



# Connections

Volume 2 No. 10 December, 2007



*Our mission is to provide a forum for education and networking among area human resources professionals, to advance the HR profession and to help our members grow professionally.*

## Join us for a special LAHRA holiday event

On Thursday December 13, join your LAHRA colleagues for a special holiday after-work gathering at Buffalo Wild Wings. We are meeting at the **Green Oak Village Place** location (Brighton) from 5:30 to 7:30. LAHRA will provide appetizers. Even though this is an informal, no-cost event, we still need a headcount! Please register at [www.livingstonhr.org](http://www.livingstonhr.org).

In the spirit of the holidays, we encourage members to help those less fortunate by bringing food donations for Gleaner's. LAHRA will collect your contributions and see that the donations are dropped off at the food bank.

We hope to see you there!



**Date:** Thursday December 13, 2007  
**Time:** 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Buffalo Wild Wings, Brighton  
**Cost:** this is a complimentary event for members  
**Reservations:** Make your reservation online at [www.livingstonhr.org](http://www.livingstonhr.org)



### Thursday December 13

Join fellow LAHRA members for an informal after-work gathering at **Buffalo Wild Wings** in Green Oak Village Place, Brighton. The event is from 5:30-7:30

### Tuesday January 22

LAHRA program meeting, a Legislative Update provided by Kathie Elliott. Ms. Elliott is the Legislative Affairs Director for the Michigan Council of SHRM. This is a luncheon meeting.

## What you missed in November...

Bart Feinbaum began his career with the EEOC, prosecuting employers. After winning a case against a large employer, they hired him to help them prevent future lawsuits. He shared his insights at the November LAHRA meeting.

Mr. Feinbaum stressed that **credibility** is the most important thing a company has going into a dispute, and **company leaders** are its most important witnesses. Their actions (or lack of actions) can expose the company to large judgments.

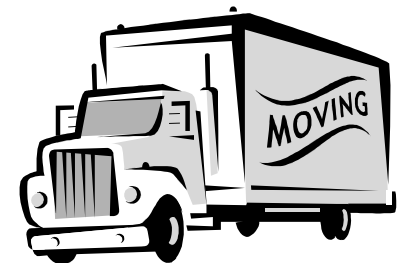
Here are some ways that plaintiffs attorneys will attack the credibility of leaders to win at trial:

1. If they lack knowledge of important corporate policies and procedures (how can they enforce them if they don't know them?)

2. If there's inappropriate documentation. Most deleted email can still be retrieved!
3. If performance appraisals are dishonest. This could include reviews that are inappropriately positive.
4. Ineffective interview techniques. Mr. Feinbaum recommended retaining interview notes both on the candidates chosen and not chosen.
5. Failure to work with the employee before terminating for non-performance.

**"Leaders are your most important witnesses."**

-Bart Feinbaum



## Members on the Move

Congratulations to **Marlene Hardesty**, who has been promoted to Safety and Training Manager for TG Fluid Systems.

We also send best wishes to **Helen Bidol**, who is leaving the area to become Director of Human Resources for Wallace Roberts & Todd LLC, Philadelphia.



## Thank you for your support!

At the November meeting, LAHRA held a silent auction fundraiser to support the SHRM Foundation, which dedicates its efforts to advancing the HR profession through research, scholarships, informational resources, publications and many other methods. A worthy cause!

Board members, Kelly Services and Dr. Huscko (who spoke at a LAHRA meeting earlier this year) generously donated auction items. The most popular items seemed to be the hand-made ones: Amy Bayerl's creative jewelry and cards, and Michelle Vorase-Biskner's gourmet caramel apples generated many bids!

Through auction purchases and additional donations, we raised more than \$550 for the SHRM Foundation. Because of this and other activities this year, LAHRA has qualified as a SHRM Foundation Chapter Champion.

Thank you to everyone who donated and bid, and helped to make this a great success.

**Kristi Stutz** helped kick off the bidding at the silent auction.



Some of the attractive auction items.



**Mike Kestly** collects his auction loot, including a DVD of "The Office" and a stuffed Catbert, the evil HR Director of Dilbert fame.

## President's Message

By Tim Cornelius



Tim Cornelius

### Happy Holidays!

By now many of you are making plans for holiday parties at work and at home. Every year my company hosts a kid's holiday party the first Saturday in December. We always have a DJ to spin records for the kids, the Fat Man shows up in red, hands out gifts and we take pictures, play games and eat holiday pizza and cookies and everyone has a good time. No worries.

