

December 2009

## Letter from the President



I love magazines. I love keeping up with what's current, what's new and everything that's out there. The perfect sofa. A great use of color. A vignette that pleases the eye. A new product that does the job better while looking good at the same time. I can hardly wait to turn the pages and be inspired.

Of course I love my home now. I have been lucky to have been able to "do" my house the way I want. Having a budget restricts you, yet it lets you be creative. But I am always dreaming of the next house, the perfect home. It's a curse but it's also a blessing.

So that is why I LOVE my job!! I get to design the perfect home, or office or corporate campus every time we start a new job. I look forward to the day. I look forward to solving problems and making things come out right. What a joy it is to work hard, make a difference and enjoy it along the way.

I have also found a passion in Executive Women International. It's not just a networking venue. We get to make a difference. We get to help solve problems in the community. Sometimes it's hard work but we enjoy it. We've made friends and found support in our professional lives.

So this IS the perfect women's group for me. Thank you all for being a part of EWI and my life!

Sincerely, Jenny

## OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

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Design Elements

**Christy Olson**, VP / President-Elect  
Advanced Computer Solutions

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& Means Directors  
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**Carol Reniger**, Director-at-Large  
Baskets n' Bows

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## December Chapter Meeting

Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Program: Annual Holiday Boutique  
& Business Meeting

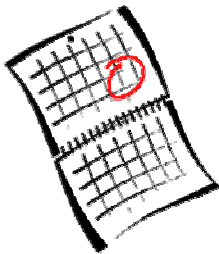
Location: University Club at CSUN, Northridge

Schedule: 6:00 Networking & Holiday Boutique  
7:00 Dinner & Program

Cost: \$35 per person

Reservations: RSVP to Bonnie Ryder at (818) 509-2072 or  
bonnie\_ryder@hiltonuniversal.com

*Members have a standing reservation for the monthly chapter meetings. Unless you RSVP by the date required, you will be billed the standard dinner charge of \$35.*



## Plan Ahead for the January Meeting

Date: Tuesday, January 12, 2010

Program: TBD

Location: TBD  
TBD

Schedule: 6:00 Networking  
7:00 Dinner & Program

Cost: \$35 per person

Reservations: RSVP to Bonnie Ryder at (818) 509-2072 or  
bonnie\_ryder@hiltonuniversal.com

*Members have a standing reservation for the monthly chapter meetings. Unless you RSVP by the date required, you will be billed the standard dinner charge of \$35.*

## Tributes

If you wish to send a tribute ***In Honor of*** or ***In Memory of*** someone special, please send the information and your donation to:

Carol Reniger  
Baskets n' Bows  
3150 Travis Avenue  
Simi Valley, CA 93063

## BOARD MEETING RECAP

Report of the November meeting of the SFV Chapter Board of Directors:

**Treasurer's Report** – Balances of the Chapter accounts as of 10/31/09: General Account: \$13,316.30; BCDP Account: \$62.30.

**Membership Development** – Need additional members to post and join!

**Program** – Working on finalizing programs for 2010.

**Ways & Means** – We made \$735 from raffle prizes and Windfall at the November meeting. Bring Raffle prizes to the meetings! Madeline Irons and Julie Aldrich will remind firms that volunteered to bring prizes.

**Sergeant-At-Arms** - There were 16 active members in attendance representing 15 out of 17 member firms, or 88%. Three sustaining members and 42 guests were also in attendance.

## MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Don't forget that you get \$50 CASH for each new member you bring into our Chapter in 2009. At the end of the year, the member that brought in the most new members gets an additional \$100 CASH!

## A Strong Leader Understands Employee Behaviors

By Garth Roberts, Leadership Coach and Trainer, Taken from connectitnews.com

American actress Mae West is quoted as saying, "The best way to behave is to misbehave." That may have worked for Mae West, but it won't work on the job. Most companies want behavior that inspires productivity, performance, and, of course, profit.

Defined as observable activity in people and animals, behavior can be broken into five categories:

**1. Behavior is observable.** An employee comes in late, doesn't complete assigned tasks and takes every opportunity to enjoy a break. As a manager, you observe these behaviors and probably get ticked off. Your emotions get you grumbling, making comments to stimulate a change and adding stress to your life.

But do you take action? Wait. Don't let your emotions rule. Instead, observe these behaviors and put a plan in place to find out why the employee is acting this way. There may be a logical reason.

