

in this issue >>>

The Fiscally Fit Family

FDIC "Top 10 List"

Credit Education Month 2011

The Un-comfort Zone



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May 2011



THE CREDIT CONNECTION

current topics >>>

Message from the President

Legislative News

Bookmark This!

Membership Report

"We must be willing to make changes, and to provide the information that the public and members need in ways that are significantly different than we have in the past."

The Credit Connection is a publication of Credit Professionals International, 10726 Manchester Road, Ste. 210, St. Louis MO 63122. Phone: 314/821-9393. Fax: 314/821-7171. Email: creditpro@creditprofessionals.org. Website: www.creditprofessionals.org

Message from the President

Billie Plasker, PCS

President - Credit Professionals International 2010-2011

Well, with the changing of the season from Spring to Summer comes the end of my term as President of Credit Professionals International. It is hard to believe that the year is almost over, and soon we will be in Charlotte, NC, for our Annual Conference.



As I write my last message to you, I am planning my trip to Pendleton, Oregon, to attend my home District Ten Conference. I know they have excellent educational speakers lined up and these meetings are always great networking opportunities. I look forward to catching up with my early career friends at this Conference.

Then at the end of April, I am off to the District 3 & 4 conference in Highpoint, NC, and this one will be very exciting, as I am driving by myself from Fairfax, VA, to Highpoint. Many of you know that I have problems following directions even when I have a navigator. You will remember the trip that I took with Joyce Jones to Norfolk and we could

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

not find exit ten and had to stop and ask for directions. I am looking forward to attending this conference, as it will be my first District conference with them—presuming I find my way there!

As I think of my theme for this year, “Reflections on the Past; Visions of the Future,” I cannot help but think of the reason that I joined CPI in the first place. The year was 1984 and I was working for the Credit Bureau of Montana. My boss had been a member of CPI and she thought that it would be a great experience for me to join. So I went to the first breakfast meeting—they had around 84 members in the local association at that time--and I was so impressed by these ladies and how they ran their meeting and how welcome they made me feel. But the thing that impressed me the most was their dedication to credit education in the public schools; in the alternative high school; for first time homebuyers; and in the work place.

As I reflect on our past, I do think that is one area that we are still very beneficial to

young adults entering the workforce and we, as officers and members, just need to find a way to provide the knowledge and expertise that we have to these young job seekers and first time employees.

As I think of the Visions of the Future for CPI, I must admit that I do not have a clear picture of what our future holds. However, I do know that if we cannot come together and work as a group to find and implement one clear vision, then I believe we will go the way of many other similar organizations. We must remember that this organization is not about one member, one District, one Officer or one or two Board Members. We all should have a voice, and

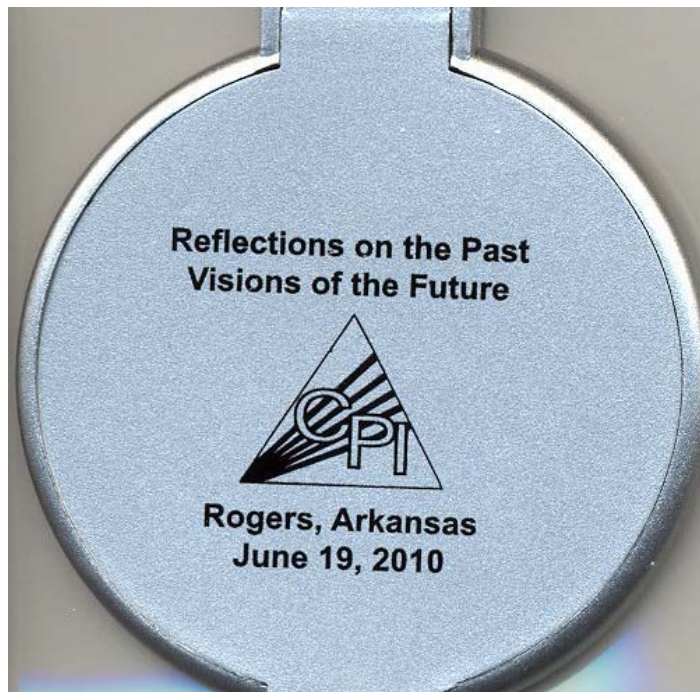
more importantly, we should all know that our voices will be heard. We must be willing to make changes, and to provide the information that the public and members need in ways that are significantly different than we have in the past.

