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Patrick Carron

Co-Chair, MACT South Florida

We have all heard about the Ugandan Anti-Gay law. Passed in 2013 by Parliament and signed into law by Uganda's President, the original version had the death sentence as the ultimate penalty. Later, it was struck down by the courts on a legal technicality.

But since then, the LGBTQ population in Uganda has been threatened, arrested, sodomized, beaten and murdered. Gays have been thrown out of their houses and fired from their jobs. Families have disowned them. Neighbors have violated them. Why all this abuse toward people who are truly innocent and quiet living?

A friend of mine, a young lawyer in Uganda, tells me how fearful he is. He wants to get out of Uganda and live in the West. He is deathly quiet about who he is at home, at work, and at church. He often reminds me that the holocaust against gays in Africa started with American evangelical pastors who visit Uganda and other countries and whip the population up into an anti-gay frenzy. They use religion to justify beatings and murder as if the Bible claims homosexuality isn't just a sin, but the unforgivable sin.

One such pastor, and perhaps the evangelical mentioned most, is Massachusetts based Scott Lively of Abiding Truth Ministries. Lively has been cited as the evangelical who has visited Africa the most spewing hate against GLBTQ people everywhere he goes. He often cites his bizarre book, 'The Pink Swastika'. The book blames homosexuals for the Nazi Holocaust. Clearly, Lively is obsessed with homosexuality.

Interestingly, Lively is being sued in U.S. court over his hatemongering activities in Uganda. The lawsuit was filed by Sexual Minorities Uganda (S.M.U.G.). Lively tried to get the suit thrown out of court, but a judge has refused his request and the litigation continues on and has for a few years now. Lively and S.M.U.G. go before a judge later this year. The great thing about this suit is that it draws public attention to Lively and his nefarious activities.

This has hurt the contributions to his ministry and his income. In a blog he was begging for donations stating that he might need to close Abiding Truth Ministries if funds do not come forth. For this reason alone, I'd say the lawsuit has been effective whether S.M.U.G. wins or loses. They have given the homophobe his just dessert.

For more, see: <https://sexualminoritiesuganda.com/> <http://www.defendthefamily.com/>



Mark P. Behar
NABWMT Co-Chair (mpbehar@wisc.edu)

MANY OF YOU MAY WONDER WHAT WE DO! "We" refers to all the volunteer NABWMT Board of Directors and Committee Members, and we do more than gab through monthly telephone meetings on weekends and weekday evenings. We actually do things similar to your local chapter, except we only get together face to face once or twice a year! There are 14 of us from these metro areas: Boston, Philadelphia, DC, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Atlanta, Ft. Lauderdale, Phoenix, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. All of us juggle many different work and family responsibilities with our local chapters and our national Board responsibilities.

Local chapters may have social and athletic activities such as dine outs, karaoke, bowling, kick ball or bumper ball (bumper soccer) competitions, pub crawls, or potlucks; educational activities such as featuring guest speakers, movies, museum tours, and discussions; cosponsoring and having political and cultural activities alone or with like-minded organizations; fundraise and food pantry collections for worthy local groups; recognize and nurture leadership through mentoring and scholarships, awards, as well as learning how conduct program planning, enhanced communication and team work through board work, newsletter writing and publication, technical web design, and so on. We are one of the few local and national groups that combine racial/ethnic parity in leadership, with sharing of knowledge and communication differences across many traditional obstacles including age and race. One of the important things we fail to do is promote ourselves!!

SOCIAL JUSTICE (SJ) IS ONE OF OUR CORE BELIEFS. One common understanding of SJ, involves "...promoting a just society by challenging injustice and valuing diversity." People must not suffer discrimination or prejudice on the basis of gender identity, sexual orientation, sex, age, religion, political affiliations, race or ethnicity, belief, disability, socioeconomic circumstances, or any other characteristics of group membership.

The NABWMT and our local chapters have sponsored many thought-provoking educational activities at gab fests and during national Convention, articles written in Q-Vision, and the numerous postings on our web page and Facebook pages covering criminal justice reform, Black Lives Matter, disparities in health care, HIV discrimination and criminalization, global homophobia. Sometimes "political actions" include marches, parades, demonstrations with other like-minded groups, and sometimes, it may be as simple as interracial men of differing ages socializing, eating, and recreating together in public areas! All of these are examples of how we "walk the walk" on SJ.

THE BOARD IS UNDERGOING RIGOROUS STRATEGIC PLANNING to make us more relevant for our future and to streamline and improve how the NA Board operates. Creating a strong foundation is not unlike our nation's own infrastructure that includes energy, transportation, economics, and indeed governance. Elsewhere in this Q-Visions newsletter, is a status report of our Strategic Planning.

