

The Association for Proposal Management Professionals - Houston



Final Draft

2010 Meetings

Houston Chapter

- [Chapter Meeting](#)
Wed., Feb 3, 11 AM-1 PM
Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.
Lubbock Conference Room,
[10777 Westheimer Rd](#)
3rd Floor, Houston, Texas
Seating is limited; RSVP by
Monday, Feb 1, to Janet
Dodd: janet.dodd@kbr.com
- **Board Meeting**
Wed., Mar 3, 2010 11 AM-1 PM
AECOM
5757 Woodway #101
Houston
- [Chapter Meeting](#)
Wed., April 7, 11 AM-1 PM

[First Annual Texas All-Star Symposium](#)

- **Friday, Mar 5, 2010**
Sheraton Houston
Brookhollow Hotel
3000 North Loop West
Houston, Texas 77092

[Central Texas Chapter](#)

- **2010 Chapter Meetings**
February 4, May 6, August 5,
and November 4
- **2010 Board Meetings**
April 1, July 1, and October 7

[Lone Star Chapter](#)

- **No updates**

[Greater Midwest Chapter](#)

- **No updates**

Get Along Little Doggies

February 3 Meeting Presenter: Jeannette Waldie, APM.APMP

Do you find yourself putting in lots of hours at the end of a proposal because your team hasn't submitted information on time? Do you find yourself regularly re-scheduling your reviews because you haven't received write-ups? This is a problem proposal professionals face, whether a coordinator, manager or consultant. Without good team and content management, a proposal team's amount of overtime increases, errors increase, and there is a greater risk of discontinuity in the content.

This presentation will provide valuable techniques to manage proposal teams of any size and obtain proposal content in a timely manner. Real-world examples from proposals will be included along with tips and tricks to greatly reduce your stress and



Jeannette Waldie

the amount of overtime your teams work.

Jeannette Waldie, APM.APMP, is author of "The Proposal Lone Ranger" column in the APMP Perspective. An APMP member since 2001, she has more than 15 years' experience in developing and managing commercial and government proposals, where she has worked both as a Proposal Lone Ranger as well as part of small to large proposal centers. President of the Greater Houston Chapter Board, Jeannette has a

[\(Continued on page 8\)](#)

The Book Review

By Jon Williams

Early on when running a proposal, I ask members of the team to visualise success. If they all have a clear and consistent picture in mind of "what good would look like", then the chances of them "doing good stuff" will be that much higher. The process should be less painful, too, as they work with a common goal to which they've each committed.

One team I worked with recently was struggling to get their minds in gear on this topic. We'd tried the usual tricks: we'd brainstormed, we'd used post-its, we'd visualised the evaluators reading the document, we'd drawn pictures – but to no avail: nothing really clicked.

So I tried an alternative approach the following morning. I copied

[\(Continued on page 7\)](#)

In This Issue ...

From the Prez	2
Resize Digital Pictures	2
Pictures Really Are Worth A Thousand Words	3
Protect the Apostrophes	3
Book Review	4
Secret to Saving \$\$\$ on Your Next Project	6
Texas Symposium Info	7
Final Notes	8

From the Prez: New Year Gratitude

Depending on the market you serve, the last two months of the year was probably a hectic time for you. I know that the pace definitely picked up for me! It can be difficult to remember what is good about our profession and our life when we feel we are working with our nose to the ground. So I thought I would take a moment and write about what I am grateful for in this New Year:

- Discovering “Folk Alley,” a web radio station that plays my style of music 24/7. It just helps the work go more smoothly.
- Two wonderful sons who have learned to adapt to Mom’s crazy schedule.
- A job where 12 hours a day is the exception, not the norm. (Yes, Virginia! Such jobs do exist.)
- An amazing chiropractor who was able to stop my back from hurting.
- Friends who allow me to vent when I am working on a frustrating proposal.

- Friends who remind me to laugh when I am working on a frustrating proposal.
- All the proposal colleagues who have become friends over the years.
- APMP for being such a great resource.
- The wonderful folks who serve on the Greater Houston Chapter Board. They make my job easy.
- All of the members and friends of the Greater Houston Chapter who have made my life richer.

I hope you will join us for our February Meeting. We will have a special drawing: Free registration to the 2010 APMP Texas All-Star Symposium on March 5th. The one-day conference will be at the Sheraton Houston Brookhollow Hotel and will be a very informative day. If you register before January 31, cost is only \$95 for APMP members (\$125 for non-members). After January 31, registration is \$125 for APMP members and \$155 for

non-members. Postsecondary students receive the \$95 rate. For more information, go to www.apmptexas.org.

