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*A publication of Credit Professionals International*

February 2015



# THE CREDIT CONNECTION

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## Message from the President

Rhonda McKinney, MPCE/CSM/SAFe

President - Credit Professionals International 2014-2015

Happy New Year!

As I reflect on the last six months, I am excited by the many ways the leaders and membership of CPI have demonstrated **THE POWER OF ONE - Making a World of Difference**. One action, one word, one moment, and one person can be a catalyst for change, and I challenge each of us to continue embracing that power this year.



Based on the results of our membership survey, we have focused on ways to reduce expenses and generate revenue—the two things that, you reported, are the most important to you. We had great participation in our first fundraiser—a raffle sponsored by Alamo CPI and spearheaded by Linda Simbeck, CFE/MPCE, and Pat Evans, MPCE. Read the results on page 12.

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**One action, one word,  
one moment, and  
one person can be  
a catalyst for change**

**Rhonda McKinney**

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We cut expenses by dropping a service contract for our photocopier—a savings of over \$400 annually. We also dropped the office cell phone, which was costing about \$50 a month. We are also working on other cost-saving measures.

Our primary goal, however, is to recruit new members, which strengthens CPI and also generates revenue. As of this date, we have seven new regular members and two new student members. (See our Membership Chairman's article on page three for details.)

I urge our new members and all our members to take an active role in your local associations, your districts and your communities. And I remind our at-large and direct members that, although you are not connected with a local association, you still have the Power of ONE.

We have some marvelous opportunities in the weeks ahead to provide credit education and financial literacy information in our communities:

**America Saves Week (February 22-28)**

*(sponsored by the Consumer Federal of America and the American Savings Education Council)*

**National Consumer Protection Week (March 1-7)**

*(sponsored by a number of federal government agencies)*

**Credit Education Month (March 1-31)**

*(sponsored by Credit Professionals International and the Credit Education Resources Foundation); and*

**Financial Literacy Month (April 1-30)**

*(sponsored by various federal government agencies, as well as a number of foundations and organizations).*

You will find website addresses and detailed information on these events, along with suggestions on how to get involved, in an article beginning on page seven of this newsletter.

Each of us should take advantage of these wonderful opportunities to demonstrate your Power of ONE, by doing something individually

and collectively to provide financial literacy education in our communities.

As you go out to schools and churches, visit other organizations or participate in community events, please send reports and pictures to the corporate office and email the information to Education Chairman Linda Simbeck at [jsimbeck@satx.rr.com](mailto:jsimbeck@satx.rr.com). We can then share your ideas with your fellow CPI members.

While your focus will be on education, keep in mind that your visibility in your community can stimulate the recruitment of new members.

If you have any questions about these events, contact Education Chairman Linda Simbeck, CFE/MPCE at [jsimbeck@satx.rr.com](mailto:jsimbeck@satx.rr.com) or the CPI Corporate Office.

I encourage you to attend your district conferences this spring and I hope to see all of you at our International Conference, June 10-14, in Marietta, GA. I believe the best way to feel a part of CPI is to attend local, district and International meetings. You will find information on International Conference events on page 12 of this newsletter.

I also encourage you to nominate deserving individuals for the:

- Helen B. Sawyers Award for excellence in leadership and mentoring;
- Hall of Fame Award for members and non-members who have made a special contribution to CPI; and the
- Honorary Member Award recognizing outstanding members at the local, state, district, and/or international level.

To learn more about each of the CPI awards, go to our website and search under Awards. You can also contact the Corporate Office for this information.

I look forward to the promise of the year new, and I am counting on each and every one of you to demonstrate The Power One in all that you do!

My theme is **THE POWER OF ONE** - *Making a World of Difference*

# MEMBERSHIP

## Our Membership Is Growing

**Cindy Westenhofer, MPCE**

**First Vice President and Membership Chairman**

I have GREAT NEWS!  
We have nine new members.

