



# NALTEA

The National Association of Land  
Title Examiners and Abstractors

## Message from the President

### In this issue:

Pat Scott, President  
Email: [president@naltea.org](mailto:president@naltea.org)

### Message from the President

*Front Cover*

How time flies. We are now six months into the term of the current NALTEA Board of Directors. We have made some progress during that time that I believe will translate to a better market environment for NALTEA member abstractors. We have begun some programs that now will require the participation of members everywhere in order to flourish.

### Board of Directors Report

*Page 2*

### Upcoming NALTEA Events

*Page 3*

### Congratulations

*Page 3*

One such program is the regional mini-conferences, the first of which will be held May 22<sup>nd</sup> in Deerfield, Illinois. There are two major goals to the regional events. First, they provide an opportunity to gather area abstractors together for a day of learning as NALTEA Certified Abstractors conduct a full-day certification exam preparation class. Second, we invite nonmembers – or future members, as I like to refer to them – to mingle with current members, directors and officers of NALTEA.

### Membership Committee Update

*Page 3*

### Website Performance

*Page 3*

### OAITA Panel Discussion

*Page 4*

Please visit our website at:  
[www.naltea.org](http://www.naltea.org)

### Contact:

NALTEA  
7490 Eagle Rd.  
Waite Hill OH 44094  
Fax: 216-771-7077  
E-mail: [info@naltea.org](mailto:info@naltea.org)

To single out one board member who has really invested significantly in the promise of the NALTEA education and certification programs, I think board member Ed Gunther has earned some recognition. Ed has been enrolling several of his employees each month as NALTEA members, and has immediately set them on the path to NALTEA certification. Three of them are qualified through the 'Train the Trainer' program to teach the exam preparation class, and Ed made the arrangements for the May 22<sup>nd</sup> Chicago area event.

In order for NALTEA education to succeed on a national level, we will need educators in all regions. To be qualified as a NALTEA educator, you need to be designated as a NCA or NMA abstractor and you need to be trained through the 'Train the Trainer' program. The first 'Train the Trainer' program was held last October at the conference in Charlotte, NC. I hope to see a packed room for the session this October in Dallas.

Among the three major goals I have thought most important for NALTEA to focus on this year – Education, Promotion and Advocacy – it seems to me that the first two are progressing well under our talented Education, Planning and Events, and Public Relations Committees. Looking forward, we can now devote more resources to advocacy for the local abstractors. Much of the bad title industry news we read about these days can be attributed, at least in part, to a diminished concern for quality. In our important, yet often ignored, segment of the industry, we need to work to increase awareness as to the importance of accurate information.

In the coming weeks and months, we will be reaching out to other organizations in an effort to provide support where the interests of our members, and our industry as a whole, would benefit.

Your association will need your talents and efforts to really be an effective force for higher standards in the industry. Whether that

means simply being vigilant and informing the association of concerns in your local market, or getting more involved with the education and certification process in your area, your efforts will be a key to our continued growth and success.

## **Board of Directors Report**

Jill Kissell

Email: [jillkissell@a1abstracting.com](mailto:jillkissell@a1abstracting.com)

Spring has sprung. The birds are busy building nests and growing new babies, the trees are busy growing leaves, the flowers are busy growing blooms, and NALTEA is busy growing too.

On April 12, 2010, the Board of Directors held its monthly meeting, and there was a substantial amount of business to tend to. Prior minutes and Treasurer's reports were approved, and we moved right on into committee business.

Education: The Board has been discussing some of the certification requirements lately and in particular the requirement that an abstractor have three years experience as a prerequisite to certification. The consensus is that this rule should stand because NALTEA, through certification, is promoting knowledge and experience to potential customers. Enforcement of the rule was another issue, and it was generally agreed that the certification application should require the applicant to affirmatively state that they have 3 years experience performing title searches. Any later discovery that the applicant has not been truthful on their test application will be grounds for loss of certification and termination of their membership in NALTEA.

Planning and Events. We have a tentative annual meeting location! Our annual meeting in October will likely be held in Dallas, Texas. Wanda Steudel sang great praises on behalf of the Crown Center, a location where a prior annual meeting was held. Ed Gunther, chair of the Planning and Events Committee, is obtaining final information from the Crown Plaza and the Omni and we hope to have a final commitment on the location in the immediate future.