WE HAVE REVISED OUR COMMITTEE STRUCTURE, FROM 16 DISTINCT COMMITTEES TO ONLY 6, and the Board's Standing Rules governing these new incarnations of committees will be completed by April. This will help us have specific outcomes that we will report on later this year.

- Executive (including Strategic Planning and Bylaws & Standing Rules)
- Finance/Fundraising & Resource Development
- Chapter Development and Membership
- Media & Communications (including Q-Visions, Web Page, Facebook, Wikipedia, Archives)
- Programming & Logistics (including CPC, Awards, Nominations & Elections, Scholarships)
- Education (including Bush Mallon Institute for Social Justice, Health & HIV, Global Homophobia & Concerns)

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE is one of the few times we will actually enjoy our times together and invite you to join our "alternate family of choice" this year in Memphis! Tell your boss "It's a family reunion" because it is! We realize that there are lots of competing activities during your summer, and hope to announce some changes to how we implement conventions, starting in 2017 and beyond. But in the meantime, check out some YouTube videos from the 2015 Newark Convention, thanks to New York photographer & videographer Benny Roman-Griffin, and Ken Scott Baron and the Media & Communications Committee. Two different video styles, music, and images! Let us know how you like them, and please share:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8wQ7La1AOo&feature=em-upload_owner
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8VpPDI-cDI&feature=em-upload_owner

Enjoy Spring!



MARK BEHAR IS THE
NA BOARD CO CHAIR
FAVORITE QUOTES:

"If you're not in the room, the conversation is about you. If you are in the room, then the conversation is with you."

—Senator Tammy Baldwin, Wisconsin, November, 2012

"Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world."

—Harriet Tubman, 1820-1913

"We need, in every community, a group of angelic trouble-makers.... When an individual is protesting society's refusal to acknowledge his dignity as a human being, his very act of protest confers dignity on him."

—Bayard Rustin, 1912-1987

Developing a Spiritual Practice

Anthony Carter

This is an [article](#) from Anthony's blog

At a recent gathering, I heard a man say the following: We are concerned with what type of world we are leaving our children; we should also ask what type of children are we leaving for the world. As a practicing Buddhist for over ten years, my belief system is simple, effective and always provides me with opportunities to grow and evolve. There are not many institutions that allow individuals to constantly strive to better themselves and as a result, the world. Twice a day, I set aside time to face my shit.

Most religions and spiritual practices encourage a great deal of conformity and very little self reflection that can, if we allow it, lead to some serious transformation.

I know of no one outside of my practice who is committed to self transformation to the extent that we (practitioners of my particular sect of Buddhism) pride ourselves on being. It has always struck me as odd when people say they have no spiritual practice and believe in nothing but themselves. One of the greatest aspects of a spiritual practice is that it allows humans to be with other humans.

We learn and grow from human interaction particularly if what we are doing is focusing on personal transformation that engenders global transformation. While openly admitting to having a spiritual practice is often frowned upon, it is imperative that they exist and people look at all the ways they practice spirituality without labeling it as such.

Anybody who fights for human rights, ending violence in all its forms and eliminating domination and unfair treatment of others and oppression is doing spiritual work and has a commitment to a spiritual practice. Bell hooks refers to those who do the work of ending domination as doing the work of love. Men who want to transform themselves would be wise to heed these words.

As men, we must not be afraid to humble ourselves to the parts of ourselves that cry out and demand serious, real connection, change and uplift. The most powerful men I have met have a spiritual core and devotion to spirituality that is awe inspiring.

We can let go of domination and "king of the hill" shenanigans that mask fears of the other and an unwillingness to be vulnerable. With spirituality there is a wonder (a not knowing) that most men are uncomfortable with and yet this is what is needed if men wish to allow the best, most loving and thoughtful part of themselves to prosper.

Men have been taught that to wonder and not know is dumb, weak, unforgivable and can only lead to trouble for all involved. When man can retire the cape, get off the white horse and admit: I don't know; the world and themselves can change and true transformation can occur. We should allow ourselves permission to "not know", to dwell in the spiritual.

This must be allowed without interference, judgment or punishment. We can not demand that men evolve when the essential component of spirituality is missing.

Men who care for children, support the elderly by driving them to agreed upon destinations and who listen to women and anyone who might know more about a subject than they do are practicing a sacred spirituality. Invite the men in your life to a temple, a mosque, Sunday service.

Remember no revolution or inner transformation can survive without a devotion to the spirit. When I pointed out this reality, some folks didn't agree and doubted that the core of any revolution and social change was based in a devotion to spirit.

Any time there is a break away from commonly held beliefs regardless of their effectiveness or sincerity, you are asking for and ushering in a revolution. We are asking men to change and show us their best selves which is revolutionary and can only be carried out when radical spirituality is at the center. Men are smart enough to figure this out and there should still exist space for us all to question, debate and sample all manner of spiritual commitment.

