Cover Story
Embracing Our Past; Impacting Our Future

In This Issue
NAEP’s 90th Annual Meeting
Community Building and Collaboration in the Birthplace of Rock and Roll
Quick and simple savings. For any size school.

In fact, smaller schools have the most to gain from our buying power. We’ve already completed the bids, secured the best prices, and signed the contracts for everything you need. Members of the National Association of Educational Procurement (NAEP) have turned to E&I since 1934 to increase buying power, streamline purchasing, and satisfy the needs of their institutions and students. See what we can do for you. Call 800-283-2634 ext. 228, e-mail membership@eandi.org, or visit www.eandi.org today.
The smarter the mouse, the more effective your research.

Taconic is a leading provider of life sciences solutions to researchers in academia and the commercial world, offering "smarter" animal models and unique scientific services that facilitate in vivo studies and accelerate research. We offer:

- One of the broadest portfolios of fully licensed, off-the-shelf and custom generated mouse and rat models
- Custom Breeding Solutions that free up facility space, improve efficiency by taking non-research work out of lab, and let you manage your colony online 24/7
- Full suite of services – from genotyping and health testing to surgical services and genetic monitoring

Taconic offers Special Volume Discounts to all E & I Members

www.Taconic.com
Doreen Murner  
CEO, NAEP

Did you know that building a physical community is very similar to building a professional community? You need to have a blueprint. The common denominator is the vision, which transcends products and services, streets and playgrounds. Instead, the vision promotes a sense of connection among Members. It is exactly that connection that NAEP enables when we facilitate our annual community service project at our Annual Meeting. Creating the blueprint to build the community is what we did with our Build-A-Bike Program. The connection of building bicycles for needy children—this year’s bikes went to the Memphis Ronald McDonald House—with Members, suppliers and other partners (our community)—and giving them to a local worthy cause (the greater community) is the exact blueprint of what Associations do. Associations build America.

Most of us know that the social connection of building community is valuable. It’s an opportunity to draw in colleagues and Members from far and wide, creating value by connecting them to something larger than themselves. That is precisely what we did in our community service project at our 90th Annual Meeting & Exposition. We had fun; our participants connected with each other in the context of a shared goal; and the local community benefitted from our choice of venue.

Community building is never finished. We need enough humility to remember that as the architects of the blueprint, it is up to each of us to choose to engage with the community. Our ultimate legacy is the quality of our community. Let’s keep building our community together.
### Letter from the CEO

**4 Associations Build America**

*Doreen Murner, CEO, NAEP*

Legacy is defined in several ways. It’s a bequest or gift of property. It’s anything handed down from the past, whether it be from an ancestor or predecessor. It’s an applicant to or student at a school that was attended by his or her parent. These definitions encompass vision, social connections and community. We all have a legacy that we hope to be known and remembered for. What’s yours?

### Features

**8 Embracing Our Past; Impacting Our Future**

*Carol Barnhill, C.P.M.*

If you’re standing still, you’re moving backward because the constant forward pace of change is always around you and working on you whether you like it or not. This year’s NAEP President Carol Barnhill reminds and encourages us to embrace change, just as she has done (for thirty-four years now) and is doing at Arkansas State University.

**10 Marketing Procurement on Campus**

*(by everyday actions)*

*Marty Newman, CPPB*

Higher education Procurement is at its best when it is effectively marketed to departmental customers on campus. There are multitudes of ways to make your marketing efforts useful. You won’t want to gloss by this article.

**12 Community Building and Collaboration in the Birthplace of Rock and Roll**

*NAEP celebrated 90 years of developing value and community to higher education procurement in Memphis, Tennessee, in April. More than 600 procurement professionals and solutions providers joined us at what is truly the higher education procurement event of the year.*

### Departments

**7 Heard on the Street: Making the Move to File Electronically**

*Cory Harms, M.S.*

Going totally paperless by going totally electronic is taking many institutions longer than others and longer than expected. Here are some suggestions to help accelerate the effort and increase its chances for success.

**16 Evolution or Revolution: Changing When and How We Work**

*Mike A. Chmielewski, C.P.M.*

As technology advancements have allowed us to work from virtually anywhere, new and refreshing work scheduling arrangements are becoming more common. Would such a practice work for your office? Give it some honest thought.

**17 Certification: Signs of the Times**

*Bob Ashby, C.P.M., CPCM*

Each person’s life is dotted with signs along the way. Bob Ashby’s column discusses some signs that are important to him, but Bob especially exhorts each of us to pay special heed to the “first sign.”

