From the Editor

I know it's not January 1st or September 1st but, at NAEP, new officers take the helm and a new budget is adopted immediately after the Annual Meeting and so, for me, it always seemed that a new year started. The annual gathering has long been a time to check the pulse of the Association, to get an update on what Members are concerned about, and to try to better understand where we go from here. I think higher education has turned the financial corner. At least I heard very little discussion of dire budget cuts, although I know a few institutions have folded and I'm certain that cost of operation remains near the top of the list of Member concerns. Maybe we have become more adept at stretching dollars, or accustomed to the pressure, or have just tired of discussing doing more with less.

In any case, this year's Annual Meeting was all about sophisticated purchasing in support of higher education. I see purchasing's role as extending well beyond the effective acquisition of needed goods and services. Providing insightful advice to those who make the decisions that determine the future of the organization is another segment of the job. And this year's NAEP Annual Meeting program and sidebar discussions reflected that reality.

Commentary: NAEP's 94th Annual Meeting

By: Neil Markee
Editor in Chief-Purchasing Link

Spring was in the air and it was relatively cool here in Palm City, Florida when I walked out to the car at 4:15 a.m. to drive the 510 miles to Atlanta for the 94th NAEP Annual Meeting. We had last met in Atlanta's Hyatt Regency in 1993, when Association President Soledad Harmon from the University of Oklahoma passed the gavel to Nancy Tregoe of Lafayette College.

I arrived with plenty of time to refresh my memory on the hotel's meeting facilities before the opening evening event, hosted in partnership with E&I, at the spectacular Georgia Aquarium. Continental breakfast Monday morning provided a second opportunity to renew long-standing friendships and meet new people. Face-to-face networking is one of the key benefits of the NAEP Annual Meeting. The program is structured to provide many occasions and venues to meet with peers from other institutions and members of the supplier community serving higher education. There were ninety exhibitors on hand. One of our new exhibitors was PayBack, located in Raleigh, North Carolina, and represented by the now-retired, long-term stalwart in NAEP's Carolinas regional group, Bob Wood.

And then it was time for the opening general session. After the usual welcome, recognition of contributors, and housekeeping announcements, the meeting was underway in what may be a unique fashion. The three professional speakers, who were to follow with concurrent workshops from 10:30 a.m. until 12:00 noon, plus follow-up interactive sessions later in the meeting, were provided an opportunity to outline what they would cover in more detail following the General Session. The choice was "The Art and Technique of Negotiation," "The Human Side of Ethics," and "Transforming Group Decision-Making." All of the three presenters were dynamic professionals, well prepared to compel you to rethink all you thought you knew about their topic. Choosing one wasn't a slam dunk for any of us.

Maybe it was because I have long been concerned with all aspects of ethics on campus, including business, academics and big-time sports. Or maybe it was the orange prison jump suit or the hand cuffs he wore initially. Or it could have been the admission that presenter Chuck Gallagher was a convicted felon. He had obviously been there and done that. I thought about it a bit and I wanted to hear what he had to say. I knew it would not be just about procurement missteps, and it wasn't. Among the points he made was that few people set out to be criminals, and the first step over the line may be the most difficult, but thereafter, the crooked route becomes easier to travel. He reviewed his own case, involving taking money from an account held in trust for a client by the CPA firm where he was a partner. Listening to the details of his fall from grace and struggle back to legitimacy in a new field was painful. I didn't see anyone leave early. Later, speaking with others who had opted for one of the other two workshops, I found them uniformly impressed by the quality of his presentation.
and value of the other presentations. And so it went for the balance of the meeting.

The Educational and Institutional Cooperative Service, is the not-for-profit cooperative purchasing corporation organized by three institutions who were Association members in upstate New York in 1934. Owned lock, stock, and barrel by its member institutions, E&I reports annually to its member institutions at the NAEP Annual Meeting. At the annual E&I stockholders meeting this year, Oklahoma's Burr Millsap, the organization's treasurer, presented a very upbeat State of the Co-op Report. The Co-op is growing and prospering, said Burr and will return something like $3.5 million to its members. Last year, NAEP Member purchases through Co-op contracts amounted to more than $2 billion. CPA Burr managed to make the very positive, but dry, financial data interesting — no mean feat.