Maybe you were brought up in the Judeo Christian construct (and if you were raised in America, you were) and have a difficult time breaking away from what is familiar and moving into and towards the unknown.

It is important that we open our hearts and minds to what other folks believe and the ways individuals structure their lives according to what they find important.

If any institution, no matter how well meaning, suggests that you be less human or give up big chunks of yourself under the auspice that you will win later, run.

Anything that demands more of our humanity and not less is what we should focus on.

Ken Scott Baron

From a Feb 8, 2016 [blog on homophobia, racism](#)

As an educator, I have worked with students at the margin and become even more aware of the special plight of young African American males as they are schooled, and the expectations that are set for them.

Some facts first. Most teachers are white. according to a new study by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE). "More than 80 percent of the bachelor's degrees in education awarded during the 2009-10 school year were to non-Latino white students, according to this study. Three-quarters went to women, and only 4.2 percent went to Latinos".

While there is a dearth of black male teachers, one curriculum "Mastering Our Cultural Identity: African American Male Image", is taught by Black males*. In Oakland, Calif., this is "a novel and ambitious initiative by the Oakland Unified School District is to rewrite the pernicious script of racial inequality, underachievement and lack of opportunity for African-American boys".

African American students in particular are disciplined or suspended at disproportionate rates for reasons that include lack of teacher training (in classroom management or culturally competent practices) and racial stereotypes only contributing further to disengagement and later dropout from school.

The main cause of dropout*** among LGBT high school students "appears to be the hostile school climate created by continual bullying and harassment from peers due to their sexual orientation".

Nearly 9 out of 10 LGBT students (86.2%) experienced harassment at school in the past year, three-fifths (60.8%) felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, and about a third (32.7%) skipped a day of school in the past month due to feeling unsafe".

If you wish to view cameos of this subject visit the Twitter hashtag: <https://twitter.com/hashtag/blackmindsmatter> and see some of the latest thoughts on this.

I leave you with a quote from the activist Malcolm X: "Without education, you are not going anywhere in this world." That is doubly true for people of color.

Sources:

* <http://www.ousd.org/Page/13823>

** http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/07/education/edlife/in-oakland-building-boys-into-men.html?ref=edlife&_r=0

*** <http://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/school-dropout-prevention.pdf>

African American students in particular are disciplined or suspended at disproportionate rates for reasons that include lack of teacher training (in classroom management or culturally competent practices) and racial stereotypes only contributing further to disengagement and later dropout from school

4th West Coast Regional

Kelvin McAdory



Black and White Men Together of Southern California & Men of All Colors Phoenix presents The 4th Annual West Coast Regional In Phoenix, AZ

In 2013, BWMTSC had a great time in Palm Springs where we all got together and had a great time. We had good food, socialized, enjoyed the town and just relaxed. See our video at <http://nabwmt.org>

For 2014, MACT Phoenix hosted us to a nice kickoff gathering on Friday. They had a blast of 70's party where Bruce turned his place into a 70's Disco. The weekend was rounded out with a barbecue at Louis' place. It was a great time to meet even more members of the Phoenix Chapter.

We went back to the Palm Springs Area for 2015 where we socialized, ate, and relaxed....repeat.

We're heading back to Phoenix for 2016 and extending an invitation to members of NABWMT. The event starts Oct 14-16, 2016. Please contact Kelvin McAdory for more detail. Calblkbear@yahoo.com

Chapter News Mid West Region

Rick Creque, Chapter Editor

Milwaukee

31st Annual Black Excellence Awards-- Milwaukee: Honoree Pamela Clark, Corporate Trailblazer, former honorees J.S. Bethea (2014) and Dr. Tito Izard (2006). Pam and Bethea served on the NABWMT CPC Milwaukee 2014, and Bethea remains an active BWMT Milwaukee member. Dr. Izard gave our NABWMT Banquet keynote address in 2014. Dr. Izard's wife, Dr. Delicia Izard is also shown; NABWMT National Co-Chair and BWMT/Milwaukee member Mark Behar is also shown.



Chapter News Eastern Region

Rick Creque, Chapter Editor

Philadelphia

Our **35th Anniversary** is coming the last weekend of April (April 29 – May 1). We've planned an enjoyable time with a few changes this year. We have moved the banquet and awards to Friday night and the Meet & Greet to Saturday afternoon and a new location for the Sunday brunch. We will have the registration forms available at the March General Meeting. The cost is \$65 for members paid by April 15 and \$70 for non-members and members after April 15. The couples price is \$110 / \$120. **Spring Pot Luck** is Friday April 9th 7:30 PM to 11:00 PM at Patrick's house

Atlanta

The Battle for LGBT Rights is Far from Over in Georgia We Must Keep Our Eyes on the Prize in 2016