Ed has also been looking into keynote speakers for the annual meeting, and we have had some intriguing suggestions. We are looking at speakers who can talk to identity theft, among other issues. If there is anyone in particular the membership would like to invite to talk to us, or if

you have a topic you would like to have discussed at the annual meeting, please contact Ed Gunther or any one of the Board members with your suggestion.

Ed has also booked a location for the May 22, 2010 Exam Prep seminar and NALTEA Meet & Greet at the Marriott Courtyard Hotel in Deerfield, Illinois. Look for further details in Ed's article in this newsletter.

Membership: NALTEA has seven new members and one reinstated former member since the last meeting. Our membership has now grown to 111 thanks largely to the efforts of Pat Scott and the membership committee. Great job Pat!

Public Relations: The printed directories are ready to go. The Board discussed who we would be sending the first round to, and it was generally agreed that we would skew distribution towards the states in which NALTEA has members; we would send them to vendor managers and MERS members. We would also like to send the directories to attorneys in states where they are in charge of hiring abstractors (South Carolina and Iowa came to mind right away). If your business is in such a state, please contact Dave Pelligrinelli or any Board Member to discuss targeting this group with a mailing.

The Board also agreed that we should explore the possibility of advertising NALTEA in widely circulated publications, such as Default Times.

Publications and Benefits: Doug Gallant and his committee are working as hard as ever to get out a quality monthly newsletter as well provide NALTEA members with useful benefits. The committee continues to have discussion with various insurance agents to develop programs and discounts for professional liability insurance. Doug is also working on an interview feature for the newsletter where he would alternate interviews between new members and certified examiners. The new member interview would give the member a bigger introduction to the membership than what we do now.

We continue to strive to grow NALTEA in a way that will complement and benefit all of our members. Please don't forget that your input is crucial to leading NALTEA in the direction you want us to go. We encourage you to participate in committees and stay in contact with NALTEA officers and Board Members at all times.

## Upcoming NALTEA Events

Ed Gunther

Email: [egunther@infotrackinc.com](mailto:egunther@infotrackinc.com)

The Meet & Greet NALTEA event is Saturday May 22nd in Deerfield, IL

This event will give abstractors in the greater Illinois area an opportunity to meet NALTEA members and learn about the advantages of being involved in NALTEA. This program will also feature the NALTEA Certification Review Class. If you have not taken this class it's something every abstractor should do. Everyone that has taken the class leaves with a deeper and more in depth understanding of what to expect in the test for certification.

The event is free and open to all abstractors. The certification class is: \$50.00. You can register in advance or at the door. Registration will start at 7:30 am and the class will be from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm with a one hour lunch break. The NALTEA Certification study guide will be available online or at the door for \$85.00. NALTEA members will be available at the registration area all day to meet with prospective members and provide information about NALTEA.

The event location:

Courtyard by Marriott Deerfield  
800 Lake Cook Road, Deerfield, IL 60015  
Phone: (847) 940-8222

Web address: [www.marriott.com/CHIDF](http://www.marriott.com/CHIDF)

Deerfield is a north shore suburb of Chicago just off the Tri-State Tollway at Lake Cook Road.

Don't miss out; the class size is limited so register early to insure your space.

The NALTEA Annual Conference will be October 22nd through the 24th in Dallas, TX.

We are retuning to the site of one of our earlier conference locations. We received many positive responses and will have more announcements coming.

The event location:

CROWNE PLAZA DALLAS near the GALLERIA  
14315 Midway Road  
Addison, TX 75001

More Meet & Greet events are in the planning. Watch for announcements in upcoming newsletters.

## CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations go out to our newest NALTEA Certified Abstractors. Scott Pyle and Frank

Navarro have passed the NALTEA National Certified Abstractor Exam this month. They will each be awarded a certificate and can now use the NCA designation after their name. In addition, if they have a listing on the Source of Title website, their name will have a star by it, indicating they are a NALTEA Certified Abstractor. Again, congratulations to each of you on being one of the elite NALTEA members to have achieved this designation.

## Membership Committee Update

Pat Scott

Email: [pxs@oconnortitle.com](mailto:pxs@oconnortitle.com)

NALTEA proudly welcomes our newest members:

**Frank Navarro** of Infotrack, Inc.

**Jason Rygiel** of Infotrack, Inc.

**Eliza Garzon** of Infotrack, Inc.

**Jonni Kottman** of Infotrack, Inc.

**James S. Pyle** of Infotrack, Inc.

**Michael Crain** of Middletown Abstracting Services, LLC

**Lori G. Phillips**

**Raymond Glowniak, Jr.** of Infinisearch, Inc.

We now have 111 active members.

