For some reason, heading for the NAEP Annual Meeting this year seemed a little different. Maybe it was because we had never met in Reno before and I had not been there in 20 years. Or maybe it was because of the awkward airline connections required after having been spoiled by the service available flying out of New York City. By the time I got to the opening reception Sunday night, it was winding down and the three-hour time difference was catching up with me. I chatted with a few people I knew and several I didn’t, but I knew why they were there from their badges, then I went to bed. Bright and early next morning, with the three-hour difference working in my favor, I walked into the continental breakfast, and whatever had felt a bit odd the night before quickly evaporated.

The meeting got underway with a challenging presentation by Venice Armour, the first female principal of an upper secondary school in the US district. The city, serves...
NAEP 2017 in Reno

By: Neil Markee
Editor in Chief-Purchasing Link

The phone across the dark hotel room demanded an answer and the digital bedside clock insisted it was 3:00 a.m. and so it was time to get up, check out, catch the 4:00 a.m. airport shuttle, and start the long flight home from Reno, Nevada. The 2017 NAEP Annual Meeting had ended the previous afternoon. I had arrived Sunday evening prior and by Wednesday night I appreciated the padded seats and carpeted floors of the large casino hotel. I can’t speak for anyone else, but I didn’t risk/contribute a quarter and my arm wasn’t tired, but my feet and butt were and my mind was digesting what I had heard.

Attendance was impressive at this largest annual gathering of campus purchasing officers held anywhere. There were about one hundred first-time attendees and most of them must have come from a distance, as there are relatively few educational institutions within easy driving range of Reno. The new attendees I spoke with were impressed with the professional development opportunities available and, I suspect, those who can swing it will be back next year at our meeting in Orlando, Florida. The dozens of workshops offered were well attended and the 100-plus supplier exhibit was always abuzz with the buyer/seller information exchange that is an integral part of the Association’s Annual Meeting experience. I stayed up late one evening catching up with old friend Brian Yeoman, NAEP’s well informed environmentalist.

Typically, the day started early with a stand-up and talk with your peers continental breakfast/information exchange at 7:30 a.m., followed by a choice of concurrent workshops, then a networking opportunity, and then another workshop, and another break, then another can’t-miss workshop etc. (breath). The biggest challenge was how to use your time. This year, the workshop series included 60-minute Impact Sessions, covering three subjects allotted 20 minutes each. I don’t know if these were aimed at those of us with limited attention spans or members who could not decide which workshop to attend, but I enjoyed the fast pace. There was something for everyone all day long and every presenter encouraged, or maybe demanded, questions from the floor. Mix in outstanding motivational speakers in general sessions, and you are guaranteed enough gray matter nutrition to keep your mental digestive system working productively for some time.

Some topics never get old, and in the world of professional procurement, ethics is front and center. I took in the Monday morning workshop titled, Ethics in Public Procurement. EPA, NAEB and now NAEP have played a key part of this ongoing discussion for decades. I’m reminded of the legendary and hopefully fictitious legislator who is reported to have noted that while he could not define pornography, he knew it when he saw it. An odious comparison, perhaps, but just as with other moral standards, defining precisely what is or isn’t ethical in every circumstance is likely to degenerate into a discussion of what is legal and what is not. Just about every jurisdiction and business organization has felt the need to provide a comprehensive definition in legal terms and has produced an inadequate document. Ethical behavior, like fairness occurs where the rubber meets the road and generally goes without whiteness and color.
Incidentally, I'm not sure why the workshop title included the word “public,” as I think purchasing ethics are universal within our world. As I see it, the thought that we needn't be as concerned with ethics in private settings is misguided. Higher education's private foundations have been the target of adverse press criticism recently. They are accused of sometimes being used as an anti-transparent mechanism to avoid public disclosure and review. To the extent that is true, I think we have earned the censure. Ethics are basic to human relations and all about responsibility, accountability, and our treatment of each other.

On Monday afternoon I took in one of the three-part impact sessions. This one promised to cover your "procure-to-pay number," and I wondered what that was. The other two topics were Public Universities and Purchasing Cooperatives and Maverick Spending." It turned out the first topic was about the importance of average order-size, and I think most of us were surprised to learn how much could be saved by both buyer and seller via order consolidation. The speakers persuasively argued that five-digit numbers were possible at a major institution. I don't know what the cost might be on your campus, but given the potential net savings involved, clearly it's worth a look.

