



Capital News & Views

Volume 17, Issue 9

www.NAPOWDC.com

November 2010

Strategic Partners: How to Recognize, Attract and Build Effective Relationships with Them

Monday, November 1, 2010 6:30 pm — 9:00 pm

Do you like finding clients one at a time? Would you rather find and build powerful relationships with six to eight people who could send you a steady stream of clients? If so, Juli Monroe, Associate Certified Coach from [1 to 1 Discovery](#) can teach you to identify and learn how to nurture strategic partners. Most business people know one or two categories of strategic partners, and your competition is already wooing them. Learn to think outside the box and find the perfect partners your competition doesn't even realize exist. Be sure to read Juli's article on page 9!

During the business meeting Susan Unger will give the Treasurer's Annual Report. Susan will be available before and after the meeting to answer any questions.

“Ask the Expert” Focus Group

If you are new to organizing, attend the “Ask the Expert” session. It is an informal gathering where new organizers can receive free advice on owning an organizing business from members of the Golden Circle, a prestigious designation within NAPO for experienced organizers.

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Location

[Rock Creek Mansion](#)
5417 West Cedar Lane
Bethesda, MD 20814
Parking is free and plentiful!

Hey, want to beat the traffic and meet up for dinner with fellow chapter members? Prior to meetings in Bethesda, folks can meet up at the Chipotle at 10400 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, MD 20814. They specialize in burritos and other Mexican delights. Buen apetito!

Agenda

6:30—7:00 pm Registration, networking and “Ask the Expert” focus group.
7:00—9:00 pm Program and business meeting.

Guests are welcome to attend for a \$25 fee per meeting.

Professional Attire Please

Chapter Mission:
To develop, lead and promote professional organizers and the organizing industry.

This Issue
**MARCPO 2010
RECAP**

**NAPO-WDC 2009-2010
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Three Key Groups Can Determine the Fate of Your Business



Janet Schiesl
Basic Organization
NAPO-WDC President
www.BasicOrganization.com

As a professional organizer, you sort items all the time. Whether it's clothing, electronic files or tasks on a calendar, making sense and simplifying things for our clients is what we do. I'd like you to think of all the people who affect the success of your business and sort them into three categories. This is not a test! I'll give you a clue: These are the people who will determine and influence your success. Think about it.

You and your employees or close business associates are the first group to determine your success. You and anyone else involved with your company directly reflect your business image. Plain and simple, you and your employees must constantly strive for extraordinary results with each and every client. How can this be done? Whether you have a formal method of dealing with clients or you are more casual in your approach, you do have a method to how you do business. What makes you and your employees special to your clients? Determining ways to replicate your success is essential to successful business operations.

Your colleagues are the second group of people that determine your success. At NAPO-WDC, your fellow chapter members are also your competitors. But they are also your best source of wisdom and experience when it comes to marketing, product development or business operations. When you work in cooperation with another business owner, you can learn from each other and grow your businesses faster. Don't be afraid of a competitor. Have the confidence that they can never replicate you!

Sharing your knowledge with others can only enhance your reputation. You will be someone other professionals want to do business with. You will be seen as dedicated to making every situation a win-win. You can do this within the chapter by contributing to the Yahoo discussions, sharing your thoughts at a book club or giving feedback at a neighborhood group. Get to know your colleagues, ask questions and learn from one another. Also, look outside the chapter for businesses that you can learn from.

Your clients are the third and last group who determine your success. We have all heard that "today the customer is in charge." No longer do marketers and advertising agencies determine the desires of the public. You must focus on the needs and challenges of your ideal clients for them to favor your business. Simply put, if you are able to solve the problems of your clients they will be loyal to you. The easiest way to do this is to listen to your clients and treat them exactly the way you want to be treated.

Trust and respect yourself, your employees and business associates. Trust your colleagues even as you compete with them, and respect their knowledge. Finally, trust and respect your clients' wants and needs. By carefully following these tenets, the fate of your business will be in very good hands.

GO Month— Right Around the Corner

Sally Reinholdt
Closets 911
Chair, GO Month
closets911@erols.com

Two non-profits have been selected for GO Month. They are [Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia](#) and the [Tigerlily Foundation](#).

