

communicators *talk*

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each story to do just that! Or share this whole issue by using the icons below.



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Letter from the Chair



Heather Folker
Colorado and Denver Bar
Associations

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The end of our NABE year will come to a close with the Annual Meeting next month in New York City. We will have a few changes on the council for next year. A BIG thank you to Sayre Happich Ribera for her service on the council. I know we will still see her involved in NABE activities for years to come.

I'd also like to welcome Brandon Vogel from the New York State Bar Association as the newest member of the Communications Section Council. Brandon Vogel has been a member of NABE and its Communications Section since 2014. He is a program co-chair of the 2017 Communications Section Workshop. He has presented on social media strategy at the 2016 Annual Meeting and Communications Section Workshop. He also was the featured member in the Spring Issue of Communicators Talk.

Brandon Vogel

The Council recently passed changes to the Anne Charles Award criteria. With a goal of better defining the criteria, former recipient's Dan Wise and Ann Murphy took a look at the description and eligibility, and drafted the adopted below.

Anne Charles Award

The Anne Charles Award for Distinguished Service is presented to a member of the NABE Communications Section who exemplifies long term excellence in mentoring, advising, and supporting the section and its members. By regularly offering their expertise and encouragement, an Anne Charles Award winner contributes to the professional development of their fellow members, helps ensure the vitality of the section, and stimulates diversity of thoughts and contributions.

Any member of NABE may submit a nominee for consideration.

Eligibility

All NABE Communications Section members are eligible, except for current members of the Communications Section Executive Council. Nominees must meet the following criteria:

- Significant and consistent participation in Section volunteer activities
- Furthering of the Section's goals through frequent work on committees and other related activities such as being a participant of the workshop planning committee, a task force member, a contributor to the newsletter, substantive contributions to the listserv, and other Section-related work
- Serving as a welcoming colleague and mentor to members of the Section, either publicly, or privately

Please consider nominating someone for both the E.A. Wally Richter Leadership Award and the Anne Charles Award. The awards will be presented at the 2017 NABE Communications Workshop in St. Louis, MO. **Nominations are due by August 23.**

Registration is open for the NABEComm Workshop in St. Louis, Oct. 4-6. It is going to be a lot of fun, like it is every year of course. Our Workshop Chair Alexa Giacomini has really done amazing work on the event planning.

Register: <http://www.nabenet.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=869858&group=>

If you are interested in hosting a workshop in your town, please reach out to me – hfolker@cobar.org or 303-824-5350.

I look forward to seeing you all soon and “Meet Me in St. Louis!”

Sincerely,

Heather Folker

Chair, NABE Communications Section Chair

Snapchat and Your Bar



Hannah Kiddoo
The Missouri Bar Association

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We're not a regular bar. We're a cool bar.

When you work with social media on a daily basis, it's hard not to get caught up in the latest trends (let's take a moment of silence to remember all those past Vine and Google+ accounts...) Today, there's a lot of chatter about Snapchat. But is it right for your bar's brand? As with many platforms, it depends.

When deciding whether you should get an account, keep in mind who your audience would be, what your ROI goals are and how much time you have to devote to your content.

The Missouri Bar has been using Snapchat for just over a year. **Here are a few reasons why we think it is a great way to connect with our members.**

It's a way to share with young lawyers.

Snapchat is the most-used social media platform among 12 to 24-year-olds. This, like most social media platforms, is changing as older generations download and embrace the app, but younger users still dominate the platform. Members of this group include law students, those fresh out of law school, as well as future law students who will one day be Missouri Bar members.

By paying attention to how younger lawyers were using their phones at events, it was soon obvious that they were interested in Snapchat. So we decided to be there, too, and many are pleasantly surprised by our presence. I'll never forget an interaction I had with a young lawyer taking photos on her phone at an Enrollment Ceremony. I mentioned to her that we had a Snapchat geofilter enabled if she wanted to use it. She quickly told me that she had already found it and used it – and that she thought it was cool that we had an account.

We're forming genuine connections.

Since the launch of our account, we've gained around 45 followers and friends. While that might seem like a small number, most of those connections have formed organically – and the interactions we've garnered from them have been well-worth the time and effort we put into the content.

Examples include:

- A lawyer snapping us a photo of the newly acquired deskbooks collection in his office.
- A member using the chat function to say thanks when we congratulated new lawyers during enrollment ceremonies.
- A user taking a screenshot of information shared in our story.
- A lawyer snapping us a photo of the Pokemon in his office after we snapped a photo of those found at our bar center.