I would like to welcome Pamela Buckley to the Chapter Board as our new vice president. Pamela is a former member of the Raleigh, North Carolina, APMP chapter and wanted to participate more in our chapter. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge Monica Williamson. She has served as vice president on our board for the past four years and brought lots of great ideas to the table. Thank you, Monica!

Happy New Year! See you soon!



Jeannette Waldie, APM.APMMP
President, Greater Houston APMP Chapter

Resize Digital Pictures for eMailing

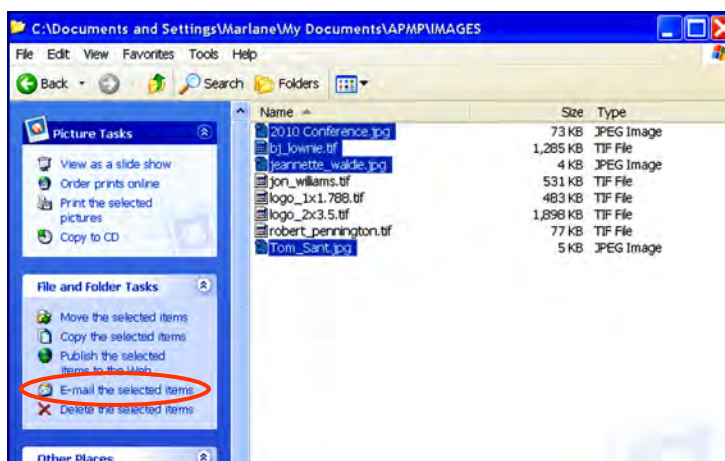
By David Wallis

Large groups of digital photographs are typically too big to email and it’s time consuming to convert each one to lower resolution using image editing software. Fortunately, Windows XP has a built-in image resizing utility that can quickly and easily resize a large batch of digital picture files at once. Follow these steps:

1. Open Windows Explorer.

2. Make sure the Tasks pane is visible. (Click the Folders button if the Tree pane is showing.)

3. Open the folder containing the digital pictures you want to resize. Select the group.



4. Under the File And Folder Task list, select the E-Mail The Selected Items command.

5. When you see the Send Pictures Via E-Mail dialog box, click the Show More Options link to expand the dialog box.

6. Select one of the available sizes and click OK. A new mail message window containing the resized digital pictures as attachments will appear.

Extra tip: If you want to save the images rather than email them, simply “Save Attachments.”

About David Wallis

David Wallis is a senior proposal manager for [Halliburton](http://Halliburton.com)’s Global Business and Technical Solutions team. He has created and regularly delivers proposal training throughout

Halliburton.

He has more than 10 years of experience with large oilfield services tenders and is a member of APMP’s Houston. Chapter.

Pictures Really Are Worth A Thousand Words

By Dr. Tom Sant

Reprinted here with permission from The Sant Corporation, *Messages That Matter Blog* at <http://messagesthatmatter.blogspot.com/>

In the 1920s, Fred Barnard, an advertising executive, tried to convince his customers that adding pictures to the placards in streetcars would make their ads more effective. As evidence, he cited a Chinese proverb: “A picture is worth ten thousand words.” Thus a cliché entered the English language—although the ratio of words to picture was mysteriously reduced by a factor of 10 along the way.

What the Chinese characters that Barnard showed actually state is something a bit



Dr. Tom Sant

different. They literally say, “A picture’s meaning can express ten thousand words.”

That’s a different claim, one that emphasizes the interdependence of words and graphics. Properly chosen, words and graphics can combine to create a powerful message that transcends either medium alone.

For years I’ve cited a study done by the University of Minnesota that showed adding a graphic to a piece of text increases the perceived persuasiveness of the text by 47%. I’ve urged people to include graphics in their proposals, particularly in the presentation of their value proposition. There’s nothing you want to be more persuasive than your value proposition, so that’s the place to show the bar chart, the trend curve, or the pie chart to illustrate the positive impact your solutions will have.

The value of good graphics has long been understood in other fields. Attorneys spend huge amounts to create video simulations and graphic displays to influence juries. In one notorious instance, John Gotti’s defense attorney stood before the jury with a simple table showing the names of all seven witnesses who had testified against the mob boss. All seven had become government informants, receiving immunity in exchange for their testimony. In the table, Gotti’s attorney listed all the crimes they had committed, including multiple counts of murder, kidnapping, extortion, bribery, and more. In total they had 69 different convictions. The graphic’s meaning was clear. The witnesses were sleazebags, felons and thugs; their testimony was worthless. Interestingly, this chart was the only piece of evidence the jury asked to review during their deliberations. Gotti was acquitted.