I think most of us are familiar with Habitat for Humanity. Their mission statement is "To build safe, decent and affordable homes for low-income families in Northern Virginia." They can benefit from our help in three ways. The first way would be assisting in the organization of the ReStores located in Alexandria and Chantilly. The ReStores need organization in the aisles, as well as with materials, furniture and lighting fixtures. The goal is to give the ReStores a cleaner look for customers and donors.

The second area where Habitat needs us is at their administrative office in Arlington, Virginia. The office is crowded and in need of organization.

A third project would involve helping some of the over seventy homeowners with whom Habitat has worked. They need one of the things which we do best: home organization.



Habitat will have staff and volunteers to work with us. Unfortunately, they have no budget to contribute to supplies. Dates for these projects have not yet been determined and the number of projects we are able to participate in will depend on the number of volunteers from our chapter.

The Tigerlily Foundation was started by Maimah Karmo, a young breast cancer survivor from West Africa. I first met her at

a business seminar at the beginning of the year where she was the keynote speaker. Her speech was simply the story of her experience with breast cancer. You could have heard a pin drop while she was speaking. The mission of the Tigerlily Foundation is to "Educate, advocate for, empower and provide hands on support to young women before, during and after breast cancer." Our role with the Tigerlily Foundation will be to help organize the homes of the young women in treatment for breast cancer. There is, in fact, one young woman who is very ill with metastatic disease who can use our help immediately. As with Habitat for Humanity, dates have yet to be determined and the scope of our project depends on the number of volunteers. At this point, Tigerlily's budget does not allow for supplies but there is a possibility that funds could be available in January.



If anyone is interested in helping Tigerlily in the near future or if there are GO Month related questions, please [email](#) me. Additionally, if anyone who had a GO Month t-shirt last year is willing to donate it to the chapter for use this year, it would be greatly appreciated and would save the chapter the expense of getting new t-shirts. Please bring any t-shirts you are willing to donate to our next chapter meeting on November 1 and I will be happy to collect them.

There will be a brief meeting immediately following the November 1 chapter meeting for those who would like more information on the GO Month projects. There will also be sign-up sheets available for each of the projects.

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GO Month

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Wish You Were There! MARCPO 2010

September

- 13 Chapter Meeting:
**What's In Your
Client's Attic?**
Rock Creek Mansion
Bethesda, MD
- 21 Book Club North
- 23-25 NSGCD Fall
Conference
Austin, Texas

October

- 2 MARCPO
- 4 Chapter Meeting:
**Case Studies
Round Table
Discussions**
Kena Shriners
Fairfax, VA
- 20 Book Club South

November

- 1 Chapter Meeting:
**Strategic Partners:
How to Recognize,
Attract and Build
Effective
Relationships**
Rock Creek Mansion
Bethesda, MD
- 16 Book Club North

December

- 7 Chapter Meeting:
**Manage Large
Client Projects with
Multiple
Organizers**
Kena Shriners
Fairfax, VA

January

- 3 Chapter Meeting:
**Basic Feng Shui to
Enhance Your
Professional
Organizing Practice**
Rock Creek Mansion
Bethesda, MD

(Continued on page 5)



Judy Parkins
MARCPO 2010 Chair
Gently Organized
Judy@GentlyOrganized.com

Purpose, Passion, Profit was the theme of the 12th Annual Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference for Professional Organizers held in Bethesda, MD on October 2, 2010. A big thank you to our inspirational and thought-provoking keynote presenters, Caroline Adams Miller who opened the day with "The Ten Things Everyone Should Know to Be Happy and Successful," and Dorothy Breininger who closed with "What Do Your Conversations Say About YOU?"

Throughout the day, concurrent session presenters educated the 100 conference attendees on business and organizing trends. Thanks to all of our session presenters including Sharon Lowenheim, Ken Smith, Casey Moore, Nicole Nolte, Margit Novack and Deborah Gallant.

A tip of the hat to conference sponsors Rubbermaid, Shelf Genie, Closet Tailors, and College Caboodle. The EXPO hall was filled with exhibits from Duffy Organizer, KC Streamline Concepts, Repax, Inc., Freedom Filer, Practice Pay Solutions, College Hunks Hauling Junk, 123 Junk, Alpha Omega Collection and Clearly Noted.

