

2009 PRAM MS Beach Board Members

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Susan Perkins, Publicity Chair,
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Leah Snyder, Community Service Chair,
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Mary Anne Caldwell, Awards and Scholarship Chair,
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Kristie Aylett, APR – Immediate Past President,
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John McCollins, Newsletter Editor,
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April Lollar, APR, Accreditation Chair,
aprillollar@coastepa.com, Coast Electric Power Association

President's Message



Dear PRAM Members:

Happy New Year! I'd like to start off our first 2009 issue of *Impressions* by thanking Kristie Aylett and the rest of last year's board for their wonderful leadership in 2008. It is because of the dedication and hard work from this team that our organization was so successful.

We have great plans for this year – plans that involve all areas of our chapter from membership recruitment to professional development. At the end of 2008, we had 68 members. We hope to increase that number this year significantly. It is our hope that by providing members with informative professional development opportunities, top-notch speakers, great workshops, accreditation seminars, networking and more that our group will continue to grow professionally from each other and our membership numbers will soar.

I would also like to congratulate our newest accredited members – Ron Barnes, Mary Anne Caldwell and April Lollar. These three members participated in the accreditation process and received their Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) designation in December. Thank you to Susan Perkins, APR for her guidance in leading study sessions for these members.

Monday, Jan. 12 at noon is our first meeting of 2009 at the Great Southern Club. Please join us to learn about the Sunherald's partnership with WDSU. Director of Marketing Services John McFarland will provide insight on how this new partnership will bring us more news and advertising opportunities.

Thank you for your involvement in PRAM. On behalf of your board of directors, we appreciate the opportunity to serve you in 2009 and look forward to another great year. Your opinions are appreciated and highly encouraged. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours in PRAM,
Melissa Bryant

Next PRAM Meeting

12 Noon on Monday, January 12
Great Southern Club – Sunset Room
(15th floor, Hancock Plaza, Downtown Gulfport)

Two Public Relations Professionals Earn Accreditation

Ron Barnes, vice president of marketing and public relations for Coast Electric Power Association, and Mary Anne Caldwell, public relations and marketing director for Lynn Meadows Discovery Center recently earned Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) designations. They join eight other members of the Mississippi Beach Chapter of the Public Relations Association of Mississippi (PRAM) who are Accredited.

To receive the APR credential, Barnes and Caldwell both completed a comprehensive program that included a portfolio presentation before three Accredited public relations professionals and a computer-based examination—both assessing the knowledge, skills and abilities of the public relations profession.

APR, administered nationally by the Universal Accreditation Board, is a mark of distinction for public relations professionals who demonstrate their commitment to the profession and to its ethical practice. The designation is earned based on broad knowledge, strategic perspective and sound professional judgment. Nationwide, approximately 6,000 public relations professionals have achieved Accreditation since the program began in 1964. Among the membership of the Public Relations Association of Mississippi, there are approximately 34 Accredited professionals statewide.

“By becoming Accredited in Public Relations, a practitioner lends credibility and professionalism to the field of public relations, and reaffirms to him/herself, as they go through the process, the ethics, history, principles, and other components that make PR an art and a science,” said Susan Perkins, APR, 2008 Accreditation Chair, PRAM-Mississippi Beach Chapter. “I am proud of Ron and Mary Anne for earning this distinguished credential and hope that others in our profession will follow their lead.”

Barnes holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration from the University of Southern Mississippi. He started his career in the electric power industry in 1995 with Coast Electric Power Association. Ron’s areas of responsibility with Coast Electric include residential and commercial marketing, public relations, internal and external communications and member services. Prior to working for Coast Electric, he spent seven years working in fund-raising and public relations for the Boy Scouts of America. Ron is the immediate past president of the MS Beach chapter of PRAM, and has served for two years on the PRAM state board of directors.

For the past 11 years, Caldwell has been with the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center—Mississippi’s only children’s museum—since its opening as the public relations and marketing director. Her education degree from Ole Miss and her extensive experience in the travel and tourism industry have been important assets in her work with the museum. She is a life member of the Junior Auxiliary of Biloxi-Ocean Springs, has been active with the Boy Scouts in Biloxi and is passionate about literacy initiatives. She has lived on the Mississippi Gulf Coast for 35 years. She has been recently voted the 2009 scholarship chairman of PRAM-Mississippi Beach Chapter.



(L-R: Ron Barnes, APR; Susan Perkins, APR; Mary Anne Caldwell, APR) Ron Barnes, vice president of marketing and public relations for Coast Electric Power Association, and Mary Anne Caldwell, public relations and marketing director for Lynn Meadows Discovery Center, recently earned Accreditation in Public Relations designations. Susan Perkins, PRAM-Mississippi Beach Chapter 2008 Accreditation Chair, presented Barnes and Caldwell with APR lapel pins during the chapter’s December meeting.

January Meeting Speaker

John McFarland, Director of Marketing Services for the Sun Herald will discuss their partnership with WDSU, how it came about, how it is working, and any related PR issues.

**Free Webinar, Wednesday,
January 14, 2–3 p.m.**

Don't Be Faceless

Learn 7 Essential Social Media Techniques for PR Success

As the world of communications continues to change, it is no longer an option to simply refer to the social media guy or girl within your organization for all things digital. Every public relations pro needs to know the basics of social media and how to apply them effectively. How should social media play a role in your overall communications strategy?

