

PA Council/Local Association Conference Call
Thursday, December 17, 2009
12:00 Noon

This month we had some good discussion regarding members and perspective members in relation to our monthly gatherings.

A big problem we have is getting people to our meetings – not just new members, but the seasoned ones as well. At our meetings is where we get a chance to network and become educated on matters that affect both our jobs and our personal lives. But we also have to realize that our members may be overwhelmed with so many responsibilities for both job and family...and getting to that meeting falls down the list of priorities.

Many members don't want to be "bugged" about coming to a meeting just to increase our numbers in attendance. But everyone needs to know that they matter and are missed. So a suggestion to accomplish both is to provide what everyone really wants and needs – and that is the warm and fuzzy feeling.

If a member was a fairly regular attendee at your meetings but has not been able to make it for the last 2 or 3 months, send a short hand-written note just to let them know they've been missed; inquire if everything is alright/are they OK; and let them know you look forward to seeing them when it is convenient for them. No pressure – just warm and fuzzy.

Same goes for a new member that signed up but has not attended any meetings....you just want to let them know that you realized that you have not seen them and are looking forward to getting to know them.

In our conversation it was thought that if the note came from the local president it would make a much bigger impact (the president missed me??). And regular follow ups should be done if you still don't see that person. If our members are made to feel a part of a second family – the local NAIW family – they are more apt to try to come to meetings, if nothing more than to escape the rest of the crazy world and bond with those that make us feel good inside. The added benefit is that they also have the opportunity to become educated by the speakers and find out what is happening in the local association.

Our president from the Main Line association, Terrye Mullin, also has a great way to not only get members interested in coming to meetings but also to extend their socialization beyond those members with whom they usually sit with at meetings. Using President Wilson's Bridge Builder challenge form, her association works on one of the listed activities every meeting....but they don't know what they will be doing until they arrive. For example, one of the activities is to collect 5 business cards at a meeting....so everyone was instructed to bring business cards. And Terrye takes it one step further by helping to make introductions and moving people's seats so that they are sitting – and get to know – other members at a meeting.

By the time this term is over, all of the Main Line members will not only have successfully earned the required 45 points to become recognized as one of President Wilson's Bridge Builders, but they will also have created a much more cohesive association. Good work, Terrye and IWML!

Do these things take an extra effort? Absolutely! But is it a big effort – and will the association benefit from them? Big effort – No! Big benefit - most certainly! If we want certain results, we need to work to find the things that will generate those results. If we can't try something different or try small changes, then we can't expect our membership to grow or prosper.

During the discussion we had a request from Laurel Highlands' president, Matt Barbera – not related directly to membership at meetings. His association is looking for some good ideas for fundraising. The LHIP association is about the same size as many of the rest of us right now – around 24 members. And like many associations, they have a number of members that do not have employer financial support.

I know a number of associations use a specific month lottery ticket as their main fundraiser. That info has been passed along to Matt. And if anyone has any other ideas that have worked well for them, would you please contact Matt direct:

mbarbera@tuscano.com

I would appreciate if you would copy me on the idea correspondence as well so that I can put all ideas together for a future conference call I hope to have regarding fundraising

Thanks to everyone that attended December's call for bringing your questions and ideaswith all that is going on in that month I know it can be hard to find time to do just one more thing!

NEXT CONFERENCE CALL

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21 @ NOON

**TOPIC: WEBSITE TECHNOLOGY
(state - local - use of website - website issues)**

Call co-hosted by our PA Council Technology Chair, Sue Shober

Please be sure to invite your association's technology chair to join the call

**Dial-in number: 800-908-2848
Enter # 150022 when prompted**

P.S. I am still looking for volunteers for a committee regarding council nominating committee issues that I requested in my November call notes.