

54<sup>th</sup> Annual NAWIC National Convention in Phoenix, AZ  
August 26-29, 2009

Having elected to drive to this desert oasis in 100°+ temperature should have been a clue as to how hot the rest of the week was going to be. Fortunately my co-pilots made the trip very enjoyable by watching movies and eating our way across the state. We arrived safely Wednesday afternoon and ready for a stretch before the activities began. The hotel and staff were fabulous and very accommodating. Registration went very smoothly and the exhibits filled the foyer.

The first activity was the “Viva la NAWIC” Welcome Fiesta. The food was great and the music was very festive, and around the room they had games to play. It was a lot of fun and a great ice breaker.

Thursday was only 110° and the Annual Meeting began promptly at 8:30am with a call to order by President Pat McDonald. The National Anthem was sung by two of our NAWIC sisters, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, Inspiration and welcome to Phoenix by Mayor Phil Gordon. The first credential report was given of 369 voting strength followed by adoption of meeting rules and convention program.

The keynote speaker was Edith Washington, FCSI CCS whose topic was “Turning Points” recognizing that people are America’s greatest resource. We need to use concentrated communication because fear based communication doesn’t work. We should be change makers, dream catchers and transformers – stop putting people in boxes. She was given a standing ovation for a very powerful and energetic speech.

Memorials were given and a word from our Sponsor, Home Depot, and then a special Master Recruiter Award was presented to Toni Walker for her ninth Gold Star, along with the first ever Gold Jacket.

Reports were given by NEF, NFSF, Board of Directors’, Executive Vice President and the NAWIC staff was recognized followed by an invitation to the 2010 Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. The final credentials report had a voting strength of 398.2. The floor was open to new business and much debate on the changes in membership categories of retiring and associate members not being able to vote. It was decided that it would be reviewed at the Post Convention Board meeting.

After announcements we were adjourned to the Awards Luncheon where Linda Young was given the Darline H. Johnson Volunteer of the Year Award from NEF. Way to go Linda!

In the afternoon I attended both of the Construction Communication seminars presented by Edith Washington. The first was on People Power focusing on Clear, Concise and Clarity. The second focused on documentation that impacts people and profit. Construction documents that save dollars, establishing clarity, creativity and consensus; documenting disputes that save dollars.

My first seminar on Friday was “Records Retention & Destruction in Construction” presented by Carol Hagen. She stressed how to capture business activities of an organization, compliance issues, risk of litigation and confidentiality issues. I then attended Building Strong Girls: Opportunities for Middle Schoolers to Explore Nontraditional Careers by NAWIC member Janice Urbanik. Rosie’s Girls is a three-week day camp for 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders. The Vermont Work was started in 2000 and is now in four states and twelve sites. It is similar to MAGIC but for the younger set introducing them to careers in construction through physical activity, arts and crafts and community service.

The Installation luncheon retired the outgoing 2008-2009 Board and installed the 2009-2010 Officers and Directors, officiated by Linda Young, Past National President.

The afternoon seminar I attended was Collaborative Team Processes in Construction presented by Janice Urbanik. She gave a basic overview of how BIM, ConsensusDocs, Lean and Integrated Project Delivery are rapidly becoming the new standard in staying competitive. I also attended No Room for Monogamy: Project Relationship Management presented by Janice Urbanik. She had a power point presentation that reviewed how critical it is to build a successful project through communication and compromise like a "marriage". The success of the project can only be as good as the bond between all parties.

Saturday morning offered several Association Workshops which I attended the Treasurer Workshop presented by Cindy Johnson, CDS, CIT. There was a handout to review the duties of the Treasurer and sample forms that will be available on the National NAWIC website. She promised more to follow as she is trying to simplify the processes and create consistency across the regions.

The convention came to a close with the Crystal Vision Awards Gala. Three very special people were recognized for their contributions in construction:

- Carol Kueker Award presented to Jeffrey Callahan for starting a Division of Construction & Design program at University of Alaska's Technical College in Anchorage
- Crystal Vision Recipient presented to Judith Ritter for being the first woman to solely own a union construction firm and exceeding the percentages of women & minorities on her projects
- Crystal Achievement Award presented to Catherine Escobar for her mentoring youth into the construction industry

This convention was packed full of information, education and opportunities to network. Thank you for allowing me to attend as a delegate for our chapter.

Submitted by Pam Gibbs, CIT