Congratulations to Ann Arbor CPI for recruiting four of them. They are Amy Maier, MB Financial Bank; Tim Berry, Ann Arbor State Bank; Mike Gruley, First Financial Reverse Mortgages; and Pam Sarlitto, a foreclosure prevention housing counselor with Michigan State University Extension, in the Ann Arbor office. They were recruited by Kathryn Greiner, MPCE, and Jean Jervis, CCCE/MPCE. Kathryn says county extension offices are a great resource for finding members.

Another new member in District 5 is Rod Rowe, who has joined Goshen CPI in Indiana. He handles business development for Collection Services and is the membership coordinator for the Goshen Chamber of Commerce. He was recruited by Rosealene Long of Collection Services.

CPI of Central Kansas (Hutchinson) has welcomed Diane Potter as a new member. Diane was recruited by Michelle Inskeep.

District 3&4 has three new members. Christopher Manley has joined CPI of Atlanta. His son, CJ Manley, is a new student member there. Another new student member is Jackie Edwards, daughter of Jackson TN CPI President Sheila Edwards, PCE. Jackie attends the University of Tennessee at Martin, where she is majoring in health care management.

We are also happy to report that many of the members from Districts 10 and 12, which disbanded last year, have chosen to remain involved with CPI as at-large members. They,



along with each of you, recognize the value CPI can add to your life and career.

A special THANK YOU goes to each and every member of Credit Professionals International for your support, involvement and dedication. Whether you have been with us for many years or are just starting out on your journey with us, you are a key and valued person.

### **Membership Contest Reminder**

Every CPI member is eligible to enter this year's membership contest and win cash prizes. Here is how it works. You will receive:

- One entry for every potential member you contact (name and e-mail/or snail mail address required). *We will do e-mail marketing to these potential members.*

*Continued on page 11*

# How to Listen so People Will Talk

By Katherine Tabener and Kirsten Siggins

©Communications Briefings

When we listen to others, we adopt one of three mindsets. Which one we choose—intentionally or not—has a dramatic effect on our relationships, because that determines how we respond to the speakers.

The choices are:

## 1: All about me.

At this level we listen in the context of “me.” We think only of ourselves, not the speaker. We may not even be listening. We might be multitasking, focused elsewhere, in which case we just want the other person to stop talking.

When communicating from this perspective, we bring the focus back to us, explaining our experience and solving the problem from our perspective. We are inclined to use the word “I” and often say things such as “I think you should...” and “If I were you, I would..”

We may become critical of another person and his or her comments because our experience is different.

*Here is an example based on a client’s experience:*

An employee says to her manager “I’d like to take a course on time management to help me be more effective.”

The manager thinks: “I was never allowed to take courses when I wanted to. I was able to work out my time management on my own and so should she.”

Thus, the manager responds, “When I started 20 years ago I didn’t need that. I was able to manage my time without it. I don’t see why you need that right now. Our budget is limited, and this is not a place where I want to spend money.”



In that conversation, the manager interprets what the employee says so it fits into his life and experiences. How much understanding does the manager show toward his employee? What, if any, support does the manager offer? Does the employee feel heard?

## 2. You should...

At this level of listening we focus somewhat on the speaker and feel that we can help them do the right thing. We tend to be critical and think we know what is best for them. When we are communicating from this perspective, we focus on the other person and want to lead him or her to a solution, so we ask leading questions that move the other person to the conclusions we think are best.

Again, we may become critical of another person and his or her comments because our experience is different.

*Here’s how the scenario would play out in this case:*

The employee says to her manager “I’d like to take a course on time management to help me be more effective.”

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The manager thinks: “This employee is slow at meeting deadlines. I think she needs to spend less time worrying about courses and spend more time focusing on her work.”

And so the manager responds: “You don’t need that right now.” You aren’t late for meetings and you seem organized. I don’t think you need it. Besides, I can teach you anything you need to know.”

The manager wants to help solve the problem for the employee but is approaching the situation from a judgmental perspective. The manager is telling the employee what to do.

What message is this manager sending his employee? Does the employee feel like her opinion was considered thoughtfully?