**18 Best and Final: Stupid Things We Do at Work**

*Craig Plakey, C.P.M.*

When a guy keeps pumping cash into a vending machine to empty it of every milk carton possible, something is up. Read about it here. That, and “You can’t de-risk every risk.”
NAEP Academies, Tiers I, II, and III
August 15-16, 2011
St. Louis, Missouri

NAEP is excited to offer all three tiers of our Academy under one roof! The Foundation, Professional and Senior Professional Academies will be hosted concurrently allowing you to network with your peers that are attending each Academy.

Arrive on August 14 and attend class all day on August 15 and 16. We’ll end the sessions with a banquet on Tuesday evening, where attendees from all three classes will be able to enjoy each other’s company and celebrate the completion of these successful sessions.

For registration fees and additional information, please visit www.naepnet.org. Sending three or more people from your institution? Special registration rates apply which could save your institution more than $650!

Have You Seen the FREE Research That’s Available at www.naepnet.org?

- NASPO’s Response to NAEP Research (download the PDF today)
- “Public College and University Procurement: A Survey of the State Regulatory Environment, Institutional Procurement Practices, and Efforts Towards Cost Containment” (Presented in collaboration by NAEP and AASCU)

### 2011 Regional Meeting Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIONS</th>
<th>MEETING DATE</th>
<th>CITY/STATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carolinas</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC/MD/VA, DE/PA/WV Metro NY/NJ</td>
<td>October 2-5</td>
<td>Galloway, NJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Lakes (Registration is open!)</td>
<td>October 5-7</td>
<td>Indianapolis, IN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>September 26-27</td>
<td>Lake Cumberland State Park, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>October 12-13</td>
<td>Traverse City, MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINK, MN/DAK</td>
<td>September 25-28</td>
<td>Omaha, NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest/Pacific/Rocky Mountain, British Columbia, Alberta &amp; Saskatchewan, CN</td>
<td>October 2-5</td>
<td>Albuquerque, NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England</td>
<td>October 16-19</td>
<td>Hyannis, MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAGM</td>
<td>October 9-10</td>
<td>Orange Beach, AL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOAL</td>
<td>September 25-28</td>
<td>Hot Springs National Park, AR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upstate NY</td>
<td>October 11-14</td>
<td>Crowne Plaza Resort &amp; Golf Club, Lake Placid, NY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information on any of our programs, visit www.naepnet.org.

### INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

- **Choice Facility Partners**
  www.choicefacilitypartners.org
- **E & I Cooperative Purchasing**
  www.eandi.org
- **ERG International**
  www.erginternational.com
- **Haworth**
  www.haworth.com
- **MSC Industrial Supply Co.**
  www.mscdirect.com
- **Salsbury Industries* (NAEP Business Affiliate Member)**
  www.lockers.com
- **Taconic**
  www.taconic.com
- **TravelGuard**
  www.travelguard.com
- **U.S. Communities**
  www.uscommunities.org
- **Vantage Point Logistics**
  www.vantagepointlogistics.com
- **VISA USA**
  www.usa.visa.com/government
- **WW Grainger**
  www.grainger.com

Interested in joining this community? Contact Toni Valenti or Jackie Harget at 443.543.5540.
How many years ago did we first hear about the paperless office? Email and e-commerce were going to be the end of paper. How many of you are laughing right now behind your mounds of documents?

I have to agree that the transition to paperless has been slower than most of us had hoped. Additionally, the technology of the last decade dramatically increased the amount of information available to us, filling the void of paper that we might otherwise have been successful in creating in our purchasing process.

The purchasing profession is making great strides toward paperless transactions by utilizing fax, email, and cXML to transmit orders; using software to post, deliver and receive bids; and utilizing technology that allows e-invoicing and e-payments. The logical next step is retaining all of that data electronically, completely eliminating the need for paper storage. This includes images of the purchase orders, attachments, bid documents and responses, emails, other communications, and anything that may be stored regarding a purchase order, bid or contract.

So how do we get there? Here are a few things you may want to think about if you choose to move in that direction.

**Review laws, regulations, and policies governing record retention.** When federal funds are involved, you may be required to keep original records of transactions for one year unless they originated as electronic documents. This may make it more practical to standardize retaining everything for one year. States will have their own retention requirements that could affect public institutions specifically. These may range from supporting the electronic efforts completely to requiring several years of hard copies as audit back-up. Additionally, universities or systems may have retention policies that may bear on your efforts.

