

54th Annual National Association of Women in Construction
Report
August 27-29, 2009

I arrived in Phoenix, Arizona on late Wednesday afternoon to check into the beautiful JW Marriott Hotel. I attended the “Viva la NAWIC” Welcome Fiesta that evening with my fellow members of Region 12. What a fun event – great food – great games and great music.

We started out the 54th Annual meeting on Thursday with a call to order by President Pat McDonald, singing of the National Anthem from two of our NAWIC members, Pledge of Allegiance, Inspiration, introduction of special guests, and welcome to Phoenix by the Mayor. This was followed by other normal business. Our Keynote Speaker was Edith Washington, FCSI, CCS on “Turning Points” – whose four words focused around accepting, assessing, acting and adjusting. She spoke about the value of woman in the workplace. She advocates the power of positive communication, empathetic leadership and tolerance. My favorite question for all of us was “what would happen if we all stayed home?” Women do have a very important role in the construction industry and in the future.

After Memorials and a word from our Sponsor, Home Depot, a special presentation was given to Master Recruiter Toni Walker from the Cleveland, Ohio Chapter. She received the first ever Gold Jacket and her ninth Gold Star for bringing in yet another 18 members during a 3-year period.

A number of reports were presented along with an invitation to the 2010 Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. The 2nd credentials report had a total voting strength of 398. Under new business a number of Chapters voiced their concerns regarding the recent change in membership of the Retiring and Associate member categories and them not being able to vote. After a lengthy debate, the issue will be taken up at the Post Convention Board meeting.

We adjourned to our Awards Luncheon and afternoon seminars. During the lunch our own Linda Young was awarded a Darline H. Johnson Volunteer of the Year Award from NEF. And she was very surprised – congratulations Linda.

I attended the professional seminar presented by Edith Washington on Construction Communication – People Power. Some of the key points I took away were build collaboration and trust; partnering; integrated document sharing; streamline communication to one page and keeping your email short. But always using the three “C’s” – Clear – Concise – Clarity.

Friday morning we had the Region 12 group photo then headed out for a full day of seminars. My first seminar was entitled Building Strong Girls: Opportunities for Middle Schoolers to Explore Nontraditional Careers by NAWIC member Janice Urbanik. They introduced the Rosie’s Girls program, similar to MAGIC, but focusing on the middle school ages of 11-13. A power point presentation of some of the current programs across the US was presented, one being in our own Region 12 in Santa Monica. I and Incoming President Loralee took some good notes and were very impressed by this program. More information is available at their website: Rosiesgirls.org

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The next seminar I attended was “The Paperless Construction Office” presented by fellow NAWIC member Carol Hagen. She has been a speaker at our Chapter before. We learned about the different document imaging and content management tools available to reduce and/or eliminate the tremendous amount of paper in our day to day operations.

Our luncheon included the Installation of the 2009-2010 Officers and Directors by Linda Young, Past National President.

President	Robin Fulton Meyer, CIT
President Elect	Debra Gregoire, CIT
Vice President	Judy DeWeese, CIT
Secretary	Shirley Horne, CIT
Treasurer	Cindy Johnsen, CDS, CIT

All our Regional Directors were introduced and installed.

The afternoon seminar I attended was entitled Collaborative Team Processes in Construction. This seminar was presented by Janice Urbanik. She discussed the different “collaborative” approaches to building your projects, many of which are being used locally in California such as BIM and Integrated Project Delivery.

On Saturday morning a number of Association Workshops were presented. I attended the PR/Marketing presented by Tampa Bay Chapter member Amanda Dawson. The workshop presented tools on how to market our Chapters. The difference between Marketing and Public Relations is marketing costs money, P/R is free – so use all the tools available. A number of templates will be produced throughout the year and posted on the National website for all Chapters to utilize in announcing their meetings, seminars, special events, etc. I then attended a seminar on How to Help My Chapter, My Community and Myself with the NAWIC Education Foundation Programs. This was led by incoming NEF President Nancy Eaton. She presented the new Bookkeeping 101 Course. There was an open discussion type format whereby members had an opportunity to share what they were doing in their Chapters by way of Block Kids, CAD Drafting, K-12 programs, etc. Lots of great ideas were shared.

Our Saturday ended with the Crystal Vision Awards Gala. We honored three very deserving individuals in the construction industry. We honored Jefferey Callahan with the Carol Kueker Award for his efforts in starting a Construction Management BAS program @ AAU in Anchorage, Alaska. We honored Judith Ridder as the Crystal Vision Recipient for all her many efforts in promoting woman in construction. And then the highlight of the evening for me was the presentation of the Crystal Achievement award to my dear friend of 25 years and member of my former Chapter and Region 10, Catherine Escobar for all her workforce development and mentoring efforts. What a wonderful celebration of three very deserving individuals.

It was a wonderful convention and I was truly honored to be representing our Chapter as a Delegate. I encourage you all to attend next year’s 55th Annual NAWIC Convention.

Submitted by:
Gwen Miller