



Association News

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State Chapter News and Update
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Are You Ready to Be in the "Mainstream?"

In almost 30 years in this business, I have spent considerable time explaining to those outside of my world what I do at work. Ordinary people don't do what we do, don't know what we know, and most don't want to. Now I am used to it but remember wondering, "What does that say about us?" No surprise you rarely see the accountant cast in a favorable light in the media or the movies. Things seem to be changing; maybe it's the economy, the recent frauds of epic proportions, or the scandal of the financial markets' stumbles with derivative contracts and values of investment portfolios. Suddenly what we do is in the news almost daily.

By nature we are not a "publicity-seeking" profession; now we have a chance to be of service and an opportunity not to be missed! Are you taking full advantage? Some of your colleagues are. Hubert Klein and Ed Heben, presidents of our New Jersey and New York Chapters, are promoting the heck out of their upcoming Forensic Accounting Conference. Hubert's e-mails with bold-face headlines from mainstream periodicals are waiting in my inbox weekly, I'm getting excited. The lineup of speakers looks exceptional and registrations are coming in beyond expectations. If you are in the region, you might want to drop in. Some state chapters are actively looking for ways to extend that brand and reach the market of users.

Our cousins at the IBA have tapped into the new interest in our field as well. See their "Free Open House" for a business opportunity pitched toward bankers, real estate professionals, and business leaders who "must make sense of the changing rules and new challenges business struggle with to retain value." Suddenly we have become the people with answers. Let's seize the moment.

Congress and American Association Day—promoting our profession—At the invitation of the American Society of Association Executives, I participated in the annual "Fly In" to Washington, DC. The purpose of the trip was to educate our Congress on the value of associations to the American economy and as a source for information to legislators about any topic they might be researching. We also took time to remind them of how vitally important business meetings are to the members we represent, as a means of education as well as a mechanism for recognition and reward.

It was fascinating to spend a day on Capitol Hill and meet the legislative staff. These young people do the legwork for those who construct our laws. While I could write pages on the observations of the day, I want to leave you with a few thoughts. In preparing for the trip, we were advised to bring some "promotional materials" about our organization and industry—something short and succinct. Since no such tool existed I created a primitive "media kit" and it appears that out of this will come some new marketing material prepared in collaboration with Dave Dix and Doug Kirchner, our PR and marketing gurus. Version one is now on the Chapter Presidents *Backpack* page and the final version will be available once the gurus do their magic. I inserted some magazine articles by our members that I thought were timely and relevant. These came from Dave Dix and the Press Room on www.NACVA.com/Press/p_Press_Room.asp and are available to you for your use as well. It would be great if you had authored a timely article to include in the marketing package but until you do, use the good work and reputation of your colleagues. There is a great organization of talented people behind you to leverage. It was a struggle to put that "elevator speech" together. How do you put this work into a "sound bite?" For now, I'm using "NACVA—We Establish, Build, Protect and Defend Value™."

Overall the reception was good, walking the halls of the congressional office buildings was a thrill, yielded some great conversation, and I had a lot of practice explaining what we do. Meeting executives from other professional and trade organizations was an added benefit. The topics that were easy conversation starters were "exit planning" and fraud; additionally, the accreditation of the CVA and AVA by the National Commission on Certifying Agencies (NCCA) is meaningful to this audience and should be when you speak to potential clients (who may not know much about your craft). Not only do we benefit from the value of membership (see *Association News Q1-2009*) but the NACVA brand distinguishes us at a time of great interest—let's get better at telling our story!

For any of you interested in developing an advocacy effort, I have posted the materials sent in advance of the Capitol Hill visit on the "Outreach" page on *Backpack*. The topics were of general interest to small business and association members. The Small Business Choice Act (affordable health insurance), the importance of meetings, the value of associations, and general guidelines for the visit. As important as the topics were, the format of these materials was just as enlightening, from the executive summary with strong visuals to explain the concepts, to Topical Q&As, to detailed "backgrounder" pieces. The importance of being prepared and having a tool for the purpose was clear. Experienced advocates gave us tips in preparation that transfer to our business lives: Present yourself as a normal, helpful person; establish some affinity with your audience; know the good things that your organization/company does for society/the audience; be a resource for information. Excellent advice as we plan more chapter outreach activities. To support you we are developing exhibitor tools to share with Chapters as they discover new ways to spread the word of our profession. For those of you not familiar with the "Backpack," you can e-mail requests to SimoneH1@NACVA.com.

The programs for the **tri-annual chapter meetings** are posted on NACVA's website at http://www.nacva.com/association/State_Chapter.asp. Presidents, please take a moment to consider them for your state's activities and get your chapter meetings on the national calendar. Send an e-mail to NACVA's Executive Director, Pam Bailey at PamB1@NACVA.com and give her the dates you plan to hold your Chapter meetings. She will then post them on the national calendar for all to see.

Planning for the **Annual Consultants' Conference** has been in full swing; it's time to make some travel arrangements if you are going to Boston. As usual, the program is timely and gives many choices for us to enjoy. Kudos to the Conference Planning Committee and staff at headquarters. I look forward to seeing all of you in Boston; you won't want to miss it.

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Local state chapter events provide members valuable opportunities to: (1) promote CVAs, AVAs, CFFAs, and NACVA within the community, (2) create a platform to network and develop mentoring relationships with other members, (3) deliver relevant industry-related information and educate members on the range of support available as benefits of membership, and, (4) receive economical CPE on timely and relevant topics pertinent to valuation and litigation forensic services.

I encourage NACVA members to take advantage of these opportunities, sharing ideas and educating one another on current issues facing the business

valuation, litigation, and financial forensics/trust consulting communities. To help facilitate and address such issues, NACVA provides presentation materials for three half-day state chapter meetings each year on topics of current interest.

Contact your local state chapter president to let him/her know of your interest in attending a meeting, being a presenter, or assisting in preparing the materials for a future meeting.