

ACN

Assessment Council News

Newsletter of the IPMA-HR Assessment Council

August 2004

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IPMAAssessment
Council

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Presidential News and Views

Ilene Gast

The 2004 IPMAAC Conference— A Resounding Success!

As promised by our friends in Seattle, the sun shined brightly on IPMAAC between June 20 and 23. The locals kept complaining about the “heat wave.” Apparently, the temperature does not typically reach 87 degrees there. Those of us from warmer climates just shrugged our shoulders. The sun was not all that was shining, however, thanks to the 2004 Conference Dream Team. The Conference Program and Host Committees worked with IPMA-HR staff to produce a seemingly seamless end product, which was appreciated by many. Even with the distance that many people had to travel to reach Seattle and the tough economic times many agencies are facing, more than 200 people came to Seattle for the IPMAAC conference.

Conference Program Chairs **Jeanné Makiney** from CPS and **Julia McElreath** from U.S. Customs and Border Protection assembled an excellent line-up of pre-conference workshops, papers, symposia, and invited speakers and attended to on-site details without missing a beat. Each morning, the conference opened with thought provoking invited speakers. **Fritz Dragow** described the challenges and opportunities associated with internet testing; **Walter Borman** provided a comprehensive description of “organizational citizenship” performance, and **Dennis Joiner** described assessment center trends.

These plenary sessions were followed by a wealth of concurrent sessions, including such topics as trends in the field, legal issues, and the use and application of new technologies. Lunchtime roundtable discussions offered the opportunity for discussion on such issues as regional relations and weighting multiple examination components. The only complaint that I heard was that there were too many interesting sessions and that it was tough to choose. Not to worry folks, the number of presentations provided on the IPMAAC website (www.ipmaac.org) continues to grow.

The conference also provided many opportunities for conference goers to interact. The host committee, headed by **Oscar Spurlin** and **Carla Swander** from Erogmetrics, provided three fun-filled activities enjoyed by all IPMAAC’ers. The president’s reception held on Sunday night featured spectacular views of the Seattle sunset. The Western Region Intergovernmental Personnel Assessment Council (WRIPAC) sponsored a reception at the Triple Door Musicquarium on Monday night. To wind up the social activities with a splash, everyone danced the night away on a sold-out Argosy Dinner Cruise.

The contributions of **Neil Davidson** and his wife, **Carolyn** were without question indispensable. For months before the conference, Neil informed us all about the exciting city of Seattle. From drumming up interest in the pre-

(continued on next page)

President continued

sentations to obtaining sponsorship from Pacific Northwest companies such as: Costco, Seattle's Best, and REI, Neil's contributions were a big part of the outstanding attendance of the IPMAAC 2004 conference.

Finally, the fruits of long hours of behind the scenes work by **Shannon Adaway** and **Katie Pierce** of IPMAAC-HR, were realized in a wonderful conference venue, organized staff, and enjoyable social events.

Before I move on, I'd like to mention a few other conference highlights and notable events:

- The Bemis Award for outstanding contribution to the profession and its practitioners went to **Mary Anne Nester**, Chief of Entry-Level Selection Branch, Personnel Research and Assessment Division, U.S. Customs and Border Patrol.
- The Clyde Lindley Award for exceptional service went to **Paul Kaiser**, Director of CSC Operations, New York State Department of Civil Service.
- The student paper award went to **Kevin Bradley** for his research on the psychometric properties of personality inventories. His school, the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, received a plaque to commemorate Kevin's achievement.

- The Innovations in Assessment Award went the Safety Forces Testing Team for the Columbus, Ohio Civil Service Commission. **Elizabeth Reed** and **Laura Wright** accepted the award on the team's behalf.

IPMAAC Business

The annual conference also provides the setting for the first of IPMAAC's semi-annual Executive Board meetings and for IPMAAC's annual business meeting.

The election results were announced at the business meeting. Incoming President Elect, **Beverly Waldron** is no stranger to ACN readers. She served as the ACN editor for several years. Also joining the IPMAAC Executive Board will be **Inés Fraenkel** and **Roxanne Cochran**. Their terms begin in January 2005. At that time, this year's President-Elect, **David Hamill** will be taking over as IPMAAC President. He is still seeking assistance on many of the IPMAAC committees.