**2. Behavior is situation-based and can vary from one situation to the next.** The person who is a star employee in one situation can be dead weight in another. If someone's performance varies that much, you need to stop and assess the situation to determine what causes the variance.

Does the new task require a giant performance leap? Have you truly given adequate and proper direction? Have you allowed the opportunity to ask questions?

**3. Behavior can be flexible, even within a single situation.** You give an employee a task and feel he's on the right path, then you notice things aren't getting done. Flexible behavior can indicate a variety of things, including lack of knowledge, lack of motivation, reluctance to change, or other problems that require further investigation.

**4. Behavior is dynamic and always changing.** While psychologists may say behavior patterns are set at a very young age, we continue to change and adjust our behavior throughout our lives. Family situations, financial crises, physical or mental challenges and something as simple as boredom all affect our behavior.

Is the once-dynamic employee bored with her job? How about your fantastic team leader? Have you made changes that are negatively affecting his performance?

**5. Our behavior is based on our thoughts and beliefs.** Pause for a moment and think back to when you were a teenager. Do you have the same beliefs today? Probably not, particularly if you're the owner of the business, and you're trying to motivate your employees to have the same degree of enthusiasm you have. Could anyone but you motivate you when you were a teenager? No. You were motivated when someone inspired you to complete a task or take on a new job.

As a leader, your job is to inspire employees so they have the same vested interest in doing a great job and moving the company forward as you do.

### Birthdays & Anniversaries

#### Happy Birthday!

Ann Simic      12/11

#### Happy Anniversary!

None for December

## Holiday Entertaining Tips

By Debi Lilly, Event Planner, taken from womenworking.com

**The holiday season is the perfect time to celebrate with friends and family. Debi Lilly offers a no-fail strategy for hosting with minimal effort and maximum fun.**

### Design a fresh theme.

A champagne and sweets party is a festive idea. Set up a champagne bar with Prosecco, a rose champagne, and a regular champagne for tasting. You don't often have a chance to sit and drink champagne the way you would wine so it's a unique idea. Plus it's easy and self-serve. For sweets, try the hot trend right now—a mini dessert bar. Have petite cupcakes or take five different glass bowls and fill each one with a different bite-size cookie. Create labels on your computer and stick them on each jar.

### Embrace tradition.

Most people today skip formal invitations in lieu of impersonal e-vites. But it's so special to receive a traditional invitation in the mail and it makes a great keepsake of the event. Purchase invitations from a store two to three weeks before the event. Or make your own—pick winter colors like white, silver, red, or gold, use simple cards, then tie a satin or silk ribbon around them in a pretty knot. Hand-write the details for that personal touch, and pop them in the mail.

### Keep it simple.

Decorating can be as easy as a few thoughtful details. Pull a big white platter from your pantry and arrange a dozen white pillar candles of all different sizes. Scatter pinecones from your yard around the candles. Buy a few holiday ornaments in coordinating colors and scatter them around the house, along with some votive candles on the windowsills, tables, and the mantel. Finish it off with red and white roses and spread the petals all around.

### Make it warm and welcoming.

Light one or two scented candles so that as soon as your guests walk in the door they'll be drawn into your house by the aroma. And be absolutely dressed and ready to go one full hour before your party starts. No matter where you live, people will arrive early, and there's nothing as unwelcoming as a hostess answering the door in her bathrobe without any makeup.

### Allow plenty of time.

Have everything ready the day before except for the things that can't be, like food. Rely on catering or buy dishes that are ready to pop in the oven and heat so that you're not making everything from scratch. It's very evident to guests as they walk in that your energy is zapped if you've spent the last twenty-four hours frantically preparing.

### Relax and enjoy!

As the hostess, you should be able to spend time with your guests. They came to see you, not watch you slaving away in the kitchen. Keep everything on a buffet, have dishes that are served at room temperature, set up a bar where people can serve themselves and let the celebration begin!

## She Said It...

"It is only through disruptions and confusion that we grow, jarred out of ourselves by the collision of someone else's private world with our own."

