

NABE-News

CALENDAR from www.nabenet.org

Program Committee meeting

When: Sept. 10 - 11

Where: Salt Lake City

Communications Section Workshop

When: Oct 6 - 9

Where: Minneapolis, MN

“Make Tracks to Minnesota. . .

Where Creative Ideas

Run Wild!”

NABE Board of Directors meeting

When: Nov. 5 - 6

Where: Destin, FL

GR Section Workshop

When: Nov. 10 - 12

Where: Washington, DC

NABE Administration and Finance Section Meeting

When: Feb. 7 - 8

Where: Salt Lake City, UT

NABE/NCBP/NCBF Annual Meeting

When: Feb. 7 - 8

Where: Salt Lake City, UT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SAD NEWS

Sharonica Hall, sister of Leticia Spencer, meeting planner for the ABA Division for Bar Services, died suddenly on August 9 in Atlanta of an undetected heart ailment. She was only 34. Sharonica was at the Wednesday evening “Casino Night” with Leticia, and many of you may have met her. Flowers were sent to Leticia on behalf of NABE, but I’m sure she’d appreciate condolence cards from you. Her home address is 1430 N. Monitor, Chicago, IL 60651. Our deepest sympathies to Leticia and her family on their loss.

CONSULTANT’S REPORT

By now, most of you have probably heard something about the work of Jan Cohen, the consultant retained by the NABE Board last year to get feedback from our members, particularly on the annual and midyear meetings. Jan, along with NABE Board members, called inactive, lapsed, or “never” members of NABE; in addition, four focus groups, composed of current, active NABE members, were conducted at the Annual Meeting in San Francisco last August. Following are a few of Jan’s impressions gathered from these interviews and focus groups:

- Size does matter. There is a real difference between what larger bar associations can get out of NABE and what smaller ones have access to and need. Programming will have to be specific to the size of the bar association to retain members’ interest.
- Money is a huge issue for the smaller bars. Strategies that would allow them to participate without spending money are necessary if they are to remain members.
- The very large bar association executives send people to the conferences, but don’t really feel they need to attend themselves.
- There also appears to be a difference in the needs of voluntary bars vs. mandatory bars, and new Executive Directors vs. seasoned ones.
- People attend NABE meetings more for the networking than for the content. Some find it a “closed” group. Strategies that encourage people to meet and feel a part of the group, while also sharing ideas, would improve the programming.
- People really want specific sessions or services that help them with the problems they face. People don’t value the large plenary sessions with motivational speakers as much as more tailored sessions.
- Technology can assist those members who cannot afford to, or choose not to, attend meetings, such as electronic or web-based programming or expansion of the listserves.
- NABE should consider services and products for executives from small bars who cannot attend the meetings. These would be of use to everyone (those who attended the conference might want to see it again or share it with staff/Board) if archived and easy to find on the web site.

As you can see, Jan’s report has a lot of “meat” for the NABE leadership to follow up on. The Board focused this past year on the programming aspects of the report, and the Program Committee already has implemented several suggestions, such as breakout sessions *(continued)*

by size of bar and bringing back the New Bar Executives Institute. They'll be working this year on implementing other aspects of Jan's report and improving on the already excellent programs they currently produce. You'll be hearing more in future NABE News about Jan's report and its implications for future meetings. In the meantime, if you would like a copy of Jan's full report, please email (afritz@memphisbar.org) me and I'll send it to you.

KUDOS TO:

Bonnie Sashin, APR, Communications Director of the Boston Bar Association, who recently addressed an audience of public relations professionals from a broad range of non-profit organizations at a national tele-seminar convened by the Public Relations Society of America. Her topic was "Earning and Retaining a Seat at the Table," and she focused on strategies for building strong working relationships with board members.

MEMBER SERVICES/BENEFITS

At the NABE Board meeting in November in Destin (hey, it's tough, but somebody has to do it!), we will be "brainstorming" ideas for services or benefits NABE can provide members who cannot or do not usually attend the midyear or annual meetings. If you're one of those people and have a suggestion for us, please call or email me. Nothing is too crazy or "out there" – I can't promise we can or will implement your ideas, but we want to hear them!

COMMITTEE/FORUM SIGN-UP

Remember to sign up for a committee or forum. . .draft time is fast approaching.

HEAD NOTES

Allan Head, who has served as Executive Director of the North Carolina Bar Association for more than 30 years, last year published "Head Notes", which contain bits of wisdom he has gathered during his years of service. He graciously gave me permission to share them with you.

"HEAD NOTE" OF THE WEEK

Celebrate the little things!