**Meet with affected parties.** The change will not only affect departments but also may impact sponsored programs, controller’s departments, internal auditing offices and others. This is a good first step to explain the project goals and the efficiencies you hope to achieve. Ask how this will affect them, and if they have any similar projects in the works maybe you can learn from each other.

**Decide how you want to store.** Not only do you need to know where items will be stored and what software you will use, but you need to decide what file types you may want to allow or not allow. Do you want to standardize everything being stored as a PDF? Will you allow several file types? What software will be needed to open stored documents and is it readily available across campus?

**Deal with security issues and proprietary information.** Some documents may contain information that needs to be protected (e.g., social security numbers) or information that is included in a proposal or bid response that is not for public view (e.g., financial statements or proprietary information). You may want to secure bid responses so that departments don’t share them with other bidders. You will need to have a way to secure those documents so that they are only viewable in Purchasing.

**Scan from the front back.** If you decide to start scanning older records to bring everything online and free up file space, you may want to start at the front and move backwards. This should help keep you from scanning records that may be disposed of shortly afterward, and if funding or time halts the process, you will be less likely to have a gap between what is available and what is not.

**Communicate.** Once you decide on a strategy, communicate with your campus and your vendor community to encourage utilizing electronic documents. Encourage campus users to request things electronically and to pass those electronic documents on to Purchasing instead of sending printed copies. Offer training if necessary and provide online documentation of the process.

**Ask colleagues.** One characteristic our profession demonstrates—which many don’t—is the willingness to share. Ask others what they are doing and what issues they’ve encountered. Good luck and share your success with others!

---


Cory Harms, M.S., is Associate Director of Purchasing at Iowa State University. He serves on the NAEP Board of Directors as Second Vice President. He is a Past President of the MINK (Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas) Region and serves on the NAEP Editorial Board. He has presented at both regional and national NAEP meetings and has spoken for the Missouri Association of Public Purchasing (MAPP). Email: c charms@iastate.edu.
ninety years old—wow! Where has the time gone? In our 90 years of existence, we have seen a lot of change, not only in the makeup of our organization—male/female ratio—but also in the levels of experience, levels of volunteerism, methods of communication, and more.

Look at the difference in our focus through the years. In 1921, we concentrated on sharing information more effectively and being able to pool our buying power. During the early 1940s, we were involved in the war, and our concerns were with regulations and issues regarding reimbursement from the military. We dealt with shortages during the war and with surpluses once the war ended. At the 1958 NAEP Annual Meeting, a report addressed the low salaries of purchasing agents at most institutions. The report asserted that the low pay represented a lack of vision on the part of administration, as purchasing agents were in key positions to save money or to make it. In 1967, the buzz was all about who was creating purchase orders on computers. The discussion in 1974 focused on decentralized purchasing and its objective of turning over to departments as much as possible. In 1986, we elected our first female President, Dolly Prenzel. In 1993, discussions led to the establishment of an email network (our listserv). In 2002, the NAEB Bulletin migrated from paper to electronic form, and in 2005, we changed our name to NAEP (from “Buyers” to “Procurement”) and adopted a new logo.

Here at my institution, Arkansas State University–Jonesboro, we celebrated our centennial anniversary last year. The organization began as an agricultural high school, became a college in 1933, and was elevated to university status in 1967. I arrived on the campus when I was five days (that's right, days) old and have been here ever since. I grew up dreaming of going to Arkansas State University (ASU) and being a part of the ASU Marching Indians, which I did in 1975. Growing up on campus was fun, as well as educational. I had the opportunity to absorb all the wonderful things the campus had to offer. Because my dad served as the head electrician and pulled emergency duty on weekends, I spent many hours in boiler/HVC rooms and other parts of the campus that most people never get to see. That is how I gained my knowledge of the many items we purchase every day. I began my career in the Physical Plant (now Facilities Management) warehouse as a student in my freshman year and worked my way up to Supervisor within three years. A short 13 years subsequent to that, I applied for and was selected to the position of Assistant Director in Purchasing. Another seven years culminated in my promotion to Director. My 34th year as a full-time employee started in January 2011.

I have seen lots of changes here on my campus through the years, as many of you have seen at your institutions. We are still in the grip of change here, as we have just welcomed a new system president and possibly a new chancellor in the future. I have gone through two software changes and numerous upgrades, painful at times, but we enjoy a more efficient working environment as a result.

I share this history with the hope that you may know me better and to remind us all that we face change constantly.

