

## **It's a Whole New Ball Game**

By Sue Heusing

This past year we have asked all the members to illuminate CPI by using a Star as our symbol and “You Make A Difference” as the Presidents theme. We all want CPI to grow and continue to function as a viable association. To do so we must continue to provide a bright horizon made up of many stars that will continue to show the way for those who follow. Our members need the educational support, the network of membership both at the local and as direct members and the opportunities to share the knowledge with their local associations and communities. As we prepare to start a new year, let us recognize the job Linda Bridgeford and her executive committee have done by showing our appreciation with a standing ovation. (Stand and Applaud).

Your new President has chosen “It's A Whole New Ball Game” as her theme this year. There are very few sports as well known as baseball. Some sports may pay their players bigger salaries, some may be structured for individuals to excel but none show how teamwork or players working together can accomplish their goals as well as the game of baseball. Credit Professionals International is definitely a team sport.

In 1866, Charles A Peverelly wrote, “The game of baseball has now become beyond question the leading feature of the outdoor sports of the United States...It is a game which is peculiarly suited to the American temperament and disposition;...in short, the pastime suits the people, and the people suit the pastime.” It is now 140 years after he made that comment and his words are still true. In any sports there are players who sparkle and shine and perhaps leave a lasting memory for the fans. Someone like Cal Ripken Jr who played 2,632 consecutive games and surpassed Lou Gehrig’s record of 2,130 games; or Rickey Henderson who stole 130 bases in one season; or Barry Bonds who hit 73 home runs to out perform greats like Mark McGwire, Sammy Sosa, Roger Maris and Babe Ruth.

Could those players have achieved those great records alone? It takes a whole team to play the game and while some stars may reach what appear to be insurmountable goals, they could not have done it without the rest of the team both on the field and in the dugout! Just as your new President will be looking for the best players to take the infield positions; as the coach she will also be looking for the best outfielders, the best hitters, and the all-around players to play in this “Whole New Ball Game”. In any sport, the key to winning is a good game plan, a good coach, and a team willing to go that extra mile to achieve success. You the members of CPI are a part of

that team. It doesn't matter if you are the scorekeeper, the 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach, or the bat boy responsible for picking up and keeping track of the equipment, you are a valued member of the team. Each of you has a duty and responsibility that is far more important than the one we are asking our officers to accept tonight. We need you to keep the game alive so we can make it a Whole New Ball Game.

District Presidents...If we can count on you take the field in this Whole New Ball Game, please come forward and take your positions (pause for them to assemble). To you we will look for leadership and coaching to all the local associations in your Districts. To hold educational seminars and conferences, to provide guidance and inspiration for your local members to find new members, create good programs and spread the word of CPI. Can we count on you? Answer I will.

Past President Linda Bridgeford, your star was very bright and your leadership was critical to the survival of CPI. We ask that you transfer that same dedication to the new core of officers and continue to serve this association. Your guidance will be invaluable to our new leaders so we ask for your pledge to assist. (answer I will).

CPI: Secretary- Treasurer\_\_\_\_\_. You have been elected to serve this association as both Secretary and Treasurer. To you we will

look for accurate minutes of the association meetings and an accounting of our financial status. There can be few positions that compare and just as a scorekeeper must track every play, you too will be responsible for all Board and Executive Committee Meetings. Do you pledge to serve this association in that office?

Second CPI Vice President – Barb Chapin. You have once again agreed to serve Credit Professionals International. To you we will look for leadership of our members. You will serve as Chairmen of the Education committee and you will play a critical role in our effort to continue to grow the local, the districts, and our International presence in the industry. The education manual that you will produce should contain timely articles and current trends for all members to use. Do you pledge to lead us?

First Vice President – Kem Morales. As Membership Chairman, it will be up to you to develop the game plan to help CPI grow in numbers and once again become a viable trade association in our industry. You will also need to stand ready to lead should the President be unable to do so, stand in the batters box, ready to step up to the plate when called upon. Do we have your pledge to serve?

CPI President - Joyce Jones. You have been elected to the highest office this association can bestow on anyone. To you we will look for

leadership, co-ordination of all efforts from every district and member. You must remain impartial but your voice must be the loudest while you are coaching, teaching, representing the membership and leading. Just as your Whole New Ball Game needs two teams to make it a good game, you will assign the duties, call the plays, and keep the teams in action for the coming year. Do you pledge to lead us? (answer I will).

Ladies and Gentlemen, please join me in congratulating your officers and wishing them the best for 2006-2007. (Applaud)