

NABE-News

CALENDAR from www.nabenet.org

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 Midyear Meeting

When: Feb. 8-12

Where: Salt Lake City, UT

CSE Retreat

When: March 8 - 9, 2005

Where: Chicago, IL

Bar Leadership Institute

When: March 10 -12, 2005

Where: Chicago, IL

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMMITTEE/FORUM CONFERENCE CALLS: As promised in last week's NABE-News, here are the results of the conference calls with the committee and forum chairs and board liaisons:

- The committees and forums have been active, with conference calls, emails, etc. among their members.
- The Bylaws Committee has considered a bylaws amendment relating to the structure of the Program Committee, which the NABE Board will discuss at its November meeting. If approved, the bylaws amendment will be voted on by the NABE membership at the midyear meeting.
- The Surveys Committee is considering conducting a technology survey this year, followed by the compensation & benefits survey next year.
- The Sponsorship Committee has received commitments from five companies to sponsor at the midyear meeting. The committee also is in the process of setting up advertising on the NABE web site and NABE-News (so don't be surprised when you see a banner ad running in a future issue!)
- The Membership Committee is going to assign "buddies" to first-time meeting attendees earlier so they will have more time to contact the first-timer before the meeting.
- The CSE Committee is busy planning the Chief Staff Executives Retreat, March 8-9, 2005 in Chicago.
- Wanda Claiborne, chair of the Meetings/Seminars & Events Forum, initiated a "get a planner" campaign, which has resulted in five new members joining that forum. Way to go, Wanda!
- The Law Office Economics & Management Forum is proposing a change in its name and scope. Its new name would be "Member Services" and it would encompass all services bar associations provide to their members. The NABE Board will discuss this proposal in November.
- The Sections & Committees Forum and the LRIS Forum both will conduct programs at the midyear meeting in Salt Lake City; the former on recruiting and recognizing volunteers and LRIS on benchmarks for a well-run program.
- The State & Local Bar Liaisons Forum is planning a half-day or full-day meeting in conjunction with the Communications Section Workshop in October 2005 in Orlando.

Thanks to the committee and forum chairs and members for their dedication, hard work, and energy. Your work is greatly appreciated!

KUDOS TO: Bill Weisenberg, Assistant Executive Director, Public Affairs, for the Ohio State Bar Association. Last week, the OSBA celebrated Bill's 25 years of service with them. (Rumor is that Denny Ramey's 25-year anniversary is coming up soon.)

WHAT TO DO WITH BOARD MEMBERS WHO DON'T DO ANYTHING: (not that we ever have this problem!) from the Board Café newsletter (www.boardcafe.org)

Whose responsibility is it to “do something” about a board member who is AWOL, deadwood, undependable, a procrastinator, or worse? Answer: Yours. Every board member shares in the responsibility to involve each board member in contributing to the well-being of the board and the organization. If you’re the board president or an officer, your responsibilities include monitoring non-participation and intervening with board members when necessary. In some cases you may need to talk with the executive director about improving the way he or she works with board members. If you’re the executive director, you may need to discuss the situation with board leadership.

There are two things you *must* do in the case of a board member who is not participating. First, you must do *something*. The problem is likely only to get worse, and non-participating board members have a demoralizing impact on even the best of boards. Second, be confident and hopeful. Many board members just need a little reminder to be more conscientious, and others will be grateful that you’ve given them a graceful way to relinquish tasks or even leave the board. Things will work out.

Short-term strategies

- Check to be sure that expectations were made clear to the board member before he or she joined the board.
- Hold a board discussion at which expectations are reconsidered and re-affirmed. Agree on a list of expectations for every board member.
- Be sensitive to possible health issues or personal reasons why a good board member isn’t participating as much as he or she has in the past.
- Transfer responsibilities to someone else.
- Together with the board member, explore whether he or she really has the time right now to be an active board member.

Longer-term strategies

- Make it possible for individuals to take a “leave of absence” from the board if they have health, work, or other reasons why they cannot participate fully for a while.
- Have a board discussion or a written board survey on what makes it difficult for people to participate fully.
- Consider whether board participation is meaningful to board members.
- Revise what is expected of board members. Perhaps responsibilities have been given to a board member that are unrealistic for any but the super-board member. Reduce the number of committees and utilize short-term task forces instead. Re-design jobs and responsibilities to fit the ability of a busy achiever to accomplish them.

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION WORKSHOP: I’m off tomorrow to attend the NABE Communications Section Workshop in Minneapolis (brrr!) One of the “perks” of being “czarina” is that you get to go to things you might otherwise have missed for a variety of reasons. I’ve always wanted to go to the Communications Section Workshop, and this is my chance! I’ll give a full report in next week’s NABE-News.