Way back in January 1964, when I joined E&I Cooperative Services, I was instantly sold on the concept of the multi-institution, cooperative purchasing earlier envisioned by a small group of neighboring New York State EPA member institutions led by Cornell's George Frank and put into practice by William S. Price, his first hire. Their startup went national and became E&I Cooperative Services. All cooperatives seek to reduce procurement costs by cutting process costs and increasing purchasing clout in the marketplace. Currently, there are several such organizations serving higher education and health care. But E&I was the first, and for years the only, dedicated to purchasing for higher education. As such, they have long been NAEP's partner. The Co-op remains unique, as it is entirely owned by their higher-education members and reports to them via an elected board of directors. At the Reno meeting, the E&I Co-op was presented by its CEO, Tom Fitzgerald, and much of the senior staff. Oklahoma's chief procurement officer, Burr Millsap, C.P.A., delivered an upbeat financial report covering the Co-op's past year. The basics continue, but computerization has streamlined the process and reduced the cost of dealing with purchasing cooperatives. Many institutions belong to several co-ops. If you are not taking advantage of cooperative purchasing, you may be missing the boat.

Several years ago, I wrote about maverick spending for Purchasing Pulse, an online publication sponsored by HigherMarkets, which later became part of SciQuest. In the article, I reflected on what I had heard from purchasing professionals who saw maverick spending as a symptom of a dysfunctional purchasing system. As the gatekeeper role of central purchasing on campus had receded, they saw maverick spending as a possible reaction where end-users had decided they could better serve their own needs by handling the purchasing function themselves. The challenge was to disprove that notion. Currently, streamlined, responsive, computerized procurement systems that allow end-users to participate in procurement decisions have largely made the point—and that's what the workshop was about. Public or private, if you have a maverick-spending problem and haven't taken a fresh look at why, maybe that's overdue.

The Association's Editorial Board met at the meeting. It is primarily responsible for the Educational Procurement Journal, NAEP's classy quarterly publication. A few technical improvements are in the works and you'll see those in the coming months. But the need continues for more editorial copy from NAEP Member contributors. Unfortunately, too few people are willing to take pen in hand and share their thoughts with their peers. Yet, they avidly read what some of those same peers have written. Some are convinced they just can't write well enough for publication. Others seem sure that nobody is much interested in whatever they might have to say about happenings in their world. There may even be a few who would argue they are just too busy to write. Incidentally, I read in the Harvard Business Review recently that being "crazy busy" has gotten to be something close to the ultimate status symbol.

You write every day and could not survive as a purchasing professional if you were not well read. Your craft requires it. A purchasing manager needs to be well read.
able to express yourself clearly. In any case, Burr Millsap stands ready to be the editor we all need and you can sent him your draft copy via an email attached to a message at bmillsap@OU.com. What you and other NAEP members are most likely to read first, other than a note from your boss, auditor or the IRS, is probably an article about what’s happening in procurement and elsewhere on another campus. The essence of NAEP membership is learning by networking with peers, and that is the purpose of the Journal. Nobody is a better expert about what happened in your world last week than you. The challenges confronting business leaders on your campus are, no doubt, widely shared within higher education. Probably the best way to stretch your time budget is to work more effectively by learning from others. In addition, I have found that doing a little research and jotting down my thoughts about the issues before me is one of the most effective ways for me to develop a better understanding of what the issues are all about.

I haven’t mentioned professional obligation yet but it’s there, too. Having benefitted from what others have learned—maybe the hard way—and shared, we incur an obligation to add what we have learned to the knowledge pool. Please join the Journal’s information exchange. Just about anything being discussed on your campus or covered by the national media, involving higher education business, should be of interest to fellow purchasing officers and other campus business leaders at every level. And while you are at it, don’t forget that along with the Journal, I’m looking for copy and ideas to share online here in Purchasing Link.

Doreen Murren, her NAEP staff, and their many volunteers put together a memorable Annual Meeting. If you were not in Reno, you missed one of the most valuable professional development opportunities of the year. The cost-benefit ratio was outstanding. We are sure to have another great meeting at Disney’s Contemporary Hotel in Orlando, Florida next April. Start planning now and don’t miss it!

As ever, what’s happening on your campus?