We understand that not everyone wants to mix personal social media with professional affairs, and the same is true on platforms like Twitter and Facebook, but being in the digital spaces where our members are allows them to if they want.

It's fast, fun and personal.

The content we share on Snapchat is similar to what we are already sharing on other outlets, but we can be more creative in our approach. For example, we use geofilters to help users get a better understanding of where we're posting from, sketch on images to drive home a point and incorporate relevant emoji. If your bar president or executive director is game, you could even consider creating a bitmoji designed in their image.

In the case of The Missouri Bar, our team members were already using Snapchat on a personal level. That meant less time learning its ins and outs (though, admittedly, they change often!) and a better understanding of what users are looking for from brands. Sharing content via Snapchat felt like a natural step, and its intuitive design makes the process that much easier.

On the fence about getting an account? Test the waters with these strategies:

Instagram trial

If your brand already has Instagram, consider using the platform's story feature, which is similar to Snapchat. If you have several views on your stories, you can infer that your members are excited about the type of content you are sharing – and would likely watch your content on Snapchat.

Set up a personal account

Do a pressure-free test run with an account in your own name. This can help you get a good feel for the functions and allows you to follow similar brands to see how they're using the platform.

Create a geofilter and see what use it receives

Snapchat makes it easy to track who uses custom geofilters. You can create one for around \$5 and see what kind of use it gets at an event. The Missouri Bar's most successful geofilter ran during a New Lawyer Enrollment Ceremony. It lasted five hours, cost around \$43 and had 4,276 views. If you have positive results, you know you have members who are already using the platform. Connect with them there!

The bottom line is that Snapchat is sticking around – at least for now. Brands are quickly buying into Snapchat, creating everything from ads and sponsored lenses to featured stories. As this type of content continues to grow, users will come to expect and even embrace it. While your bar might not be able to drop \$750,000 for "big brand" advertising, it can certainly create similar content on its own account. And as Snapchat continues to grow and improve regional-based pushes, opportunities for adopting these options could be more feasible.

Snapchat is not for every association, but if your members are already there we suggest giving it some consideration.

P.S. Follow The Missouri Bar's account, mobarnews!

Weight, Weight, Please Tell Me



Russell Rawlings
North Carolina Bar Association

Share

My previous contribution to this newsletter about losing weight and keeping it off left one reader hungry for more:

“I just thought it could be very valuable to dig into the specifics of how you lost weight and kept it off over the long term. I presume that you have come to enjoy and value your lifestyle, and some concrete examples of what you did and the mindset that you brought to it might inspire others.”

Such kind and insightful words merit a thoughtful response. Over the years, others who have heard my story about losing 140 pounds during my senior year of college have also asked how I lost the weight and how I’ve managed to keep it off.

Some have even stuck around long enough to hear my response. Most, however, have scattered like bowling pins in the aftermath of a perfectly rolled strike. Some look at me as if I were speaking a foreign language. Others think I’m from Mars.

How I lost the weight, in and of itself, could fill an entire book, and perhaps one day it will. For the purposes of this article, though, I will stick with the keywords and save the stories – oh my God the stories! – for another day.

Step one, I stopped gaining weight. More specifically, I stopped overeating. Combined with a modest dose of activity, which increased as my weight decreased, I lost a lot of “easy weight” in a hurry. Big people will know what I’m talking about.

Step two, in which I broke through the proverbial wall, I said goodbye to cheeseburgers and pizza, the staple diet of any college student, and made new “friends.”

There wasn’t a wealth of nutritional information on package labels back then, much less in fast food restaurants, but I discovered one food that I really liked, mushrooms, didn’t have a lot of calories. Some even referred to my diet as the “mushroom diet.” Lord only knows how many cases of Green Giant mushrooms I went through, straight out of the jar.

By the time I reached the 100-pound milestone and discovered that I actually had a ribcage, it was game on. I focused more and more on portion control, and added soup, salad, fish and broccoli to my roster of friendly foods. If the can indicated a low calorie count, I gave it a try. Veg-All was my go-to, even if it wasn’t my favorite.

Much of what I have said about losing weight applies to keeping it off as well. Over time my strategies have changed as my age and situation have changed, but the thought process behind turning the ship around and steering it in the right direction remains the same: stop overeating.

