

NAWIC's 52nd Annual Convention

Caribe Royale Orlando – Orlando, Florida

September 5-8, 2007

I am excited to share my convention experience this year. I arrived in hot and humid Orlando on Wednesday afternoon. The Caribe Royale was a beautiful facility and very large. There was a lot of walking done in four days.

After registration and browsing the NAWIC Marketplace, I attended the "Tropicana" Welcome Party that evening and it was so good to see and catch up with old friends, one in particular that most of you know, Kate Muniz.

The Annual Meeting was held on Thursday from 8:30 AM – Noon. Business was conducted and then we heard from the keynote speaker, Vicki Hitzges, Certified Speaking Professional. The title of her program was "The Reaching Out Principle". A great deal of time and money has been devoted to find out what makes people succeed in business and Vicki translated these principles into a fun, motivational presentation giving tips to immediately build productive relationships with employees, customers, clients and vendors with specific techniques to build rapport and strong alliances that last. National President, Christie Wigginton, CIT showed a video on a new program called MAGIC: Mentor a Girl in Construction. More information will be coming out about this on how chapters can host a MAGIC Summer Camp. President Elect, Tammy Taylor CDS, CDT, CIT gave the invitation to 2008 Convention which will be held in Las Vegas and the meeting was adjourned at noon.

At the Awards Luncheon I was very honored to accept the "Tradeswoman of the Year" award for Wendy Hibbert and the "Appreciation" plaque for Olson Plumbing & Heating for their financial support of the national CAD/Drafting competition. During lunch we were also treated to a Carhart Fashion Show previewing the new line of clothing for women.

Professional Seminars were offered in the afternoon and I attended two of Vicki Hitzges: "Here I Am – There You Are" which showed how to discover the pay-off and the building of strong relationships by making other people feel important and how to put customers, colleagues and friends first and why it helps. The second one was "Jazz 'Em Up-Turn 'Em Loose". To get employees to work for you, you've got to work for them. She gave tips to create a more successful company by teaching managers new ways to motivate employees.

Friday started with more Professional Seminars and Workshops and I attended two presented by Marion York from WORDpower Institute. The first was “You Win or Lose with The Words You Choose” which gave us tips on effective communication, a combination of speaking and listening. The second was “Think On Your Feet-Communication Excellence”. Knowing how to express ourselves in authentic, respectful ways gives us a big professional edge. After the Installation Luncheon, Carolyn Cummings and I met with Director Roberts to discuss Forum 2008.

Saturday I attended three workshops: “Chart the Future of Your Chapter”, the “Directors Advisor/Forum Hostess Chapter Meeting” and a presentation on “Web Site/Database” where we were shown the capabilities of the new NAWIC database and how to use it to benefit our chapter needs. Saturday evening was the Crystal Vision Awards Gala where the Crystal Vision recipient, Veronica Soto, and the Crystal Achievement Recipient, Deborah Henry, Ph.D. were presented with their awards. We were entertained by Jeanne Robertson with her presentation, “Humor: More Than a Laughing Matter”. Jeanne is 6’ 2” and soars to new heights while discussing differences between being funny and possessing a sense of humor, learning to laugh at yourself and accepting things that cannot be changed as she related original stories based on her life experiences.

Two ladies from SAWIC (South African Women in Construction) were in attendance this year and they spoke about experiences women are facing in South Africa in the construction industry. It is always good to see them and hear of the progress they are making.

I hope that at some time you are all able to experience attending a National Convention and the unforgettable memories to be cherished.

Linda Champlin-Frank
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2006-2007 President