

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

You and NEHA's Strategic Planning Process

...John M. Barry, Ph.D.

Next month you will again have the opportunity to join in with the strategic planning process for NEHA. But before you go out and say, "Hey, this is something new!" let me give you a bit of retrospective knowledge as to how NEHA has evolved and how this evolutionary trend has produced the organizational structure and planning process you see today.

Keep in mind that NEHA actually has had a form of the strategic planning process for some 10 years, and during this time there has been a clear direction, although the face of NEHA has been changing. Prior to and during the early 1980s, the organization had no central focus or support for a mission to which all could agree. There were serious financial problems, membership was declining, and the actual systems to run the organization were not effective. During the mid-1980s there was an effort to improve both the quality and quantity of NEHA products, an effort to manage the association like a business and actually to adopt a mission statement which acknowledged the individual member. Goals and objectives were adopted by the Executive Committee (now known as the Board of Directors), and programs and products strengthened from top to bottom. During this same time, the association was generally driven by the affiliate presidents, who basically had no knowledge of day-to-day activities of the association and the needs of the individual member, and as a result, the association tended to look to blue sky ideals instead of the needs of the individual member.

In the late 1980s, because of the individual and cumulative commitments of elected officers and the Executive Director, NEHA continued to grow and became more visible in policy-making decisions at the federal level, financial growth continued, and a business philosophy was adopted. Because of the strong leadership of the Executive Committee and its commitment to the or-

ganization, a change in the Constitution and Bylaws (now known as the Articles of Incorporation) was proposed to where the true governance of the organization would be done by the elected officers, and the Council of Delegates would take a more active part in the strategic planning process. The overall effect was to clearly stipulate that NEHA was rooted in its individual members and was to be a service to its individual dues-paying members. I might mention that this change was approved in overwhelming fashion on the spring ballot!

Along with this change came the Vision Statement that focused on creating an image for NEHA as one of advancing its individual members, and the organization began to move away from top-down influence to bottom-up shaping. This overall change has culminated with the advent of the current strategic planning process. At the Orlando AEC we saw, for the first time, affiliate delegates join together in a strategic planning process based on benefits to the individual member and to the organization as a whole. Now this information process is in full swing. The AEC has been re-engineered from the bottom up, and efforts are being fine-tuned on how to use bottom-up information to set NEHA's future goals.

This is the process you will see again in Ft. Worth. There will be ample time for affiliate delegates to voice concerns that have been relayed to them from individual NEHA members. There will also be time for the individual member to be heard on topics such as professional growth, educational and career advancement, mutual support, and the future direction that the organization should take.

We will need to look at developing new "hard core" product lines such as professional credentials, publications, educational meetings, employment assistance, and benefits. We will need to examine "soft core" activities such as networking, position

taking and resolutions, support for state credentialing programs, international involvement, and professional ethics.

Begin now to think what you would like your professional organization to look like. Plan to be in Ft. Worth and express your individual ideas for the future. The only way that your elected officers can effectively direct your organization is if you express your thoughts. Search out and nominate qualified members for elected office; take part in association activities which effect your future. Above all, don't just sit back and be complacent. Make the individual commitment to take an active part in your organization.

See you in Ft. Worth!

Clinton Signs "Environmentally Conscious" Executive Order

Affirming the federal government's role as "an enlightened, environmentally conscious and concerned consumer," President Clinton signed Executive Order 12873, entitled *Federal Acquisition, Recycling, and Waste Prevention*.

Some requirements of federal agencies cited in the executive order are:

- Buy retread tires and recycled motor oil for government vehicles.
- Purchase paper that is composed of at least 20% recycled material.
- Cut waste and use resulting from increase cost of purchasing recyclables.
- Change brightness specifications for bleached paper.