

Report from Toni Walker, President  
On NAWIC Region 4 Forum in Akron, Ohio

Akron Chapter #124 hosted Region 4's Golden Opportunities Forum April 9-11, 2010 at the beautiful Sheraton Suites Hotel in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. Mardi Gauer was Forum Coordinator and did a wonderful job. Director Jan Sullivan kept our general sessions moving and Mary Hosafros, President of the Akron Chapter welcomed attendees to an educational, fun and interesting weekend.

Since many of our members could not attend, I will tell you in detail as if you were right there with me.

Cleveland Chapter #156 had 14 registered, but only 12 attended Forum. At Saturday's Final Attendance Tally, there were 19 delegates, 62 voting members, 7 non-voting members, for a total of 88 members, 2 out-of-region members, 3 members-at-large, for a total attendance of 93.

Just to let you know that if you think Cleveland's cell phone policy of \$10.00 is steep, they charged \$25.00 as a donation to NEF. Also, no texting was permitted. So be mindful when attending out of chapter functions.....their cell phone donation amount is more than ours.

I only saw part of the BIM presentation by Sue Millard of Messer Construction. I am actually trying to get a representative from Intuit to bring BIM to our chapter to get to let you know what it is all about and how it is changing project delivery methods for the construction industry. It definitely helps construction companies in their bidding process. This was part of the general session.

Director Sullivan presented Melanie Meyers and Candy Riley, candidates for Region 4 Director. Both candidates gave excellent speeches about their vision. Cleveland Chapter members met with me and caucused about the candidates and their willingness to serve our region. Voting took place Saturday morning and Melanie Myers of Lansing is our Director-elect.

National President-elect Debbie Gregoire presented several candidates that were running for national office and gave us an opportunity to ask questions to them during the weekend and take that information back to our chapters.

There was a first timers event and they had two pages in the program book to fill out in order for them to meet new members. What really helped them was that they sometimes asked their chapter members about a question and both of them would come to an individual and they would get their book signed. I was able to sign their book for four (4) different questions, but most knew me for two of them – Has a recruiter jacket and speaking a foreign language. One thing though – a person could only sign their book one time.

The Toledo chapter #282 bid for hosting Forum in 2012 and won.....so we will be in Toledo.

The NAWIC store was filled with many opportunities for chapters to sell their favorite NAWIC item. We had our NAWIC bling pin, 50/50 raffle, raffle for a bracelet and the Mystery Basket. Many other chapters had tables as well so it was a money make for all and it was exciting Sunday morning having Director Sullivan pull all the winning tickets.

Director Sullian presented a Leadership Meeting for all current officers and future officers after the general session. The room was packed and we had a lot of good questions being asked and were given information about convention and Region 4 celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Louisville with a dinner. More information will be forthcoming to all chapters in Region 4.

Keynote speaker was Mary Faktor, who presented "The Six Ages of Woman". We had her at our second Joint Holiday Social. I know I can laugh at her no matter how many times I hear her material, but the whole room was laughing so hard. At one side I saw Betty Goad who was comparing her Mediterranean furniture with her and the other end where Ginger Hedrick was laughing about the same. Everyone in the room could find a little about themselves in Mary's one woman comedy show.

I tried to sneak into the Designing a Porch Pot, but you needed a ticket and I did not have one as it was limited. That was a bummer. I found you had to get one before general session started and I did not get there until 2 as I had to work at the Safety Incentive Program for CEA. Maggie Bell, a perennial specialist presented a hands on demonstration for secrets and tips. I have asked Pat Pietraroia to contact her to see if she would like to come to our chapter to present the same workshop.

Christine Ruffier showed us how to learn to use Yoga as a stress relief tool that could be done in your chair at work, home or anywhere. There were so many of us that we had to stand to do some exercises, but she was right. You can definitely get relaxed with real-time stretching and relaxing poses so that we can tackle our next project in our busy agenda. This too I referred to Pat .....see if you can get Christine for us too.

I missed the Spam I Am – Not! The Misadventures & Misadentures of E-mail & the Internet. I can't remember who from our chapter attended, but, attorney, Joseph Feltes of Buckingham, Dolittle & Burroughs gave a workshop on using email and the internet in our lives daily. He gave useful advice to both companies and individuals on how to avoid liability.

There was a workshop presented on Defining Sexual Harassment in the Work Environment by Lisa Kainec of Kastner Westman & Wilkins stressing the rights of the employer. I thought it would be more on helping the victim, rather than protecting the company, so I did not feel it was relevant for me and therefore tried to sneak in the Designing the Porch Pot program.

Janice Urbanik, a Cincinnati NAWIC member is a good speaker and presented the Collaborative Team Processes in Construction. She covered the new and basic overview of Consensus DOCS , BIM, Lean and Integrated Project Delivery. I don't know much about these, but I understand these approaches are rapidly becoming the new standard in the construction industry.

The Welcome Party was fantastic with a great band with two men and one woman – I felt I was in the Caribbean. We had all kinds of hand held shakers, plus hula skirts and a limbo stick.....Rachel and Monica were the best....ask them. We had a fun time being back up singers, plus singing some of our favorite songs along with the band. The same for Saturday night's banquet. They had a fantastic Motown band of three men and two female singers and, oh my, what a fun time.....everyone was on the dance floor. And we were singing too. Of course, our knees were in not too good of shape Sunday morning. Oh, and all the food was good too!

This is a recap of Forum 2010 in Akron Ohio.