THE LIGHTER SIDE OF TAIR

By
Christopher P. Benton

No one has ever accused institutional researchers of being “wild and crazy guys,” but, trust me, there’s a lot that goes on behind the scenes that you may not be aware of! In that vein, I thought I would share with you the top 5 conference themes that were rejected for TAIR 2005. Below is a list of the rejects along with the reason why each one was discarded. Enjoy!

5. “Institutional Researchers Gone Wild!”
   (Unfortunately, there’s probably already a video with this title.)

   (That’s just sad.)

   (That’s even sadder!)

   (Some themes hit just too close to home.)

1. “What Happens at TAIR Stays at TAIR!”
   (This wasn’t selected, but we think we’ve found our theme for 2006!)

Well, as you can see, institutional researchers often have a sense of humor that’s just a few too many standard deviations away from the mean.

In other lighter news, for the first time ever, a mystery novel has recently been published in which one of the central characters is the director of institutional research at a small community college in Texas. The volume is titled “A Bond with Death,” and it was penned by award-winning mystery writer Bill Crider. In this tome you will be delighted by the actions of IR director, Dr. C.P. “Seepy” Benton, who often entertains his cohorts with songs on the guitar. Of course, any similarity to actual persons living or dead is purely coincidental. Plus, those remarks in the story about Dr. Benton and whips are greatly exaggerated!

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TAIR 2005 Program Committee Chairs

Program Chair .......... Chris Benton, Alvin Community College
Concurrent Sessions .......... David Preston, Brazosport College
Evaluation ....................... Carol Kominsky, UH – Clear Lake
Finance.......................... Jaime Garcia, Rice University
General Sessions .. Melissa Canady, Texas Christian University
Local Arrangements ... Sam Stigall, Univ. of Texas at Arlington
Newsletter Editor/Publicity ........ Jana Marak, Baylor University
Program Brochure .. Gabriela Borcoman, Cedar Valley College
Registration ............ Danica Frampton, St. Edward's University

Resource Fair............ Allen Clark, University of North Texas
Roundtables.................... David Andrus, Del Mar College
Special Interest Groups . Carol LaRue, Southwest Texas Jr. Col.
TAIR Webmaster Sam Stigall, University of Texas at Arlington
Workshops ....................... Teresa Isbell, Northlake College
Advisor ...................... Karen C. Laljiani, El Centro College
Advisor ............. Marilyn Greer, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center

TAIR 2005
Wednesday, February 23rd – Friday, February 25th
(Pre-conference Workshops begin on Tuesday, February 22nd)
And finally (important announcement!), in keeping with our theme of “FUN” for this year’s TAIR conference, the TAIR Executive Committee has reserved the Legends Room (across from the bar) at the Wyndham Hotel for an after-dinner get together from 9-11 PM on Thursday night, February 24th. Thus, if you have any talent at all (singing, guitar playing, musical instruments, juggling, word problems in algebra), bring that talent to the Legends Room and share it with your colleagues. If you have absolutely no talent, come and share that too! We’ll have munchies and both non-alcoholic and non-non-alcoholic beverages available as well as what we like to call our “Koala-tea Enhancement Grant” or “KEG” for short. So if your quality enhancement plan has got you down, then come and swap your QEP for our KEG and an enjoyable evening with your friends in the Legends Room on Thursday night! If all goes well, then you, too, may find yourself saying at the end of the evening that “What happens at TAIR stays at TAIR!”

**Member News**

Congratulations to “Dr.” Gabriela Borcoman who recently received her doctorate from the University of North Texas.

Dr. Gerry Dizzino is the new Director of Institutional Research at The University of Texas at San Antonio.

**TAIR Web Information**

URL: http://texas-air.org

2005 conference information is posted on the TAIR Web site. Check the Web site often for updated information.

**REMINDER**

Be sure to bring the Texas Hotel Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate with you to the Conference – a copy is available on the TAIR Web site.

**2007 Conference Site Contenders**

South Padre Island

Waco

Voting for the 2007 conference site, Nominating Committee and the offices of Vice President/President-Elect and Treasurer will be conducted at the conference.
Needed: Your Input!

Recently, you received through the TAIR-L the draft TAIR Strategic Plan developed at the request of President Karen Laljiani by your colleagues:

- Susan R. Griffith, Chair University of Texas-Pan American
- Susan Brown The Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Darline Morris Texas State Technical College
- Dr. Marilyn Greer University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center
- Rose Austin Kingwood College
- Dr. Gerry Dizinno Formerly St. Mary’s University/Now University of Texas-San Antonio
- Fonda Vera Richland College
- Nick Valcik University of Texas at Dallas
- Karen Laljiani El Centro College

The TAIR membership is requested to review the draft strategic plan and provide comments to the TAIR Strategic Planning Team by the following methods:

- In advance of the conference, review the draft strategic plan and send your comments via email to the Team member of your choice.
- At the February TAIR conference, attend a roundtable discussion with Team members.
- At the Conference, discuss your comments individually with Team members.

Please give the Team your input by:

- Editing draft goals/strategies.
- Suggesting deletion of goals/strategies.
- Suggesting new goals/strategies.
- Offering for consideration by Executive Committee your proposal for:
  - Priorities
  - Target measures
  - Year of completion
  - Responsible party

Remember, this is YOUR PLAN.
If you don’t participate, you will have to live with someone else’s vision of TAIR’s future.
TAIR Resource Fair

We are going to have a wonderful Resource Fair at the 2005 TAIR conference! We currently have seven vendors. These vendors and representatives are:

- ACT – Chuck Warton
- College Board – Elizabeth Stanley
- EInstruction – Bob Kramer
- RAND – James Padilla
- SAS – Minda Markel
- SPSS – Robin Williams
- TLT – Katharine Mason

Each of these vendors offers a unique opportunity for us to learn more about products that can help us to better manage our daily business affairs. If you are like me, you may have been reluctant to speak to vendors in the past because you were afraid they would try to sell you one of their products. In the past year, I have found several of these vendors’ products to be extremely helpful. Please make an effort to go by the Resource Fair and meet these company representatives. I know they would like the opportunity to share some of their experiences and knowledge regarding their products. Also, this year, the vendors will not be assigned an individual table at the Thursday luncheon; they have requested the opportunity to sit with conference attendees. Please make them feel welcome at the Thursday luncheon and throughout the TAIR Conference.

See you at the TAIR Resource Fair.

Allen Clark
TAIR 2005 Resource Fair Chair

Meet the Candidates!

Nominees for Vice President/President-Elect

Dr. Gerry Dizinno
University of Texas – San Antonio

Dr. David Preston
Brazosport College
Nominees for Treasurer

Margaret Drain
Houston Community College System

Bishar Sethna
Lamar State College

Nominees for Nominating Committee

Dr. Gabriela Borcoman
Dallas Count Community College District

Dr. Allen Clark
University of North Texas
Karyn Hall                  Dr. Pam Haws
Stephen F. Austin State University  University of Texas – Arlington

Dr. John Kalb                  Kaye Mizer
Southern Methodist University  Texas A&M System Health Science Center

Lance Pate       Jeff Pitts
Victoria College        Texas A&M University