

Forum Reports

Ann Thompson:

FORUM OVERVIEW

The Forum started off on Thursday with a wine tour. There were 11 of us that Wendy Cole wined and dined us in style. We went to King Estates, Sylvan Ridge, Sweet Cheeks (where Wendy made us a fantastic lunch) and the finale was at LaVelle's Winery. Thank you Wendy for making this tour a really special experience.

Friday morning started off with Ellie Cooper serving a Continental Breakfast in the Hospitality room. The meetings started with our keynote speaker Leigh Anne Jasheway. Her talk was about "Your Sanity Under Construction: Using Your Sense of Humor to Build A Strong Foundation". Her recommendations were that we laugh many times a day, with a real belly laugh; this is not only healthy but reduces stress. She was a lot of fun.

We also had a speaker that morning from our own Chapter: Carrie Fortier. She spoke about "Women and Communication". This was great information and Carrie did an absolutely great job. Please ask her for her notes, as you will get a lot of information, and insight from her.

After a great lunch we had Christine Taylor from the University of Oregon speak about the "Architectural Evolution at the University of Oregon". She spoke of all the architects that influenced the University over the past 100 years. Then at least 20 of us went on a walking tour of the University and the Matthew Knight Arena.

To end the day, Sandee Gerber put together the Welcome Party/NEF Fundraiser. Sandee in great style had everyone doing different Track & Field games, like the Relay race, Shot Put and Discus. Everyone had so much fun, they won great prizes and we raised more than \$2000.00 for NEF. Thank you Sandee for taking your Birthday and working so hard on this evening, I know we all appreciated it.

Saturday started off with our own Janet Spriggs doing a "Change Order Panel Discussion". This discussion was very informative, as she had someone from EWEB and Lease Crutcher Lewis to speak on this subject as Owner and Contractor what goes into getting a Change Order.

Next we did a break out session for developing Strategic Planning for National and our Chapters.

After lunch Carrie Fortier gave a team building exercise with marshmallows. It was fun, enlightening and very sticky! We did some more NAWIC business and then it was already time to get ready for the awards dinner.

The Awards Dinner was to recognize the Block Kids Competition winners in the region, along with winners of Cad/Design Drafting and Scholarships. Cathy Brady also had the pins for Longevity handed out and our Sandee Gerber was recognized for 30 years membership in NAWIC. Congratulations Sandee!

Diana Corbin:

First I would like to thank Eugene Chapter #77 for making the opportunity for me to attend NAWIC Region #9 Forum May 14 and 15 2010.

I used to attend Forum every year. For the last three, four or five years I have not been able to attend due to my work environment changing. So, I was please to be able to attend Forum in Eugene.

Forum was held in Eugene this year so I got to see the last speaker before lunch and then eat lunch there on Friday. I worked before lunch and went back to work after lunch was over. As usual, I enjoyed networking with the wonderful women from Region 9 and the out of town guests.

The speaker before lunch was Carrier Fortier, CPA. She gave an enlightening presentation on Communication. The points that stuck out the most for me were:

- 1) Know who you are giving the information to and that will determine how much information you give them. If they are task detailed oriented don't give them just the bottom line – they won't like it. If they are goal oriented give them the big picture bottom line only and they will like it better.
- 2) Know what kind of communicator you are yourself.
- 3) If you work with people who do not communicate in the same manor you do you will need to adjust how you related to them. i.e. If you are blunt and to the point and the other person is not they might not relate to your one or two word answers the same way you would.
- 4) There were also comparisons between male and female ways of looking at things. Pretty right on and informative.

After work I went back for the Welcome Party and NEF fund raiser. I had the privilege of being one of the three judges for the Track Town USA races. As I boldly stated before the races started 'some of the judges can be bought and the bribes will go to NEF'. Let me tell you sister, that is all it took for the scheming and bribing to begin. One of our judges could not be bribed – that was not me!!! Different teams gave bribes to make other teams loose or to ensure their team would win. We raised over \$2,000.00 that night for NEF!!!! The hula hoop contest was an added bonus we had not counted on and wow what fun to watch that (you know who you are).