As for my lifestyle, I would say that I value it more than I enjoy it. Let’s be honest: someday it is living hell not to let loose and eat whatever I want in whatever quantities that I want it. This may well be what distinguishes the overweight from the obese: overweight people can taste and smell food; obese people – or at least this formerly obese person – can hear it.

But therein lies the mindset, and of all the words my valued colleague used in his response to my previous column, I believe mindset is the most important. Some people call it willpower; others have referred to it as dedication, determination and discipline.

I call it fear, and I mean that in the most positive way imaginable. Fear of being fat again, fear of being uncomfortable in my clothes and in my body, fear of not being able to go and do as I please because I have chosen instead to eat myself to death; that's the motivation that stares me in the face every morning.

It will never go away, and I don't want it to. Instead, I accept the challenge as the hand that I have been dealt, and I look around at the hands other people have been dealt and realize that I'm lucky. I've got it made. My biggest problem, aside from what comes out of my mouth, is what goes in it. I can live with that.

And I can live with people not being interested in losing weight the way I lost it, or keeping it off the way I have kept it off, which at present involves a lot of walking and a steady diet of fruit, vegetables, poultry, fish and Ezekiel bread.

It's not about the diet, it's about the attitude.

That is the most important lesson I learned back in 1978, and that is the lesson that I will carry closest to my heart until the day that I die.

Thanks for asking.

In the Spotlight: Lindsey Crook

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Lindsey Crook
North Carolina Bar Association

How long have you been a member of NABE Comm: Two years

When you were a kid, did you dream of being a Bar Association Executive? Haha, no.

If not, describe how you got to where you are today: I studied graphic design and art history in college. I interned with a couple museums, but eventually landed as an in-house design/marketing/catch-all creative person for a healthcare technology firm. While my husband was in law school, I learned of the NCBA. A job became available, and I went for it. I became the graphic designer at the NCBA in 2011, and was promoted to assistant director of communications in 2015.

What is the most rewarding part of your job: When everything comes together the way I hoped it would.

What is the most challenging part of your job: Balancing the high and low.

If you weren't a bar executive, what would you want to be?: I'd own a specialty food store / art gallery / flower shop / champagne bar / with irregular hours that I'd run with unlimited funds. I'd also have a yacht to travel the world, of course.

What is your greatest accomplishment: Yet to come.

What is the best piece of advice that you ever received through NABE?: You're not alone. There are interesting, smart, generous people across the country who know what you're going through and how to help.

What would you tell someone new to the crazy world of Bar-Executive-dom?: If you're at a voluntary bar, learn the ways and needs of your volunteers. Their dues pay your salary.

What makes you successful in your position?: I work fast.

What's your favorite website or app?:

For work: google.com

Personally: swiss-miss.com and qz.com

Do you have a motto?: Figure it out.

Favorite quotes:

"It is better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation." – Herman Melville

"Vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others." – Jonathan Swift

"Pay attention to what you pay attention to." – Amy Krouse Rosenthal

Favorite sports team: Go Heels!

Favorite band/album/concert of all time: Radiohead (In Rainbows) and Andrew Bird (Noble Beast) are my favorite albums.

Favorite Books: I am an avid reader, but I have to say the Harry Potter series, hands down.

Person you would most like to have dinner with (alive or dead): Peggy Guggenheim

Hidden talent: I'm not hiding any talents, but I hope there are a few lying latent, waiting to surface down the line.

Our Wally: Sharon Nolan



Tim Eigo
State Bar of Arizona

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The most adept leader may be the one who has walked many paths and found each fascinating. An example of such a curious explorer is Sharon Nolan, Director of Marketing at the Chicago Bar Association – and the recipient of the E.A. “Wally” Richter Award at the 2016 NABE Communications Section Workshop. As the October 2017 Workshop in St. Louis enters its final planning stages, and decisions are being made about this year’s Wally honoree, we caught up with Sharon to ask about the field of communications – and why she originally left the Chicago suburbs to start a new work life in the Windy City.

“All I wanted to do was work downtown so I could live down here with my girlfriends,” Nolan says with a laugh. “And somehow I ended up staying.” Though her jobs have changed, her love for the Chicago Loop never waned – she’s been at the Chicago Bar for 20 years.

Marketing Products, Serving People

All communicators believe they have demanding customers, but Nolan’s first job out of college prepared her to roll with the hardest punches.

“I worked for the city of Naperville in the mayor’s office in his PR department. We did all his press releases, hometown events, parades. We covered it all, so that was kind of how I got my start.”