Georgia remains one of 29 states without laws that specifically protect LGBT citizens against discrimination in the places where they live, the offices where they work, and the restaurants where they eat, says Jeff Graham, executive director of Georgia Equality. And Georgia, the cradle of the civil rights movement, is one of only five states without a hate crimes law on its books—not just to protect victims who are singled out because of sexual orientation, but also those who are targeted because of race or gender. "Gay couples in Georgia have few, if any, protections," says Bryan Long, executive director of progressive advocacy group Better Georgia. "A gay couple who wed on a Saturday can be fired on Monday, or turned away on their honeymoon for being gay, and a gay couple's landlord can terminate their lease legally." At the local level, however, the city of Atlanta's LGBT-friendly laws have set the standard for the South. The Human Rights Campaign, a national advocacy organization that grades the inclusiveness of municipal governments, gave Atlanta a perfect score of 100 in 2013 and 2014, citing its

Non-discrimination laws that include protections for sexual orientation and gender identity and its creation of LGBT community liaisons. But goodwill for the gay community—at least as it's reflected in local statutes drops off just outside the Atlanta city limits. In DeKalb County, unincorporated areas and even otherwise gay-friendly cities like Decatur lack strong LGBT protections. Such policies are largely nonexistent in other Georgia cities like Augusta, Columbus, and Savannah, all of which scored below 25 on the HRC index.

See more at: <http://www.atlantamagazine.com/news-culture/articles/the-battle-for-lgbt-rights-in-georgia-is-farfrom-over/#sthash.ZY6YsQiH.dpuf>

Obituary for Duane S. Rayford

Yvette Robert (sister)



Duane S. Rayford passed away at home on February 10, 2016.

He was born to Margine Rayford Griffin and the late John E. Rayford on November 11, 1958 in Gary, Indiana. He graduated from Bishop Noll in Hammond, Indiana in 1977. He later went on to graduate with an Associate in Arts from College of the Desert in May of 2000 and a Bachelor of Arts with a concentration in Administration Information Management from California State University at San Bernardino in September of 2003.

Duane's interests were varied and vast. His first career was a paperboy. He loved nature and animals, and worked at Glen Park pet store. He loved all kinds of music, but gospel was his favorite. He ran a record store in Gary, Indiana and Chicago, Illinois. In the early 1980s Duane moved to San Francisco to be a record buyer for gospel music Rose Records. From there, he went to work at Macy's and started his career in retail services. Duane was a top furniture salesperson at Macy's in Palm Desert, and he recently celebrated 15 years of service.

Duane loved to travel, and traveled to places like Australia, Brazil, and Mexico. His love of travel was evident even from a young age when he subscribed to National Geographic. He loved to meet new folks and was able to interact with all kinds of people.

Duane's strong character and perseverance in the face of challenges was one of his most admirable qualities. He was a fighter through health misadventures, including the loss of function in both of his kidneys.

Duane was incredibly gregarious and was loved by anyone who met him. He loved to entertain his many friends at his home.

Duane is survived by his mother, Margine Griffin; his brothers Curtis (Audrey) of Berkley, Illinois and John (Levian) of Society Hill, South Carolina; his sisters Deborah (Conwell) of Gary, Indiana, and Yvette (Robert) of Charlotte, North Carolina, along with numerous nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins and a host of friends. Duane is preceded in death by his father John E. Rayford, and his sister Shirley Creal.

Addendum by Paul Cloutier

Duane was also an active valued member of both [Black and White Men Together Southern California](#), and the [National Association of Black and White Men Together](#).

In Memory of Gary Dale Crandall

Bruce Platt



MACT Phoenix and the many friends of Gary Dale Crandall mourn the passing of our beloved brother and friend on February 11, 2016. Gary was born on February 7, 1955 at Home Hospital in Lafayette, Indiana. In 1973, he graduated from Southwestern High School in Lafayette. Following graduation Gary worked for several retail businesses but he was best known at Mary Lou's Doughnuts where he was employed for 11 years as a baker.

Gary relocated to Indianapolis Indiana in September 1992 and he worked for Crystal Catering until his health declined in August 2005. Gary joined BWMT in 1985 and was an active member of the Indianapolis chapter until its closing.

Gary retired to Phoenix in December 2005 and joined MACT Phoenix shortly after its inception in July 2011 and was an active participant in the chapter at the time of his death.

Gary was a deeply religious and spiritual man and was a faithful member of New Foundation Christian Fellowship at the time of his death. He loved gospel music and early this year Gary enrolled in the chaplaincy program which was sponsored by the Dream City Church.

A home going celebration honoring Gary's life was held at Bethesda Gardens Assisted Living center in Phoenix on March 5, 2016, where he was living at the time of his passing.

The celebration included many members of the [Phoenix MACT Chapter](#), members of [UGIMA](#) (United Gay Informed Men of African-Decent) a sister organization that Gary was a member of, and the people that loved him from Bethesda Gardens Assisted Living Center.

