

May 2009

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In my last message to you I discussed the challenges our association is faced with, and my commitment to keep you informed..

Now that the first quarter of the 2009 Board's activities are behind us, you need to know it has been rough going. We had a heated debate over the conference financial procedures, and as a regrettable result we lost two very talented board members, Jill Turman and Kate Dinneen. You may well be asking, "What the heck is going on here?"

Our current Conference Manual was first adopted in 1994 and was last updated in 2003. This includes the conference financial procedures but fails to fully comply with our bylaws or the way that conferences are run currently. At the November Board meeting the conference committee was authorized by a unanimous vote to open a 2010 conference checking account. This has been a past practice for many years and is in line with the old Conference manual. However, Linda Tanner, our Treasurer, questioned the procedure, and pointed out that it may not comply with the bylaws. Our pro-bono attorney was contacted for an opinion, and the bottom line is that the Treasurer and the ABANA President (as backup) are the only signatories permitted under our bylaws.

Now for some good news – your ABANA Board has revised the conference financial procedure and it was adopted by a majority vote. This newly revised procedure complies with the ABANA bylaws and places the ABANA Conference finances under the control of the Treasurer, as it should be.

New leadership for the 2010 Conference in Memphis has been appointed. Lance Davis and David Hutchison, volunteered and are doing a great job picking up where the past conference committee left off. We will soon announce the list of demonstrators and program activities. Lance and David, along with committee member Paul Boulay, are working on fine-tuning the budget to keep the cost of attending low and still produce a great conference focused on forging.

One more point of good news is that several ABANA Affiliates and many individual members have donated funds to the conference seed money account. My hat is off to these folks and they deserve a very special "Thank You." I won't reveal who these Affiliates are just yet; it would spoil the surprise we have in store for recognizing their efforts. Also note that additional sponsorship opportunities are available. These funds will allow for expenses to be covered prior to opening up conference registration .

Our confidence is high and the excitement is building! The 2010 ABANA Conference in Memphis, June 2nd through June 6th, promises to be "ABANA's Greatest Hits". Stay tuned for more announcements posted on the ABANA web site and Constant Contact emails.

I'd like to welcome Andy Blair from Stevensville, Montana, to the Board. Andy is an active member of Northern Rockies Blacksmith Association. He will serve out the remainder of Kate Dinneen's term. Andy will chair the Bylaws Committee. You can find his contact information on the ABANA web site under ABANA Business, Board of Directors.

Jack Parks of Piedmont, South Dakota has also joined the board to serve during the last few months of Jill Terman's term. Jack is eager to help out with the conference and will be on the ballot for the Board this summer.

If you have an interest in making a difference, and you have some time and talent, along with a commitment to ABANA's future, we need volunteers in a number of areas. We're also

seeking a Trustee for the Education Endowment Trust. This position was vacated when Len Ledet was appointed to the board.

Considering running for the Board? Election deadlines are coming up, candidate statements for publication are due by June 15th. All you need are the signatures from 10 members in good standing and a short statement of your interest and background.

Finally, please feel free to contact any board member with concerns, questions, and suggestions.

For Love of the Craft,

Rome H. Hutchings, ABANA President