The job required wearing many hats, from dealing with citizen complaints to speaking with local media about mayor and council decisions. “It was literally everything,” she says.

Her path to the world of bar associations had another lucky precursor when she worked as a packaging specialist – not *packaging* as in marketing, but as in literally designing packaging for office supplies. When Office Max or Office Depot wanted to carry an off-brand piece of equipment – think laminators and staplers – those items needed to be branded and packaged for resale. The company she worked for was “kind of like the generics of the office supply world.”

It’s the daily job of the communications pro to create print and digital products, but Nolan liked the opportunity to custom-create things that slipped into the stream of commerce. She says she enjoyed working “where you visually saw what you created come to life on a piece of paper or a piece of cardboard. It was neat to see what you designed on the shelf selling retail.”

What she has brought to life for the past two decades is the brand of the Chicago Bar Association. She started marketing there for the lawyer referral service and then went into the young lawyers section. Soon after, she earned her MBA, and has been Director of Marketing for about 15 years.

Leading and Mentoring

Nolan attributes her interest in NABE to her bar’s Executive Director, Terry Murphy (who was NABE President in 1989-90), who “has always been super supportive of anybody being active in NABE.” She names many colleagues who “spurred me forward” and proved NABE’s value to her, including the New Hampshire Bar’s Dan Wise and Kevin Ryan, now Executive Director at the Monroe County (N.Y.) Bar Association (and a former Wally honoree himself).

“But I would have to say Francine Walker was someone whom I emulated to be like. She really got me involved.”

“She’s a good mentor,” Nolan adds of Walker, the Florida Bar’s Director of Public Information. “She has influenced a lot of people to get involved.”

Nolan’s colleagues say the same of her.

Russell Rawlings, at the North Carolina Bar Association, marvels at the way Nolan “took the lead on chairing the highly successful Orlando Workshop and kept the event on track from start to finish. The local bar, which provided us with boots-on-the-ground support and contacts, underwent a leadership change in the year leading up to the event. Undeterred, Sharon never missed a beat in making sure every detail was taken care of.”

Section Chair Heather Folker says, “I’ve worked with Sharon for several years on the Council and Workshop planning. I consistently see her generously offering her time and expertise to NABE and the Section. Best of all, she’s a joy to work with!”

Sarah Coole, at the Georgia Bar, agrees.

“Sharon has always been there for me with a quick smile and willingness to help in whatever I needed her for. Her expertise in Workshop planning was especially helpful as we planned the Savannah workshop. The bar world is certainly lucky to have her.”

Mark Mathewson, of the Illinois State Bar Association, cites Nolan’s NABE-wide commitment.

“In addition to her Workshop planning, Sharon has been a strong advocate for the Section as a member of the NABE Program Committee,” says the 2011 Wally Award honoree. “When you attend a communications-related presentation at the NABE midyear or annual meeting, you can be sure Sharon had a hand in it. ‘Big’ NABE relies on her talent and hard work as much as we in the Section do.”

“She has a rare combination of creativity and calmness,” says Dan Wise. “She is someone who’s very good at making people feel they are being heard, while still managing to make sure the trains run on time and things get done.”

The Multi-Skilled Future

Over the years, Nolan says, the Section has evolved just as communications has.

“As the Internet has exploded and taken over, the definition of communications has become much broader and encompasses so many different things now. It’s a little bit of everything.”

Today, she says, comms pros must be adept at many skills. They all have to be able to say, “I do a little bit of publications, a little bit of marketing, communications, web site work, email marketing, social media. It’s become such an intertwined configuration.”

Asked what’s occurring in marketing that she never would have expected 20 years ago, Nolan points to the rise of video and social media “and how for not very much money you can do so much.”

“I think if you have the human capital, you can do pretty much anything now. It’s just having the right sort of people to execute.”

The right sort of people in Sharon's personal life are her children, 13-year-old Madeline and 11-year-old Jameson. Her husband Jason is a technology consultant.

Decades after her Parks & Rec stint in a mayor's office, Nolan says she still appreciates the variety of that job's duties, which she describes as "sort of a segue into working in an association." And she is ever willing to assist colleagues in those obligations. As former Section Chair Russell Rawlings adds, "I cannot to this day recall ever having to ask Sharon to do anything; she already had it done before it ever crossed my mind."

Today, as she continues to excel in the role of crafting and packaging messages – and lending a generous hand to others – Nolan remains an exemplar of the Wally Richter Award and the Communications Section.