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Passing of the Gavel Ceremony: Outgoing and Incoming NAEP Presidents

Posted By NAEP, Tuesday, April 18, 2017

Outgoing President

Kelly Kozisek
Chief Procurement Officer
Oregon State University

I hope you are all enjoying your time here in Reno. Hopefully, you are learning new things, reconnecting with colleagues, and meeting new people as you participate in the sessions and events.

It was just shy of a year ago when I gave my incoming President’s speech, sharing my perspective about the value of personal and professional relationships that I’ve developed through NAEP. At that time, I shared one of my very special mentor’s mantra that, “It’s all about the relationships.” Serving as the NAEP President proved to be no exception to that saying. This experience has afforded me the opportunity to work with procurement professionals who are doing amazing things. I had the privilege of developing several new relationships, many of which will last well beyond my career as a procurement professional.
Before I move on to the next step as the Past President, I’d like to thank some important people. So kudos and a huge thank you to the following people:

The Board of Directors for your involvement and leadership. You have been a wonderful team and I’ve learned so much from you. You are engaged, active, and passionate about this Association and it shows through your involvement and contributions.

Doreen Murton and the NAEP staff. I appreciate your hard work, dedication, and the commitment you provide each and every day. You are a very resourceful team and manage to operate a lean and effective Association.

The Oregon State University (OSU) staff for their support and enthusiasm. I never had to worry about what was happening at OSU as I traveled around the nation representing the Association. I feel very fortunate to work with such a great team. Thank you, Tim, my wonderful husband, for your patience, support, and understanding as I fulfilled my duties. Finally, thank you, the Members of NAEP, for electing me, providing your support, and sending me your well wishes all along this journey. I truly appreciate having such strong relationships with so many of you.

Speaking of relationships and gratitude, I have had the pleasure of getting to know your next president much better this past year. She has been an extremely active and engaged Board Member who is always looking out for the best interest of the NAEP Members. Our Association will definitely benefit from her strength and leadership. Please join me in welcoming your president, Rosey Murton.

**Incoming President**

Rosey Murton  
Director, Procurement Services  
Wake Forest University

I hope you are enjoying the conference and have been collecting great ideas that will generate great rewards for your institution. For those of you who don’t know me, I’m Rosey Murton, and please feel free to say hello. I love to meet new colleagues and I welcome feedback.

This year, the theme of Great Ideas, Great Expectations and Great Rewards was chosen in the development of our program. We would like to continue that theme throughout this next year with a call for leadership to colleagues who are excited about helping NAEP continue the tradition of meeting the great expectations of Members and implementing great ideas to achieve great rewards. As an example of meeting your expectations, many of you have attended the excellent professional development programs that were formulated by seeking the input and collaboration of procurement leadership throughout Higher Education. If you haven’t had the chance to attend a program yet, I would encourage you to review the current offerings, as a busy schedule is planned for this next year. In the words of our keynote speaker Vernice "Flygirl" Armour, "You have the permission to engage."

Recently, NAEP completed a survey of membership that indicated that, out of the pool of respondents, 38 percent said they were retiring; 33 percent will retire within one to three years; and an additional 23 percent will retire in three to five years. That translates into a Membership turnover of about two-thirds within the next five years. Not only will this create opportunities for our up-and-coming professionals on a campus level, but it also creates leadership opportunities within organizations like NAEP. Although we will miss our mentors and leaders, it is apparent that the time has come to pass the torch to a new generation of leadership. I’d like to ask all of you to consider being a part of the leadership that assists our Association in creating great ideas, expectations, and rewards. Your Association needs your talents. We can no longer afford to wait. For those of you thinking of getting involved, there is no better time to develop and refine your leadership skills. Please seek out Members of the Board, NAEP staff, and regional leadership to explore the opportunities.

Expectations of the procurement office in Higher Education have never been higher and we are called upon to deliver on those expectations in a compressed timeframe, with minimal resources. My journey with NAEP started with volunteering for committees. Being fairly new to Higher Education at the time, it became a great way to build a network of peers, expand my knowledge, and contribute to our Association. I have learned many lessons during my tenure, and one of them is to always be ready to lead when the opportunity presents itself. With the strength of our Association, I am confident that NAEP will continue to grow and thrive in the years to come.

