



NALTEA

The National Association of Land
Title Examiners and Abstractors

Message from the President

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Please visit our website at:
www.naltea.org

Pat Scott, President
Email: president@naltea.org

A year ago this month, I wondered aloud on this page, whether we had experienced a spark to greater activity within NALTEA. With that, I was referring to local NALTEA-sponsored events that would bring abstractors together throughout the year – mini-conferences, if you will, where members could become qualified to present our certification exam review to other members who are preparing to become NALTEA Certified Abstractors. Time allowing, the local abstractors could discuss the challenges unique to their regions, and exchange ideas on how to overcome them and prosper. Another benefit to the local events is the opportunity to showcase our organization to local abstractors who have yet to join us.

Since that time, a second event was held in Illinois, and one is planned for Nashville, TN in August. I applaud the participants in those events, and I continue to believe in their value. And, while the participation in these events has been modest, in comparison to our hopes, I continue in the belief that increased local participation can bring us a long way toward realizing our goals.

As an organization, we tend to make impressive progress when our members come together as a group, face to face, to discuss our industry, get to know each other, and toss around ideas. But our national conference comes around only once each year. How much more progress could we make if we had groups of local abstractors getting together year-round?

Many NALTEA members are business owners. Others have earned top management positions within the industry. To accomplish this requires one to possess leadership qualities – the ability to take initiative and to get things done. Thus, there is no question in my mind that the ability is within our numbers to greatly expand our efforts, and thereby our influence within the greater real estate industry.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated, talented group of people on our committees, our board of directors, and as officers of NALTEA. I am proud to be associated with every one of them. We need more like them on both the local and national levels. The time is now to look within, and decide whether we have the desire and the ability to lead and grow our association. Locally, that means planning NALTEA-sponsored events. On a national level, it means making the decision to run for a seat on the board of directors. This October, we will have three seats up for election. One of those seats will be wide open, with no incumbent seeking to retain it. It's an excellent opportunity for your ideas to become policy.

If you are interested in holding a local, NALTEA-sponsored event, or if you are interested in running for a board position, please send a note to info@naltea.org. Our success depends on the ideas and energy provided by our members.

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Board of Directors Update

Pat Scott

pxs@oconnortitle.com

This is a summary of the meeting of the NALTEA Board of Directors on May 16, 2011. The meeting was held via telephone conference.

Present at the meeting were board members Debi Merrill, Jill Kissell, and Pat Scott, Secretary Tamikio Veasley, and Vice President Doug Gallant.

Following brief committee reports from those board members present, the board continued discussion of membership categories and certification requirements. At present, any member who wishes to be certified must apply for membership apart and separate from any Corporate/Independent membership, if he or she is not the principal on the Corporate/Independent membership. The board members and officers present appear now to favor eliminating that requirement and, instead, initiating a small annual fee charged to all certified members to cover the tracking and maintenance of the designations. The Education Committee chairperson, Debi Merrill, agreed to submit a proposal regarding changes to certification requirements at the next board meeting.

Discussion next focused on conference speakers. Several of our board members and officers have been in contact with potential presenters, and we expect to soon be able to begin confirming and forming the agenda for the October conference.

We have noted an increase in membership from the oil and gas industry. The board is considering ways in which NALTEA can best benefit our public records professionals working in oil and gas, and also how the inclusion of those members may, in turn, benefit our members who tend toward the lending and surface land sale niches.

The board next held a lengthy discussion of the growing number of customers requiring vendor agreements.



As the NALTEA membership is made up of many without easy or affordable access to the advice of attorneys, the board agreed to look into the possibility of obtaining the opinion of a real estate attorney with regard to any cautionary steps our members might employ when considering such agreements. The members present also agreed that the subject might be a good one for the October conference.

Debi Merrill presented cost figures for the planned August 20th meet and greet in Nashville, TN. The meet and greet will immediately follow the Old Republic Title conference at the same location. Debi will attend the Old Republic conference on behalf of NALTEA, and she will encourage any attendees, planning to remain at the location after the conference, to stop by our meet and greet the next day.

