

September 2009 Phoenix National Convention Delegate Report

By Kim Briggs

On a not too early Wednesday morning, I took my coffee cup and joined Myrna Smith and Pam Gibbs to brave the heat of the desert to attend the NAWIC 2009 National Convention held at the Marriott Hotel in Phoenix, Arizona. The good company, a movie playing and a few stops made the trip seem effortless.



Arriving after lunch we settled into our room and prepared for the "Welcome Fiesta" where we donned "fiesta" attire hooked up with Sherry Yarborough and joined many other women from locations all around the United States. In the Fiesta room we played games and heard opening remarks to welcome us to Phoenix.

The business of NAWIC was attended to on Thursday morning. First we were greeted by the mayor of Phoenix, and then lifted out of our seats to an energizing message from Edith Washington. She inspired us to "truly empower ourselves by effectively handling ourselves", "Quit putting people in boxes", "Fear based communication is when we focus on our goals instead of on souls", "I can do anything if I only knew what it was. , and don't use the attitude and phrase "we've always done it this way." We were encouraged to handling those turning points in our lives that we can't see ahead by refusing to give into fear. I don't know what awaits me around the next corner, but I plan to handle it with no fear and see it as an opportunity and not a setback.

Following this inspiring speech we got down to the heart of the business. This is when a delegate chosen to represent her chapter must be prepared to cast her vote on the items being presented. A lively discussion ensued over the new category divisions. In the end of the discussion, it was recognized that a change to bylaws can be retroactive and be very costly if the IRS decides the change affects our 501c6 standing. The final vote received the new categories as recommended by the attorney. It was this discussion that made clear the responsibility of the delegate and why it is necessary to attend and bring this information home.

An awards luncheon awaited us with so many worthy recipients of very honorable awards. I was surprised when my own name was called for inviting some of you lovely ladies to join NAWIC. Certainly my small award didn't compare to the huge honor Linda Young received for her work on the new NEF class on bookkeeping. Even so, It's quite fun to go to a national event and be recognized for something. Now I have to try and see if I can do something else for next year.

The remainder of the afternoon and Friday met us with various instructional seminars that to increase our knowledge and be able to bring back to our communities. Construction communication was available to us. So, I once again found myself listening to Edith Washington teaching us the mechanics of communication (tone, pitch, volume, inflection do make a difference), the message-know what you are trying to say, and the mastery of communication-learn about others. I also joined here again for "Paper Power" and learned how to avoid litigation-write it, record it and keep it safe along with the ever famous "Who, what when where how why."



Friday record retention held us in our seats-keep it longer than the accountant says. In fact, keep it long enough to make an attorney happy.

I proceeded to learn about building strong girls with Rosie's girls which is a summer camp to teach girls community building activities. It can be a day program or literally a camp away from everyone. The girls learn not only construction skills, but also skills necessary for life either through arts and crafts, physically challenging activities such as rock climbing self-defense or other sports and games. Is San Diego prepared for such a step yet? Hmmmm

The installation luncheon left us saying goodbye to the Pat McDonald, the outgoing president, which was a bit sad for me as I have so enjoyed her leadership. Then Robin Fulton Meyer was installed as the new president. Robin is a great choice and I know she will be quite sufficient for the task ahead. We will forward to her leadership as well. If you don't know either one of these ladies, it's time to get involved. They possess a wealth of knowledge to be recognized. Join us next year and you will see.

Continuing my journey in the paper world of accounting and communication I took a look at the LEED Certification seminar, then a lesson called "No Room for Monogamy" a course in project management relationship. Owners, design professionals and contractors were compared to a marriage relationship. It's all about the relationship courting, the prenuptial agreement (the estimating process and discussion of terms) the marriage (contract) and finally the ending of a relationship. Have you considered another contractor in these terms? It's a little hard to picture some of these contractors as my intended.

My, how the days pass quickly when you are in seminars. Saturday morning was designed to teach us about new skills to take home to our chapter. My first area of interest was the "Garden Shed Project" which I learned has also been used to teach girl scouts and women in prison. This seemed such a great way to encourage the girls and women to learn new skills and possibly open a future to them. As an accountant, and your outgoing treasurer, I still find it necessary to keep learning so I attended the Treasurer's workshop to hone my skills in the area of non-profit. I still love to learn and grow in my field and this seemed a great way to add something new or to be refreshed of that which I may already know.

Saturday evening, we gussied up and put on our beautiful smiles where we met again with our chapter for an awards banquet. Honored were two people have been instrumental in their contribution to the construction industry. I know some pretty outstanding women in our chapter and look forward to



honoring them at this event sometime in the future.

So long...farewell... Auf Wiedersehen...all must come to an end. Movies and snacks awaited our trip home...and...beware... what lurks in the heat of the desert (115)...it could be a mirage...or it could be real. Come with us next year and see what awaits you.