The business meeting also provides an opportunity to review progress and raise important issues. I am pleased to report that we have been able to achieve much of the work set out in the 2004 strategic plan. Some of our more significant achievements follow:

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- The Assessment Council News, under **Deonda Scott's** leadership continues to interest and inform us every two months. And the ECN, under **Bill Waldron's** leadership continues to grow in popularity, so much so that we may need to move to a larger server.
- Under **David Hamill's** leadership, the Membership and Committee Services Committee continues to work on ways to sustain and grow our membership. He will continue to be busy through the remainder of the year.
- The Professional and Scientific Affairs Committee, chaired by **Dennis Doverspike**, is on the verge of producing a monograph on Situational Judgment tests. Dennis is also contributing a regular column on assessment issues for the IPMA-HR news.
- The Training/Workshops Committee, lead jointly by **Kris Smith** and **Mabel Miramon**, has prepared a strategic plan for updating IPMAAC's training function. In addition to looking at the market for existing IPMAAC courses, they will examine ways in which distance learning technology can be used to bring training to those who need it.
- Thanks to **Harry Brull's** outstanding leadership last year in 2003, we are in good shape financially. Our

reserves are continuing to grow. With the generous donation that Harry announced in his presidential address last year, we have established a donor-advised fund. In addition to the \$50,000 in the fund, Harry has generously offered to match another \$50,000 in contributions to the IPMAAC fund. We will be launching a capital campaign in the near future to raise this money. We are also establishing guidelines for the use of the fund.

- IPMAAC continues to partner with IPMA-HR. IPMAAC has contributed expertise to a number of IPMA HR-Committees, provided speakers for IPMA-HR International and regional conferences on assessment topics, and is working with the Federal Section on assessment-related sessions. **Jennifer French** is shepherding an effort to implement an alternate form of IPMA-HR's certification exam.

Again, thanks to all of you who came for making IPMAAC 2004 so successful and so memorable! I hope many of those who attended this year will experience the same kind of lasting value that Lee Friedman has described in his article, also in this issue of the ACN.

Now, let the countdown to IPMAAC's 2005 conference in Orlando begin!—ACN

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- **Personnel Report (Integrity/Ethics)**
- **In-depth Law Enforcement and Firefighter Personality Examinations**
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- **Fire Service Supervisor I and II**
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- **Promotional Oral Board Interview Programs**
- **Assessment Centers or 'Standalone' AC Components**
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- **Paramedic**
- **Online Exam Purchase, Administration, and Scoring**
- **Online Employment Applications**
- **Online Public Safety Morale and Community Surveys**
- **Job Analysis and Customized Exam Programs**

Technical Affairs

By Mike Aamodt, Associate Editor

This month's column contains some thoughts on introducing speakers as well as a piece of HR humor. If you have any questions you want answered, or have a piece of HR HUMOR to contribute, email them to me at maamodt@radford.edu. Don't make me have to come find you!

I'm Pleased to Introduce.....

I was putting the finishing touches on a column about reducing turnover when I took a break to give a talk at the monthly meeting of a local human resources group. My experience at that meeting motivated me to save the turnover column for the next ACN issue and provide some thoughts about the proper way to introduce speakers—especially ones that are speaking for free (well not exactly free, I did get a chicken lunch!). I thought the column might be useful, because many ACN readers either speak at such events or are called on from time-to-time to introduce speakers or trainers at professional and community meetings.

My experience the other day wasn't terrible, but it reminded me of an occasion a few years ago when I was asked to speak (for free again) at a local professional group. When I arrived at that meeting, I was told that the person who arranged for me to speak had a work-related emergency and would not be able to attend. No problem, I thought. The person probably arranged for someone else to introduce me. I enjoyed a good breakfast and some good conversation with the folks at my table but noticed that it was 8:15 a.m., and I had been told that the group ate at 7:30 and started the program at 8:00. By 8:25 I got a bit nervous because I was supposed to speak for 45 minutes and the meeting had to end by 9:00. I asked the people at the table when the program would start and they replied, "Good question. None of the officers are here who normally run the meeting." So, I stood up and said, "Let's get started this morning. Any business before I introduce myself—your speaker?" A few people made announcements and then I introduced myself, gave a short version of my talk, and closed the meeting. It didn't seem odd to anyone that a speaker who had never met anyone in the group before had actually run the meeting!