The adult holiday party always gives me cause for concern--we offer employees an open bar. You may be thinking, "They must be crazy". I will admit there is risk in providing alcohol to employees at a holiday party. To manage that risk and to maintain my blood pressure we take the following steps:

1. We inform employees at company meetings of our expectations that they monitor and control how many drinks they have and ask them to limit consumption to no more than one per hour.
2. We provide lots of snacks throughout the evening. This slows the absorption of alcohol into the bloodstream.
3. Our holiday party committee looks for potential problems throughout the evening. If they think someone is drinking too much they discreetly alert their spouse or significant other and encourage that person to cut back on drinking and be the designated driver for the evening.
4. We instruct the bartenders not to over serve anyone and we check with them every so often to find out if they think there is a problem with anyone in the room.
5. If an employee abuses the policy, one or two people drive them home and put them to bed and they are not invited to another company function.

In short, we do our best to properly manage events where alcohol is served. We know the risks and take steps to control them. Serving alcohol at company events is inherently risky. My advice, like the Boy Scout motto is, "be prepared".

**Michelle Vorase-Biskner** tempted bidders by providing samples of her gourmet caramel



## To conquer turnover, first calculate its true impact

Even in this day of penny-pinching, few CEOs understand how much money their companies lose by failing to retain key employees. *Example:* Replacing an HR manager in the automotive industry can cost \$133,803. A machine-works company that loses a skilled, salaried machinist can lose \$102,796 from its bottom line. And the loss of a store manager costs a fast-food chain \$21,931.

Now, here's your chance to calculate the cost of losing one of your company's stars. Thanks to consulting firm Kepner-Tregoe Inc. and the Saratoga Institute, here is a formula you can use:

Select a job function with a lot of turnover. Calculate the full cost of that function by entering the average wage for that position on Line 1 and then multiplying it by 130% to include benefits cost. Next, multiply the total wage by 25%. This cost per employee may then be multiplied by the number of ex-employees on Line 6 to arrive at the total cost of turnover in this position.

Line #	Here are the steps		Here's an example	
1	Annual Wage	\$	Store manager salary	\$67,480
2	Gross-up for benefits	x 1.30	Gross-up for benefits	x 1.30
3	Total wage	\$	Total wage	\$87,724
4	Turnover cost	x .25	Turnover cost	x .25
5	Cost per employee	\$	Cost per manager	\$21,931
6	Number of ex-employees	x	Number of ex-managers	x 10
7	Total turnover cost	\$	Total turnover cost	\$219,310

*From The HR Specialist-National Institute of Business Management*

## Looking for an idea for holiday sharing?

Q: Our employees would like the company to coordinate some type of holiday giving project. Do you have any suggestions?

A: There are a lot of good local causes in which to participate in this holiday season. Here are some suggestions: the Marine Corps League coordinates Toys for Tots, and collect new, unwrapped toys which are distributed to needy kids. The Salvation Army coordinates the Adopt a Family Program. The Livingston Women's Club identifies holiday wishes on their giving trees, located throughout the county. They hope to grant 1600 wishes this year.

The Livingston County United Way produces a wish list for its partner agencies. Your com-

pany could consider adopting an agency & collecting contributions. For example, one local company is adopting the Pregnancy Helpline, and asking its employees to consider purchasing for its wish list, which includes diapers, prenatal vitamins, clothes for infants, etc.



If you'd like a copy of the Agencies Wish List, contact the United Way at 810-494-3000.

## More November meeting photos



Jennifer Hetherton, Shellie Rytlewski



Jim Krolik



**More November meeting photos**

Sandy Morris, Mike Kestly

David Burkhouse, Jeanie Lewis



Michelle Vorase-Biskner, Mary Nye



Steve Williams, Tonya Schemer



Christy Conn, Steve Williams, Amy Bayerl



Cheryl Cunningham, Joe Kyle



Janie Thayer, Jill Warner



Laura Shad, Christy Conn

**LAHRA Board of Directors**

**President**

**Tim Cornelius**

Transtar Autobody Technologies  
tcornelius@tat-co.com  
810-220-3017

**President Elect/Programs**

**Tracie Maisonville**

Roofcon, Inc.  
tracie@roofcom.com  
810-229-8490

**HRCI Certification**

**Amy Bayerl, PHR**

American Mitsuba  
a-bayerl@amc.americanmitsuba.com  
810-225-2458

**Membership Chair**

**Helen Bidol, SPHR**

Groundwater & Environmental Services  
hbidol@gesonline.com  
800-368-0337 x3353

**Secretary**

**Kari Olds, PHR**

Amerisure  
kolds@amerisure.com  
248-615-8551

**SHRM Foundation/Community Relations**

**Cheryl Rogers, SPHR**

Livingston County Daily Press & Argus  
clogers@gannett.com  
517-552-2822

**Diversity/Legislative**

**Michelle Vorase-Biskner, PHR**

Citizens  
mvorasebisk@hanover.com  
517-540-4436

**Treasurer/Communications**

**Steve Williams**

EctoHR, LLC  
Steve@ectoHR.com  
810-534-0170

**Welcome new LAHRA members:**

**Janie Thayer**  
March Coatings

**Christy Conn**  
Macy's