Product sponsor Paolo Cardelli provided beautiful embossed binders, UniKeep provided CD holders, The Container Store gave convenient sized shopping bags and Digital Recollections provided CD duplication.

Conference contributors and door prize donations came from Smead, Lifelines and Legacies, eSMMART, List Planit, Esselte/Pendeflex, BLIS – Best Life Information System, Deborah Gallant of Bold Business Works, Closet Tailors, Shelf Genie, Clearly Noted, Freedom Filer, Neat Company and IKEA.

A pre-conference demonstration was held by Rubbermaid on closet organizing. Thank you to all sponsors, exhibitors and contributors for making MARCPO 2010 so successful.

Many kudos go to conference committee chairs

and their volunteers. Julie Gray led an awesome EXPO team including Susan Unger, Terri Fischer, Kim Oser and Cris Sgrott-Wheedleton; Janet Schiesl found all our talented speakers and presenters, assisted by Pierrette Ashcroft, Alisa Levy and Susan Kousek; Deb Lee led the marketing team assisted by Judy Parkins, Lauri Mennel, Lauren Halagarda and Nealey Levi; Cris Sgrott-Wheedleton led the program committee assisted by Jody Al-Saigh, Jackie Kelley, Susan Kousek and Alisa Levy; assisting conference chair Judy Parkins with hotel and logistics were Scott Roewer, Lynn Meltzer, Janice Rasmussen, Melissa Sorensen and Verneestine Laughinghouse.

The children of Homestretch thank all MARCPO participants for their generous contributions during the conference's *Winter Wear for the Wee Ones* drive. We collected 21 coats, \$185 in cash, \$45 in gift cards, and lots of gloves, mittens, scarves and hats to help keep these kids warm this winter. Homestretch is NAPO-WDC's 2010 community partner. Its mission is to help homeless families rebuild their lives.



Picture yourself at MARCPO 2011!

Save the date, October 15, 2011, for the 13th annual Mid-Atlantic Conference for Professional Organizers: Today's Vision, Tomorrow's Reality, chaired by super volunteer Cris Sgrott-Wheedleton. Mark your calendars today -- you won't want to miss out!

(Continued from page 4)

11 Book Club North

February

7 Chapter Meeting:
Capturing Your Share of the Booming Senior Marketplace
Kena Shriners
Fairfax, VA

16 Book Club South

March

7 Chapter Meeting:
Business Model Round Table Discussions
Rock Creek Mansion
Bethesda, MD

22 Book Club North

April

4 Chapter Meeting:
Referral Fees Panel Discussion
Kena Shriners
Fairfax, VA

6-9 NAPO National Conference
San Diego

20 Book Club South

May

2 Chapter Meeting:
Favorite Organizing Products
Rock Creek Mansion
Bethesda, MD

17 Book Club North

June

6 Chapter Meeting:
Membership Appreciation and Awards Dinner
Location: TBD

15 Book Club South

No chapter meetings in July or August.



A well-deserved sit down for the MARCPO 2010 Committee.



Winter Wear for Wee Ones for Homestretch kids.



Caroline Adams Miller signing her book for Michelle Bogart.



Dorothy Breininger and Susan Unger



Deb Lee and Nicole Nolte



Emily Belcher, Tammy Laurent and Alisa Levy



C. Lee Cawley and Sharon Lowenheim



Dorothy Breininger

Newsletter Information

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Newsletter Topic Schedule

- Sept Welcome Back
- Oct Disaster Preparedness
- Nov MARCPO Recap
- Dec Clutter Free Gift Giving and Holiday Organizing
- Jan Board Duties and GO Month
- Feb Board Nomination Bios
- Mar Social Media
- Apr Spring Cleaning and Feng Shui
- May What's New and My Favorite Things
- Jun NAPO 2011

The deadline for each newsletter submission is one week after each chapter meeting.