This vivid and disturbing example of the persuasive power of a good graphic comes from Edward Tufte’s *Visual Explanations: Images and Quantities, Evidence and Narrative*. This is one of the four books he has written on the art and power of effective visual display. (The other three are *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information*, *Envisioning Information*, and *Beautiful Evidence*.) Tufte has become almost a cult figure for his insightful and provocative opinions about the potential for excellent graphics—charts, illustrations, and so on—to

Protect the Apostrophes

By Rhonda Cavender
Shea Writing and Training Solutions,
Inc.



Rhonda Cavender discussing grammar tips at the December APMP Houston meeting

In December, Grammar Goddess Rhonda Cavender gave APMP-Greater Houston Chapter meeting attendees helpful grammar tips. In this follow-up article, she issues a call to action to protect apostrophes.

The holidays are over, and with all of the turkey, dressing, cookies, and pie that I have consumed, you would think that I would be feeling pretty mellow. But no, a grammar goddess’ work is never done! And just in case you find a grammar and/or punctuation error in this article, I left it in on purpose. Or not.

Yes, I’m a nut for correct grammar and punctuation. I admit it. But did you know that there is actually an organization called

[\(Continued on page 5\)](#)

[Continued on page 5](#)

Book Review: The Complete Idiot's Guide to Getting Government Contracts

By Dr. Pam Buckley

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Getting Government Contracts
(Published by Alpha, a division of Penguin, \$19.95)
Author: John C. Lauderdale III

In this book, the author describes in complete and practical detail from an insider's perspective how to navigate the complex intricacies of doing business with federal, state, and local governments. Although the emphasis is on doing business with the federal government, most of the information is relevant to state and local governments as well. He explains how to identify and, in some cases, influence contracting opportunities; establish winning proposal themes; build and manage a suc-

cessful proposal team; know when to bid; know when to partner; and follow-through after the competition.

Mr. Lauderdale has included special tips, insider information, common pitfalls, and government contracting jargon gained from his more than 20 years of proposal and project management experience in the telecommunications industry. These highly useful insights are presented in sidebars throughout the chapters and enhance the information provided in the text. Appendix A contains an extensive glossary of common acronyms along with their definitions to



[\(Continued on page 6\)](#)

The Secret to Saving \$\$\$ on Your Next Project

By Mike Parkinson

Reprinted with permission from [Billion Dollar Graphics \(BDG\) blog](#) March 2008.
<http://billiondollargraphics.blogspot.com>

You have a new presentation or proposal to do. Where will you spend the most money? I'm guessing your answer is labor cost. The author (s) of the presentation or proposal spend countless hours coming up with the best way to show that you and your company are the best-of-the-best. Your presentation or proposal needs to show that you have the winning solution so you or your team write, tweak, rewrite, rearrange, and review again and again to get it right. That costs a lot of money.

How do you spend less money (and time)? Visualize the solution first. It is guaranteed to work and here is why:

1. It helps you find holes. You can see where there is a gap in logic, the process, and/or the solution.

2. It Gets everyone on the same page—fast. Everyone has to agree to this approach early in the development vs. later, which creates much more work.

3. If you and your team can visualize the solution, you can quickly write to it. You can paint a vivid picture and tell a compelling story that is unforgettable.

Simply make a rough sketch (no art degree needed) that you can explain to anyone. Stick figures are fine. The intent is to make sure that everyone involved (you, your team, your boss) pictures the same thing.

We are visual creatures. We remember and connect with imagery far better than facts and figures. Painting a picture that tells a story is the fastest way to success. Andy Bounds, the author of *The Jelly Effect: How to make your communication stick* said it best when he stated, "Facts tell and stories sell."

In addition to lowering cost, visualizing the solution first has other benefits which include:



Mike Parkinson

increased moral, less miscommunication, better teamwork, and more time to focus on other important tasks that inevitably pop up.

Visualize the solution first and I guarantee that your labor costs will drop.

About Mike Parkinson

Mike Parkinson is an internationally recognized visual communications expert and APMP Fellow. He is a partner at 24 Hour Company (www.24hrco.com) specializing in bid-winning proposal graphics. His Billion Dollar Graphics website (www.BillionDollarGraphics.com) and *Billion Dollar Business Graphics* book

share best practices and helpful tools with proposal professionals. Contact Mike at mike@24hrco.com or call 703.533.7209.