Thank you for your dedication and support. I look forward to working with all of you in the future.
Higher Education at the time, it became a great way to build a network of peers, expand my knowledge about best practices, and also meet some folks who served as valuable mentors. That experience helped contribute to developing my leadership skills, both on a professional and personal level. Professionally, this experience allowed me to leverage what other peer institutions were implementing and tailor it to the needs of my specific institution. Personally, I knew that if a unique challenge presented itself, there was always a colleague out there to bounce ideas off of and to provide input that made my own ideas even better. These connections have been invaluable in my career!

The exciting change for many others like me is that our networks are evolving and changing as we see colleagues retire. We must constantly reach out to the best and brightest, as we move forward and embrace new ideas and innovations that occur with the rise of new leaders. We are hoping that many of you who have not yet participated or reached out to other NAEP colleagues take this opportunity to do so and build a network. It is so important that our colleagues feel supported and valued at this point in their careers.

All of my NAEP experience contributed to the development of leadership skills. What I learned from my colleagues is that there were so many great leaders to emulate within Higher Education, all in their own way either contributing or developing the essential "Cs" for leadership. These include enhancing credibility, developing competencies in new areas, supporting when courage is needed, enhancing communication skills, developing creativity, honoring commitments, and most of all developing a sense of community and contributing to strength of character. I hope that you will benefit from the same leadership opportunity that I was fortunate enough to access.

I’d like to thank my family and extended family for all their support. In my case, it has truly taken a village and I am so truly grateful for their love and support throughout the years. I’d also like to thank my wonderful mentors including Steve Logan, Mike Smith, Phil Abruzzi, Brad Sheriff, Mike Bass, Joe V., John Shenette, Carmen Canales and Becky Edmunds. I’d also like to thank my former Big Ten colleagues Jill Schunck, Jim Konrad, Mark Felhlberg, Tim Bray, Mike Hardiman and Kim Watson and my IPHEC "gang" Mike Bloechle, Tracy Sullivan, Karen Toricelli, Nancy Fairless; Shannon Reed and Terry Rogge. Also special thanks to Gene Suwanski, Bill Harris, Sandy Hicks and Lisa Deal for providing counsel during my time at NAEP. Lastly, and most importantly I’d like to thank my staff – both former and current. Having such great teams is the reason a leader can achieve great rewards and I thank all of you for your contributions. What I have learned is that none of us goes it alone and having colleagues who care about you and support your journey is essential to one's success.

I’d also like to mention a special thanks to the wonderful NAEP Board you have elected. We will work hard to achieve the great expectations of our Membership.

I’d like to reiterate the “ask” for all of you in the audience... if you are interested in creating, sharing, and implementing great ideas and realizing great rewards for all the Membership of NAEP, then we are asking you to get involved. Volunteering is a great reward in itself, however you can make a difference. We need you. There are many NAEP committees that need your great ideas, both on a national and regional level. We ask you to rise to the great expectations we have for our upcoming NAEP leaders.

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3 New Board Members Elected to National Office

Posted By NAEP, Tuesday, April 18, 2017

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On March 9, 2017 NAEP announced the results of their 2017 National Board elections.

*Our Teller of the Ballots, Jennifer Adling, Texas Tech University, validated the election results.*

(view full BoD page on website)

Our new national board representatives are:

- National 2nd Vice President: **Travis Ball**, Texas A&M University - Commerce
- District 3 Representative: **LaDonna Purcell**, Morehead State University
- District 6 Representative: **Raymond Hsu**, University of Washington

Additionally, our current national Board of Directors were all voted into their ascending positions.

Our 2017 Board Officers:

- President: **Rosey Murton**, Wake Forest University
- Senior Vice President: **Nichol Luoma**, Arizona State University
- First Vice President: **Kevin Holmes**, Oklahoma State University – Tulsa
- 2nd Vice President: **Travis Ball**, Texas A&M University - Commerce

All officers were installed and began their terms officially at the 2017 NAEP Annual Meeting on March 29 in Reno, Nevada.

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**National Awards Winners Announced**

*Posted By NAEP, Tuesday, April 18, 2017*

Congratulations to our National Award Winners!

On Wednesday, March 30th, NAEP honored our 2017 National Award Winners at a celebration luncheon.