I share this history with the hope that you may know me better and to remind us all that we face change constantly. It may not always be what we like, but we must, nevertheless, deal with it, one way or another.
I may be an anomaly, being at ASU this long, but I love it here. I love my association with NAEP as well, as I have learned so much from each of you Members. Each conference I have attended has allowed me to bring back to the campus a new idea to help make us better, more proactive, and more productive and efficient.

Your NAEP Board recently participated in a five-year strategic planning session in an effort to envision our future. We are discerning what actions we can take now—individually and collectively—to significantly increase the impact that procurement will have on our campuses in the future.

Change keeps us on our toes and keeps us learning. It happens every day, every moment, everywhere. To live fully, we must learn to embrace change and honor it, even when change arrives with companions, such as fear and uncertainty. Today’s rapidly changing technology, the economy’s rollercoaster performance, the upsizing, downsizing and resizing have forced virtually all of us to change, in some cases almost daily.

Adapting to new demands is an important mechanism for both personal and organizational survival. Individuals and groups that do it well seem to be more successful than those that resist and drag their feet.

Life is about evolving and actively creating change. It is about learning how to grow with the flow when the inevitable comes our way.

---

Mark Your Calendars for 2012!

NAEP’s 91st Annual Meeting
April 1-4, 2012
Anaheim, California

Watch for more information on our Call-For-Programs and other details coming soon.
When we think of marketing procurement, the usual suspects come to mind: exhibits, vendor fairs, and glossy brochures. But what about our everyday actions? Providing excellent service, taking proactive measures with our customers, implementing new technology, and offering informative training venues are great day-to-day marketing tools.

Like most everything in life, we are defined more by our actions than our words. It’s often our approach that transforms problems into opportunities, mistakes into lessons, and obstacles into customer service. How often have you received a call from a campus customer that begins: “You may not be the person to answer this question, but I know you will steer me in the right direction.” Or: “Can I get your opinion on this before I proceed?” Or: “I’m having issues with a vendor; can you help me?” How about when you save a department thousands of dollars on a new piece of equipment and sell the old one? Or respond to someone who exceeded delegated authority by reintroducing the policy and assisting with processing the invoice? Those, my friends, are examples of marketing procurement through excellent customer service.

Let’s get personal— with our customers, that is. Truth be told, most researchers and administrators on campus are concerned with many things, but following procurement regulations isn’t at the top of their list (if on the list at all). Before we can get it included, we need to learn how their purchasing decisions are made, and who is involved in the process. Try scheduling a time to visit a department, offering assistance while learning about their world. Prior to your visit, ask the department to identify a product or service anticipated for purchase in the near future. During your visit, spend time talking with the ultimate user about the planned acquisition; help to specify it, ensuring the greatest opportunity for competition without sacrificing quality and value; and explain the procurement process that will work best.

Other ways to learn about campus needs are attending business officer meetings, sitting in on facilities meetings, and even visiting research labs. Our time is valuable; taking the amount required to learn about customers’ needs is an effective way to market procurement.

Procurement embraces new technology that streamlines the acquisition process, and we need to advertise that fact. A decade ago, most campuses implemented procurement card programs that put small-dollar purchasing authority directly into the hands of departmental customers. It was no small concern to release control and place trust in such a process. But we survived, and campuses flourished. E-procurement or e-catalog systems are now the order of the day, offering one-stop shopping to campus and
Directing purchases to our contracted vendors, saving time, effort and money. Implementing new purchasing technology demonstrates to campus that Procurement is innovative and timely. It also serves as great marketing.

Offering and providing training on how to procure goods and services is a wonderful marketing strategy. Keep it fresh, updated and available in a variety of media and venues. Simply posting policies, regulations and procedures on a website doesn’t necessarily result in educated customers.

Have you ever called to ask how to do something, only to be told to complete the training on the website? Have you then discovered that the training was written in 1999 and never updated? Did you just now pause to check your website? Yikes!

Just about every campus employee will purchase something during his/her tenure, so providing a how-to session at new employee orientation is a great way to introduce procurement. A step-by-step guide in both written and electronic format can be very helpful. Training sessions can be offered online and in-person. Keep them updated; schedule a review of documents, forms, manuals and other items at least twice a year; and make updates every time something major changes. Offering fresh, inviting and current training is an excellent means of marketing.

Every day is an opportunity. Providing great customer service, proactively engaging end-users, applying new technology, and offering informative training opportunities are some of the ways we can market our profession daily. No doubt you can think of even more ways. Have fun! Make it happen.