### 3. We partner.

In this state we are truly active in how we listen. We focus on information from all sources, including words, tone, facial expressions, body language and the environment. This level of communication requires focusing our full attention on what is being said and how it is being said. We are curious and open to what is important to the speaker.

*Here is how the conversation between the employee and manager might go in this case:*

The employee says to her manager, “I’d like to take a course in time management to help me be more effective.”

The manager thinks: “It appears this employee is concerned about her ability to manage her time well. I wonder why she thinks she is not effective now and how a time management course would help.”

The manager responds: “It sounds as if you feel that time management is an issue for you. What are your reasons for wanting to take this course, and how do you think it would help you?”



The use of open questions enables the manager to remain curious without being judgmental, while keeping the focus on the employee.

In this example, the manager is curious about the reasons his employee wants to take a course and how she feels it could benefit her. With no rush to judgment, the manager can dig deeper, learn what is really going on, and allow the employee to feel heard and understood.

When using this approach, we use open questions, which begin with who, what, where, when and how.

How effectively are you listening? The choice is yours.

### About the authors:

*Katherine Taberner and Kirsten Siggins are a mother/ daughter duo who are both certified executive coaches and founders of Coaching Culture®. They transform communication by giving you the tools to communicate effectively without struggle. For tools and tips, visit [www.coachingcultureca.wordpress.com](http://www.coachingcultureca.wordpress.com) or [www.coachingculture.ca](http://www.coachingculture.ca)*

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## U.S. Government News

### CFPB Issues Advisory on Student Loan Scams

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) is warning students to avoid private student debt relief companies that charge high fees for federal loan repayment benefits that are available free from the Department of Education.

In December 2014, the CFPB and the Florida attorney general's office filed suit against College Education Services and Student Loan Processing for illegally marketing student debt relief services. It was reported that College Education Services reaped millions of dollars from consumers from student loan borrowers with loans in default but provided no services.

The U. S. Department of Education offers a variety of plans to borrowers with federal student loans to make payments more affordable. These include options that let borrowers set their monthly payment based on their income.

"Monthly payments under these plans can be as low as zero dollars per month for unemployed or very low-wage borrowers," the CDPB said. The Department of Education does not charge any fees to apply for or enroll in these plans, for which many student loan borrowers qualify.



### CFPB, FTC and States Go After Foreclosure Relief Scammers

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and 15 states have filed three lawsuits against companies and individuals that collected more than \$25 million in illegal advance fees for services that falsely promised to prevent foreclosures or renegotiate trouble mortgages.

The CFBP alleges that the scammers used deceptive marketing to persuade thousands of consumers to pay millions in illegal, upfront fees for promised mortgage modifications. Each of the scammers was a law firm or was associated with one. The defendants disguised their false promises of foreclosure relief for struggling homeowners with claims that they were performing legal work.

The CFPB has issued a Consumer Advisory to help consumers recognize the red flags of foreclosure relief scams, especially when someone is claiming to provide legal help.

## THE NEWSLETTER SURVEY DRAWING WINNER IS:

Margaret Wigington, of Brownsville TN CPI, is the winner of the drawing held among CPI members who responded to a readership survey regarding *The Credit Connection* newsletter. Margaret, who joined CPI in 1962, received a \$25.00 Visa gift card.

The survey, conducted in October 2014, sought members' input on newsletter content. "We are grateful to all of our members who took the time to respond to our survey," said

Linda Bridgeford, CCCE/MPCE, CPI's Publications Coordinator.

Linda and Joyce Jones, CCCE/MPCE, who works with her, have already started implementing members' ideas and suggestions to make the newsletter of greater value to CPI members.

They encourage members to continue sending them ideas for the newsletter.