I participated in the "MindXChange and Networking Breakfast. The format offered 20 roundtable discussions of topics very likely to be of interest to procurement professionals working in higher education. Periodically, the moderator announced it was time to change tables. Then, participants moved to discuss another topic. I opted to stay at the table set aside for discussing Promoting Procurement on Campus, because I was interested in learning what approaches Members of all sorts had tried in the continuing effort to reinvent campus procurement in an environment that has changed significantly in the past decade.

Clearly, technology has changed how we communicate with associates on campus and with peers across the country. Funding insufficiency has made establishing an effective network more necessary than ever. Most of what I heard amounted to technology-driven major refinements in efforts that have been part of the scene for many years. The universal goal is for purchasing to be seen by endusers as a useful, convenient partner, not as another bureaucratic roadblock to be overcome or worked around. The challenge becomes a communications issue and we have the technology needed.

I was reminded "back in the day," that is, in the 1960s, Henry K. Nelson, the well-known purchasing agent at Columbia University, had a staff member whose full-time job was to call on endusers to learn their future needs and plans early on, and to explain what purchasing might do to facilitate whatever they hoped to accomplish. Ever forward-looking Hank was president of the Association in 1964. At the roundtable workshop, others mentioned similar face-to-face efforts to gain information and sell purchasing's services. The more things change the more...

Some time ago I read about the huge volume of data now routinely, cheaply and publicly available. It seemed "Big Data" could provide just about all the information needed to make any decision. It was all there and all but free. But so was a huge volume of interesting but extraneous data that needed to be filtered out before it was likely, or even possible, for the harried decision-maker to recognize the well-camouflaged in plain sight bits that were needed. If analytics is about successfully identifying pertinent bits of data and aligning and presenting them in such a way that allows leaders to make better decisions, expertise in recovering useful information from Big Data is likely to be a key management skill of the future and NAEP will be involved.

The workshop was headed "What Your Business Officer Wants to Know." NAEP's CEO, Doreen Murner, moderated a timely session focused on, "How do we leverage procurement data to deliver actionable insights that engage, inform and inspire executive and functional leaders beyond procurement?" The work being done in cooperation with NACUBO, with the support of Spikes Cavell and E&I, made it was plain that those involved recognized the potential and were determined to invest in the future of purchasing in support of higher education. The role of procurement on campus isn't just about acquiring needed goods and services effectively. Luke Spikes was the well-informed principal presenter.

If you missed the 2015 NAEP Annual Meeting you missed a great opportunity. Now is the time to start planning and budgeting for the 2016 version in San Antonio, Texas. If you were in Atlanta, take the time to draft a report to your boss outlining the benefits you brought back to campus, including the contacts you made or strengthened, and how the institution's investment would enhance procurement on your campus. Likely, your chief business officer is a participant in NACUBO's annual meeting. If so, he or she is aware of the benefits of face-to-face networking and the potential of specialized workshops. In fact, much of the most useful professional development information exchanged at both meetings is available nowhere else.

See you in San Antonio next Spring.

Wes Donaldson Obituary

Too late for our last posting, the sad news arrived that Wes Donaldson had died at home on February 23. Wes was the longterm chief procurement officer at Texas A&M and president of NAEB (now NAEP) in 1987. Like ASU's George Morrell and Cornell's Wally Rogers, Wes was one of those unpretentious, reasonable, clear-thinking people who almost always seemed to get it right,
no matter what the topic was. There never was a Wes Donaldson Texas School of Purchasing but, for some time, it seemed that just about every chief procurement officer at a public institution in Texas had spent some time in Wes's shop. I'll miss him.