Marty Newman, CPPB, is the Assistant Director of Procurement at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her responsibilities include managing the purchasing card program, increased delegated procurements, small procurement orders, and master contract releases; reviewing University units that have delegated purchasing authority; and providing procurement training to campus. Email: menewman@umd.edu.

Think Green and Visit NAEP’s Sustainability Web Page Today! http://www.naepnet.org/sustain
N

AEP’s 90th Annual Meeting & Exposition in Memphis this past April brought together over 600 procurement professionals and solutions providers to confront shared challenges and best practice solutions in the home of the blues. Dynamic and interactive, this year’s meeting was replete with networking, learning, recognizing Member achievements and giving back to the community.

The highlight of the meeting is our Awards Luncheon, where we recognize top performers and achievers in our community. The Association’s highest honor, the Bert C. Ahrens Award for outstanding contributions to the procurement profession over an extended period of time, was given to Eddie Jackson, retired, from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI). Over the years Eddie was at National meetings participating as presenter, as a speaker, and once to give benediction. His advice has always been to get involved, stay involved. Over this decade he has been a shining model for RPI and NAEP. In all the duties he has accepted for the Association, he has performed them with professionalism, dedication and class. One of his most notable accomplishments and leadership endeavors was as Co-Founder of NAEP’s Supplier Diversity Institute. In 1996, Eddie served as Chair of NAEP’s 75th Anniversary, which was held in Indianapolis, the birthplace of NAEP. In 2003, Eddie was presented with the Neil D. Markee Communicator of the Year Award, and in 2004 Eddie was presented with the Supplier Diversity Advocate of the Year Award from the Upstate New York Regional Minority Purchasing Council. In 2005, he was presented with NAEP’s Distinguished Service Award. Even since his retirement from RPI, Eddie maintains regular communications and assists his many understudies towards development and growth in the procurement field. He has demonstrated a great love for the community building and collaboration in the birthplace of rock and roll.

Eddie Jackson, retired, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI).

New for 2011: Vendor Speed Dating!

This game was played using two circles of facing chairs. Exhibitors in the inner circle facing out and attendees facing the exhibitors in the outer ring of chairs. When the bell was rung, exhibitors had three minutes to introduce themselves and their company to the attendee facing them. Every three minutes, attendees moved one seat to the left and at the end of the round, exhibitors presented a prize to the attendee who was facing them. Attendees and participating vendors had a wonderful time getting to know one another and many have already expressed their hopes that this is an activity that returns to future Annual Meetings.

First-time attendees Tanya Echols and Claire Tsai meet our 90th Anniversary Keynote Speaker, New York City Fire Department Chief Richard Picciotto.

NAEP’s 2010 First Vice President Bill Harris presents Eddie Jackson (retired), Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with the prestigious Bert C. Ahrens Award.

Young Professional in Procurement Award Winner, Misty Kennedy.
procurement profession. The commitment that he has shown for all that he does, the willingness to help anyone in the organization, his tenacious drive to do everything in a professional manner, the love that he has for the Association and the work he's done are only a few of the important qualities he possesses.

It is no surprise that our highest honor goes to such a selfless and tireless friend and champion to the Association and to the procurement profession.

Our Additional 2011 Award Winners:

**Distinguished Service Award**
Stanley Behnken, C.P.M., Purchasing Manager, Carroll Community College and Denise Finn, A.P.P., CPPO, C.P.M., CPPB, Associate Director, Purchasing Division, University of Kentucky

**Professional Perspective Award**
Nicole Lamb, CPIM, Strategic Sourcing Senior Manager, University of California – San Diego for her article found in the 2010 Summer Educational Procurement Journal titled: Pathway to a Successful Bid-Evaluation Process. To view this article, go to www.apogeepublications.com/eMags/NAEP_Summer2010/flash.html#/14/.

**The Neil D. Markee Communicator of the Year Award**
Craig Passey, C.P.M., Senior Strategic Sourcing Manager, Brigham Young University

**The Bob Ashby Mentor of the Year Award**
Nancy Fulcher, C.P.M., Manager, Strategic Sourcing, University of Notre Dame and Ted Nasser, C.P.M., Assistant Director, Procurement & Contracting Services, University of Arizona

**The Young Professional in Procurement Award**
Alexandra Fuentes, Purchasing Agent, Berklee College of Music and Missty Kennedy, Procurement Manager, Auburn University

**The Nancy Tregoe Scholarship Award**
Elizabeth Lees, Director of Purchasing, Muhlenberg College

The Award of Excellence in Procurement
University of California, San Diego
University of Virginia

Last year’s charity event was so successful that we did it again! This year, we had a Build-A-Bike charity event benefiting the Ronal McDonald House Charities of Memphis.