Editor's note: Now earn 5 to 10 continuing education units through APMP by attending Mike Parkinson's trainings on conceptualizing proposal graphics. Contact Mike for more information. 24 Hour Company also provides free onsite training: <http://www.24hrco.com/designing.shtml>.

Apostrophes

[\(Continued from page 3\)](#)

the Apostrophe Protection Society? Yes, really. Their web address is <http://www.apostrophe.org.uk/>. The site includes



December meeting attendees correcting grammar and punctuation in a letter to Santa

numerous photos of apostrophe errors that devotees have submitted to reveal how regularly this little punctuation mark has been abused. The site's purpose is to preserve the correct use of the apostrophe in all forms of

text written in the English language. You must be careful, though. The website is UK-based, so some of the rules that are discussed do not necessarily align with American usage. It's never easy, is it? Check your *Chicago Manual of Style* or Alred's *Handbook of Technical Writing* if you are not sure.

One of my favorite, but most pain-invoking Christmas decorations is a beautifully hand-painted, ceramic house. In front of the house is a sign. It reads: "The Cavender's."

AUGHH! This year I finally used some white-out to mark out that persnickety little apostrophe. The Cavender's what? Does the Cavender own something? Probably. But it isn't explained on that little sign. If the Cavenders live in that house, there is no need for an apostrophe. Do you feel my pain?

Here are some rules to follow if you care about using apostrophes correctly:

[\(Continued on page 7\)](#)

Pictures

[\(Continued from page 3\)](#)

convey content quickly, persuasively and powerfully.

Tufte can be cranky in his opinions. He has attacked PowerPoint as evil, argues that most of the illustrations in the New York Times and USA Today are filled with "chartjunk," and rails that most graphics assume the reader is stupid. On the other hand, he has demonstrated the impact that poor design can have, including a convincing analysis that poorly designed charts misled NASA engineers into believing the 1986 launch of the space shuttle Columbia was safe.

As a thorough-going left brainer, I struggle to think visually the way Tufte does. But I do understand his key points and I no longer feel satisfied using the typical garish charts generated from a spreadsheet or the cheesy clip art that comes with our slide-generating software. Some of the things I've learned

from Tufte that can help us as persuasive communicators:

1. Graphics should be interesting in their own right.
2. Graphics should be content rich, dense with information, and should include multiple dimensions and variables.
3. Graphics should force us to make "wise visual comparisons" and should show causality.
4. Words, numbers, and images should be integrated on the page, never broken up by lodging all the graphics at the end of the document or on a different page from where they are discussed.

Another important point that Tufte constantly reiterates is that your presentation—both the words and the graphics—succeeds or fails based on the accuracy, quality, and relevance of your content. This fundamental truth takes us back to the wisdom of the Chinese

proverb: it's the harmony of word and image that creates the most powerful impression.

With Sant Suite you can integrate graphics with your words easily and quickly. We even provide a built-in means for demonstrating your value proposition visually. Check out the interactive, Web-based demos on our site, www.santcorp.com. With the right graphics, you may be able to save 10,000 words, and won't that come in handy when you have a tight page limit?

About The Sant Corporation

The Sant Corporation enables sales professionals to deliver high quality content throughout the entire sales cycle. Our sales enablement solutions reduce the time it takes to locate the best sales materials and expertise within the organization. Our proposal automation solutions improve win rates by accelerating the production of persuasive proposals, RFP responses, presentations, and related documents. Businesses choose Sant to improve sales productivity and win rates, increase marketing effectiveness, and deliver accurate, personalized documents to their customers.

Book Review

(Continued from page 4)

assist the less experienced government contractor. Whether the reader is an experienced government contractor completely familiar with Federal Acquisition Regulations or a neophyte just learning about General Services Administration (GSA) schedules, there is something to be learned. For example, the chapter about GSA Schedules provides a comprehensive description of the GSA, outlines the steps to register with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) to do business with the GSA, and points to Appendix B, which contains a list of providers who can assist with GSA Schedule Contracts. Each chapter closes with a succinct summary of the contents titled “The Least You Need to Know.” This feature is useful if the reader is skimming to locate a particular topic.

