prepare you for these multiple roles, with timely examples from an environmental perspective.

Our conference seminars will offer expert guidance on formulating public involvement strategies for "tough sell" issues, case studies on controversial projects and discussions with cities that are committed to building community through environmental stewardship. A highlight is a peek into the making of Al Gore's film essay, "An Inconvenient Truth," which not only expertly frames the toughest environmental issue of our times, global warming, but serves as an example of public information and communication as a tool for change. You won't want to miss this annual summit in the beautiful Sierras!

If you have ideas and suggestions for making our 2007 CAPIO conference the best yet, please e-mail conference chairman Mark Dennis at mdennis@lake-elsinore.org, or call (951) 675-3124 x207.

Departing Vacaville PIO honored with 'Earl Parker Recognition Day'

After eight years, Vacaville's official voice is changing.

At a meeting earlier this month, the City Council announced the retirement of city Public Relations Officer Earl Parker, whose retirement was marked in an observance recently at City Hall.

City Manager David Van Kirk said Parker was the first PIO the city ever hired, Vacaville having reached a size that made the position necessary.

The city manager added that in Parker's years on staff, the PIO set a high standard for those who come after him.

"He really laid a great foundation," Van Kirk said. "He is very professional and he really worked hard at getting the word out about what was going on in Vacaville."

Among other highlights in Parker's career, Van Kirk mentioned that the PIO was instrumental in bringing about the Senior Health Summit four years ago. Also, up until about two years ago, Parker hosted a TV

program titled "Vacaville Voices," which he said was a news magazine type of show about what was happening locally.

"Before he leaves completely, we will be working on getting that going again," Van Kirk said.

According to the city manager, one of Parker's most valuable attributes is his experience. The Missouri-born PIO came to work in Vacaville after holding a large number of jobs in both print journalism and public relations.

While serving as public relations/marketing manager for the San Diego City/County Workforce Investment Board, Parker said he was recruited to do the same in Solano County.

His career path led him to the job in Vacaville about eight years ago.

"I really believe in local government and felt the city was doing a good job," he said. "It was an opportunity to use some of my experience to get the word out



Earl Parker

about all of the good things the city does."

In her presentation at the ceremony, Vice Mayor Pauline Clancy said Parker is irreplaceable.

"He is a professional, and I like working with professionals," Clancy said. "I personally feel we will never see his likes again."

A representative from Congressman George Miller's Office

attended the event to read a letter from Miller, in which he said, "You are to be commended on a career marked by professionalism and dedication." A certificate honoring Parker also arrived from State Senator Mike Machado.

Augustine went on to read a proclamation in honor of "Earl Parker Recognition Day." Parker also received a gift certificate to Sports Chalet and a plaque for his new home in Coeur d' Alene, Idaho.

A married father of 10, Parker said he visited Idaho to visit his 15th grandchild and he and his wife fell in love with the area. In retirement, he has more time to pursue interests like golf and music.

"I play the piano and my wife plays the cello," Parker said. "We're both very active in the Catholic Church, and I'll start devoting more time to helping people in the community."

Article reprinted from the *Vacaville Reporter*.

Decade of service comes to an end for Judy Franz

Whether good or bad, when something newsworthy came out of City Hall it was Judy Rambeau Franz's job to talk about it. Now after nearly a decade as the spokesperson for Santa Monica, a new voice will speak for the city.

Franz retired Sept. 11, 2006, clearing the way for acting Human Services Manager Mona Miyasato to take her place.

"I've been really privileged to work for three city managers now," Franz said. "Had I not promised my new husband I would retire, I would be thrilled to be working with (City Manager) Lamont Ewell for years to come."

Since 1997, Franz has been the voice for the city in good times - including the announcement of numerous environmental awards and the groundbreaking for major capital improvement projects - as well as the bad - such as the widely covered Farmers' Market crash that killed 10 and injured more than 60 three years ago.

A proactive spokesperson, she has helped launch a leadership series to help ordinary citizens become more active in their commu-



Judy Franz

nity and took it upon herself to establish a "council wrap-up," which concisely sums up what happened at City Council meetings.

Through it all, her civic-minded vision has anchored a complex job she says has "touched on just about everything" the city does.

"My goal in all aspects of my job has been

to encourage public participation in city government, and provide accurate, responsive info, to be open and inclusive and do my best to maintain customer service in City Hall," she said.

Franz has now passed the baton to Miyasato.

"Santa Monica media relations will be in good hands," Franz said.

Like Franz, Miyasato will oversee CableTV programming, city publications, media relations, customer service and community outreach. She also will serve as a liaison to neighborhood organizations and handle communications during crisis.

