

# THIRD THURSDAY

## The Mommy Track Puts Rumson Event Planner In The Fast Lane

BY JOAN LABANCA

“O KAY THEN, FOR the sales meeting next January we’ll be at the Marriott Resort in Naples. The customer indicated that 500 sales reps from around the country will attend. Next week, I am receiving bids from vendors for the local transportation and for the boat cruise. Things are coming along well. Katie just woke up from her nap, so I need to take a break now. I’ll call you later; I’d like to review the insurance company proposal for the annual awards dinner. Thanks.”

While the exact conversation above is fictitious, this scenario is in fact one that Jennifer Kane frequently encounters. Kane is owner of Shore Incentives, Inc., an event planning company based out of her home in Rumson. Shore Incentives specializes in corporate business meetings, conferences, and travel award programs. One of the unique aspects of the company is that all nine employees work out of their home from locations all around the United States. Among the group of employees, they have eleven children ranging from a newborn to 13 years old. By giving these employees flexibility to work-at-home, and acknowledging their needs to balance work and family, Kane is able to maintain a high quality, dedicated staff. “I can tap into a source that corporate America can’t work with too easily, and there is tremendous talent

out there. Every one of Shore Incentive’s employees has a laptop, fax, cell phone, and sometimes a crying child in the background”, says Kane. She has created a team of people who use their minds and their creativity to support each other professionally and on family issues.

Jennifer Kane started Shore Incentives in 1993 after working for several years in both the resort industry and for an event planning company. Kane found that she had her own creative ideas and wanted to branch out on her own. Shore Incentives started small with a core group who had already worked together. Kane was joined by Cory Crocker, who does all computer support, web design, and on-site technical support and by Sandra McMullen who handles “one billion administrative details for the meetings”. Even from the start, the company was spread around the country with Kane in Rumson, Crocker in Seattle, and McMullen in Winston-Salem. The other employees are also spread out (California, Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania) and support Kane on client proposals, meeting preparation, and on-site support of the events. Shore Incentives also taps into the larger “stay-at-home mom” network. One local example is their use of Jennifer Eckhoff, a printer and mother of two, who also works out of her Rumson home. Eckhoff creates all the printed

products for Shore Incentives including hand cut invitations, name tags, and itineraries for the events.

Shore Incentives, Inc. offers a full range of services for planning a corporate event. From the location and hotel arrangements, to all transportation for the attendees, to formal dinners and black tie affairs, meeting space, registration data bases, basic audiovisual, entertainment, themes, and décor, and of course on-site support, the team is there. Shore Incentives works closely with the client on budgeting for the event, and tracks the budget throughout. The same on-site trip directors are used for each event, thus repeat clients come to know the staff and appreciate their personalized service. Clients include a Wall Street financial firm, an auto manufacturer, and large insurance companies. Guardian Life Insurance is the largest client, with Shore Incentives planning approximately four large events per year for them.

Kane enjoys her work immensely. “I am very detail oriented and unbelievably efficient,” says Kane with a smile, “and that’s why I love what I do.” She has fun planning the themed events – last year the company planned a “Polo Club” event with a polo match, stomping of the divots, and fireworks. Another event featured a “Hollywood Night” with Lucille Ball, Marilyn Monroe, and Humphrey Bogart



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Jennifer Kane owns and runs her event planning business from her Fair Haven home.

look-alikes. One of the greatest perks for Shore Incentives employees is the opportunity to bring kids along to some of the large events. At some of the large resorts, employees’ children are enrolled in a special day camp, and employees are provided with two bedroom suites to accommodate the family. Kane notes that this may cost her company a little more, but in the long run, it has allowed her to maintain the best people, and create a closely-knit team.

Jennifer Kane doesn’t just plan events for other people; she is also a triathlete, who is now training for her own event. On July 12, the same date as her 40th birthday, she will compete in her next triathlon. She even manages to fit her training into her busy schedule in an efficient manner. “When I get too stressed, I just jump on the treadmill,” confesses Kane.

For more information on Shore Incentives, Inc., visit their website at [www.shoreinc.com](http://www.shoreinc.com).



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Kane balances her work schedule with caring for her daughter, Katie, 5, who has a playroom adjoining Kane’s office.