The chapter about small businesses is particularly relevant to individual consultants. Mr. Lauderdale describes how small companies can verify that they meet the size standards for classification as a small business. He suggests that an opportunity for small business often exists when a contract held by a large company expires or is terminated and must be recompeted. This often opens the door for a small business to submit a proposal. He provides a solid description of multiple-award contracts (IDIQs) and the process for awarding task orders that fall under the umbrella of the IDIQs.

Proposal writing can be a daunting task for businesses if no one is assigned to regularly handle that assignment. Mr. Lauderdale pro-

vides past performance templates, formatting ideas, and resume templates. He includes a list of words that should not be used in a proposal along with words that are more effective. He provides a good overview of the various teams that play a role in proposal development: the Black Hat Team, the Green Team, the Pink Team, the Red Team, the Purple Team, and the Gold Team. Included in the topic of proposal preparation is a chapter about creating cost and price volumes. He explains the difference between cost and price and suggests ways to make the pricing more competitive.

The only problem in the publication that the reviewer found was a broken link to one of the websites referred to – www.knowthis.com, a site containing sample marketing plans. This situation is unavoidable as websites frequently change between the writing and publishing of a document that contains a reference to a particular site. Appendix C contains a sample capture plan that more than makes up for the broken link to sample marketing plans. I would recommend this publication to our APMP members as a good review for those with years of government contracting experience and an excellent tutorial for those who are just entering the field.

About Pam Buckley

Dr. Pam Buckley is Vice President for Program Development and Implementation with Project GRAD USA, a nonprofit education reform model serving more than 134,000 economically disadvantaged youth in 213 schools across the nation. She has more than 35 years experience working in both for-profit and non-profit corporations as a Program Director, Project Manager, and Proposal Manager. She is an APMP member and Vice President on the Houston chapter.

Register now for the 21st Annual APMP® International Conference & Exhibits scheduled for June 1-4, 2010, at Walt Disney World Dolphin in Orlando, Florida.



[CLICK HERE](#) for More Conference Information

February 3 Meeting: Special Features

Be sure to attend the upcoming meeting of the Greater Houston Chapter of APMP.

Symposium Drawing

Attendees will be eligible to participate in a drawing to win free registration to the March 5 Texas All-Star Symposium at the Brookhollow Hotel in Houston. For more information about the symposium, see Jeannette Waldie's *From the Prez* column on page 2, the symposium ad on page 7, or visit the symposium's website www.apmp.org/ca-16.aspx.

Sneak Preview

Jeannette Waldie's presentation titled *Get Along Little Doggies* will be a sneak preview of her accepted presentation for the APMP International Conference & Exhibits in Orlando in June.

The Book Review

(Continued from page 1)

the back covers of a selection of paperback books – novels and non-fiction. I asked the team to look through them and study their composition. A headline to catch the eye, a plot synopsis, an author profile and a few gushing quotes seemed to be the common features.

And then I invited the team to write their own perfect back cover for the proposal they were about to write. And it worked like a dream!

Yet I was minded to push the concept a step further. Most evaluation teams will produce some form of internal briefing note about each bidder's proposal. That summary, it struck me, is broadly akin to a book review.

So, what if we asked proposal contributors to write a 'review' of the 'book' they're about to



Jon Williams of The Proposal Guys

produce – specifically, the review they'd hope would be written by the customer's chief evaluator? That'd make them think about structure, style and story of the proposal they

were about to develop – and might well unlock some fascinating insights.

This article originally appeared on The Proposal Guys, the popular free proposal management blog (www.theproposalguys.com). Jon Williams is a principal director of training and consultancy group Strategic Proposals; he's a Fellow of APMP and served as the first chief executive of its UK chapter in 2001–2

About The Proposal Guys

The Proposal Guys are Jon and his partner BJ Lownie. Together they have more than two decades of experience in the proposal business. Now, as principals of Strategic Proposals (www.strategicproposals.com), they consult, blog and schedule speaking engagements and deliver trainings about proposal writing.

At the March 5, 2010, Texas All-Star Symposium, BJ will be a keynote speaker—kicking off the conference Friday morning. And Strategic Proposals will present a preconference workshop on the APMP Foundation Level Accreditation exam preparation and will conduct the exam.

Apostrophes

(Continued from page 5)

Use the apostrophe to denote missing letters in contractions (can't in place of cannot; it's in place of it is).

Use the apostrophe to denote possession (the boy's hat; the woman's dress).

According to the Handbook of Technical Writing, use the apostrophe to show plural forms of numbers, symbols, letters and words used to name themselves (three 6's; your n's look like

h's). Alert: *The Chicago Manual of Style* says NOT to use the apostrophes in this case, so decide which you prefer, but be consistent.