"Her broad knowledge of city operations and policy, municipal finance, housing and redevelopment, grants management, and social services will serve her well in working with the media and community on a broad range of issues," Franz wrote in a departure letter.

Reprinted from the *SurfSantaMonica.com*.



An afternoon in Oxnard demonstrates the importance of CAPIO, networking

By Gail Stewart-Brockman
Southern California Director at Large

One of the goals of the CAPIO Board is to offer mini-workshops to our members, in their locales to encourage networking among their people. It sounds easy, but getting it accomplished can be a big job. Still, there's always a go-getter in every organization and in Oxnard's City Manager's Office, Public Information Officer and CAPIO member Christina Aerenlund fits that description. She was the force behind a recent luncheon targeting PIOs throughout Ventura County.

As a CAPIO board member, I took for granted that Public Information Officers throughout California realize what a great organization we have and that its people are available 24/7 to help them. After my visit to Ventura County, I learned a few things. CAPIO is a well-kept secret among some PIOs.

We also have a lot of work to do to get our message out with mini-workshops up and down the state.

When Aerenlund asked me to speak to a gathering of PIOs in her city I was thrilled. I thought this would be an excellent opportunity to share my 21 years of journalistic and PIO experience with her group. After a relaxing train ride north from San Diego, Aerenlund met me at the station and took me straight to quaint downtown Oxnard. Within in no time, 29 of 30 invitees turned out for a full-house lunchtime meeting.

Before I started my presentation, I did a quick survey of the crowd and found, to my surprise, these people work near each other in neighboring cities but without regular PIO meetings. Some of these PIOs had never even heard of CAPIO.

"I educated them," Aerenlund said of my 30-minute presentation on "CAPIO, the Media & You." One of the first points I covered was what CAPIO does for each member and why it's important to become part of this statewide organization. Not only does it allow us to share valuable skill sets, but it also offers great conferences and certificates in public information training. This was all new information to these people.

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Another major point that was not missed on this group of PIOs was the fact that they had not been networking. Not only had they not been networking with each other, but some of them hadn't taken the time to get to know their local reporters. I asked the simple question, "When was the last time you had a brown bag luncheon for the reporters in your town?" I didn't get much of a response. I also asked, "Have you compared notes with other PIOs on the way certain reporters cover your agencies? If not, why not?" These are simple questions that local PIOs should be asking each other. We do in San Diego. At the District Attorney's Office we hold brown bag luncheons for reporters about every two to three months. We bring in the District Attorney, feature a Division Chief who talks about their Division and what they've been up to and everything that is said is "on the record." It's gone a long way to improving media relations. Perhaps only one or two PIOs out of the group had employed this strategy.

The bottom line on this mini-workshop is that it worked. If you're working in a city where the networking of PIOs is less than desirable, contact your Regional Directors (I'm your Regional Director for Southern California). The Oxnard City Manager's Office PIO had an idea and turned it into something big that's still reverberating throughout Ventura County.

"They are talking about establishing a network," Aerenlund said of the PIO group and Ventura County Emergency Services. "They realize that CAPIO is an incredible resource."

CAPIO CAREER CORNER

COMMUNICATION SERVICES MANAGER

Salary range: \$89,204 - \$108,428

CENTRAL CONTRA COSTA SANITARY DISTRICT

Position requires at least five years of increasingly responsible professional and managerial experience in the preparation and dissemination of public information regarding the activities of a public or private agency including two years of supervisory experience plus the equivalent of a Bachelor's Degree with major course work in communications, journalism, English, public administration or a related field. A completed District application and supplemental questionnaire must be submitted to the Human Resources Office, 5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez, CA 94553 no later than 5 p.m., Monday, October 23, 2006. For a detailed informational brochure and application packet, please call (925) 229-7109, or email your name and address to: employment@centralsan.dst.ca.us or learn more about the District and download application materials from www.centralsan.org.

COMMUNITY COORDINATOR

Salary range: \$44,600 - \$61,000

Carlsbad, California has an opening for a Community Coordinator to assist with writing, editing, coordinating community events and meetings, updating web content and new media. Deadline is Oct. 16. For a complete description, and to apply, visit www.ci.carlsbad.ca.us.

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Salary range: \$6,405 - \$7,821/monthly

Tustin, CA has a management, single position classification position open that reports to the City Manager; plans and organizes a comprehensive public relations program for the City; coordinates media and community relations activities and develops and implements communications and marketing efforts for major City programs, services and special events. Apply by 5 p.m. on October 19, 2006. Visit our website at www.tustincta.org, call 714-573-3040, or e-mail at employment@tustincta.org.