

Pittsburgh Kicks off September Meeting at Heinz Field *by Mary Hoerner*

Pittsburgh Points (MPI Pittsburgh Chapter Newsletter)

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The chapter kicked off the fall season on Wednesday, September 26 at Heinz Field with a record-breaking 150 current and prospective members in attendance. Program Co-Chairs, Paula Fair and Teri Curry, CMP deserve great praise for putting such an eventful program together.

The chapter first welcomed its new and prospective members at an hour-long orientation. Attendees had the opportunity to introduce themselves, and were educated on the benefits and opportunities of MPI. Each person that attended the orientation received a \$5.00 rebate at the door.

Following the orientation, new and prospective members mingled with current members at a networking reception. Chapter President, Bill Paviol, welcomed everyone before being served a wonderful lunch featuring a petite filet and Maryland crab cake. While enjoying lunch, the group was entertained by motivational speaker, Joel Zeff. Joel's presentation, "The Strength of Laughter: Energizing Your Spirit with Humor," addressed team building, communication, leadership, and flexibility in the workplace, and he communicated these themes through audience participated skits.

Perhaps the most memorable skit was one conducted by past chapter Presidents' Vi Boehm, Anthony D'Alesandro and current President, Bill Paviol. Not only did each of them have to guess and imitate riding a roller coaster, being a gymnast and a porcupine, they could only speak in gibberish. Although all of the skits presented were quite comical, it's safe to say that this one stole the show. Attendee and MPI Member, Barb Roth said, "I don't think I have ever laughed so much at one time."

Joel, a former newspaper reporter and advertising writer, started his own consulting business in 1994. Today, he is an award-winning comedian, creativity speaker, actor and writer based in Dallas, Texas. He has been entertaining professionally for more than 10 years, and performs more than 250 shows each year across the country for corporations, special events and comedy clubs.

Current President, Bill Paviol remarked, "I think that Joel Zeff's presentation was a wonderful way to open the new year for the chapter. In light of the September 11th events, we need to remember that fostering a positive attitude during even the worst of times can be the most important thing we do. Joel taught us how to use key tools to be both creative and thought provoking in our everyday lives. We had fun, learned some key lessons and took home a positive approach to life's challenges."