Continued on page 14
Six teams (see photo on page 4) joined together to build bikes that will enhance the life of a sick child while competing against one another in a series of activities. What better way to network than to have fun and band together for a little healthy competition all while giving back to the community? It’s a win-win all the way around!

The six bikes were donated to the Ronald McDonald House, a program of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Memphis, which serves as a home-away-from-home for families while their child is receiving treatment for cancer or another catastrophic illness at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

Thank you to our Build-A-Bike team sponsors: Grainger, NAEP’s TAGM Region & Host Committee, Premier, VISA, and VWR.

**Do You Believe in Magic?**

Our Memphis Host Committee kicked off our meeting on Monday evening with our 90th Anniversary Host Committee Gala. Attendees were immersed in the wonder of good and evil while finding themselves surrounded by living fountains and moving vines.

**Brand New Raffle and Return of the Silent Auction**

This year our Scholarship Committee decided to try something new and sold raffle tickets for chances to win many of the items generously donated by Members and partners. We also had an area for items in a Silent Auction format. This was a fun change which brought out the competitive nature of many! All proceeds benefit the William E. Haas Memorial Scholarship Fund which awards scholarships to Members for professional development opportunities. Thanks to the generosity of our donors and attendees, this was a very successful event.

Additional photos of the Annual Meeting can be seen at www.naepevents.shutterfly.com.

These larger-than-life living vines gracefully moved around the floor providing entertainment for all in attendance. Attendees were also enchanted by the living fountain (pictured above).
Educational Procurement Journal

New attendees found "the force" in Memphis with the help of NAEP CEO, Doreen Murner (far right).

Masked by the magic of our Host Committee's 90th Anniversary Gala celebration.

We would like to thank all of our 2011 sponsors for their partnership and support!

Preparing for Your Regional Meeting?
Ordering NAEP imprinted materials has never been easier.
Check out www.cafepress.com/naeplogostore
There was a time not too long ago—except maybe for those of us born after 1980—when we all pretty much worked the same hours. We started our work day around 9:00 a.m. and finished around 5:00 p.m. Many stayed later just to get our work done; some of us may still do that.

The problem with that set schedule is that it doesn’t work for everyone. Many of us (myself included) are not morning people, while others prefer to get up while it is still dark outside (who knows why?). Many parents deal with getting children off to school, daycare, soccer games, band practice, karate class, Girl Scouts, and Cub Scouts, while still getting themselves to and from work.

Employers started to realize that something had to change or they could well lose valued employees. That is when telecommuting and alternative work schedules began. They are now in fairly common use in the workplace.

The Law School Admission Council started the practice in the 1990s. I had one co-worker who simply could not get himself up in time to make our 8:30 start. He was consistently late. He got together with our supervisor, and they decided he could start work at 9:00 instead. He was rarely late after that. I had another co-worker who was more comfortable coming in at 6:30 a.m. and leaving at 2:30 p.m. She was just an early riser. Now there are only two of 10 employees in Finance who work the normal 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. work schedule.

I was curious to see how many of you were using similar arrangements so I sent out a request to the NAEP Listserv. Apparently, a number of schools are adopting the routine. The most common alternatives, usually called flextime, are:

- Working eight nine-hour days and one eight-hour day in a two-week period, having one day off, usually either every other Friday or Monday (in addition to the two weekends);
- Working four 10-hour days each week while taking one day off (in addition to the weekend). A number of schools move to this schedule during the summer, but now some institutions offer it throughout the year.
- Varying the start and end times while still working a five-day week.

Telecommuting (working from home) is another alternative that is becoming more prevalent because many of us use computers and communication equipment to do our work. For the present, it is not being used as commonly as flextime. One colleague reported that employees may telecommute during bad weather, such as a snowstorm. Others allow it one day a week. Some of you may be thinking that it doesn’t work, but with shared servers and accessible files, it is much easier to work remotely. Of course, it is up to each employee to stay focused on the task at hand. If your department is still heavily paper-based, then telecommuting is probably not the answer.

Of course, monitoring by supervisors and fellow employees helps ensure that work is getting done and that no one is abusing the practice. Non-completion of work and complaints of unfairness can easily derail an alternative work schedule. A mature, well-functioning group should be able to decide what works best.

Many positives accompany these arrangements. Employees are likely to be happier because they can take care of errands, make appointments, and see their family more often while not having to take time off from work. They can also be on the road at off-peak times, which reduces stress while commuting and reduces emissions to the environment. Employees who are happy and valued are usually highly productive.