# The Power of One: Making a World of Difference

## CPI Members: You Are Needed

### To Educate America Now!

CPI President Rhonda McKinney, MPCE/CS/CSM/SAFE, has issued a “Call To Action!” to every CPI member. You are needed to celebrate:

#### **America Saves Week (February 22-28)**

*(sponsored by the Consumer Federal of America and the American Savings Education Council)*

#### **National Consumer Protection Week (March 1-7)**

*(sponsored by a number of federal government agencies)*

#### **Credit Education Month (March 1-31)**

*(sponsored by Credit Professionals International and the Credit Education Resources Foundation)*

#### **Financial Literacy Month (April 1-30)**

*(sponsored by the Financial Literacy and Education Commission)*

It doesn't matter whether you are a member of a thriving local association or an at-large or direct member. Each and every CPI member is being called into action! If you're drawing a blank, don't panic! CPI has you covered. Simply choose one or more of these ideas and go into action.

### **To Do Online**

- Use social media or e-mail to spread the word about these three events. Encourage folks to go to [www.creditprofessionals.org](http://www.creditprofessionals.org) where, on the home page, they will find links to websites for America Saves Week and National Consumer Protection Week.
- Visit [www.americasavesweek.org](http://www.americasavesweek.org) for event ideas and materials to use the last week of February.
- Visit [www.ncpw.gov](http://www.ncpw.gov), which is the official site for National Consumer Protection Week. Here you will find a variety of celebration ideas. This website has additional links to several government agencies.
- Visit [www.mymoney.gov](http://www.mymoney.gov), which is the official site for Financial Literacy Month.



- Visit [www.publications.USA.gov](http://www.publications.USA.gov) and click on “money” and then, on the next screen, click on “Money Topics” to find free pamphlets on a variety of topics. Order some of interest to you and distribute them in your community.

If you do not have internet access, you can contact the CPI Corporate Office for assistance in getting ideas and materials downloaded and mailed to you.

### **To Do In Your Community**

- Host a Credit Education Month, America Saves Week or National Consumer Protection Week party at your house for friends and family. Distribute free materials from government agencies. (Options: do this with your bridge club, bowling league or other groups to which you belong and with whom you feel comfortable.)
- Set up a display in the lobby of your bank or at your local library. Get friends, family members and someone from the bank or library to help you. Keep it stocked with free materials you can get from government agencies. ([www.publications.USA.gov](http://www.publications.USA.gov) or from the CPI Corporate Office.)
- Tie Credit Education Month or one of the other events in with one of your volunteer activities. Do you work at

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# What Does My Insurance Cover When I'm Traveling

By Heidi Petschauer

Whether you're traveling for business or pleasure, a stolen piece of jewelry or broken laptop can quickly put a damper on your trip. And if the stolen or damaged item isn't covered by insurance, a dream trip can quickly turn into a nightmare.

Before your next getaway, be sure to review your insurance policies—homeowner's, renter's, auto, and even health insurance—to be sure you have adequate coverage.

## Is Your Personal Property Protected?

Whether your trip is personal or business, before you leave home with your personal property, such as your clothing, laptop, tablet, smartphone, luggage, engagement ring, or watch, verify that it is covered by your current homeowner's or renter's insurance policy. In some states, once you take your property out of your home, there may be limited or no coverage for theft or other perils, such as fire or smoke damage. You may need to add an endorsement to your policy to offer this additional protection.

Remember that in the event of a claim, your deductible may apply. If you have a \$1,000 deductible and are only taking \$500 worth of personal property with you, the additional cost of an endorsement may not be necessary.

Be aware that not all policies consider electronics and jewelry as part of your personal property limit, which means coverage on these items may be limited to a specified amount—or they may not be covered at all. Be sure to contact your agent to see if there are exclusions on your policy or if you should consider purchasing a valuable items insurance policy. These riders can offer much broader coverage than named peril policies.



If you will be using your own vehicle for your trip, you should also consult your agent before you leave. You may live in a state that offers an option to include some personal property coverage for items, such as CDs or car seats, if they are stolen from or damaged in your vehicle. Typically, some personal property will also be covered under your homeowner's or renter's insurance policy.

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In addition, you may want to ask your agent about all risk protection, which would cover your valuable items. For example, with all risk protection, you would be covered if you dropped and shattered your laptop or if you took off your engagement ring and it fell down the drain while you were washing your hands.