A second memorial service was held on March 12th in Lafayette, Indiana. It was attended by a larger number of Gary's family members, friends, classmates as well as members of the former BWMT Indianapolis chapter.

This memorial wouldn't be complete without a shout-out to Jack Carter Perkins, his beloved friend of 30 years and caregiver during his years of declining health and was present when Gary passed from this earth. Gary was a special soul and his presence will be missed by the Phoenix chapter for years to come.



Looking for a few committed men with vision

Gavin Morrow Hall

This year we will mark the 35th anniversary of our organization' elections of co-chairs.

35 years ago people gathered in San Francisco to be part of a new organization and to elect the leadership of this new organization: The International Association of Black White Men Together.

Although much is changed in the past 35 years, what our organization needed in 1981 is quite similar and in many ways more urgent today. We need men who are committed and have a vision for the organization and indeed our collective communities.

This year we congregate in Memphis where we will elect two co-chairs, one corresponding secretary, as well as members to the (now) National Association of Black and White Men Together (NABWMT) Board of Directors.

The institutional leadership of the NABWMT meets monthly by phone as well as two to three times during the year. Together we execute plans of action to guide our organization to live out our vision and statement of purpose of a more just, and more inclusive society. Along the way we have a lot of fun as we explore the dynamics of brotherhood and fellowship.

Over the past year we have actively engage in any strategic planning process. The goal of this process has been to strengthen our organization and make it more relevant to our members and in the communities in which we live.

35 years after our inception there has been one constant. NABWMT is still the only gay male organization committed to fostering supportive environments where in racial and cultural barriers can be overcome and the goal of human equality realized. No other gay organization is interracial by definition and speaks to issues and concerns of those who are interested in cross cultural relationships.

Whether you were new to the organization, or have been around for a while I urge you to consider your participation in this endeavor. Together we can re-create a proud history.

Please email me if you are interested: [Gavin Morrow Hall](#)



GAVIN MORROW HALL is a long time NABWMT member and now on the Board of Directors.

FAVORITE QUOTES:

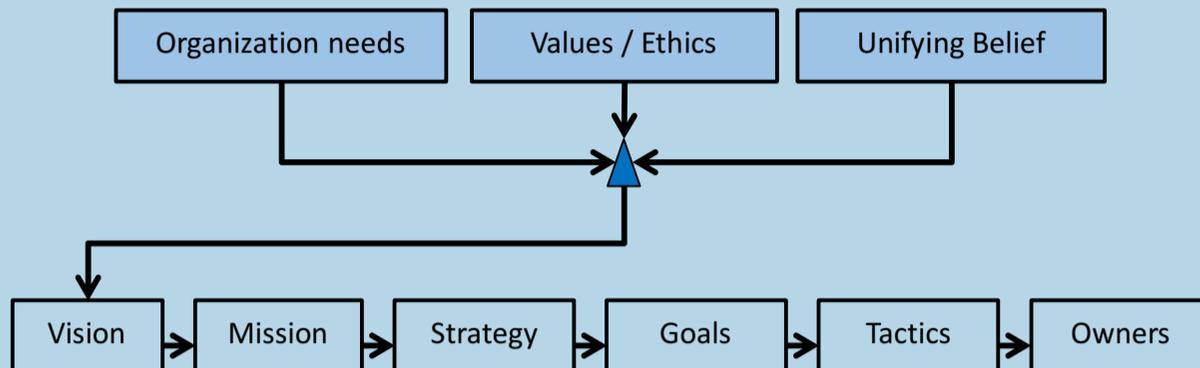
“Each one of us must find the gift we have to give. You do not need a college degree to serve. You don't have to have make your subject and your verb agree in order to serve. You don't have to know Plato or Aristotle to serve. You don't have to know Einstein's theory of relativity to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love. And you can be that servant.--Dr. Martin Luther King”

“The hottest places in Hell are reserved for those who, in a time of moral crisis, maintain their neutrality.--Dante's Inferno

Be good to yourself, and to someone else as well.

Our Vision Statement: An Opportunity for General Membership Feedback From the Strategic Planning Committee of the NA Board

As you all probably know, the NA board has been crafting a strategic plan for NABWMT. Led by the Strategic Planning Committee with advisory support from Dr. Paul Hawkins, the board ratified the following framework with the completed areas in blue.



We are in the midst of forming the next level of the model. Our plan is to present the entire model at our July convention. Please know that as we move forward on this process, we are dedicated to outline a road map for growth for NABWMT. Thanks in advance for your consideration and ongoing support.

If you have questions on the planning process, please contact:

- Pat Carron – pjcarron@gmail.com
- John Williams – johnrudy2@gmail.com



JOHN WILLIAMS is a long time NABWMT member and is a member of the Finance, Programming, and Exec. Committees of the Board. He lives in Boston and hails from the Bronx.