I would like to thank our volunteers that continue to work to keep CPI going on a daily basis. They include the Foundation board and committees; the CPI committees; our district and local presidents and officers; the CPI volunteer coordinators, who maintain our website, keep our books, monitor our finances, manage our certification program, coordinate our conferences, order jewelry and chair or serve as contributing members of our many CPI committees. Without out their dedication to CPI, we would not be able to run this organization on a daily basis and we should all thank them for all that they do for us.

I would also like to thank Charlotte, who not only runs the office in St. Louis but keeps all of the officers and committee members on track to meet publish-

ing deadlines and finish whatever needs to be completed by a specific date. She made this year so pleasant for me, always being there and willing to help in any way that she could. I thank Charlotte for all the time and effort that she puts in to make this organization run so smooth for all of us.

I hope that you are all making plans to attend the 74th Annual Conference to be held in Charlotte, NC. Cheryl Burleson and her committee have been hard at work to make this a great conference and I know it is one that you will not want to miss. Thursday, June 16, they



Continued on page 5

Invite Co-Workers To “Sample” CPI

Diane E. Radcliff, PCE
First Vice President



Why do warehouse stores like Costco and Sam’s offer free food samples? Why do manufacturers deliver free product samples from soap to cereal in our mailboxes?

The reason is simple: samples sell products. We taste that bite of pizza and we just have to buy a whole one. We try that new cereal sample that arrived in our mailbox and take the accompanying coupon with us to the grocer.

We in CPI have been using the free sample technique for years to recruit new members. We’ve had great success by inviting potential members to “sample” CPI by attending a local association meeting. For many of us, this was our introduction to CPI.

In recent years, we have often found it difficult to entice potential members to our meetings. People feel they are busy and too pressed for time to attend another meeting that might lead to membership and more meetings. This doesn’t mean we need to abandon the “free sample” approach. We just need to tweak it a bit.

We all know that our CPI friendships were formed over the years by working on projects together. So, instead of inviting co-workers to sample a CPI meeting, invite them to sample a CPI project. Here are some ideas on how to invite them and get them involved.

- *“Joe, I know you walk several miles every day. Do you know where I could get some handouts on the health benefits of walking and tips for beginners that my CPI group could hand out at our Walk-A-Thon to raise funds for credit education and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children?”*

Most likely Joe does and he may even get them for you. Get him more involved by asking about places to walk, length of the walk, rest stations. There’s a good chance Joe will be onsite helping with WAT registration.

- *“Mary, since you have a daughter in fifth grade, would you take a look at these financial education materials I got from the FDIC and tell me what topics would be of most interest to fifth-graders? My CPI local is planning to do financial education programs in grade schools for Credit Education Month in March.”* You can also ask Mary to put you in touch with her child’s teacher or the principal at the school. If you do a presentation for her daughter’s class, Mary is likely to be there to help.
- *“Bill, I loved the presentation you did at last week’s meeting and I was amazed at how you used your laptop to display the visuals. I’m a real techno-phoebe. Could you teach me how to do that for a presentation my CPI local wants me to do at a high school during Credit Education Month in March.”* Bill is likely to lend his expertise and would probably be willing to go to the presentation and assist you and your fellow CPI members.

By showing a personal interest in your co-worker and tying your request into his or her expertise, you are likely to draw the person into helping with your project. In addition, you are not initially asking them to give a lot of their time. Eventually, they may end up doing so and have the opportunity to work alongside you and your fellow CPI members. It could be the introduction to a long-term relationship.

U.S. Government News



Proposed Rule Calls for Releasing Credit Scores

The Federal Reserve and the Federal Trade Commission have proposed a rule that would require lenders to disclose credit scores to consumers when the scores are used to set certain credit terms.

The proposed rule, which would take effect in July, 2011, relates to implementation of a provision in the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which was signed into law by President Barack Obama on July 21, 2010.

Under the proposal, lenders would be required to provide free credit scores to borrowers when lenders use a credit report to set high interest rates or other loan terms that aren't the best available; when they deny credit; change the terms of an existing credit arrangement; or refuse to grant credit in the amount or on the terms requested.

The proposed rule would apply to financial products such as mortgages, credit cards and auto loans. If adopted, the new rule would be enforced by the new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Partnership Announced to Promote Financial Education and Savings Programs

Three federal government entities have signed a joint agreement to help millions of students get on the path to financial success.

In announcing the agreement, U. S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) Chairman Sheila Bair and National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) Chairman Debbie Matz challenged financial institutions, schools, federal grantees and other stakeholders to work together to help students and families save for college and develop smart money habits.