Tom Kaloupek Wins NAEP's Highest Award

Tom Kaloupek (retired, Virginia Tech) received the Bert C. Ahrens Achievement Award at the recent NAEP Annual Meeting in Atlanta. This award is the Association's highest form of recognition. Reading the list of past recipients amounts to reading a Who's Who of higher education purchasing professionals for several decades. Tom Kaloupek's place among them was well-earned. Personally, I never was disappointed when I called on Tom for a candid opinion, or information, or any other input I needed to help me better understand some aspect of what was going on within our branch of higher education.

94th NAEP Annual Meeting a Huge Success in Atlanta

More than 400 attendees from 187 institutions and 126 vendors and sponsors gathered at the Hyatt Regency in Atlanta, Georgia, April 12-15, 2015 for NAEP's 94th Annual Meeting. The opening Host Event at the Georgia Aquarium provided the perfect climate for networking and introductions. Throughout the next three days, attendees were offered 50 educational sessions (download from the website here), covering eight subject tracks, presented by the most highly regarded experts in the field of purchasing for higher education.

Our keynotes educated and inspired us. The three Monday PEP Talk speakers and John Spence (our Tuesday keynote speaker) all taught in-depth breakout sessions after their main sessions for those interested in a deeper dive of each respective topic. Our closing keynote speaker, Dr. Bernice King, left us inspired with her words.

The Exhibit Hall bustled with activity as hundreds of supplier representatives explained their products and services that are geared to the needs of our purchasing professional Members. On Wednesday, April 15, at a gala luncheon, National Awards were announced (see article below). Texts of speeches made by the outgoing and incoming NAEP Presidents are published below.

So who attends the Annual Meeting? Here are two interesting charts that show the breakdown of attendees by school size and the breakdown of attendees by job type.

Annual Meeting Attendees by School Size:

Annual Meeting Attendees by Job Description:
Thank you to everyone who attended the meeting this year! We hope you took back to the office useful ideas that you could implement immediately as well as food for thought for your toughest challenges. We look forward to seeing a record-setting audience in San Antonio next May for the 2016 Annual Meeting.

Passing of the Gavel: Outgoing President Cory Harms

April 15, 2015, NAEP Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia

— This is a really tough day for me. It took me 10 years to get to this point. To reach this goal and proudly say that I am the NAEP president — at least for a few more minutes. If you were here last year, you may have heard my story of how I was inspired by Dick Scharf. Ten years ago, I listened to Dick Scharf, as he was stepping down as president of NAEP, and I saw how much the Association meant to him. He inspired me to be here today. To volunteer - to give - to be a part of the Association. Not just a Member, but an active, participating, contributory Member.

Seriously though, I have enjoyed my time on the board and have had the opportunity to work with a lot of awesome procurement people — and I can leave the board knowing it is in good hands.

So here is where I get to thank a bunch of people — kind of like the Oscars but without the music to play me off the stage. Thank you to Doreen and all of the national office staff, current and former. They have done a lot of the heavy lifting for everything I wanted to do. Thank you to Nancy Brooks, my boss, who encouraged me to become involved and has been instrumental in furthering my development in the Association and my career. Thank you to all of my numerous NAEP friends: Sandy, Charlene, Karen, Mike, Wendy, Kim. Well, too many to mention. You are all appreciated and I look forward to seeing you every year.

This Association is the best. It is dedicated to what we do and only to what we do. There are others out there, but not one that’s sole purpose is to lift our profession up, educate our personnel, promote best practices, and create tools and information that is a perfect fit for our organizations.

It does this through top-notch staff and awesome volunteers. Volunteers like all of you. Anything you can do to help the Association helps your peers and your profession. Please make an effort to
As I leave my tenure as NAEP president, I leave the association in excellent shape and in excellent hands.

We are:
- Financially sound,
- Readied with a new strategic plan,
- Providing increased resources to its members,
- And moving towards an era of increased volunteerism.

As I said, I leave the Association in excellent hands, those hands belonging to Lisa Deal from the University of Florida. Thank you, Lisa, and I look forward to your leadership.