Doug Gallant has been in contact with an E&O insurance company regarding discounted rates for NALTEA certified abstractors. The discussion is in the early stages, and we hope to have good news to report on the subject soon.

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, June 20, 2011. And with that, this meeting was adjourned.

Membership Committee Update

NALTEA proudly welcomes our newest members:

Daniel G. Khalil

Meghan Handy

Novy R. Woolbright, Jr.

Patricia Keeling

Jacqueline Battle of Public Research, Inc.

Cathy M. Jewell

Lesa Gilbert of Gilbert Mapping and Abstracting Services

NALTEA now has **124** active members.

The organization welcomes input from the membership. You can contact the board members or the various committee chairpersons at the e-mail addresses found on the NALTEA website at www.naltea.org.

Quality Clients Make you a Better Searcher, and Vice-Versa

David Pelligrinelli
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Selecting good clients is not just about making sure you get paid. Cultivating a collection of excellent clients for your abstracting business also increases your ability to be an extraordinary abstractor.

1. Higher quality search orders. A better class of client will have a higher proportion of meaningful projects for you to work on. You may have a few current owner searches mixed in, but you will see more 50 and 60 year projects and a few light commercial searches. In addition, a better client will want thorough results including probate and civil court records and realize that these are important elements of a search which should not be shortcut

2. Better communication. A professional client will be more likely to send orders to you with complete information, not requiring you to locate a property or verify which parcel is the subject property. You will be able to spend less time chasing administrative issues and more time actually performing searches. Your skills as an expert abstractor will deteriorate if you are spending all day dealing with superficial issues.

3. Client knowledge. Professional clients will have knowledge of the title industry and what goes into a search. Your conversations will be less likely to be about explaining what a legal description is, and more likely to be about something more complex and stimulating. These deeper conversations exercise the skills and knowledge you have as an abstractor and increase the ability level. (If Einstein was teaching first grade math all day he would not have as many extraordinary accomplishments)

4. Organization. A well run company will have their orders organized with efficient dispatching. Fewer orders will be "Urgent Rush" jobs because they have their stuff together. Their flow pipeline will be managed in a way to give you the time to perform a search properly and correctly the first time. Last minute changes will be less likely.

5. Guilt by association. If 90% of your clients are professional high quality clients, then the inferior ones will stand out more prominently. It will be easier to notice the toxic clients when they are the exception.

By the same logic if most of your clients are unprofessional organizations who only scramble to rush last minute orders for thin searches, it might become hard for you to actually engage with a substantial client when they come along.

Of course the better searcher you are the easier it will be to attract quality clients, so it is a self-fulfilling cycle.

It is hard to imagine that any client is not worth having in the current economic environment. However, revenue does not always mean profit, especially when long term effects are taken into account.

Nashville Meet & Greet

Debi Merrill
Email: sqi@charter.net

A Nashville Meet & Greet is in the works. The weekend is planned for August 19 and 20th, to coincide with Old Republic Title's Annual Tennessee Agent's Seminar. NALTEA will have a booth at Old Republic's event on Friday, August 19th, to promote a better understanding of today's title examining process. On Saturday, Aug 20, attendees will have the opportunity to meet and talk to some of NALTEA's Board members. The NALTEA Review class will be featured, along with a presentation by Dave Pelligrinelli on Non-Traditional Title Searches. The Certification Exam will be made available for those interested in becoming certified.

The event will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton, downtown Nashville, with rooms available. The event would run from 8:00 - 4:00, at a cost of \$50 per person, including breakfast. The exam and review book could be purchased, if desired.

Dave's topic of Non-traditional searching will suggest methods for abstractors to develop additional lines of business to increase income and secure a diverse client base.

If this is something you are interested in, please let Debi Merrill (sqi@charter.net), or any NALTEA board member know. Final arrangements will not be completed until we know there **IS** an interest in such.