

Paralegal PERSPECTIVES

Convention torch passes to PAR at Seattle Convention

By JP FOUNTAIN

It is official: The Paralegal Association of Rochester Inc. (PAR) is next up to host the 2019 National Federation of Paralegal Associations Annual Convention and Policy Meeting next October. During the annual meeting at this year's convention in Seattle, the torch was officially passed. And not just figuratively — there was an actual plastic torch handed to Deborah Wilcox Mabry as she spoke on behalf of PAR as the NFPA 2019 Convention Host Coordinator.

Seattle was a spectacular location to hold this year's meeting. Although it was a little rainy (as usual), the foliage was brilliant and painted highlights all over the Emerald City. Inside, however, there was a lot of business to attend to. One full day of CLEs included tracks for Litigation, Intellectual Property, and Immigration. The remaining three days consisted of meetings with delegates from our local geographic regions as well as policy meetings. This year, in particular, there was an extensive agenda and discussion items relating to changes in procedures and credential examination requirements. Despite the significant number of decisions to be discussed and voted on, we managed to get through everything, install our new board of directors and wrap up the meetings on time. As a result, this year we are looking forward to a refresh of the *National Paralegal Reporter Magazine* and a new website



Left to right: Bonnie Brooks, Deborah Wilcox Mabry and JP Fountain at the Seattle convention.

for NFPA, which will go live around the first quarter of the year.

This year's luncheon keynote speaker was Robert McKenna, former two-term attorney general of Washington State. The charity this year benefiting from donations (jeans Friday donation and raffles) was the Courthouse Dogs Foundation headquartered in Bellevue, Washington. Friday night, we were treated to dinner at the Seattle Waterfront with a magic/comedy show and amazing views

of both the city skyline and harbor from the rooftop deck.

As this was my first national convention, there were lots of new people to meet and procedures to learn when it came to the policy meeting. However, the most important takeaways for me were what I learned about how other local associations hold fundraising and CLE events as well as how they reach out to students in their area. Engaging younger generations of paralegals is key

to keeping our associations relevant and holding members' interest. Hearing about how other associations are addressing the same issues and embracing diversity left me with great ideas to share with our board.

It goes without saying that we have a lot of work to do before next year's convention and less than 365 days to do it. In the meantime, a few upcoming events to mention: on Dec. 7, PAR will be hosting a CLE on the subject of Advanced

Directives presented by Elizabeth Talia of Thompson Health and Richard Marchese of Woods Oviatt Gilman LLP.

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