What's the big deal? For those of you who conduct training programs or do public speaking, the introduction is one of the most important aspects of the talk. It provides the speaker with credibility, signals the importance of the topic, and sets the tone for the talk. Furthermore, a properly prepared introduction shows the speaker that you appreciate the time he/she has spent preparing for and giving the talk to your group. A proper introduction makes a speaker's job easier, whereas a terrible introduction can ruin the talk. With that said, here is some advice working with and introducing speakers.

Prior to the Talk

1. Provide the speaker with details about what you expect. Important details include the desired length of the talk, the time at which the meeting will begin and end, and what you want the group to get from the talk (e.g., awareness, motivation, knowledge, a new skill).
2. Tell the speaker about your group. Do they tend to participate? Do they like humor? What types of presentations have been well received and poorly received in the past? For example, when planning programs for our Kiwanis club, I always told speakers that a few of our members would fall asleep right after dinner and to not take it personally. They have fallen asleep at meetings for 20 years and will probably do so for the next 20.
3. Find out what equipment the speaker needs and find a way to get it. When people are speaking for free, you should not expect them to drag their own equipment to the talk. Let the speaker know of any limitations. For example, if the laptop only has a CD drive, let the speaker know.
4. Find out how the speaker wants to be introduced and ask for a short bio. Do not ask for a resume. Most people who do a lot of speaking have a bio prepared that provides the information they want the audience to know.
5. Ask the speaker how to pronounce his/her name.
6. Send the speaker an email confirming the details of the talk as well as directions to the speaking location. Mention to the speaker how you want to handle handouts. That is, should the speaker email you a copy of the presentation so that you can make copies or would the speaker prefer to make the copies and be reimbursed?
7. Two days prior to the talk, call the speaker to confirm details. Such a phone call will also reassure the speaker that the equipment needed will be there and that the talk is still on.
8. Practice your introduction like you would a speech.

During the Meeting

1. Be there early to meet the speaker and have the audiovisual equipment already set up.
2. Help the speaker load the presentation if a computer is to be used and show the speaker how the equipment works.
3. Introduce the speaker to members of your group and be sure that the speaker has a good location to sit. That is,

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don't put the speaker at a table where he/she might be alone or at a table that makes it difficult to get to the location where the presentation will be made. Some speakers are socially self-sufficient and have no problem mingling, but there are many who need your social assistance.

4. If there is food at the meeting, be sure the speaker gets served first so that he/she will be finished eating well in advance of speaking.

The Introduction

The first purpose of an introduction is to get the attention of the audience and to signal that it is time to quit eating and talking to others at the table and time to listen. If you want the audience to continue eating during the talk, let them know that eating is ok.

The three goals to a good introduction are to motivate the audience to listen, establish the credibility of the speaker, and set the tone for the talk.

Motivating the Audience to Listen

An audience will be motivated to listen if the talk will do something for them. For example, an opening sentence might be, "Most of us have had the unfortunate experience of working with a difficult colleague. Tonight's speaker will provide us with some insight on how we can handle difficult employees" or "I think all of us have struggled with the new state disability law. Our speaker tonight will explain how to comply with the new law."

Establishing the Credibility of the Speaker

The key here isn't to recite everything about the speaker's life, but instead, to give the audience enough information to realize that the speaker actually knows something about the topic. Phrases such as, "Our speaker has 20 years experience preparing affirmative action plans" or, "Our speaker has written three books on employee selection" should do the trick. Ask the speaker what key information he/she wants included in the introduction. If you are reading from a bio given to you by the speaker, pretend you wrote the introduction. Never say, "Let me read you some information given to me by the speaker." When the accolades appear to come from you, the speaker looks good. If the audience thinks they came from the speaker, the speaker appears conceited.

If the speaker has some affiliation with your group, be sure to mention it. For example, I once spoke at a State IPMA meeting and included information in my bio that I had been a member of IPMAAC since 1985. The audience seemed to like the fact that I knew who they were.

Setting the Tone for the Talk

To make the speaker appear human, a few words on his/her personal life are often appropriate (e.g., married with a daughter in high school, likes to bowl, originally from this area but moved when he was five). However, any personal information should be given with a purpose, such as making the speaker appear likable or demonstrating the speaker's similarity to the audience. When using personal infor-

mation, be careful about stereotyping. A former student told me of a conference she attended in which the introductions for the women who spoke included family information whereas the introduction for the men included professional credentials.