(Continued on page 7)

Website Report



Nealey Levi
 On Track
 NAPO-WDC Director of Communication & Technology
liveontrack@gmail.com

Date	Unique Visitors	Number of Visits	Pages
9/10	514	907	3,799 (4.19 pages/visit)
9/09	923	1868	6,783 (3.63 pages/visit)

TECH TIP – Our Website’s Traffic Sources

As you can see in the chart below, there are three main ways users get to our website:

Direct Traffic

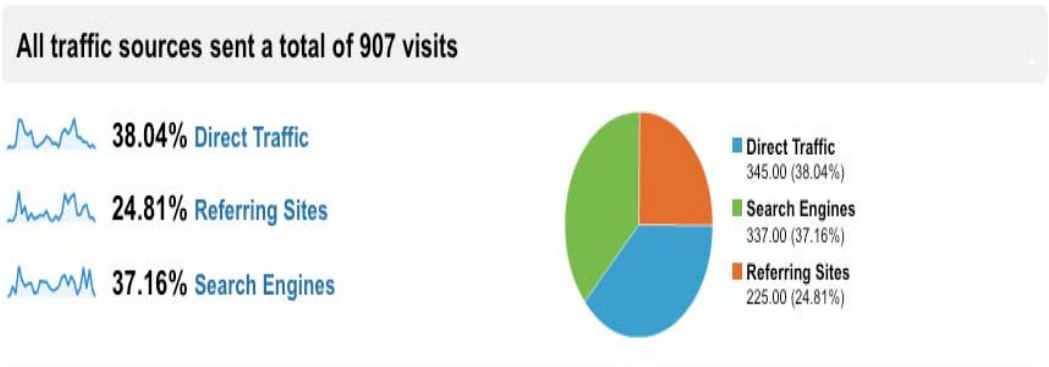
This is if you type our domain name directly in the address bar at the top of your browser.

Referring Sites

This is if you get to our site from another website.

Search Engines

This is if you get to our site by doing a search (i.e. Google, Yahoo!).



Top Traffic Sources

Sources	Visits	% visits	Keywords	Visits	% visits
(direct) ((none))	345	38.04%	professional organizer dc	55	16.32%
google (organic)	312	34.40%	napo dc	54	16.02%
napo.net (referral)	62	6.84%	dcorganizers.org	30	8.90%
facebook.com (referral)	36	3.97%	napo washington dc	19	5.64%
bing (organic)	19	2.09%	napowdc	18	5.34%

Book Clubs

Book Club North

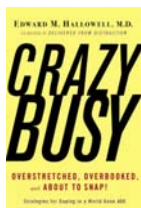
Coordinator: Lynn Meltzer
Clutter and Paperworks

When: Tuesday, November 16, 7pm

Where: Home of Lynn Meltzer
10131 Ashburton Lane
Bethesda, MD 20817

Book: *"CrazyBusy: Overstretched, Overbooked, and About to Snap"*
by Edward Hallowell, MD

Hallowell turns what he has learned treating ADD into advice on how to cope with rampant busyness, "the problem and the opportunity" of modern life.



Book Club South

Coordinator: C. Lee Cawley
Simplify You

When: Wednesday, February 16, 7pm

Where: Whole Foods
Clarendon, VA

Book: *"It's All Too Much"*
by Peter Walsh

Veteran "organizational consultant," TV show host and author Walsh has more ideas in his latest book on clutter management than the spare closet has junk, and, even better, it's organized, in-depth and entirely user-friendly. Join the conversation as Book Club South gets back to the basics!



(Continued from page 6)

The NAPO-WDC Chapter is committed to providing information through the newsletter. Contributions from members are encouraged. All articles are subject to editing. Please include your full name, business name, email address and photo for possible publication.

If you would like to advertise in this newsletter, please contact Lauri Mennel, Lauri@BluebonnetPO.com. NAPO-WDC makes no endorsement of products or services advertised.

Advertising sizes and rates:

Small (3 1/2 x 2")	\$30
Medium (3 1/2 x 4")	\$50
Large (7 x 4")	\$100

25% discount for members

25% discount for repeat ads (three or more consecutive months)

All ads must be pre-paid. Rates subject to change at anytime.

Board Meetings

Board meetings are scheduled immediately preceding each chapter meeting. Board meetings are open to all chapter members. To ensure enough space at the location of an upcoming board meeting, non-board members who wish to attend should contact Chapter President Janet Schiesl one week prior to the meeting.

NAPO-WDC Enhanced Website Listings

Sign-Up for an enhanced listing on the *Find an Organizer* section of NAPO-WDC's website to make your business **stand out**. Enhanced listings include your photo, special color background to display your information and headings in a bold, red font.