After the Welcome Party a bunch of us went back to the hospitality room and talked for hours. If you have ever been to any NAWIC event longer than one day you know what I mean about talking and laughing for hours. If you haven't you really need to attend Forum and you will get it.

I got back to the hotel in time for the beginning of session on Saturday. Some of the things covered in the session were:

- 1) Parliamentary Procedures – former National Presidents, Evie Clark and Tamie Taylor discussed procedures of a small board, nominating from the floor, asking for the question, motions and friendly amendments.
- 2) Change Order Panel – Janet Spriggs arranged for someone from the General Contractors office and a representative from Eugene Water & Electric Board project. I think the most interesting part of this was seeing one of the Change Orders with a list of sub-contractors on the job. There were a lot more Subs from Eugene than I knew about and I liked finding that information out.
- 3) Old B.A.G. (s) – Big Audacious Goal(s) and strategic planning. You can go onto the NAWIC national website and read the Strategic Plan and the B.A.G.(s). We broke up into groups and went over the goals and discussed how we thought they could be accomplished. I was in the B.A.G.(s) group. NAWIC's **Big Audacious Goal** is **NAWIC will be THE global resource for professional development in the construction industry**. I have heard over and over again that NAWIC is 'the best kept secret' in construction. So, if you want to be THE global resource ... you cannot be a secret any longer.
 - a) Need several items:
 - i) Get the name NAWIC known. Do this by:
 - (1) Links, Facebook, blogs and what ever it takes to get the electronic age linked to NAWIC
 - (2) Change the logo. Too hard to read the words and not easily recognizable. Need easy to identify logo – i.e. Nike swoosh, Pepsi tri-colored ball, CFMA has building blocks with name making it easy to read.
 - (3) Participating in projects with other organizations we already have partnerships with
 - ii) Have the resources in place for professional development
 - (1) I think we are on track for this aspect
 - b) Every chapter should have a strategic plan that works for their chapter and helps weave into the National Strategic Plan and Goals.
 - i) Short term goals - examples
 - (1) Increase membership
 - (2) Professional speakers
 - ii) Intermediate goals - examples
 - (1) Magic Camp next year or year after
 - iii) Long term goals – examples
 - (1) Put into place process that keeps chapter running smoothly year after year not President to President
- 4) A really interesting Team Building Project. This project was as much communications as team building. It reminded me of the game 'telephone' we played as kids. One person saw what had to be built and explained it to the next, the second person then repeated the information to the builder of the project. VERY INTERESTING!!!! Apparently I suck at this exercise.

We had a comedian entertain us after the banquet. She was funny and we all laughed a lot. Then the acknowledgement of regional awards winners were announced for Block-Kids, CAD/Drafting, Safety, Future Leader, WIC of the Year and Lifetime Achievement. Then the resolutions were given and Forum was adjourned.

In 2000-2001 I signed up to be on the National Resolutions Committee. I actually didn't know what that committee did – I thought it was more like goal setting – you know resolutions like New Year's. Since I was not really known on the National Level, President Cindy asked Pam Dullum to be on the committee with me. Cindy wanted her resolutions to be humorous not dull, flat and dry. So I wrote the resolutions and Pam critiqued them. I was going to stand up with Pam in front of 800 women in Alaska and give the resolutions. Then 9-11 happened. We got a phone call that my Father-In-Law was in the hospital dying and we had to wait to be able to fly. I went to Arizona instead of Alaska and Robin Langkamp took my place reading the new and improved style of resolutions. Now remember I have not been to Forum for several years so I was just a little pleasantly surprised by the resolutions presentation. It was funny and a little over the top. However, I heard there were several people there who did not like or maybe approve of how that was done. So this is where I get on my soap box and start talking about the survival of NAWIC. As I looked around Forum there were a lot more young women in attendance that there used to be. If we want to see this origination continue and even grow we MUST EMBRACE the youth around us. We have to be fun and light hearted. Young women have so much on their plates that if we want them to become involved in NAWIC they have to get a lot out of it or they won't be there. Not just the education and networking but also laughter, fun and camaraderie with their new NAWIC friends.