A little humor in the introduction can establish that the tone of the talk will be light. Caution: Ask the speaker how he/she will begin their talk. If the speaker plans to use humor to start their talk, you don't want to use humor in the introduction and run the risk of stealing their thunder. Avoid using canned jokes (e.g., a rabbi, a priest, and an HR analyst went into a bar...) – they seldom work and can distract from the point of the introduction.

Have your introduction memorized and be energetic when making the introduction. After making the introduction, ask the audience to welcome the speaker and stay at the podium until the speaker gets there.

A Note to Speakers

It would be nice if introductions were always perfect, but the reality is that they often are not. It is a good idea to prepare your speaker's bio to send to the person who will introduce you. Keep it short enough that it will take only a minute or two to read. This bio can be customized for each talk by changing an item or two that you want emphasized. It is helpful to phonetically spell your name or title if you think it might be mispronounced. Be sure to bring a copy of your bio/introduction with you in case the person introducing you forgets their copy—an all too common occurrence.

I hope the above hints will prove useful. If you have some hints that I left out or have some good stories about bad introductions, send me an email, and I will include them in the next technical affairs column.

HR HUMOR

A big corporation recently hired several cannibals.

"You are all part of our team now," said the HR rep during the welcoming briefing.

"You get all the usual benefits, and you can go to the cafeteria for something to eat; but please do not eat any of the other employees." The cannibals promised they would not.

Four weeks later their boss remarked, "You're all working very hard, and I'm very satisfied with you. However, one of our secretaries has disappeared. Do any of you know what happened to her?" The cannibals all shook their heads no.

After the boss had left, the leader of the cannibals said to the others, "Which one of you idiots ate the secretary?"

A hand rose hesitantly, to which the leader of the cannibals shouted,

"You fool!!! For four weeks we've been eating managers and no one noticed anything. But nooooooo, you had to go and eat someone important. —ACN

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IPMAAC

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September 29, 2004
8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Town of Greenwich Town Hall
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Training and Experience Rating

September 30, 2004
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Planning Hiring and Promotional Assessments (Examination Planning) provides guidance on the development of employment and promotional assessments. Topics to be covered include: determining the adequacy of job analysis information, deciding what to measure in the selection process, documenting the examination plan, and planning for test development.

Training and Experience Rating is designed to be useful to assessment professionals at all levels. This seminar reviews basic concepts such as an overview of training and evaluation methods and the improved point method. The seminar also provides guidance on when to use a particular method and presents the most recent research evidence supporting use of T&Es.

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Only at an IPMAAC Conference

Lee Friedman
Chair, IPMAAC Student Paper Competition
Principal Consultant, SpecTal

When a speaker presents a paper at a conference, their **ultimate wish** is to get a large, captive audience that is engaged in the talk, provides valuable feedback, and is ready to put the speaker's words into action – to “spread the word.”

In my career, I have given numerous presentations at a variety of conferences. Yet, it was at IPMAAC that my **ultimate wish** came true. In June, 1992 at the IPMAAC Conference in Baltimore, I presented a talk on an assessment instrument that I developed with my two colleagues and co-authors Carl Cameron and Jennifer Fletcher. The purpose of this instrument was to assess accommodation needs for workers with severe disabilities in entry-level jobs. The practical value of the instrument in the workplace made it a great fit for IPMAAC. This is why a representative from The Psychological Corporation (Harcourt Brace & Company), Susana Lozada-Larsen, who was chairing a session at IPMAAC, invited me to speak at her session. At the session, I spoke about the approach that we took to develop

the instrument, as well as our ongoing plans and progress in validating it. Upon hearing the presentation, Susana saw potential in the instrument, and was later successful in getting The Psychological Corporation to support, and over time, publish and distribute our instrument, which came to be known as the Transition-to-Work Inventory (TWI). The TWI was published in 1996, and is still being published and distributed by The Psychological Corporation. I recall that after my IPMAAC talk, several people in the audience gave me wonderful advice with respect to a) the potential market for this instrument, b) the types of agencies, schools, and community service boards where we could collect more data for validation purposes, and c) differentiators of our instrument from others. This feedback ended up being invaluable in many ways.