We are pleased to announce them here:

(view full page in website)

**Bert C. Ahrens Achievement Award**

- William Harris, University of Kentucky

**Bob Ashby Mentor of the Year Award**

- Denises Finn, formerly of the University of Kentucky

**Neil D. Markee Communicator of the Year Award**
Distinguished Service Award
- Kevin Carr, University of Maine System
- Burr Millsap, University of Oklahoma

Professional Perspective Award
- Raymond Hsu and Kerry Kahl, University of Washington

Volunteer of the Year Awards
- Duane Bullock, Pennsylvania State University
- Jesse Moore, Purdue University

Young Professional in Procurement Awards
- Kara Finch, University of Colorado
- Joshua Dodson, Oregon State University

Award of Excellence in Procurement
- Cornell University

Nancy Trego Scholarship Winner
- Tonia Lawson, Bay County Schools

2017 Sons & Daughters Scholarship Winners
- Kyle Miller, University of Central Oklahoma
- Son of Chandra Miller, Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology
- Morgan Starns, Sam Houston State University - (Daughter of Renee Starns, Sam Houston State University)

Congratulations to all of our nominees and award winners!

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Our 2017 webinar series gets underway in earnest in April with several upcoming complimentary events. If you have an hour in your schedule, you have time for a webinar! Read more about the upcoming events:

Amazon: A Gateway to Maverick Spend... or a Portal to the Best Prices?
April 20, 2017 | 2:00 pm EST | 11:00 am PST
Registration

Is Amazon just a new and tempting gateway to more maverick spend? Or is it a convenient place to get better prices? Should you embrace it or try to keep it out of your campus? And what about the other e-commerce sites like Best Buy, Jet, and others?

What’s the Best Answer? There may be no single right answer, and we know many organizations are trying to figure out their best path forward. In this first of a two-part webinar series, hear how Iowa State University has prioritized working with strategic vendors over broadening access to various e-commerce sites.

Future of Higher Ed Procurement Technology: A conversation with The Ohio State University and Amazon Business
April 25th | 11:00 am Eastern, 8:00 am Pacific
Complimentary Registration

College and university leaders are asking procurement organizations to help address budget shortfalls, better serve end users, and mitigate new risks with fewer resources.

We will explore how you can simplify purchasing, consolidate suppliers, and improve organization compliance—with Amazon.

The Ohio State University will share its journey to manage rogue Amazon purchasing and how, in the process, the university’s procurement leader discovered a new procurement technology that can help delight buyers and streamline purchasing.

Join us for a webinar sponsored by Amazon Business where you will gain an understanding of best practices for managing long-tail vendors in your purchasing environment. Explore opportunities for increasing spend through strategically negotiated contracts and discuss and learn best practices for increasing staff productivity, end user satisfaction, and supply chain efficiency through strategic relationships.

Building Your Business Case: Best Practices for Introducing Procurement Initiatives
April 27, 2017 | 2:00 pm EST | 11:00 am PST
Registration

Procurement is constantly changing and evolving, and your department may be faced with new demands, shifting priorities, financial pressures, budget cuts and continuously being asked to “do more with less”.

How can you get leadership on board with something new and different when current processes and methods are working seemingly just fine? Or on the flip side, perhaps your procurement department tried something new in the past that only created more confusion and stress, creating reluctance to steer from the tried and true.

Show leadership that you’re thinking strategically about the future of procurement at your institution, and get buy-in to move forward with processes, technology, suppliers or methods that help you better support your institution’s mission.
Procurement is consistently growing and changing. To meet these challenges, procurement professionals must continuously build knowledge, skills and abilities through expertise sharing, formal and informal training and ongoing coaching. NAEP offers robust resources, high quality professional development and special events, specifically designed for professionals within higher education. Click on the links in the Calendar of Events for detailed information about each in-person institute and academy.

**Calendar of Events**

**Procurement Academy**
Tier I, Tier II, Tier III
August 7–8, 2017
Hanover, MD

**RFP Institute**
August 9-10, 2017
Hanover, MD

**Contract Management Institute**
August 9-10, 2017
Hanover, MD

**Federal Procurement Institute**
August 17-18, 2017
Hanover, MD

**Strategic Procurement Institute II**
August 27-30
Denver, CO

**Negotiations Institute**
December 11-12, 2017
Hanover, MD

**Facilities Institute**
December 11-13, 2017
Quote of the Month

Posted By NAEP, Tuesday, April 18, 2017

“You can cut all the flowers but you cannot keep spring from coming”

— Pablo Neruda

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