The federal agencies will work with these institutions and organizations to provide effective financial education; increase access to safe, affordable and appropriate accounts at federally insured banks and credit unions; and encourage saving.

All three agencies will also work together to increase participation in the National Financial Capability Challenge, a voluntary awards program designed to challenge educators to teach high school students the basics of personal finance.

IRS Changes Lien Policy

The IRS is making changes in its lien policy in an effort to aid taxpayers concerned about the effect such liens can have on their credit scores.

The changes include increasing the dollar threshold for when liens are generally issued from \$5,000 to \$10,000 owed in back taxes.

The IRS is also making it easier to withdraw a lien once the tax debt is paid but the taxpayer must first request that the lien be withdrawn.

Earlier withdrawal of a lien will be available to taxpayers who sign up for a direct debit installment agreement from their bank account.

Small businesses with \$25,000 or less in unpaid taxes will now be able to get a 24-month installment agreement. The previous threshold was under \$10,000 in liabilities.



Arizona

In mid-March 2011, the Arizona State Senate passed legislation specifying that banks and collection agencies have six years to pursue consumers who default on their credit card debt. The bill has already passed in the State House but is awaiting a final roll call vote in the Senate.

Nevada

The Nevada legislature is considering seven bills to regulate the hiring of collection agencies by Home Owners Associations (HOAs) to collect dues owed on foreclosed properties.

Investors say collection agencies hired by the HOAs are gouging homebuyers, often demanding several thousand dollars to cover a debt of a few hundred dollars. HOAs argue that the fees need to be high enough to give collection agencies an incentive to tackle the task of collecting the debt. With more than 276,000 homes in foreclosure in Nevada, the amount of money at stake is significant.

All seven of the bills under consideration were introduced by a state senator who is employed by an HOA and are meeting stiff opposition from investors, who have joined forces in a Political Action Committee. The investors view the Nevada foreclosure situation as an opportunity to snap-up homes at deep discounts and rent or flip them.

Continued from page 2

have planned a trip to the NASCAR Museum, and that is also where the Walk-a-Thon will be held. Martha Phillip is the chairman of the Walk-A-Thon and they have worked out something fun that we will be able to do there that ties into the theme of the Museum—I know that you will not want to miss that!! On Thursday, after a fun-filled day of the tour and meetings, I would like to invite each of you to attend my President's Reception. Be prepared for a fun and enjoyable evening.



The Pre-Conference Capsule has been mailed to each of you. Have you read it and have you voted? Please take the time to do both. As a member of CPI, your participation is very important. Each of you makes a difference in CPI and your vote is your voice on how you want this organization to continue.

I would like to thank each of you for your support this year. I have sincerely enjoyed being your President. I have experienced so many opportunities to meet and work with great people, and I know I will cherish this year for the rest of my life. Thank you all for giving me this opportunity to serve CPI.

I cannot finish my last article to you without also thanking my husband, Jim Plasker. He worked long and hard for us this year in getting the computer programs for the corporate office and helping Charlotte to install them. Charlotte and I would not have been able to accomplish all that we did this year without his help. Also, he does the District Ten website and newsletter and has been doing that since 2003, when I was President of District Ten. Without his continuing support and willingness to help wherever needed, I would not have made it through this year.

Thank you, and may God bless all of the CPI community.

Mom Versus Dad:

Financial Literacy Poll Reveals Role of Parents in a Fiscally Fit Family

According to a Financial Literacy Poll released in March 2011 by TD Bank, 62 percent of all parents agree they should start teaching their children about money by 12 years of age. While mothers and fathers generally agree on when to start money-related conversations, the survey reveals they differ on how they teach their children financial literacy. The results also show there is a confidence gap between the two genders in how confident they feel about making sound financial decisions.

TD Bank surveyed 1,637 consumers within the Northeast, as well as in Florida and Washington, DC, to better understand their financial literacy and attitudes, specifically examining the role of the parent and how this can differ between mothers and fathers.

“The survey shows that each parent contributes different money-related lessons when it comes to a child’s financial education,” says Suzanne Poole, executive vice president, TD Bank. “This indicates that it’s important for moms and dads to combine efforts to ensure that their children learn all aspects of financial literacy from monthly budgets to everyday spending.”

Financial Confidence

According to the survey, 34 percent of respondents rated their financial knowledge as “good” or better. From that, dads are found to be nearly 10 percent more financial confident than moms. Despite these findings, 66 percent of dads also report they wish they had more conversations with their children about money.