Cory Harms, Associate Director of Purchasing
Iowa State University

Passing of the Gavel: Incoming President Lisa Deal

April 15, 2015, NAEP Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia — Hello, I am Lisa Deal. I hope you have enjoyed our time in Atlanta together. What a great city and I hope you agree, a great conference. Lots of great information to engage in. I’ve heard that one is supposed to open a speech with humor but I have to tell you, I am not great at delivering jokes. I am pretty good at being a procurement nerd, and here’s how I can prove it. How many of you have a last name that correlates to your job? Do you know how many times suppliers have teased me about my negotiating a good “deal” for our university? Yup, that’s me Lisa Deal. Sometimes I am a little “out there,” too, which one could argue is represented by my email address — and once I tell you, you will likely never forget. It’s LSD, just like the drug@ufl.edu. So now we can stay in touch, LSD@ufl.edu.

So, now that you know who I am (and my email address so we can stay in touch), I’d like to thank you for the honor of allowing me to serve you and the Association in this role. There are an awful lot of people who are responsible for my being here today and I can’t possibly thank them all but I can mention just a few. For those of you who are new to the Association, please don’t let this list put you off if you don’t know these folks. Instead, seek these folks out. These are our current and future Procurement Rock Stars, and all-around good folks: Sandy Hicks, who has been supportive and a wonderful mentor and sounding board. I’d also like to thank other colleagues at a national level: Ted Johnson, Ralph Maier, Steve Mack, Bill Probst, Eric Denby, Tim Gibney, Judy Smith, John Riley and, recent rising rock star Nichol Luoma. I can’t tell you how helpful and supportive are the recent NAEP Board Presidents: Bill Harris, Valerie Rhodes Sorelle and Cory Harms. I’d like to thank Derek Smith and Jim Knight. In particular, I thank the entire hardworking NAEP staff, and my colleagues from the State University System in Florida and folks from the University of Florida, Karen Frank (who’s here) and the people in Gainesville-UF Purchasing Services’ staff, my former and current bosses: Emily Hamby, Matt Fajack, Greg DuBois and Mike McKee, whom some of you may have seen on the CFO panel, and finally, two my two teenage kids, Victoria and Chip (who’d better be in class). I couldn’t be here without all those folks and a bunch more I didn’t name, so please forgive me. I’m a little nervous about doing a great job in this role, but with their help and yours, I promise you I will do my best.

I’ve given some thought to how I will do my best. I am going to use the same ideas at this conference: Explore, Engage and Innovate. It’s what NAEP has been doing over the last few years, and the results, I hope you will agree, are impressive. I’d like to share two personal stories about NAEP. The first: I got to attend my first national meeting (in Lexington, Kentucky) by applying for the Florida Regional Scholarship. At that meeting, I met a bunch of P-card administrators — just as I was about to roll out a brand new P-card program at USF. A few years later, in the year I was selected to serve as the Purchasing Director at UF, I attended the Annual Meeting alone, knowing I had an organization to migrate to a more strategic way of thinking. I attended a panel discussion of CPOs and got my courage up to ask John Riley (from Arizona) a question about position descriptions. His answer was so helpful I returned home to innovate — and in 2014 I saw that guidance codified in the NAEP Innovators Forum 2014 white paper on Talent Management. I hope you see why I think this makes NAEP Membership good value.
So, I’m going to head home from here to do some more exploration, engagement and innovation. And you are too, right? I have a suggestion to help you: get some practice doing it with NAEP, they’ve been doing it for a while. Take advantage of an opportunity to learn and practice. Volunteering is low-risk and it’s free. What a deal. Working with NAEP you stretch your mind and then implement ideas. You get to work with colleagues in our field and enhance your skills, which makes you more valuable to you, your home organization — and NAEP benefits from your growth. To me, that sounds like a win-win-win, which is what we are trained to negotiate for in procurement, right?