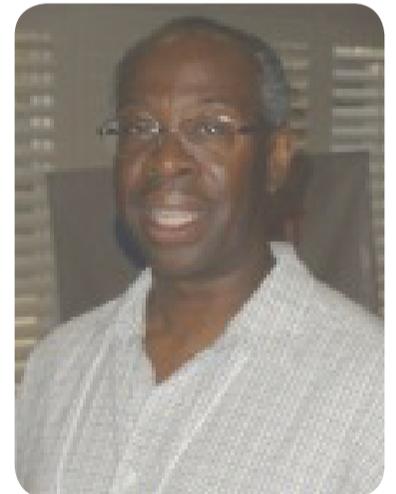
INTERESTS:

His interests include reading, movies, theater and working and volunteering for social change.

Does NABWMT have “Salsa, Soul and Spirit”?

Wendell Reid

This workshop at the Memphis Convention will discuss leadership approaches and values from Latino, Black and American Indian communities, in Juana Bordas’ groundbreaking book, “Salsa, Soul, and Spirit: Leadership for a Multicultural Age” (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, SF, Second Edition, 2012). We will explore how we have integrated these values into building a multicultural, inclusive NABWMT. What values have we adopted, what approaches do we need to consider, and what organizational and personal commitments should we make to improve? Ms. Borda’s book should be available through your local independent bookstore, online, or perhaps your local library. It is suggested but not required that it be read in advance of the workshop.



WENDELL REID is a former NABWMT Co-Chair and a current Board member. He has also done volunteer work for the Point Foundation, the National LGBT Scholarship Fund; International Mr. Leather, Chicago; and the Gerber/Hart Library in Chicago as Treasurer. He currently works for the Federal government in the Washington DC area as an internal auditor.

The Memphis Convention:

It's Gonna Be Great and We Ain't Bluffin!

by Neal Holmes and Paul Hawkins, Convention 2016 Cochairs

Like other iconic American cities, Memphis has a nickname. Affectionately known as “the Bluff City,” one might wonder what “the Bluff” is all about. Could it be that Memphis is like great poker players who, even when dealt an adverse hand, convince you that they have something unbeatable? Let’s hold that thought for a moment. In the meantime, we’ll let you know the real reason for Memphis’ nickname is that the city sits on a bluff overlooking the mighty Mississippi River. The native Chickasaw understood the value of high ground when the spring thaw caused the Mississippi to flood, and so did the American businessmen who, two centuries ago, recognized “the fourth Chickasaw bluff” as an ideal, flood-free location to establish a commercial center. Thinking the top of the bluff to be reminiscent of a vista overlooking the ancient Nile, they decided on the name Memphis, in honor of Egypt’s Old Kingdom capital.

Come July 13-16th, for the first time, we are convening NABWMT’s annual gathering in Memphis, Tennessee, the Bluff City. There, the convention activities will reflect our theme *Voices from our past, Voices for our future*. The power of this theme draws upon Memphis’ identity as a city simultaneously old and new, transparent yet mysterious. This is the city where, tragically, an assassin struck down Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and where, triumphantly, American blues, soul, and R&B—deep articulations of twentieth century African-American experience—arose from their spiritual base. The power of this theme also draws upon NABWMT’s organizational identity, an echo of the Post-Civil Rights discourse on race, an echo heard as a yearning for a consciously interracial common ground within the fledgling gay men’s community.

The central question, of course, is how we, meaning NABWMT, will leverage *Voices from our past, Voices for our future*. As convention co-chairs we believe NABWMT is at a critical juncture. Big decisions about how or whether to extend NABWMT’s legacy are at the organization’s front door, knocking loudly. At the same time, all of us, as individuals, whether we realize it or not, have to make big decisions about how to cope with the “inequities in our communities and in our lives.” We have designed *Voices from our past, Voices for our future* to be a time for reflection, if not a call to focus. We hope this summer’s Memphis convention brings forth the *Voices from our past* from whom we must take wise counsel; we likewise hope that doing so helps us find our individual and collective voices, the *Voices for our future*.

To give you a sense of how the convention design will support the theme, here are a few day-by-day highlights:

Wednesday, July 13th: The true opening of NABWMT’s annual convention is the general membership meeting. This year, we expect this to occur in two parts: Wednesday morning will be devoted to organizational housekeeping. Wednesday afternoon we will continue the strategic planning conversation started last summer at the Newark convention. Okay, granted, that sounds like work, and it is. But we hope it will be rewarding work, including the reward of a Mississippi River dinner-dance cruise. For our evening pleasure, and continuing conversation, we have chartered the Island Queen, an old-fashioned riverboat, where we will depart from “the fourth Chickasaw bluff” to enjoy scenic views, famous Memphis barbeque, and sounds spun by our DJ.