## Easy ways to boost your website performance

Dave Pelligrinelli

Email: [daveafx@gmail.com](mailto:daveafx@gmail.com)

As a professional business in this century, you probably have a website. Whether it is a large corporate site, or a single page advertisement for your business, a website is the window into your business customers use to find you, and make decisions about doing business with you. With a few simple changes, you can empower your site to get more traffic, and generate more phone calls.

### Here I Am

The first thing a customer needs to do is find you. Traffic will flow to your home page from search engines, links from other sites, or advertising. Make sure you are not missing opportunities:

1. Make sure people can get to your site no matter how they type the name, [www.WEBSITE.com](http://www.WEBSITE.com) or just WEBSITE.COM. Check

to see that your hosting company has it set up to resolve either way.

2. Add tags to your webpage to tell the search engines what you are about. When Google, Yahoo, and other search engines decide when to show your page, they do use the visible content on your website, but they also score your page based on "invisible" coding on the page. By having tags on the graphics and pictures of your page, and also embedded in the "meta" code, you will tell the search engines exactly what you can do for the visitors, and to be sure and display your page in search results.

3. 404 errors. If a customer types the wrong page name, or there is a typo on a link, make sure the visitor goes somewhere. For example, if you have a page called [www.WEBSITE.com/contact.html](http://www.WEBSITE.com/contact.html), and the visitor types "ctnact.html" by mistake, where do they go? Do they get an error page? You can add a small file called ".htaccess" to your site to make all errors go back to your home page, to keep them on your site.

### **You found the right place**

OK, once your customer has arrived, you want to make sure their experience is positive, and everything is easy.

1. If you are taking orders or collecting information on your site, do you have a secure server? Even the most novice web surfers look for the "lock" or "key" logo in their browser to let them know they are in a safe place.

2. Is your phone number easily visible on all pages? Some visitors will want to call immediately, or decide to at some point during their visit. Don't make them have to find a "contact" page.

3. Are the most important things you want to say on your site in the most prominent place? Are they in more visible type? If some of the content is more important, make that obvious. Larger, bolder type, and featured in distinct locations tells your visitor these are key messages you want them to see.

I wish you success with your website. If you would like any suggestions on your particular site, feel free to contact me anytime.

## **OAITA Panel Discussion**

Doug Gallant

Email: [dougernaut@columbus.rr.com](mailto:dougernaut@columbus.rr.com)

I recently participated in a panel discussion at the annual conference of the Ohio Association of Independent Title Agents (OAITA). As part of their

conference, the organization invited Robert Franco, Mary McMahan of Ohio Title in Cleveland and myself to do an unscripted discussion of the issues faced by title examiners, and the changes we've seen in the industry over the years. Mary has been an examiner with Ohio Title since 1978 and is a real courthouse rat. Robert, of course, owns Source of Title as well as having spent 17 years as a title examiner and small agency owner. He recently passed the Bar exam, and is now a sole practitioner in Mansfield, Ohio. I began abstracting in 1972, spent a few years with a couple of small agencies doing a bit of everything, and started a small title search company in 1978 in Columbus.

It was quite enjoyable as the moderator did not prepare us with any type of outline on where the discussion might lead. We touched on the challenges of technological changes in the way records are presented. Many of the audience members seemed surprised to learn that not all of the changes have been for the better. We spent some time talking about the issue of title work being outsourced overseas, and the unreliability of many on-line records that they depend on. The majority of the attendees understood the problems with these types of title examinations. Some seemed surprised at how prevalent it is with many of the major underwriters.

When asked what changes we would like to see in the title examination field, Robert brought up the issue of licensing and uniform standards. The concept of uniform standards is addressed as the first objective of NALTEA (see the home page of our website). Robert pointed out that all the other parties to a real estate transaction are licensed in some form or another, the appraiser, the lender, the agent, the realtor. The president of the OAITA seemed interested in working with NALTEA on some of the issues we share in common, including licensing in Ohio.

The organization is affiliated with the National Association of Independent Title Agents (NAITA). They are a fairly young organization, but have aggressively pursued legislative changes to protect the independent agents. You can find out more about the group and their objectives at their websites. I think you will find that they share many of the same concerns as NALTEA.

All in all, participation in the panel discussion seemed to fulfill one of the purposes of NALTEA, to reach out to others in the title industry and stress the importance of a proper title search.

As a fun note, the conference was held in the same hotel here in Columbus as the first NALTEA