Preparing for the Press



Karen Korr
San Diego County Bar
Association

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Earlier this month, KUSI came calling. KUSI, a popular local independent television station, was looking for some information on the San Diego County Bar Association (SDCBA), our public service programs, and a few highlights of what we do in the community. In official professional public relations practitioner terms, this is what we refer to as a "gift." We somewhat regularly prepare (and media train our President and President-Elect) for press interviews regarding Bar initiatives, big events, crisis situations, and hot-button topics, always "expecting the unexpected," however, this felt like a truly rare opportunity. Generally, media moves fairly quickly, but in this situation, we actually had time to prepare, review, and practice our messaging in advance. In addition, we had a chance to talk about the great work lawyers do in our community, promote our Lawyer Referral and Information Service (LRIS), and heighten the Bar's visibility (one of the main objectives outlined in our Communications Plan). This was rare, indeed, but it got me thinking that regardless of the timing or the topic, there are a few universal practices, in my experience, that make a TV interview go well. At the very least, they make your designated spokesperson/bar leader feel a bit more comfortable before their big break.

Preparation is key.

My first step in preparing for a TV interview is to get as much information from the television station as they have available or are willing to give at that moment. I will ask who will be doing the interview, what questions they intend to ask, if they will be interviewing anybody else on the same topic, and how the story idea was generated. Once I have this information, I will send the producer or reporter I am working with background information that may help the station prepare for the interview — whether it is links to pages on our website, statements or press releases from the SDCBA, or other information sources not related to the Bar that may help shape their story.

Our spokesperson (at the SDCBA, the President or his/her designee) always receives talking points prior to any interview, as far in advance as possible. For television, the talking points are very clear and concise, and completely free of "legal-ease." It is important to remember that our Bar vernacular and how we talk about matters in the legal world doesn't always translate well when addressing the public — whose day-to-day vocabulary likely doesn't include terms like "the bench," "3Ls," and "access to justice." Clear, clean and concise talking points also help your spokesperson nail the key messages, and allows them to add their own voice.

Review specifics with your spokesperson.

Our leaders are all amazing — balancing all that they do in their practices and personal lives with all that they do for the Bar in their relatively short leadership terms. While most of them know and can speak to your organization's vision, and short and long term focus and goals, we are the ones who know all of the nuances of our programs and initiatives. For example, our President may know that diversity and inclusion pipeline programs are a priority for your Bar, but we know that 32 firms are participating in our Diversity Fellowship Program, which represents 10 percent growth for the program over the last two years. In addition to knowing the general message, your spokesperson should know a few key details and facts. You never want them to be unprepared to answer the question of "How do you plan to do that?"

For every talking point, it helps to prepare your spokesperson with some of the tactics that your organization employs. Generally, you don't want your spokesperson to get caught up, especially on camera, in the nitty gritty details of anything, but you also don't want them to talk in vague generalities and come across as uninvolved or dispassionate. They should have some "go-tos" that they feel comfortable with based on the direction and topic of the interview.

Practice. And then practice again.

Generally, I've found that litigators make great on-air spokespersons — they're ready to handle any question that may come their way. But regardless of who your spokesperson is and their practice type, they should know how to answer a reporter's question with one of your key messages. If your spokesperson doesn't have live television interview experience, you may want to practice on camera (or in our case, on an iPhone) so they can see and hear the topics they are comfortable speaking on and also where they falter. In practice, I will usually ask my spokesperson some of the most absurd, unlikely questions in an effort to teach them how to come back to our talking points. For an extreme example, a question like "What's the SDCBA's position on the death penalty?" can be returned to message point with something like "While we don't have an official position on the death penalty, we have an extraordinary panel of criminal defense attorneys available through our Lawyer Referral Service who know and can explain the nuances of the death penalty under California law." While it may seem like a silly exercise, asking the most ridiculous questions in practice means that anything the reporter might ask will seem like a softball in comparison, and something your spokesperson should be comfortable answering.

With all that being said, all of the preparation in the world may not matter on live television — there are times when you're going to get questions that can't be answered, or the reporter takes an angle that might not be in the best interest of the Bar. However, the more you prepare and practice, the more comfortable your spokesperson should be in delivering your message live. I've found that being at the interview with the spokesperson also helps, as you can straighten a tie, go over some last minute points, reassure them that they look like a million bucks and ask the reporter directly just before the interview what they plan to ask. And also, just because sometimes, every star needs a little extra support behind the scenes.