Thursday, July 14th: On Thursday morning we will have the first of two convention plenaries—that is, discussions among the whole convention body. Our special guests will be David & Tre’Darrius Anderson, two Memphians who, as teenagers, not only took the bold step of getting legally married, they allowed their wedding to be the basis of a short documentary. Considering that NABWMT has consistently explored the dynamics of same-sex coupling over the past thirty-six years, we believe David & Tre’Darrius could be two *Voices of the future* whose experience gives us a fresh take on marriage, right as we celebrate the one-year anniversary of the Supreme Court’s landmark *Obergefell* ruling.

Friday, July 15th: Our second convention plenary, titled *Our Response to Racism, Then and Now* is slated for Friday morning. Dr. Kendal Broad of the University of Florida, who has been studying NABWMT’s first decade as a site of anti-racist activism, will kick off the plenary by providing an update on her work. In follow up we will hear from Tami Sawyer, a young Memphis-based activist aligned with the Black Lives Matter movement. Designed to extend the power of our continuing dialogue, we will explore how the NABWMT experience compares with, and contrasts against, the experiences of those outside NABWMT who, much more recently, have mounted visible responses to racism.

Friday, July 15th: On the evening of April 4, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. walked out onto the balcony of Memphis’ Lorraine Motel. A moment later he was assassinated. That balcony, and the adjoining rooms Dr. King occupied, have been preserved as part of the National Civil Rights Museum. A site of pilgrimage for thousands of people every year, on Friday evening the museum will close to the public and then reopen for a pilgrimage of our own. We will have time to engage with the museum exhibits, and gather for an onsite dinner in honor of all those who gave their lives in the quest to make ours a more socially just society.

Saturday, July 16th: Our host hotel is the Doubletree by Hilton-Memphis Downtown. The grand finale of our convention will occur Saturday evening in the hotel ballroom where we will enjoy a plated banquet dinner. While most of the preceding days will have focused on listening to voices outside of NABWMT, our keynote speaker will be one of our very own: John R. Williams, II. While perhaps needing no introduction, John has been involved with NABWMT for more than thirty years, including work on the local chapter and national board levels. More than that, John has co-facilitated numerous racial justice workshops within and on behalf of NABWMT, especially during the decade when NABWMT’s Bush-Mallon Institute for Social Justice was active. This gives John a unique perspective as both a *Voice from our past* and a *Voice for our future*.

As mentioned, these are only highlights. We are also orchestrating two luncheons, additional workshops, caucus discussions, a tribute to our deceased members, and of course, the much beloved annual Madame X “No Talent” Talent Show. We have also built in some free time so you can explore some of Memphis’ historic, cultural, and entertainment attractions.

Now, back to that original question about Memphis being “the Bluff City.” We told you the standard answer, how Memphis was founded on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi, even while we speculated about another possibility. We suggested that, like in poker, the word *bluff* might really be about telling others you’ve got a winning hand when in fact you have something less spectacular. Well, we know the Memphis convention is going to be spectacular. We hope this article proves it. But if you don’t believe us, then we invite you to come to Memphis this July and, you guessed it, call our bluff.

Key Reminders

Website: The most up-to-date information about NABWMT’s 2016 convention can be found at: www.nabwmt2016.org.

June 11th: The last date to reserve a room under NABWMT’s block at the Doubletree by Hilton-Memphis Downtown. Please note, however, that room inventory is limited, and may sell out. Please reserve your room as early as possible. To reserve, we recommend calling 1-800-222-8733 and using reservation code NAB.

June 15th: The last date to mail in a convention registration form and the last date to get advance purchase rates. After June 15th, please e-mail info@nabwmt2016.org to inquire about the possibility of doing an onsite registration.

July 13th-16th: The dates you have to be in Memphis!

NABWMT Convention Scholarships Available

Mark Behar and Darryl Fore

Due to the generosity of NABWMT contributors, limited funds are available to help those in need attend this year's convention. There are two types of assistance available:

The **Michael John Smith Scholarship Fund** (named in honor of NABWMT's founder) helps individuals with demonstrated financial need attend the annual NABWMT convention, particularly so the recipient can take advantage of the educational programming at the core of the convention's purpose. Applicants may apply to have some or all of the convention registration fee covered by this fund.

The **Wendell Roberson Fund** (named in memory of the late Wendell Roberson of Chicago) serves a purpose similar to the Michael John Smith Scholarship Fund insofar as it helps individuals with demonstrated financial need attend the NABWMT convention. Whereas an award from the Michael John Smith scholarship fund covers some or all of the convention registration fee, an award from the Wendell Roberson Fund may be used to cover some portion of the key expenses normally incurred to attend the convention. Examples include transportation, lodging, and/or meals. First priority for Wendell Roberson Fund awards is given to persons living with HIV who also have a demonstrated financial need. Second priority is given to persons not living with HIV who nonetheless have a demonstrated financial need. Wendell Roberson Funds are disbursed directly to the vendor (i.e. to the hotel or airline) or on a reimbursement basis for approved purposes (i.e. meals) upon furnishing valid receipts.