Budgeting

Despite evidence that better budgeting can contribute to a more financially fit family, 43 percent of families surveyed are still not creating or following a monthly budget. Even more interesting are the parental disparities in the reasons why they don’t budget:



- 35 percent of dads versus 22 percent of moms feel they do not need a budget
- 19 percent of moms versus 12 percent of dads feel they find budgets too complicated and don’t know how to create one.

Financial Education Actions

When it comes to the actions taken by individual parents toward their child’s financial education, moms are more likely to engage in everyday financial conversations:

- Teaching children how to count money (81%)
- Teaching money matters while shopping (70%)
- Saving money in a piggy bank (70%)

Dads, on the other hand, are more likely to focus on the tangible aspects of money:

- Providing an allowance (52%)
- Setting a savings goal (32%)

Other key findings from the survey include:

- Given the recession, 55 percent of families say they are talking to their children more often about money
- 30 percent of families feel they are being more proactive and having conversations with their children before matters arise
- Only 1-in-3 parents are setting a savings goal.

FDIC Announces "Top 10" List of Online Resources for Consumers



Consumers of all ages are increasingly turning to the Internet for help with managing their finances, but knowing where to go online for reliable, practical money tips can be challenging. That's why the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation has compiled a "Top 10" list of FDIC online resources for consumers on subjects ranging from deposit insurance to shopping for a bank account and avoiding financial fraud.

"FDIC.gov is a great starting point to learn about shopping for a bank account, maintaining a budget, building savings and avoiding financial scams," said FDIC Chairman Sheila C. Bair. "We encourage everyone to check out our Top 10 list and the many other online resources for consumers from the FDIC."

The FDIC home page is www.fdic.gov, but the Top 10 list is featured on a special page at www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/information/ncpw/index.html. By going to this page, it is possible to click on each of the items listed below to obtain additional information on the topic.

Here are the 10 FDIC online resources the agency is encouraging consumers to use:

- **"EDIE," the FDIC's Electronic Deposit Insurance Estimator:** An online calculator that assists consumers and businesses in determining their deposit insurance coverage for each FDIC-insured bank where they have deposit accounts. EDIE also provides a printable report showing whether those deposits are fully protected or if some exceed the federal limits.
- **FDIC Consumer News:** The FDIC's quarterly publication for consumers offers information and tips on credit cards, bank accounts, loans, scams, money management, and much more. Consumers can also listen to

articles anywhere, anytime online or by downloading to an MP3 player.

- **Bank Find:** An online directory that consumers can use to locate an FDIC-insured institution, learn what happened to a bank that changed names or no longer exists, and more.
- **Customer Assistance Form:** An easy-to-use form to submit a question to the FDIC or a complaint regarding a financial institution. Of course, consumers with questions or concerns can also call the FDIC toll-free at 1-877-ASK-FDIC, which is 1-877-275-3342.
- **Consumer Alerts:** Warnings about financial frauds and scams.
- **Small Business Web Page:** Useful information for small businesses, especially regarding access to loans, plus an online form to ask the FDIC a question or register a concern.
- **The FDIC YouTube Channel:** Videos on topics such as deposit insurance and Internet fraud and messages from FDIC Chairman Bair.
- **Money Smart:** A financial education curriculum concentrating on the development of consumers' financial skills and positive banking relationships.
- **Foreclosure Prevention Toolkit:** A Web page that provides easy access to helpful information for homeowners on avoiding foreclosure and foreclosure "rescue" scams.

E-mail updates: Sign up to receive e-mail notices of each new issue of FDIC Consumer News, Consumer Alerts, and other announcements and publications from the FDIC. Consumers can also follow the FDIC on Twitter and Facebook.

Credit Education Month 2011

Las Madrugadoras CPI Gives Kids The Facts about Saving Money

Four members of the Las Madrugadoras CPI (District 7&9) presented a financial education program to 120 fourth-graders at the Los Colinas Elementary School in Albuquerque, NM, during Credit Education Month 2011.

Betty Thorman, Marylyn Tack, Barbara Anaya and Mary Ann Ouellette divided the 120 students from five fourth-grade classes into three groups, with each session running a half-hour. They chose “Why and How to Save” as the topic of their presentation, since the Title 1 school serves children from low-income families.

Marylyn Tack started each session by asking the students some questions, such as:

- Why is it better to put your money in a bank or credit union than to keep it with you at home?
- How many of you are not saving any money?
- How many of you already have a savings account at a financial institution?
- Why would you want to save money and what are you saving it for?