### **Will your health insurance cover you?**

It's difficult to think about life-threatening situations when planning a trip, but they can happen, so it's important to be proactive and review your health insurance coverage. Are there limitations on your coverage if you are traveling? Does your plan cover you if you travel out of state or out of the country? Would it cover your expenses if you needed to be airlifted to a specialty hospital?

Finally, you may want to consider purchasing travel insurance, which reimburses you if your



trip is cancelled or interrupted or if you lose your bags. The policy may also include life and rental car insurance, as well as coverage for medical expenses, emergency evacuation, and identity theft.

### **Do you have adequate auto insurance?**

If you are traveling by car, reviewing your automobile insurance is also very important. Does your policy include medical expense coverage once you leave your home state? (This is also known as additional personal injury protection.) If you do not have this coverage and you are in an automobile accident outside the state in which you purchased your policy, you may not have coverage for any medical expenses incurred if you and your passengers are injured. There is typically a limit per person, so you may want to purchase the maximum limit available in your state.

You may also want to add rental reimbursement coverage to your auto policy. If your car is damaged in an accident and cannot be used to continue on your trip, this coverage will help pay for your rental car. Some policies offer a per-day limit for a specific time period, while others offer to pay for a vehicle similar to the one you own. Being able to cover the cost of a rental vehicle can help to get you back on the road quicker.

*Heidi Petschauer graduated from St. John's University in Queens, N.Y., in 1983 with a B.S. in management. She joined her late father's firm, Petschauer Insurance, in 1982, became principal in 1995, and now shares ownership with her partner and cousin, Erwin Petschauer. She received her Certified Insurance Counselor (CIC) designation in 1997. She currently facilitates the professional and creative development of the entire Petschauer team and manages the personal lines and social media departments*

*This article provided by Equifax*

## STUDENT CORNER

# Careers in the Credit Industry

## What Does a Credit Manager Do?

A credit manager is concerned with collecting monies owed for products or services. A company might employ this kind of manager to track accounts, negotiate payments and to take part in collections and legal actions as necessary upon non-payment. This type of credit supervisor often works closely with banking institutions and credit agencies to perform his or her duties. Additionally, this manager will protect his or her company from risk by researching and avoiding poor credit situations.

While much of the credit manager's job involves issuing invoices, settling accounts, and tracking payments, most credit managers are required to deal directly with customers and outside organizations as well. The credit manager initiates any collection actions that are necessary and consults lawyers and others involved in legal action if customer payment is severely delayed. For collections and legal situations, the credit manager is typically required to provide documentation and reports outlining payment history and accounting details. This manager also is in routine contact with banks during the processing of payments and money transfers and uses the resources of banks and credit approval agencies to do financial investigations.

Depending upon the size of the organization for which he or she works, a credit manager may have a wide variety of duties. At larger companies, these professionals may focus on a specialty, such as collections, while those at smaller companies may have a wide variety of credit duties, including general office tasks. At both large and small companies, a credit manager may be required to supervise others and create and maintain appropriate policies and procedures relating to credit and payment.



Part of the credit manager's job also is to protect his or her company from risky credit extensions. In this position, approving credit is a vital component as well. The manager researches and checks the backgrounds and payment histories of individuals and companies to help ensure his or her company will receive timely payments.

During the work day, this manager spends much time communicating and networking with others via computerized devices, phone, and mail. He or she will likely issue statements and spend some time tracking and following up on account payments as well. He or she may be required to focus on special accounts or projects, or may have a more general role at the company. In some cases, a credit manager will spend time meeting with senior level employees to develop, maintain, and evaluate company policies and practices. Additionally, he or she maintains relationships with those working for banking, law, and accounting businesses.

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- One entry for each new member you recruit. If you recruit five new members, you will double-up and get 10 entries.
- One entry for any innovative membership promotion you implement. For example, you might make a CPI promotional video and put it online.

The winners of this contest will be announced at the International Conference, June 10-14, 2015, in Atlanta, GA. I hope you all plan to attend. Information is on the CPI website.

Every CPI member also has the opportunity to be entered into another membership drawing this year. Come up with an innovative idea to recruit members and implement it. Send your submissions to me at [cwestenhofer@iquest.net](mailto:cwestenhofer@iquest.net) and you will receive an entry in this contest.