A current enhanced listing user says: *"The enhanced listing has made a huge difference to my business. The clients who decide to contact me are a better match for my business because of the additional information provided in the listing. For me, the enhanced listing is a bargain compared to more costly marketing and advertising campaigns."*

Enhanced listings are \$50. Sign up in the membership renewal process by selecting the "Upgrade my listing for \$50" box in the "Upgrade to an Enhanced Listing" section.

NAPO-WDC
Corporate Partners

Premium Partners

123Junk.com
www.123junk.com

Standard Partners

Closet Factory Washington DC
www.closetfactory.com

College Hunks Hauling Junk
www.1800junkusa.com

Eco-Nize Closets
www.eco-nize.com

Junk in the Trunk
www.JITT.com

ReSale Solutions
www.resale-solutions.biz

Shelf Genie
www.shelfgenie.com

Call for Submissions for NAPO-WDC Slideshow!

Carroll (Carly) Poppalardo
Public Relations Committee Chair
Real Organized
cpoppalardo@gmail.com

As the new chair of the Public Relations Committee, I am excited to announce that our committee is creating a NAPO-WDC slideshow. The slideshow will promote NAPO, our chapter, and what we do as organizers. It will serve as a promotional tool for NAPO-WDC and will also be available for members to use at their own speaking engagements. It will give those who are unfamiliar with our industry a quick and easy look into the world of organizing. In addition to featuring our members' work, the slideshow will include statistics about organizing and show the benefits of being organized. This is your chance to showcase your hard work!

We are calling all members who wish to be a part of this new and exciting project to send their "before and after" pictures to be considered for use in the slideshow. Please send your best photos to us as soon as possible! Of course, although all photos featured will be anonymous, you must have permission from each client to use their photos. The deadline for submissions is **November 15th**, so start sending now.

We are currently accepting pictures in the following categories: Garages, Students, Seniors, Playroom/Kid's Rooms, Closets, Kitchen, Office – Home and Business, Cars, Hoarding/Chronic Disorganization, Moving/Downsizing and Basements.

All photos will be featured in the slideshow anonymously. We do ask that, before submitting any photos, you have the permission of the client for these photos to be published. Our committee will review each photo submitted and select those that fit our criteria.

Don't miss this great opportunity to show everyone what a professional organizer can do! Start sending your pictures now to Kim Mihalik at kim@theneatlife.com.

Organizing Assistants

Are you interested in letting other chapter members know you want to work as an organizing assistant? Advertise in the monthly Constant Contact. This publication comes out approximately one week before chapter meetings.

The list will consist of your name, phone number, email address and photo. You will be able to purchase space on the list for \$45 for a three month ad. Deadline for payment and listing information is two weeks prior the chapter meets. Sign up now for the December issue! Contact [Lauri Mennel](#) for more information

How to Get the Most From Your Strategic Partnerships



Juli Monroe
Associate Certified Coach
1 to 1 Discovery
www.1to1Discovery.com

This is an excerpt from my upcoming book, *Networking and Social Media: Building Lasting Business Relationships On and Offline*. The strategy I write about here is ideal to use once you have identified another business that offers complimentary but not competing services.

Mutual Questioning

The following strategy usually only works when you have a very close relationship with another business person, and you and that person have the ability to pass referrals back and forth to each other. When you find that other person, this strategy can be golden.

Let me start with an example. When I sold windows, I had a question that I asked every time I met with a new client. "Are you planning on doing any more work on your house?" Oftentimes, I got the answer, "Well, yes, we were planning to..." The blank could be filled with anything from redesigning the kitchen, to replacing flooring, to getting a new heat pump. My follow up to that question was "Are you working with someone on that?" Often, the answer was, "No, we've just started thinking about it. Do you know someone?" It was rare that I did not. I was handing out referrals to other contractors on a regular basis, just because of that question.

On the flip side, there was a heating and air conditioning company owner who knew and liked me. Whenever he could, he would start a conversation about his customer's windows. And he frequently found referrals for me.