The ability to offer assistance primarily depends on the amount of funds available. Other factors are described in the application cover letter. To apply for assistance, please fill out the application materials below. The deadline to apply is **June 15, 2016**. Award notifications are usually made about 10 days after the application deadline.

POBox-3793-Hollywood-CA90078-3793

Phone: 1-800-624-2968

Website: www.nabwmt.org

Email: nabwmt@nabwmt.org

An assistance application form is attached on the next page. Please complete it and then return it to the NABWMT national office via post to: (see above) or email it to NABWMT Co-Chair Darryl Fore at fore@mailcity.com. Your application is confidential and will be reviewed by the NABWMT Co-Chairs.

Applications for assistance will be evaluated based on the following:

- The amount of financial assistance you are requesting.
- The amount and ratio of resources you can provide or obtain versus the amount you are requesting from NABWMT.
- Your history with NABWMT and/or a local chapter organization.
- Whether you have received financial assistance from NABWMT in recent years.
- What you expect to gain from your convention experience.
- Other personal factors that warrant consideration.

2016 NABWMT Convention Assistance Application Form

(Please print or type all information clearly.)

Name: _____ Date: _____ Address: _____

Phone (s): _____ E-mail (s): _____

In order for us to evaluate your request, it is important for us to know how much it will cost for you to attend the convention, what resources you have to cover those costs, and how much assistance you desire from NABWMT. Please fill in every blank spot on the grid below. To do so, you will need to estimate your costs to attend the convention, determine what resources you have, what resources you can obtain, and what resources you want NABWMT to provide. The sum of all columns and rows must equal the totals indicated.

	Amount you can pay:	Amount from your chapter, if any:	Amount from other sources:	Amount from NABWMT:	Total:
Transportation	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Lodging	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Meals	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Registration	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Incidentals	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

Please read this statement, and then sign below: I have completed this form truthfully and as accurately as possible. I promise that if I accept financial assistance I will attend the NABWMT convention and uphold the NABWMT Statement of Purpose.

Signature: _____ (just type your name if submitting a Word file) Please provide the following information. Attach additional sheets if necessary:

1. Are you a member of NABWMT or one of its chapters? If so, please describe the length and extent of your involvement.
2. If you are a member of an NABWMT chapter, have you asked your chapter to help you attend the convention? If so, what assistance will the chapter provide?
3. Have you ever requested financial assistance from NABWMT to attend a convention? If so, how much assistance did you receive and when did you receive it?
4. How will your attendance at NABWMT's convention affect your life?
5. Are you living on a limited or fixed income? Please describe your personal finances to the extent you are comfortable:
6. (Optional) As priority for some forms of assistance is given to persons living with HIV disease, do you have any medical conditions you would like us to consider?
7. Are you able and/or willing to do on-site volunteer work at the convention?

B. Chambers Fund Scholarship
Sean Schumaker

The B. Chambers Scholarship Fund was established by Dr. Sean Shumaker as a “call to arms” for today’s young mindful innovators. Further, the fund seeks to award outstanding LGBT students seeking to accomplish their dreams by making significant contributions in the LGBT communities. The Award is \$500.00

Eligibility Criteria:

- Undergraduate/Graduate applicants must be full or part time students.
- Applicants must be a citizen of the United States and seeking enrollment in an accredited college, university or technical school in the United States.
- Applicant must possess a grade point average of at least 2.5 (C+) on a 4.0 system.
- The B. Chambers Fund Scholarship is not renewable.

Required Application Materials:

Please submit:

- Two letters of recommendation (other than relatives): One personal reference and one academic reference, typed, Times New Roman font, 10 pt, 1 inch margins.
- Current official transcripts of grades
(If completing high school: copy of letter of acceptance from college/university.)
- One Page essay

Have you included?		
Transcript _____		
Two Recommendations _____	One Page Essay _____	
(A personal & an academic reference)		
For High School Seniors only: College/University Acceptance Letter _____		

Student Signature _____ Date _____

B. Chambers Essay

(Name and current school must be on top of Essay)

- Please attach a typed one page essay explaining what led you to your interest in your particular major and what career you ultimately wish to pursue (max 500 words).
- Bullying has become a major epidemic in the United States especially in LGBT community. Explain in what way you could contribute to addressing this problem (Max 500 words).

Return completed applications (no later than May 1, 2016) to:

Winners will be notified via mail. If you are selected, you must attend the NABWMT Convention, July 13 - 16, 2016 in Memphis, Tennessee to receive your award.