Many interesting answers were given. For example, one child said, “If you keep the money in your sock drawer it might get stolen by your brother or sister.” Another said, “or you might take it to the store and by a toy.”

Marylyn also asked the children what President’s face is on the \$1.00, \$20.00, \$50.00, \$100.00 and \$500.00 bills. Answers ranged from George Washington to John F. Kennedy to our current President Barack Obama.



Once they had captured the students’ attention, the four CPI members spoke with them about the importance of saving money to further their education. They also discussed the availability of student loans and scholarships. They hoped to ignite a desire in the students not only to save money but also to start planning for their futures.

Each student received a savings bank and a dollar sign squeeze donated by Sandia Laboratory Federal Credit Union.

The students and teachers were so enthusiastic that they asked the CPI members to return and do another presentation. That is likely to happen, since the Las Madrugadoras CPI has, in the past, donated school supplies and backpacks to the school, as well as gift certificates and four complete turkey dinners to the school’s annual “Turkey Bingo”, held each November.



THE UN-COMFORT ZONE

With Robert Wilson

Life Lessons

From My Cat

Once upon a time, I met a beautiful, charming and witty woman and fell deeply in love. Over the months we dated I was the consummate romantic. I brought her flowers; wrote heartfelt love letters; and on occasion even sang to her. At one point she remarked that no one had ever treated her better. Then suddenly and unexpectedly she left me. I was devastated. When I asked her why, she replied, "You never listened to me." I had no clue what she was talking about.

Of course I listened to her. Didn't I know her favorite foods, music and vacation spots? Absolutely! I also knew of her past struggles, her frustrations at work, and even her dreams for the future. Apparently it was not enough. In retrospect, I finally figured out the problem was that I had been too busy following the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as *you* would have them do unto *you*."

Remarkably it wasn't my ex-girlfriend who taught me this lesson, it was my cat. One morning while I was enjoying my coffee on the back porch, Roxy came up to my chair and meowed for attention. I picked her up, held her and started rubbing her soft fur. I knew from past experience that she didn't like that, and she immediately began to squirm and try to jump out of my arms. Nevertheless—in the spirit of Albert Einstein's observation that insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results—I hoped that she would start liking it.

Finally, I turned her loose on my lap and petted her. She became very affectionate and gave me lots of nudges with her head and purred loudly. I used to think that my other cat, Spike, was the more loving cat because he likes to be held and cuddled, which is of course, what "I" want to do with a cat. Roxy does not like to be cuddled, and when I attempt it all she does is try to escape.



I've learned that she still wants loving and wants to give it back, but it has to be her way. I realized it is that behavior which causes many people to see cats as aloof and unresponsive.

As Roxy worked her way around my lap, rubbing her face against my arms, legs, chest and face, I thought, "Everyone comes into our lives for a reason - usually to teach us something." I looked at Roxy and said, "What are you here to teach me?"

Then it dawned on me that she was there to teach me the Platinum Rule: "Do unto others as *they* would have you do unto *them*." In contrast to the Golden Rule which is all about "Me," the Platinum Rule is all about "You." The Golden Rule is about "Controlling." The Platinum Rule is about "Giving."

In other words, to motivate someone, give them what they want. I should have known this intuitively from the years I spent in the advertising business. I have taught hundreds of seminars where I advised my students, "When you create an ad, always put the prospect first; because when they see or hear it, all they are thinking is: What's In It For Me!"

I'm reminded again of the wisdom of Dale Carnegie who noted, "You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you." To do that he advises: "Be a good listener; encourage others to talk about themselves; talk in terms of the other person's interests; make them feel important - and do it sincerely."

Continued on page 10

Bookmark This!

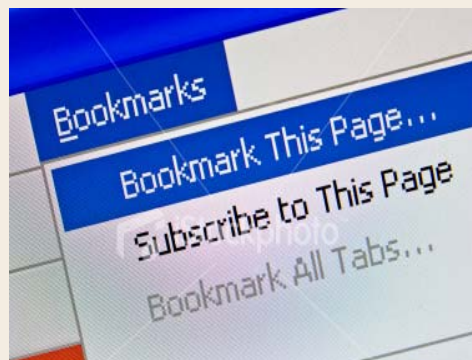
Have you played **Auction Action? Invest Quest? Invasion of the Wireless Hackers? ID Theft Faceoff?**

These are just a few of the 13 free online educational games you'll find at OnGuard Online—www.onguardonline.gov—a website maintained by the Federal Trade Commission and developed by a group of 35 federal agencies and private organizations to educate consumers of every age about online safety and identity theft. The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, which the Credit Education Resources Foundation supports, is among them.

