

NFPA Observers
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NFPA 2007 Annual Convention Report

“Soakin’ it up in Tampa Bay!” That was the theme for the 2007 annual NFPA convention held in Tampa this year. PACO Executive Board Members Trina Hayes and Karen Pierson represented our organization as observers. Even though we were not voting delegates, the entire policy meeting was exciting and very interesting (think of the presidential nomination conventions). The room was set up for the two (2) delegates from each Paralegal Association designated by state, and then there were the “observers” designated tables. A detailed report to PACO members about the convention will be published in the Winter edition of The Cimator.

The convention was well attended with forty-five (45) credentialed associations, including the newly formed New York City Paralegal Association. The Navy Legalmen Association did a special “tear-jerking” presentation to Lori Thompson, member of the National Capital Area Paralegal Association, for her work in coordinating with the various Paralegal Associations in sending 400 care packages to our men and women serving in the Navy. A special thank you to Lori and the Associations from the Admiral was read by Stephen S. Distefano LNCM (SW/AW), USN Command Master Chief Naval Legal Service Command & Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Judge Advocate General of the Navy.

The Navy Legalmen and Military Outreach Program was started in December 2006 as a partnership between NFPA affiliated-member programs and the Navy Legalmen Association and provides the opportunity for members of the NFPA paralegal community to show support of those paralegals who are away from home in the service of our country. The goal is to provide support and bring comfort along with information and news regarding the civilian paralegal profession to our military counterparts serving overseas. Packages are sent bi-monthly and include a variety of items, including hygiene products, snacks, puzzles, books, games and personal cards and notes.

The room was set up for the two (2) delegates from each Paralegal Association designated by state, and then there were the “observers” designated tables. The head table had the NFPA president, parliamentarian, secretary, time keeper, etc. Here is a brief breakdown of the two (2) days we were in attendance:

Friday, October 19, 2007.

- Region III (PACO falls under) meeting hosted by Director Mary J. McKay, RP, CLA of the Tampa Bay Paralegal Association;
 - Many associations discussed their monthly GM meetings;
 - Encourage members to use the vendors (sustaining members) products/services;

- One association has their vendor pay \$1500 + sign a contract for the entire year and the vendor is guaranteed the GM each month;
- Some association's vendors give a door prize at year end to the member who attends every GM;
- Some associations vendors write articles for their newsletter;
- Some vendors have issues regarding not having access to the member's e-mail; most associations do not give their vendors the members e-mail info;
- Association reports were distributed from Cleveland Association of Paralegals; Georgia Association of Paralegals, Inc.; Greater Lexington Paralegal Association; Indiana Paralegal Association; Memphis Paralegal Association; Michiana Paralegal Association, Inc.; Middle Tennessee Paralegal Association; Northeast Indiana Paralegal Association; Palmetto Paralegal Association; Paralegal Association of Central Ohio (PACO); and Tampa Bay Paralegal Association.
- First timers meeting:
 - Distributed "Parliamentary Procedure – a matter of order" and "First Timer's Manual for NFPA Conventions"
 - There are very defined parliamentary procedures for the policy meeting;
 - Delegates need to have read and understand all the bylaw resolutions, agenda topics and administrative topics before arriving at the convention (after all, the delegate votes how their respective association has directed);
 - Dress code is business attire, including Sunday;
 - Make sure either the Primary or Secondary is always at the table and informed on the current discussion in order to vote;
 - There is a process in place if you don't understand an issue, need clarification, speaking at the microphone, etc.
 - There is a checklist so you won't forget anything. There are more "dos" and "don'ts" too numerous to list.

Saturday, October 20, 2007.

- Policy meeting. The official roll call was forty-five credentialed associations in attendance. There were eight (8) agenda topics to be discussed from 8 AM – 5 PM. Only three (3) actually were voted on and passed during that time frame:
 - PACE Registered Paralegal – Creation of "Emeritus" status;
 - After much discussion/amendments, resolution 07-02 passed 43-2.
 - Associate membership for International Paralegal Associations.
 - After much discussion/amendments, resolution 07-03 passed 42-3.
 - As Hoc Committee to study Access to Legal services.
 - After much discussion/amendments, passed with majority vote.
 - Model Plan for Paralegal Regulation (Topic #4) and Bylaws Definition of "Practicing Paralegal" (Topic #8).
 - Went into Caucus at 8:30 PM on Saturday night; which would then be discussed and voted on Sunday morning.

- Revised Model Plan for Paralegal Licensure (Topic #5); Education Standard for Regulation Proposal (Topic #6); and Expansion of Paralegal Utilization Standard for Regulation Proposal (Topic #7).
 - These agenda topics are contingent upon Topic #4

The 2008 NFPA Annual Convention will be hosted by the Arkansas Paralegal Association.

Individual Member Benefits from NFPA

- American Society of Notaries (www.notaries.org) receive discounts on products/services;
- Career Opportunities – click on “career center” on the NFPA home page to search for job opportunities and post your resume, etc.
- Credit Union – Community America Credit Union is a non-profit; Enjoy lower loan rates, high savings, etc. Call (800) 892-7957 to sign up for membership;
- Dental, Vision, Hearing Aids & Prescription Drugs – Universal Health Systems has partnered with NFPA to offer our members discounts at a cost of \$69/year or \$129/year depending on the types of services needed. This is not insurance, but a discount program. Call Judi Kotrola at (800) 800-8304 ext. 626;
- DHL Express (formerly Airborne) – DHL Express will provide discount of up to 40% for overnight delivery services. Call (800) 636-2377, 8 AM – 7 PM, EST or log onto www.membersales.com or look at NFPA’s home page;
- ExecuTrain Virtual Campus – members may purchase online training in computer software, hardware and business skills. Three cost-effective libraries are available to choose from;
- Corporate Gifts, Flowers, Gourmet Gift Baskets – members can receive 10% discount; Call (800) 356-9377 and mention the promotion code “NFPA” or www.1800flowers.com and enter code “NFPA” under special offers during checkout;
- Publications – members may order certain publications which provide information on current NFPA activities at a discount rate. Also a subscription to the National Paralegal Reporter is automatically mailed to members bi-monthly;
- National Notary Association – visit www.nationalnotary.org and click on the NFPA logo to join the NNA membership and receive discounts on products/services. Our number is A19105;
- Car Rental Discounts – special rates to our members. **Hertz** (800) 654-2210 and provide NFPA’s discount ID-CDP #336599. Also **Alamo** (800) 327-9633 and provide NFPA’s discount ID-BY 218829. At least 24 hours advanced notice is required to receive these discounts;
- Internet Connection – members can view publications, join list serves, chat rooms, etc.
- Insurance Benefits – Seabury & Smith is offering discounted insurance rates to NFPA members for disability income, group term life, major medical, etc. Visit <http://NFP.healthinsurance.com> or cusv@ahww.com for more details;

- Hotel Reservations – members can receive up to 65% off regular hotel rates in certain cities. Call (800) 964-6835 or www.hoteldiscount.com and identify yourself as a NFPA member to receive the discount;
- Continuing Legal Education – discounts are provided for various courses offering CLE credits. Look at NFPA’s home page and click on “CLE;” and
- Executive Wireless, Inc – they have teamed up with NFPA to bring you the best wireless data and voice solutions at members-only discounts. All the best wireless solutions for mobile legal professional and their families, including BlackBerry, GoodLink, Palm and more. Go to the NFPA website and click on the BlackBerry li0144nk.