We have a great organization and we want to be viable for another 75 years or more. We need every member to help make it happen!

## Living Memorials

### In Memory of:

**Pearl Turpin**  
(former CPI member)

**Given by:**  
**Mary Nebeker, CCCE/MPCE**

### In Memory of:

**Missy Baxter**  
(daughter of Nona Ellzey, MPCE)

**Given By:**  
**Mary Nebeker, CCCE/MPCE**  
**Gail Ottinger, CCCE/MPCE**

## Pearl Joyce Turpin Dies



Pearl Joyce Turpin, the 1990 International Credit Professional of the Year, died on Thanksgiving night, Nov. 27, 2014, at age 77, in La Canada Flintridge, CA.

Pearl began her career in collections at age 18, as a secretary in a medical collections agency. During her career, she was the owner and manager of various collection agencies and earned a reputation as being a leading expert in the field. She became a sought-after consultant and professional speaker. She also served on many boards, including that of Consumer Credit Counseling Service/ByDesign of Los Angeles.

Pearl joined CPI of Glendale, CA, in 1957, and served two terms as its president. She also was a past president of District Eleven. During the qualifying year for the 1990 award,

Pearl brought seven new members into the Glendale association. She also wrote monthly articles for the local association's bulletin and worked to organize a new local association in Riverside, CA. She is survived by her husband, Peterfield; daughter, Isabelle; grandson, Brighton; a brother and four sisters.

an area food pantry? Are you involved with organizations such as Beyond Housing? Do you volunteer with or belong to a group or organization at your church, synagogue or mosque that serves people in your community? These offer opportunities to distribute materials.

- Give a talk on a credit topic at a meeting of another group to which you belong, such as an AARP chapter, a church organization or your local Chamber of Commerce. Choose a topic with which you are familiar and comfortable. As part of your preparation, read "Take the Fear Out of Public Speaking," by Linda Bridgeford, CCCE/MPCE, in the April 2014 issue of *The Credit Professional* magazine.

Be sure to send a report on your activities to the Corporate Office for a report to be published in the May issue of *The Credit Connection*.

## And The Winners Are!

The winners of the First Annual Raffle benefiting Credit Professionals International are:

### iPad Mini

**Mary Hoegler  
District 5**

### \$500 Visa Gift Card

**Rex Somerville  
District 8**

The raffle's sponsors, District 8 and Alamo CPI, thank everyone who supported this raffle by selling and purchasing tickets. A special thank you goes to the District Presidents for serving as the ticket control points.

The raffle raised \$2,123.00 for CPI!

## Register Now for 2015 CPI International Conference June 10-14, 2015 Marietta, Georgia

Did you know you can save \$50 by registering for the 2015 CPI International Conference by March 15, 2015?

After that date, the \$300 early bird registration fee disappears and the fee rises to \$350. If you use that \$50, plus another \$10, to purchase a ticket for the pre-conference tour on June 11, you'll have a great package at a bargain price, says Conference Chairman Michele Rocher, MPCE. You can do both for \$360.

Hosted by CPI of Atlanta, the conference gives CPI members the opportunity to be part of CPI business meetings; attend continuing education sessions; socialize at the CPI President's Reception and luncheons; participate in the International Walk-A-Thon, sponsored by the Credit Education Resources Foundation; meet and celebrate with award winners; attend the installation of the new International officers

and meet each of them personally; renew old friendships and make new friends.

The pre-conference tour will whisk you, via air-conditioned coach, to the World of Coca-Cola and then to the world-famous Varsity restaurant for lunch, which is included in the tour price.

When not engaged in conference activities, CPI members can head to Marietta Square, which is within walking distance of the hotel. It has something for everyone—shops, restaurants, museums, live theater, concerts, and a farmers' market, as well as walking and trolley tours. The Ghosts of Marietta tour is not for the faint of heart but it can be a fun experience for the curious and courageous.

Registration forms are available on the CPI website or from the Corporate Office.