In this session you will learn:

- Techniques that are field tested and proven through work with dozens of clients, including some of the world's largest brands.
- Actionable tips for how to put your knowledge to work the very next day — or perhaps even the same afternoon.
- How to integrate social media and personality into your overall communications strategy so it complements your other efforts.

Tracking and reporting your success in a way about that will get your boss excited (and reward you).

You will hear from:

Rohit Bhargava, award-winning author, blogger, founding member and SVP of Ogilvy PR's 360 Digital Influence, is author of the best-selling new marketing book, "Personality Not Included," an engaging, useful guide to the future of public relations and how personality and social media are impacting the world of business. He publishes the Influential Marketing blog, which is ranked among the top 50 marketing blogs in the world, and has been featured in The Wall Street Journal, BusinessWeek and other global media. He also is a popular keynote speaker on marketing and business strategy and often appears as a guest columnist in media publications. He believes in being approachable, helping others do great things and loves to be identified as a smart marketer — although, he prefers to be described as a nice guy.

For registration information please visit <http://www.prsa.gov/PD/events/DontBeFaceless.html>.

Meet Your 2009 Board Members



Charmaine Schmermund, Treasurer, is a 2006 graduate of the School of Mass Communication and Journalism at The University of Southern Mississippi. She joined the university's Gulf Coast marketing and public relations department in March 2007 where she is responsible for news writing, photography and administrative support. Charmaine has been a member of PRAM MS Beach for the past two years. For both years, she has managed the chapter's newsletter *ImPRessions*.



Susan Perkins, Publicity Chair, is a native of the Mississippi Gulf Coast and has worked for the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources since 1999. She worked in the Public Affairs Bureau for eight years, left to pursue a marketing career at Memorial Hospital in Gulfport and returned to DMR in 2008 in the Office of Coastal Management and Planning. In her current position, Susan supports the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area, the Smart Growth initiative and the Comprehensive Resource Management Plan. Susan holds a bachelor's degree in journalism and a master's degree in public relations from the University of Southern Mississippi. She earned her Accreditation in Public Relations in 2007.



Leah Snyder, Community Service Chair, is president of East Beach Specialties, a promotional products distributor. Leah is Junior Warden at St. John's Episcopal Church, Ocean Springs and member of Rotary Club of Ocean Springs as well as Assistant District Governor of Rotary District 6840, Beach Territory. Leah enjoys yoga and spending time with her husband Joe and children, Brenda and Sam.

Canned Food Drive

Food Pantries everywhere are in short supply of food. Please bring canned or other non-perishable foods to our January or February meetings. Monetary donations are also welcome. Donations will be distributed to local food pantries. For more information contact Community Service Chair Leah Snyder eastbeach@cablone.net
Thanks!

2009 PRAM MS Beach Invoices Coming Soon

It's 2009 and the start of another great year for PRAM MS Beach. With the beginning of each new year, members receive invoices to renew their membership for our chapter. This year's invoices will be distributed on Tuesday, Jan. 6, and payment must be submitted by February 9.

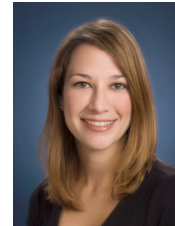
The invoice for this year is similar to the invoice used last year. The chapter is offering members the ability to pay either their annual dues or their annual dues *plus* the cost of the monthly lunch meetings for one year. There is also a discount to those who pay for their monthly lunch meetings in advance. Lunch meetings at the Great Southern Club regularly cost \$17 each month, but by paying for the entire year, members are only paying \$15 per lunch. Members will only have until February 9 to pay for the year's lunches in advance.

If you do not receive your invoice through e-mail or if you have any questions, please contact Charmaine Williams Schmermund at charmaine.williams@usm.edu.

Door Prizes for the January meeting are courtesy of Lynn Meadows Discovery Center, Domino's Pizza and Prime Outlets. Thank You!



For the past eleven years, Mary Anne Caldwell, Awards and Scholarship Chair, has been with the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center, Mississippi's only children's museum, since its opening as the Public Relations and Marketing Director. Her education degree from Ole Miss and her extensive experience in the travel and tourism industry have been important assets in her chosen profession. Working with a non-profit, Mary Anne understands how vital volunteers are for such groups to succeed and thus, she is a life member of the Junior Auxiliary of Biloxi-Ocean Springs, has been active with the Boy Scouts in Biloxi is passionate about literacy initiatives. Mary Anne recently received her APR designation.



April Lollar, APR, Accreditation Chair, has been employed as a Communications Specialist with Coast Electric Power Association since 2005. She also began her involvement in PRAM in 2005 and is happy to be holding an office for the first time. April received her APR designation in December of 2008 and looks forward to encouraging other members of the Mississippi Beach chapter to become APRs. April graduated from the University of Mississippi with a degree in journalism in 2000 and loves spending as much time as possible in Oxford and Vaught-Hemingway stadium. She is an avid reader and an aspiring author. April and her husband Neil live in Gulfport with their two furry children, Brutus and Colonel.



John McCollins, Newsletter Editor, has been with First American Printing and Direct Mail since 1999 as VP Sales & Marketing. Prior to moving to the Gulf Coast, John was the General Manager of a book printing company in Tallahassee, Florida and the Executive Vice President of a large commercial printer in his hometown of Milwaukee. He holds a business degree from the University of Wisconsin and an MBA from Marquette University.