On balance, I think these alternative arrangements are good. Some of you may be using others that I did not mention. I would be happy to learn what they are, so please let me know.

Meanwhile, while some of you are driving to work in the dark, please know that I will be blissfully sleeping until seven.
by Bob Ashby, C.P.M., CPCM
University of Nevada, Las Vegas (retired)

In a previous article, I mused that Einstein was an idiot, that a marathon was not 26.2 miles long, and that various other “truths” may be equally suspect. And I related these musings to NAEPers who know they need—but just haven’t gotten around to it—to increase their education in order to compete in today’s job market.

My recent musings have been about signs I’ve recently encountered.

The first sign said “Uneducated Equals Unemployed.” This may not have been true during Nevada’s construction and tourism booms, but it is looking truer in this current downturn. The sign was displayed at a student organized rally against the State of Nevada’s declaration to help balance its multibillion dollar budget shortfall by cutting higher education funding an additional 29 percent over the 20 percent reduction imposed the last two years. Axing this amount would cut 414 budget positions and close 24 degree programs. The alternative would be to raise tuition 73 percent, following a 28 percent increase just two years ago. This is scary, since a state must have trained and educated residents in order to attract more business. It is also scary since we in NAEP support the missions of our schools. If that mission is downsized, we will be as well! And the less educated will be the first to go.

The second sign I saw was “Life is a hill, get over it.” I really like that one because I, too, often hear people say they cannot get a degree or professional certification because “life gets in the way.” Yes, our families, children, social activities, and other factors do get in the way, but there will never be a time in our lives when we do not have other issues to manage. If you’re bumping against that hill, read the first sign again.

The second sign I saw was “Life is a hill, get over it.” I really like that one because I, too, often hear people say they cannot get a degree or professional certification because “life gets in the way.”

“What want an education? Find a mentor.” This may be my favorite. Jessie Suesue, a Buyer at the American Samoa Community College in Pago Pago contacted me for guidance about obtaining a professional certification. I determined that Jessie was not eligible to test for the Certified Professional in Supply Management (CPSM) due to a lack of a college degree, however she could test for the Certified Public Purchasing Buyer (CPPB) certification through the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP). I am not a certified NIGP Instructor, so I introduced her to Carol Hodes, NIGP Director of Education, for the necessary guidance. I started out as a mentor, recognized my limitations, and searched out a better-matched mentor. An NAEP strong point is that one person may not always have the answer but he/she knows someone who does. Find your mentor; improve your educational value.

This next one was not a sign but, rather, an observation. In Lewis Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland is the following dialogue: “Cheshire Puss,” Alice began, “would you tell me please which way I ought to go?” “That depends a great deal on where you want to go to,” said the cat. “I don’t much care where,” said Alice. “Then it doesn’t matter which way you go,” said the cat. This advice strongly applies in today’s world. Do you want to progress, or just keep your job? You can’t answer that without first determining what you want out of this profession and your supply management career. Clearly, you cannot follow your map until you first draw it up. And that map must include a way to increase your education. Don’t believe it? Reread the first sign.

And, last, is a sign that first appeared in the radical counterculture of the 1960s. Bob Dylan said: “What is money? A man is a success if he gets up in the morning and goes to bed at night and in between does what he wants to do.” If we want to be a success in this profession, we will recognize supply management as our chosen career, and if we truly want a career instead of a job, we will search for the positive (i.e., opportunities), instead of wallowing in the negative (i.e., fear of downsizing). To do that, we must prepare ourselves educationally to recognize, capture, and use those opportunities. The alternative? Reread the first sign.

What are you waiting for? Contact Bob Ashby, C.P.M., CPCM, at ashbybob@embarqmail.com to discuss the signs in your future.

Bob Ashby, C.P.M., CPCM.

is retired from his position as
Director of Purchasing and Contracts for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he also served as an Adjunct Professor in the Management Department. Bob has been active in NAEP since 1997. In 2006, he received NAEP’s Distinguished Service Award, and in 2008, he won the newly established Mentor of the Year Award. NAEP renamed the award in his honor to the Bob Ashby Mentor of the Year Award in 2009. Email: ashbybob@embarqmail.com.
You loved reading about stupid things I’ve said at work. I’ve expanded the theme… to stupid actions.

An Antidote Anecdote

Our Purchasing Department was across the hall from the Housing Department, whose director was fond of practical jokes. One day as I was speaking with the receptionist, her smart aleck boss shot a rubber band at me. It missed, instead hitting a plant on her desk and slicing off a section of a leaf.

