COMMUNICATORS FORUM
Annual Board Retreat
July 15, 2004
Upson Room, Wilson Library

Present: Stephanie Bettermann, Kristeen Bullwinkle, Connie Burkhart, Ross Janssen, Deb McKinley, Jessica Mooney, Alan Olson, Lani Payette, Nicole Pilman, Jennifer Schulz, Pat Snodgrass, Pam Stenhjem, Lori Ann Vicich

Introduction
The retreat began with lunch and an ice breaker. (We learned that Lani once had a pet pig!) Connie gave a brief overview of the Forum and advised board members to review the “role of committee chairs” and the Forum mission (handouts provided in folder) and explain to committee members so they understand why we do what we do.

Minutes
Kristeen made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Deb McK. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Treasurer’s Report
Nicole’s computer was stolen, so she was unable to provide an up-to-date financial report. She distributed a year-end report. Overall, the Forum is in good financial shape—we may even need to spend down this year.

Action & Discussion Items

Database/Listserv: Lani explained to new members what she does to maintain the database and listserv. She maintains a database that contains information about the last five years of membership. She also maintains two listservs—one for all members and one for the newsletter. A suggestion was made to add “how to unsubscribe” information to the end of each listserv email.

Pizza Party: The pizza party has always been a complicated event. First, it’s really early in the Forum year and the marketing & promotions committee doesn’t have much time to come together and plan it. Also, the focus on recruiting never seems to work too well. Deb McK suggested we ask people to note on the program evaluation what skills they would like to develop by being a member of the Forum. Then the appropriate committee can approach these members. This year, we will plan a program on professional development opportunities for communicators. We will have members fill out an evaluation to be entered into the prize drawing. It was suggested to seek testimonials from current members as to why they are members of the Forum. The Programs Committee and the Marketing & Promotions Committee will work together to plan the event. Programs will find a speaker. Marketing will do the party planning (room, food, testimonials). The event will be held sometime in September.

Newsletter: Pam is going to continue to edit the newsletter. Committee chairs should send committee updates and other information to Pam each month. Kristeen made a suggestion to highlight past Margo winners each month.

Adjourn business meeting: Pat made a motion to adjourn. Deb McK seconded the motion, which was approved.
“How to Run an Effective Meeting” Presentation

Dave Hancox shared tips on running an effective meeting. As a member of seven different boards, he’s picked up some great tips along the way.

**PLAN**
- Be clear about the purpose of the meeting
- State the topics to be discussed
- List the objectives
- What info is needed to conduct meeting

**INFORM**
Be sure everyone knows:
- What is to be accomplished
- Objectives
- Use common language (avoid jargons, acronyms)

**PREPARE**
- Present sequence of discussion topics
- Present a time allocation for each item
- List by importance, not urgency
- Anticipate the questions you might receive

**STRUCTURE & CONTROL**
- Present evidence/data before interpreting
- Keep participants on track (stop discussion, bring focus back)

**RECORD & SUMMARIZE**
- Record all decisions made
- Document who is responsible for each task

Next we watched a video: “More Bloody Meetings—Human Side of Meetings” starring John Cleese.

1. Unite the group (get on the same side)
   - let off steam
   - don’t take sides
   - bring in “noncombatants”
   - stick to facts
   Chief danger=aggression

2. Keep everyone to the point (focus the group)
   - test comprehension (rephrase)
   - stay alert
   - keep hand on wheel
   - paraphrase/check back
   Chief danger=getting off point
3. Build a decision (mobilize the group)
   • protect the weak, control the strong
   • collect ideas from all
   • record suggestions
   • build up ideas, don’t knock down
Chief danger=squashing

Other:
• Consider seating arrangement.
• Build consensus (not necessarily unanimous)

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, August 17, 2004, 118 Pattee Hall

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Schulz, recorder

**Follow-Up Tasks**
- Send content for newsletter to Pam
- Committee chairs should review “role of committee chairs” and the Forum mission
- Program Committee and Marketing & Promotions Committee plan “pizza party” event