So I have met the most amazing women in our Region and on the National level too. My point really is IF WE WANT NEW MEMBERS and TO GROW we have to get a younger mind set. We can be professional, provide education, serve the construction community and have fun at the same time. If we don't, this organization will not survive.

I welcome any comments.

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Deanna McRae-Brandt:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit the following report to you about the NAWIC forum.

I attended the hospitality welcome reception on Thursday, May 13th, at Valley River Inn. My daughter-in-law, Bethany, and granddaughter, Heidi, were with me. Bethany works with me on a part-time basis. We had a marvelous time and made some new "friends."

I found it interesting that I had the chance to meet one of the women from Alaska and enjoyed sharing information, only to have a customer at my work the very next day who is building a cabin in, yeap, Alaska. It was nice to have the reference for the client.

I really enjoyed getting to go to the dinner on Friday, May 14th. It was a great way to meet a few more women and the rigged relay races were a great way to interact. Congrats to all the "winners." I hope to bribe money went for a good cause.

Thank you for allowing me the chance to meet and interact with women in the construction industry. I appreciated the time and effort by the people who put the event on. I especially enjoyed the atmosphere and the good food at Valley River Inn. It was a great way to be encouraged.

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Wendy Cole:

May 17, 2010 Wendy Cole, Inside Sales Representative, Farwest Steel Corporation

NAWIC Region 9 Forum May 13-15 2010
Valley River Inn Eugene, Oregon

It has been over 8 years since I attended a NAWIC Forum. The last one was in Eugene in 2002. I had such an amazing experience at both that I should plan to attend more of them, not just the events hosted by our chapter. Forum is a regional gathering with members from Alaska, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Oregon. It is not only educational but a wonderful networking tool.

This year I was able to get to know customers and vendors, as well as a host of many women who are very passionate about the construction industry and NAWIC. They made me proud to be part of an industry that progress and innovation are a part of. We were able to tour a job site in progress that is not only part of our industry, part of our community, but one that I directly supplied materials to.

I have to plagiarize a statement from our Region 9 Director who comes from The Tri-Cities: I always leave NAWIC events recharged, energized and ready to take on the world. I do not want to take on the world, just my world, including challenges that I face in my work. I attended two seminars that provided me tools to enhance my work experience, deal with stresses and communicate more effectively.

Our first seminar was centered round the use of humor to enhance your health and well being but to also deal with stress. I learned that we choose our level of stress that we experience and can reduce that by trying to find humor. Our stress is tied to our 'ego', we can use humor to laugh at ourselves and not let our ego create more stress. The act of laughing out loud increases our well being both mentally and physically. One of the most poignant facts that I learned is that anticipating the negative is more damaging than waiting to see if it even happens. I will put this new knowledge to work and enjoy my work even more.

Our second seminar taught the obstacles we face in communication. I was thrilled with the insight this brought me to communicate more effectively with co-workers and customers. We need to consider who we are communicating with, not just the message. They have a different age, gender, interpersonal style, culture and professional expectation. By changing your style to more fit their style, your message will be heard better or received better. I imagined our own department during this seminar, and envisioned each member, how different we are and how my message can be delivered more effectively if I change my delivery to fit that person's make-up. We discussed how technology has changed how we communicate: generation Y's use of texting and abbreviations and its effect on their professional future. We also discussed communication situations that are stressful for people, i.e. speaking in front of people or receiving criticism. Much like the former seminar, we learned that our ego can greatly affect the stress of that situation. Finally we learned that women and men differ in their message, i.e. men focus on the outcome, women focus on the process leading up to the outcome. We must use all of these tools and knowledge to enhance our ability to communicate.

I am very thankful for the experience of attending Forum and for NAWIC's role in enhancing my professional experience.