Thinking I’d be funny, I picked up the leaf clipping and ate it! Immediately, my throat began burning as it started swelling. “Oh my gosh,” I thought, “I’ve poisoned myself!” At once, I weighed two options, either of which was potentially lethal. Without medical help, I could die. Or, I could get help, explain what happened and die of embarrassment.

If you guessed that I chose to go solo, you are correct. Running downstairs to a vending machine, I pumped in all the cash I had and bought as many cartons of milk as I could (when you’re in Purchasing, you think all problems can be solved via acquisition). I drank all the milk as fast as I could. Amazingly, the burning and swelling subsided. Sheepishly slinking back to my office, I closed the door and marveled that a smart guy like me nearly sacrificed himself for a cheap laugh.

Pain Killers

I worked in an office with 100 people on the floor (actually some were in chairs). Our employer kept a supply of OTC tablets for employees—aspirin, antacid—common stuff; no poisonous plant antidotes or do-it-yourself surgical instruments.

Employees were appreciative and felt they were able to feel better and remain at work for the day.

So, I duplicated the same first aid supplies in my BYU office. Ten years later, we received an email announcing that the OTC medicine had been removed due to liability concerns.

Really? What Happened to Common Sense?

Three boxes of mild painkillers constitute a risk management nightmare? (I guess medical marijuana will be out of the question.) If our meager supply cannot be tolerated, my local pharmacy better sweep its shelves, and if someone might be allergic to aspirin, what about food allergies? Close the cafeteria and all food outlets!

I remember a guy who once caught his tie in the paper shredder. The tie has been framed and hung above the shredder. It’s humor, not a safety warning. We shouldn’t have framed it. We should have forever banned ties from campus (I actually like that one).

Folding a purchase order with one hand while holding a phone with the other, I received a nasty paper cut. Farewell to the half million reams we use each year! We can eliminate the cost of paper and bandages.

When my son was seven, not paying attention, he walked into a glass panel next to a door in our fine arts center. The potential hazard demands we remove all glass, right? He had just had a hearing check at school indicating a possible concern. He looked at me and said, “I knew I had hearing problems, Dad. I didn’t know I had a seeing problem too!” So cute: he grew up to be a door manufacturer. (No, it’s true.)

A transfer employee from Hawaii slipped on the steps after a snowstorm. We should eliminate concrete and prohibit snow by all of us moving to the fiftieth state. “Attention students. Let me explain why your class is now meeting in a tent (made out of antimicrobial bamboo fiber grown on campus now that we have moved to a warmer climate).”

Okay. All suggestions are in jest to make a point. We cannot protect people from themselves. But wait. I just noticed there are no plants in my windowless office! That’s why I’m still alive to write this column.

Craig Passey, C.P.M., has enjoyed a 30-year career in purchasing and travel for Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, and for the LDS Church in Salt Lake City. His writing and teaching include assignments in both international and domestic procurement. He has a BS in financial planning and counseling, with a minor in international relations from BYU. He is the recipient of NAEP’s 2010 Neil D. Markee Communicator of the Year Award. Email: craig_passey@byu.edu.
Meet us in St. Louis!

Foundation, Professional and Senior Professional Academies

Attend with your team. Grow as a team.

August 15th – 16th

All 3 academies co-located at the
Ritz Carlton Hotel in St. Louis, MO

“Great topics. Great Presentations.”

“The Senior Professional is an excellent source of knowledge… The content was great!”

“I loved this class! The topics were exactly what I was looking for and being able to ask questions was priceless! The topics were relevant; the delivery was awesome and entertaining. I also loved that the discussion leaders encouraged networking and made themselves available for additional questions and advice…”

Registration is NOW OPEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Academy</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier I</td>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>$625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier II</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>$825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier III</td>
<td>Senior Professional</td>
<td>$825</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Up to 16 hours of continuing education credits will be granted for each of the academies.

For more information or to Register go to www.naepnet.org
looking for a more efficient way to get the products & services needed to run your school?

begin streamlining your procurement process today with MSC

✓ Over 500,000 facility maintenance, repair and metalworking products
✓ Order by 8PM ET - get it next day* at no additional cost*
✓ Customizable inventory replenishment programs
✓ Safe, clean and green campus solutions
✓ 24/7 online account management at mscdirect.com

For information on our many GSA, State & Education contracts
go to mscdirect.com/education.htm or call 800.645.7270