- Joyce Carol Oates

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### December 8, 2009

SFV Chapter Meeting  
Annual Holiday Boutique  
6:00 pm

### December 10, 2009

LA Chapter Meeting  
6:00 pm  
Info at [executivewomenla.org](http://executivewomenla.org)

### December 15, 2009

SFV Board Meeting  
6:00 pm

### January 12, 2010

SFV Chapter Meeting  
TBD  
6:00 pm

### January 14, 2010

LA Chapter Meeting  
6:00 pm  
Info at [executivewomenla.org](http://executivewomenla.org)

### January 19, 2010

SFV Board Meeting  
6:00 pm

### September 2010

Leadership Conference &  
Annual Meeting  
Kansas City, Missouri  
Info at [executivewomen.org](http://executivewomen.org)

## Welcome Reniger Financial & Insurance Services!



Hal Reniger is an independent Retirement & Estate Planning specialist. Proudly independent, Hal works for his clients; not for an insurance company or a securities brokerage house.

He specializes in Exit strategies, along with common-sense areas of Estate and Retirement planning often ignored by many financial planners. He is qualified to discuss all forms of retirement plans, IRAs and annuities, along with long-term care insurance, including the California Partnership.

When he had a real job, prior to 1993, Hal enjoyed a successful career of nearly 20 years in management positions with manufacturing companies ranging from Fortune 500 to closely held private corporations. His experience includes strategic planning, acquisitions, and start-ups in markets throughout the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. It is that experience that gives him an edge over financial planners, and provides additional insight and benefits for his clients.

Hal is very active in the community being a member of the Rotary Club of Simi Sunrise, and serves on the Ventura County Star Editorial Board's Community Advisory Board, and the Youth Employment Service Board in Simi Valley.

He and Carol have been married for 34 years and have two grown sons.



## Welcome Sandra Ker from Topaz Lighting!

Sandra Ker joined Topaz Lighting in August of 2007 where she works as a Purchasing Agent. Throughout her career, she has dabbled in accounting, warehousing, manufacturing and human resources, but the majority of her experience has been in the field of purchasing. She has worked in retail, wholesale and manufacturing environments.

Sandra has been married to Ricky for 33 years and has one dog, Dusty Rose, who is three years old.

## Make an Impression

Leil Lowndes, President, Applause Inc., taken from [womenworking.com](http://womenworking.com)

December brings lots of social obligations—and with it lots of opportunities to connect with new friends and potential business contacts. To make the most of this holiday season, communications expert Leil Lowndes offers insider tricks that will help you work any room, charm every guest and leave a lasting impression at your next event.

### How to Navigate a Large Party

Remember that every big function starts out as an intimate affair. So grit your teeth, swallow your instincts, and go early. When you're among the first to arrive, you'll have the chance to meet everybody who's there. As the party grows you'll have a built-in group to hang with and to introduce you to other guests.

### How to Break the Ice

Asking questions about someone's last few hours is a great way to kick-start the conversation. It may sound silly to you, but this is not 'small' talk to her. Why? Because those details are still on her mental windshield and the time proximity makes them loom larger than they really are. She'll love talking about it because she's so close to the experience.

### How to Make Your Handshake Stand Out

To create an instant connection with a new acquaintance ever-so-lightly place your forefinger on his wrist vein so he feels the warmth of your body flowing into his. Sliding your hand into his far enough to reach his pulse forces your webs to touch, which is another sign of a great handshake.

### How to Present Your Business Card

Your card is an extension of yourself so hand it over with pride. Take it gently out of an attractive carrying case and present it horizontally, with the script facing the recipient. Hold it just a bit higher than usual—not in their face—but at a height where he/she could almost read it.

### How to Accept a Business Card

To make the giver feel valued don't just glance at their card and quickly stash it away. Hold it with both hands and examine it with care. Then switch to holding the card with one hand, but continue holding it at waist level or just below. Every so often look down at it.

### How to Tactfully Change the Subject

Stuck in a tired conversation about the weather (*snore*)? Change the subject by repeating or rephrasing the last word or phrase the person said, and then tie it to yours. For example, say "On rainy weekends, I usually go to the movies. In fact, just last week I saw one called..." If you allude to what someone else just said, people won't even notice the shift.

### How to Make a Great Last Impression

The next time you meet someone, make a note of how enthusiastic you sounded when you said hello. When it comes time to say good-bye, boost your energy level up a tad higher and make your 'bye' as big as your 'hi'.

## Language Lesson

**Use body language to your advantage—these tricks of the trade will subtly send signals to your fellow party goers.**

### Wave to imaginary friends.

When you face a daunting swarm of strangers, don't stop at the door with a terrified expression. Glide right in and gleefully wave either between bodies at imaginary people or at a real person across the room. It gets you into the crowd looking popular and confident, and that makes you feel popular and confident!