Remember back in Chapter 2, when I talked about "active" vs. "passive" referrals? This was one of the things I had in mind. I wasn't waiting for clients to mention working on their home. My process was designed around getting referrals for other contractors, but giving referrals was only one of my goals. Remem-

ber how I said giving a referral is a great follow-up strategy? Well, if you've ever worked in-home sales or know someone who has, you know that people don't always buy on that first visit. Which meant I had to follow up later to find out where they were in their buying process. Do you like getting a call like this?

"Hi, it's Juli Monroe following up with you. Are you ready to buy now?"

If your answer was "yes," I have the name of a good therapist for you.

Of course, you don't want that call on your voice mail. But what about this?

"Hi, it's Juli Monroe following up on that referral to ABC Contracting. I just wondered how your meeting with them went."

If I want to ask where they are in the buying process with me, I can. But I had a much better reason to make the call. And I gave them a good reason to call me back.

How can you incorporate this into your own relationships? First, you obviously need to have someone you know, like and trust enough to refer. And you need some service that complements theirs. You don't want to compete, obviously. Nor do you want someone whose services are nothing like yours. You need some common ground on which to build.

Once you have discovered that common ground, you can develop questions you and your strategic partners can ask each others' clients. The benefit will be more than referrals. Your clients will appreciate that you are looking out for their welfare in areas you can't serve.

The action plan might be more complicated. You might agree to meet together with certain clients. You might cross market each other or go prospecting together. The ways to find referrals for each other are limited only by your imagination or your professional ethics.

NAPO-WDC Chapter Membership Dues

Regular chapter membership requires membership in NAPO National (*see below*).

Regular chapter member (local)	\$165
Regular chapter member (non-local)	\$120
New member one-time processing fee	\$ 25

Corporate Partner Standard: \$325

Corporate Partner Premium : \$500

Membership year is from October 1 through September 30. NAPO-WDC Chapter membership information and application visit www.napowdc.com or contact the Membership Director Jackie Kelley at membership@dcorganizers.org. Corporate Partner info, contact Susan Perez at corppartners@dcorganizers.org.

NAPO National Annual Member Dues

Industry Member—Provisional	\$200
Industry Member — Level 1 (w/o employees)	\$230
Industry Member — Level 2 (w/employees)	\$280
Corporate Associate	\$615
One-time processing fee	\$ 25

Send NAPO National dues to:

NAPO
15000 Commerce Parkway
Suite C
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054
Tel: 856-380-6828 Fax:
856-439-0525

Visit the website to download a membership application.

Membership News

Welcome New Members!

Penny Catterall
Bethesda, MD
Penny@orderyourlife.net

Kim Mihalik
Reston, VA
Kim@theneatlife.com

Marianne Shoemaker
Silver Spring, MD
messmanagementsolutions@gmail.com

There are currently 92 members and 7 Corporate Partners in NAPO-WDC. There were 27 members (regular and CP) at our October 2010 chapter meeting and we hosted one guest.

Membership Directory

Detailed information about members can be found on our chapter website, www.napowdc.com, in the **Members Only** section.

Changes and Corrections

Once you join or renew your chapter membership, you can update your own information at any time. Go to www.napowdc.com. From the "About Us" menu, select "Members Only Pages." Enter your NAPO National membership number and your unique password. Click "My Account" and make changes.

Chapter Meeting Summary



Cris Sgrott-Wheedleton
Organizing Maniacs
NAPO-WDC Secretary
Cris@OrganizingManiacs.com

On October 4, we met at the Kena Shiners in Fairfax, VA for a Case Studies' Round Table Discussion.

Alisa Levy started the meeting with the ice breaker. We had to share our most interesting artifacts found: the list included a dead dog in freezer, shot guns in the closet, bones and Jesus in a globe, just to name a few! Susan Perez acknowledged our corporate partners present: Danni Stodomeyer with Closet Factory and Ron Goodess with Re-Sale Solutions. Jackie Kelley gave us an introduction to our guest. Then we welcomed a new member and a returning member!

We acknowledged Jody Al-Saigh as our volunteer of the month. Thank you for the awesome MARCPO program book! We are starting to plan for MARCPO 2011 and we cannot do this without your help. If you want to get involved please contact Janet Schiesl or Cris Sgrott-Wheedleton. Remember GO Month is right around the corner!