In sum, thank goodness for the IPMAAC Conference. It is a forum for “real-world” personnel assessment that meets the needs of many, many HR professionals, and the workforce they serve.—ACN

IPMAAC Across the Nation – News of the Councils

By Kristine Smith, Associate Editor

American Psychological Association (APA)

Future conferences will be in Washington, D.C. from August 18-21, 2005; in New Orleans, Louisiana from August 10-13, 2006; and San Francisco, California from August 16-19, 2007. For more information, visit their website at www.apa.org as it is updated.

Bay Area Applied Psychologists (BAAP)

The BAAP sponsors a speaker once a quarter. The location varies, but the format involves networking from 6-7 p.m., followed by the speaker's presentation at 7 p.m. BAAP speakers are typically leaders in the field and deliver interactive presentations with plenty of group discussion. Check their website at www.baaponline.org for the most current information on upcoming events, speakers, and topics.

Chicago Industrial/Organizational Psychologists (CI/OP)

CI/OP is a society of human resources professionals from the Greater Chicago area who meet to discuss current issues in I/O psychology. CI/OP generally has Friday afternoon sessions from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. featuring several speakers addressing a topic. For more information and to confirm meeting dates and topics visit their website at www.iit.edu/~ciop/

Gateway Industrial-Organizational Psychologists (GIOP)

GIOP is a group of psychologists and human resources professionals in the metropolitan St. Louis area. The group consists of over 150 members and offers programs and conferences on a wide range of topics. For more information, visit the GIOP website at www.giop.org

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International Public Management for Human Resources (IPMA-HR)

The 28th Annual IPMAAC Conference, "Moving from Valleys to Vistas: Discovering Creative Solutions to Assessment Challenges." was a tremendous success. Many thanks to Program Committee Co-chairs Jeanne Makiney and Julia McElreath and to Host Committee Co-chairs Oscar Spurlin and Carla Swander. Presentation materials will be made available at ipmaac online so check for the latest updates! www.ipmaac.org

Metropolitan New York Association for Applied Psychology (METRO)

For more information, call the MetroLine at (212) 539-7593 or visit METRO's website at www.metroappsych.com.

Mid-Atlantic Personnel Assessment Consortium (MAPAC)

MAPAC is chartered as a non-profit organization of public sector personnel agencies involved and concerned with testing and personnel selection issues. For details on MAPAC, contact Amy Bauer at 410-545-5609, or visit the MAPAC website at www.ipmaac.org/mapac/

Minnesota Professionals for Psychology Applied to Work (MPPAW)

MPPAW is an organization consisting of a broad range of practitioners, consultants and professors. Information on MPPAW programs may be obtained from Sidney Teske at Sid.Teske@co.hennepin.mn.us

Personnel Testing Council of Arizona (PTC/AZ)

PTC-AZ serves as a forum for the discussion of current issues on personnel selection and testing. It encourages education and professional development in the field of personnel selection and testing and advocates the understanding and use of fair and professionally sound testing practices. For more information about PTC-AZ, contact Vicki Packman, Salt River Project at 602-236-4595 or vspackma@srpnet.com or visit the PTC/AZ website accessible through the IPMAAC website at www.ipmaac.org/ptcaz

Personnel Testing Council of Metropolitan Washington (PTC/MW)

PTC/MW offers monthly luncheon programs and publishes an informative newsletter. See the 2004 calendar for scheduled luncheon speakers or visit the PTC/MW website accessible through the IPMAAC website at www.ipmaac.org

Personnel Testing Council of Northern California (PTC/NC)

PTC/NC offers monthly training programs addressing topics and issues that are useful and relevant to personnel practitioners of all levels of expertise. The monthly programs are typically scheduled for the second Friday of each month and alternate between Sacramento and the Bay area. The monthly programs feature speakers who are active contributors to the personnel assessment field. For more information regarding PTC/NC programs, visit the PTC/NC website accessible through the IPMAAC website at www.ipmaac.org/ptnc

Personnel Testing Council of Southern California (PTC/SC)

PTC/SC serves as a forum for the discussion of current issues in personnel selection and testing; encourages education and professional development in the field of personnel selection and testing; advocates the understanding and use of fair and non-discriminatory employment practices; and encourages the use of professionally sound selection and testing practices. For more information regarding luncheon meetings, workshops, upcoming conferences, or membership, please contact Mike Wheeler at mwheeler@per.lacity.org or visit the PTC/SC website accessible through the IPMAAC website at www.ipmaac.org/ptcsc

Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM)

Contact www.shrm.org/education/ for a current listing of seminars and conferences.