Do not use an apostrophe to show the possessive form of pronouns (its paw; the book is hers; the bikes were theirs).

Do not use an apostrophe to denote plurals, and that includes acronyms (CDs, bananas, SOPs, the 1970s).

Forgive me for repeating this one:

Register Now

APMP Texas 1st Annual
All-Star Symposium

Friday, March 5, 2010

Great Leaps and Great Minds:
Tools and Technology for a
Successful Mission

A one-day event of workshops, discussions, and exhibits to support those involved in proposal management and grant-writing activities in Texas and neighboring states. For details and to register, visit:

www.apmptexas.org

Location

Sheraton Houston
Brookhollow Hotel
3000 North Loop West
Houston, Texas 77092

Preconference Workshop March 4

APMP Foundation Level Accreditation exam preparation and exam conducted by Strategic Proposals, LLC, an APMP Approved Training Organization. For details, visit:

www.apmp.org/ca-16.aspx

Conference Hosts

Central Texas, Greater Houston, and Lone Star Chapters of the internationally recognized Association of Proposal Management Professionals (APMP)

'Its' means belonging to 'it'—its paws were clean. Do not use an apostrophe!

'It's' means 'it is'—It's time to say goodbye. Do use an apostrophe!

I could go on forever, but then one must always consider one's readers, and I fear that my readers are not as gung-ho as I. So—Happy New Year, and remember to never let a document out of your sight until you have thoroughly checked it for errors. You'll be glad you did!



2010 Board of Directors

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Final Draft is the official newsletter of the Greater Houston Chapter of APMP. All content is copyrighted and authors retain rights. Unless otherwise stated, the views expressed in this newsletter are those of only the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Greater Houston Chapter of APMP or the APMP National Organization.

The mission of the Association for Proposal Management Professionals (APMP) is to advance the arts, sciences and technology of new business acquisition and to promote the professionalism of those engaged in those pursuits.

We are extremely proud that we have grown into an internationally recognized association with membership and corporate sponsors from a diverse range of disciplines and industries who are committed to the pursuit of proposal excellence. Our journey has been one of promoting the professionalism of our members and shaping the future of the proposal profession throughout the world.

*APMP is a learning environment for both novice and seasoned proposal professionals. We offer professional symposia, conferences, and publications - the **Perspective and the Journal of the Association of Proposal Management Professionals.***

Join our organization online at https://www.apmp.org/siteSpecific/customer/register_accountData.aspx. You can pay with a credit card or check (follow the online instructions). For a chapter affiliation, simply select the Greater Houston Chapter from the corresponding drop-down list.

Join us and discover how we can help you pursue new horizons in proposal excellence.

Get Along Little Doggies

[\(Continued from page 1\)](#)

BA in Marketing and works as a Proposal Specialist for AECOM in Houston.

Attend the February 3, 2010, meeting of the Greater Houston Chapter of the Association for Proposal Management Professionals (APMP) at Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc., Lubbock Conference Room, 10777 Westheimer Rd., 3rd Floor, Houston, Texas.

Seating is limited; RSVP by Monday, February 1, to Janet Dodd: janet.dodd@kbr.com providing your name, company name, and membership status (APMP member, non-member). Admission includes lunch and is \$20 for members, \$25 for nonmembers, and \$15 for students (student ID required).

Final Notes

Welcome New Members

Help us welcome the following new members to the Greater Houston Chapter of APMP:

- Raquel Sheppard, ABB Inc.
- Pat McDaniel, ABB Inc.
- Ronnie Martin, MRM Consulting Services

In Appreciation

Thank you to all who help make the Greater Houston Chapter and its meetings a success. In particular, thank you to in-kind sponsors:

- [B&E Reprographics](#) prints duplicate receipts for general meetings
- [Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.](#) provides meeting space for general meetings
- [IRC Risk and Safety](#) prints copies of newsletters for distribution at general meetings

Volunteers Wanted

Do you want to feel more appreciated? Volunteer to help on APMP Houston Chapter working committees. The Programs Chair and the Membership Chair in particular both could use extra hands. Contact Tim Budzik (Programs) or Kim Muckleroy (Membership) to learn how you can help. See the About Us page of the website for their email addresses:

http://www.apmphouston.org/about_us.html

Email Meeting Announcements

To receive email announcements of each Greater Houston Chapter's upcoming meetings, send an email request to:

janet.dodd@kbr.com

Please provide your name and email