Pierrette Ashcroft presented Chris Fay of Homestretch with 21 coats, lots of hats, mittens, \$184.00 in cash and some Target gift cards which were donated during MARCPO last month. Thank you everyone for your generous donations! The children of Homestretch will enjoy a warmer winter with your help.

Denslow Brown graciously gave us permission to use her case studies for discussion. We explored four chronically disorganized client case studies. This process gave us a different prospective on how to help and have a positive impact on our clients' lives. If you are interested in working with people with challenging disorganization, please consider a membership with NSGCD.

We will be helping Tiger Lilly and Habitat for Humanity during GO Month. The Route 7 neighborhood group will be studying for the CPO test; if you are interested, please let me know.

See you next month in Bethesda!

Golden Circle News



Helen Monforts
Making Space for Life
NAPO-WDC Golden Circle Liaison

Golden Circle Gatherings

Our next meeting is a potluck at Helen's home in Bethesda on Sunday, January 23, 2011 at 4:00 pm.

Ask the Expert Table

At the beginning of each chapter meeting, an "Ask the Expert" table is hosted by Golden Circle members. This gives new

folks an opportunity to ask questions of more seasoned organizers and for GC members to give back to the organizing community. Volunteers are still needed for upcoming dates. Please let Helen know which meeting you'd like to be the "expert!"

Thank you Lauren Halagarda for hosting the "Ask the Expert" table at the October meeting!



Could You Sell It?

Zach Johnson
NAPO-WDC Premium Partner
123 Junk
Business Development Manager
www.123Junk.com

"I really think, with a little bit of TLC, someone could fix it up and use it for a long time."

If you operated the phones at 123Junk for a week, you might hear it a dozen times. The phrasing may change, but the sentiment is always the same. Even though "junk" is in the name of our business, people sometimes have very high expectations about what we can do with a used piece of furniture. Maybe it is because we tell our customers that we make every effort to donate items (we do), or that about half of the items we collect as a company are either recycled or donated to charity (they are).

There are several reasons why an item may not be acceptable for donation. Sometimes local charities are overstocked with certain types of items, and they simply cannot accept any more inventory in a particular category. Other times a customer may have a valuable item that simply doesn't appeal to a wide enough range of people for a charity to justify trying to resell it.

The most common reason, though, is that a particular item simply isn't in good enough condition. It's practically a daily occurrence for us to field a call from someone who has something that they would like to have donated because, well, "*someone*" could use it.

Can you blame them? Almost invariably the item is usable. Unfortunately (or fortunately, for some people), at this point in time, many charities are inundated with high-quality, like-new pieces. A lot of items that would have been accepted by charities just a few years ago are no longer being accepted.

A good rule of thumb is to ask yourself "Could I sell it myself," or, more importantly, "Is it worth the time and effort it would take for me to sell it?" After all—if it wasn't valuable enough to keep, it may not be valuable enough to donate either.

Golden Circle

Golden Circle originated in 1990 as a way to recognize our veteran members with a special designation for their dedication to the organizing profession and to NAPO. There are more than 600 members throughout the country and 48 in our area.

If you've been in business as an organizer for at least five years and a NAPO member for at least one year, you may qualify for GC membership. To apply, go to the Members Only section of NAPO.net and click on Golden Circle.

There are no membership fees or dues and new members receive a GC certificate and a gold membership pin. The GC logo can be used on your marketing collateral and you are designated in the national and local NAPO membership directories, and websites, as a Golden Circle member.

GC members attend many outstanding events at the NAPO national conferences including luncheons, special lectures and roundtable discussion groups as well as attend local get togethers.

NAPO in the Neighborhood Meetings

Rockville Pike

November 22
LaMadeline—Rockville Pike
6:30—8:30 pm
Contact: Wendy Glover
wendy@minordetailz.com
301-906-2125

Route 66

November 23
Whole Foods—Vienna
7:00—9:00 pm
Contact: Terri Fischer
fischer.terri@gmail.com
703-638-5995

Route 7

December 1
Panera Bread—Off the Greenway in Ashburn
7:00—8:30 pm
Contact: Cris Sgrott-Wheedleton
Cris@organizingmaniacs.com
703-969-8407

PR Corner

Have you given a presentation to a community or professional group? Been featured in a news article? Interviewed on a radio or television show? Don't forget to send the details to the [news-letter editor](#) so we can all bask in your glow!