The website also features eight videos. Some help children learn how to deal with online risks, while others expose phishing scams, where online fraudsters use email, pop-ups, or text messages to get consumers' personal and financial information. And don't miss the "How to do it" tutorials on using security tools, filtering spam and setting up wireless security. You can view these on the website.

In addition, there is printed material on 23 different topics—from computer security to online investing to online shopping—that you can use for your own information or print to distribute to others. A variety of other free handout materials can also be ordered in quantity, without charge, from this website.

The games and videos can be played and viewed online but you can also download them to your computer or laptop. Once downloaded, you can share them with friends and family or use them as part of your credit education presentations in your community.



Continued from page 9



He then adds, "When dealing with people, let us remember we are not dealing with creatures of logic. We are dealing with creatures of emotion, creatures bustling with prejudices and motivated by pride and vanity."

Now wait a minute—surely, he's talking about cats!

About the author >>>

Robert Evans Wilson, Jr. is a motivational speaker and humorist. He works with companies that want to be more competitive and with people who want to think like innovators. For more information on Robert's programs please visit www.jumpstartyourmeeting.com.

Walk-A-Thon News

We are happy to report that Claudia Yat, who was featured in the May 2009 issue of *The Credit Connection* newsletter has been found. She had been missing since Sept. 19, 2008.

Also, two of the missing children for whom CPI members walked at the International Walk-A-Thon in Bentonville, AR, in 2010 have been found. They are Korina Marshal, who had been missing since Oct. 31, 2009, and Angelica Vargas, who had been missing since Oct. 9, 2009.

In Memory Of...

Living Memorials

In Memory of:

Anthoinette Raby

District 3&4 Past President (1976-77)

Given by: District 3&4 Past Presidents

Mary Moyers, MPCE

CPI of North Carolina State Past President

Given by: CPI of Atlanta

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Credit Professionals International

June 16-19, 2011

Marriott Executive Park Hotel

Charlotte, North Carolina

EDUCATION—BUSINESS—SOCIAL NETWORKING

Early Bird Registration: \$300.00 until April 30, 2011. Afterward \$350.00

For registration information and the Conference Agenda, see the CPI website:

www.creditprofessionals.org or contact the CPI Corporate Office: 314-821-9393

**International Walk-A-Thon
Charlotte, North Carolina
June 17, 2011**

We Walk For the Children



Sponsored by: Credit Professionals International
Credit Education Resources Foundation
National Center for Missing and Exploited Children



Aarone Thompson

Female. **DOB:** 11/20/1998. Missing 11/14/2005 from Aurora, CO. Black. Black hair. Brown eyes. Ht. 4'. Wt.: 60 lbs. Aarone is missing her top right canine tooth. When she was last seen, Aarone's hair was in a ponytail with a pink rubber band. Contact: Aurora Police Department 1-303-627-3100. Photo is age-progressed to 8 years.

Kamyle Burgos Ortiz

Female. **DOB:** 10/23/1993. Missing: 7/8/2006 from San Lorenzo, Puerto Rico. Hispanic. Brown hair. Green eyes. Ht. 5'4". Wt: 110 lbs. Kamyle may still be in the local area. Contact: Puerto Rico State Police: 1-787-744-7252.



Bianca Piper

Female. **DOB:** 12/26/1991. Missing: 3/10/2005 from Foley, MO. White. Brown hair. Brown eyes. Ht: 5'6". Wt: 185 lbs. Bianca has scars on her arms and legs, a scar on her abdomen, and pierced ears. Her nickname is 'B'. Bianca may need medical attention. Contact: Lincoln County Sheriff's Office 1-636-528-8546 or 1-636-528-6100. Photo is age-progressed to 18 years..

Lisa White

Female. **DOB:** 2/2/1961. Missing: 11/1/1974 from Vernon, CT. White. Blond hair. Blue eyes. Ht. 5'. Wt: 110 lbs. Lisa was last seen wearing green pants and a blue jean jacket. Contact: Vernon Police Department: 1-860-872-9126. Photo is age progressed to 44 years.



**ANY ONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT:
The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
1-800-843-5678 (1-800-THE LOST)**

Child Find Canada—1-800-513-3463