### Reach out, then pull back.

To show you like someone without being forward, extend your arm as though you are going to touch their arm to express fondness or sympathy. Then, as though realizing the possible inappropriateness of the gesture, pull back. This subtle technique, when executed innocently demonstrates affection, respect, and decorum.

### Nod up, not down.

To convey confidence when expressing acceptance or agreement, begin with your chin parallel to the floor. Then, lift it up and bring it back to normal several times. Blend this confident move with other warm gestures and people will appreciate such an authoritative looking person agreeing with them.

### Elevate yourself.

Sitting in an elevated seat generates subconscious respect for you and your ideas. Arrive at meetings early to find or create the highest perch. At casual social gatherings choose the highest seat in the living room. Half-sitting on a couch arm works well in short discussions. When people have to physically look up to you, it carries over into psychologically looking up to you.

### Take the "success seat".

Sitting directly to the right of the host, honored guest, or most admired person at a dinner or meeting holds unspoken status and will subliminally increase people's perception of you.

## Pictures from November's Firm Recognition Night



Our wonderful door prizes – A big “thank you” to all who donated!



Our wonderful door prizes – A big “thank you” to all who donated!



Our beautiful centerpieces by Carol Reniger



Representatives from Los Angeles Reading Radio Service, one of our charitable giving recipients



2 of our 4 ASIST scholarship recipients



Our guest speaker – John Kobylt from KFI's “The John and Ken Show”

## SAN FERNANDO VALLEY CHAPTER MEMBER FIRMS

**Advanced Computer Solutions**  
**Allen Stith Video Production**  
**Baskets n' Bows Inc.**  
**Brick Elm Staffing Solutions**  
**Design Elements**  
**Ernst & Young LLP**  
**First Private Bank & Trust**  
**Hilton Los Angeles/Universal City**  
**Lee Wayne Corporation**  
**Mid Valley Properties**  
**Northridge Hospital Medical Center**  
**NumberCrunchers**  
**Reniger Financial & Insurance Services**  
**Schrillo Company**  
**Telling Insurance Agency**  
**Topaz Lighting**  
**Willett Travel**

### SUSTAINING MEMBERS

**Annette Drake**  
**Patricia Fulton**  
**Shirley Stark**

## She Said It...

"You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, "I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along." You must do the thing you think you cannot do."

- Eleanor Roosevelt

" Many persons have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification but through fidelity to a worthy purpose."

- Helen Keller

## Membership Postings

When the posting of a prospective new member firm has been made in the Chapter publication or notification sent by a special mailing and no written objections are received from an Executive of a member firm within 10 days of posting, the firm may be contacted to join our Chapter. If an objection is received, a reason must accompany the objection so the Board of Directors can investigate. The Board of Directors has the authority to rule on the validity of any objections and accept or decline them.

There are no postings for December.

## November Raffle Results

| Item                     | Donated By                  | Won By            |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Jewelry                  | Cheryl Conhaim              | Julie Aldrich     |
| Design Remix             | Design Elements             | Cheryl Conhaim    |
| Coldwater Spa Gift Card  | Mid Valley Properties       | Christy Olson     |
| Night at Hilton & Brunch | Hilton Universal City       | Christy Olson     |
| Bass Pro Shop Gift Card  | Topaz Lighting              | Ann Simic         |
| iPod                     | Advanced Computer Solutions | Maggie Kestly     |
| Cappuccino Machine       | Schrillo Company            | Nancy Walsh       |
| Gift Basket              | Baskets n' Bows             | Blanca Echeverria |
| Candle Trio              | Northridge Hospital         | Marchell Peterson |
| Gift Basket              | Willett Travel              | Mary Fischer      |
| Gift Basket              | First Private Bank & Trust  | Christy Olson     |
| Cuddler                  | Lee Wayne                   | Priscilla Lerma   |

**Blanca Echeverria, CTC**  
**Director of Group Operations**

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Have your ad or business card run in our monthly **CHAPTER PULSE**.

**The annual fee is as follows:**

Business Card Size      \$30/year\*  
Half Page Ad              \$50/year\*  
Full Page Ad              \$60/year\*

New member firms get the first two months free (\$25)!!

The **CHAPTER PULSE** is published monthly by the Publication Committee. The deadline for all submissions to be printed in the newsletter is the 25th of the month.

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\* Charges will be prorated on a quarterly basis