One of the first sayings I learned in procurement is that none of us is as smart as all of us. I think the annual conference and NAEP really demonstrates that. Please volunteer with NAEP to continue your journey exploring, engaging and innovating. Once you’ve done it once, it makes it easier to do it again and continue doing it. Please explore possibilities, dig deep and engage in discussion and learning. Implement by doing great things in procurement and then return to an NAEP conference to share what you know — just as the purchasing rock stars who have come before you have done. I can’t wait to hear what you accomplish. And you know how to stay in touch, so I look forward to hearing about your success. Thank you.

Lisa Deal, Purchasing Director
University of Florida - Gainesville

And the Winner is... National Awards for 2014 Announced

The National Awards for year 2014 were announced and presented at the 2015 NAEP Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia in April. We congratulate the all the winners and also each and every of the other candidates who were nominated by their appreciate colleagues for outstanding contributions to our purchasing profession.

- **Bert C. Ahrens Achievement Award:**
  Tom Kaloupek, Virginia Tech

- **Distinguished Service Award:**
  Terry Tzitzis, SUNY Fredonia
  Tamara Gash, Oregon State University

- **Bob Ashby Mentor of the Year:**
  Curtis Monroe, University of Louisville

- **Award of Excellence in Procurement:**
  Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute AND the University of Colorado

- **Neil D. Markee Communicator of the Year:**
  Finesha Colton Lee, Emory University

- **Volunteer of the Year:**
  Mary Ellen McClellan, Emory University

- **Young Professional in Procurement:**
  Blake Reagan, University of Tennessee

- **Professional Perspective Award (for article in NAEP Educational Procurement Journal):**
  Kimberly Dulaney, Virginia Tech; with Curt Plyler, Fort Hill Associates, LLC

- **Nancy Tregoe Scholarship:**
  Dee Ann Schneider, Texas A&M AgriLife

- **Sons & Daughters Scholarships:**
  Adam Hoole, University of Massachusetts-Amherst; Son of Tom Hoole, University of Massachusetts-Lowell
  Taylor Bounds, Texas A&M University-Galveston; Daughter of Robert Bounds, Texas A&M Health Science Center

**Strategic Procurement Institute: August 30 - September 2 in Denver**

The 2015 Strategic Procurement Institute will take place August 30 through September 2 at the University of Colorado and the Warwick Hotel in Denver. This popular Supplier Relationship Management event sells out on a regular basis so register early this summer to attend.

The strategic management of costs involves several important and complementary disciplines, including opportunity assessment, business case development, cost management execution, and supplier relationship management. This Institute integrates these leading disciplines into one comprehensive methodology and approach.
Registration is currently open and the course schedule (PDF) is available for review.

Reserve your room at the Warwick Hotel across the street from the University of Colorado by August 17th to receive the discounted NAEP room rate. Call 800.525.2888 and mention you are part of the Colorado Procurement Group.

Calendar of Events

Strategic Procurement Institute
August 30 – September 2, 2015
Denver, Colorado

2016 Annual Meeting
May 22-25, 2016
San Antonio, TX
Call for papers is now open.

2016 Procurement Academy
RFP Institute
Federal Procurement Institute
February TBD, 2016 in Arizona

Regional Meetings
See the full calendar for the upcoming regional meetings and to register for your specific meeting.

NAEP Scholarship Fund — Every Dollar Educates

NAEP encourages individual Members and Regions to consider supporting the NAEP Scholarship Fund. An individual can make a tax-deductible donation to the NAEP Scholarship Funds (where allowable by law).

One hundred percent of your individual donation will be applied to the William E. Haas Scholarship, the Nancy Tregoe Scholarship, and the Sons & Daughters Scholarship funds. Recipients of these yearly awards use the funds to further their educational goal by attending NAEP academies, institutes and meetings or, in the case of the Sons & Daughters Scholarship, for college or trade school tuition. Contributors will receive a letter of receipt for tax purposes.

Support the future of Higher Education Procurement. Click here to make a donation today!

Complimentary Webinars

Click here to see a full calendar of complimentary webinars on various procurement topics.
Quote of the Month

“Good management is the art of making problems so interesting and their solutions so constructive that everyone wants to get to work and deal with them.”

– Paul Hawken

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