Society of Industrial/Organizational Psychology (SIOP)

The 2005 conference is scheduled for April 15-17, 2005 in Los Angeles, California at The Westin Bonaventure.

Western Region Intergovernmental Personnel Assessment Council (WRIPAC)

WRIPAC is comprised of public agencies from the western region of the United States who have joined together to promote excellence in personnel selection practices. WRIPAC has three meetings each year that are typically preceded by a training offering. Additionally, WRIPAC has published a monograph series and job analysis manual. Additional information may be obtained by visiting WRIPAC's website accessible via the IPMAAC's website at www.ipmaac.org

Western Region Item Bank (WRIB)

WRIB is a cooperative organization of public agencies using a computerized test item bank. Services include draft test questions with complete item history, preparation of "printer ready" exams, and exam scoring and item analysis. Membership includes 190 agencies nationwide. For more information, contact Bridget Styers at (909) 387-5575 or bstyers@hr.co.san-bernardino.ca.us —ACN

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6-11: Academy of Management. Annual Meeting. New Orleans, LA. Contact: www.aomonline.org

11: PTC/MW Luncheon Meeting.

8-12: American Statistical Association. Annual Convention. Toronto, Canada. Contact: www.amstat.org

SEPTEMBER

8: PTC/MW Luncheon Meeting.

15: BAAP Meeting - Oakland. Speaker: Dr. Marcia Stone Straehley, "The Aging Workforce: Utilizing & Supporting Older Workers."

20-24: Human Factors & Ergonomics Society. Annual Meeting. New Orleans, LA Contact: <http://hfes.org>

29: WRIPAC Training. Squaw Valley, CA

29: IPMAAC/CPAS Seminar. "Examination Planning" Greenwich, CT

30: IPMAAC/CPAS Seminar. "Training and Experience Rating" Greenwich, CT

30-10/1: WRIPAC Meeting. Squaw Valley, CA.

OCTOBER

5-8: Development Dimensions International. International Congress on Assessment Center Methods. Las Vegas, NV. Contact: www.assessmentcenters.org

7-10: International Test Commission. Annual Conference. "Equitable Assessment Practices: Building Guidelines for Best Practices" Williamsburg, VA. Contact: www.intestcom.org

13: PTC/MW Breakfast Workshop.

16-20: IPMA-HR Annual Conference. Phoenix, AZ. Contact: www.ipma-hr.org

18-20: IPMAAC/CPAS Seminar: "Training and Experience Rating" Lakeland, FL.

28-30: PTC/SC Fall Conference.

(Some of the information in this calendar was reprinted with permission from the PTC/MW Newsletter which was compiled by Lance W. Seberhagen, Seberhagen & Associates.)

Kristine Smith is a Senior Associate with Darany and Associates in Redlands, California. If you have regional organization news or an item to add to the calendar, please contact her by e-mail at smithk1@earthlink.net or by telephone at (909) 798-4475.—ACN

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About the *ACN*

The *ACN* is the official newsletter of the International Public Management Association Assessment Council, an association of individuals actively engaged in or contributing to the professional, academic and practical field of personnel research and assessment. The Council has approximately 700 members.

The *ACN* is published six times a year during the even months of the year. It serves as a source of information about significant activities of the council, a medium of dialogue and information exchange among members, a method for dissemination of research findings and a forum for the publication of letters and articles of general interest.

Submissions for Publication: Assessment Council members and others with letters or articles of interest are encouraged to submit materials for review and publication. Submission deadlines for 2004 are:

October issue is due on September 3

December issue is due on November 5

Articles and information for inclusion in the sections (*News of the Councils, Technical Affairs, Public Sector Practice Exchange*) should be submitted directly to the Associate Editor responsible for the appropriate section. Submissions may also be made to the Editor.

If you have questions or need further information please contact the Editor, Associate Editors, or IPMA-HR.

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