

## ***Soakin' it Up in Tampa Bay! Report from 2007 NFPA Convention***

Tracey L. Young, RP and Cheryl Corning

The annual NFPA policy meeting opened with a pictorial history of NFPA with photos from various conventions from 1995 through 2006. The video was followed by a presentation by Master Chief Steven DiStefano of the Navy Legalmen Association recognizing the 35 NFPA associations which support the military outreach program. Each association was given a certificate of appreciation as well as a commemorative Navy coin. Master Chief DiStefano read a letter of appreciation from Rear Admiral McDonald for the more than 400 care packages which have been sent since the program began in 2006. A Navy Legalmen expressed her thanks for the packages she had received while serving in Iraq.

There were 45 member associations present as well as numerous observers and invited guests. The parliamentarian provided a brief overview of parliamentary procedure, describing the policy meeting as "Democracy in Action". Following the State of the Federation address by NFPA President Anita Haworth, RP, the delegates discussed and voted on the numerous agenda topics. The delegates overwhelmingly approved the creation of PACE Emeritus status for retired RPs. Continuing NFPA's efforts to strengthen its position as the "Leader of the Paralegal Profession"<sup>TM</sup>, the delegates also expanded the Associate member category to include international paralegal associations in NFPA. In addition, two ad hoc committees were formed to (1) study access to legal services and (2) develop a definition of practicing paralegal (including traditional and non-traditional paralegals) as such definition relates to NFPA membership. In the area of Regulation, the minimum educational standards of a regulation proposal to garner NFPA support was revised to include an associate's degree program since many states do not offer a Bachelors degree in paralegal or legal studies. The revised Model Plan (Act) for Licensure was approved but the proposed Model Plan for Regulation (generic plan) was sent back to committee for further work.

Andrea Lupanze, RP, was posthumously awarded NFPA's highest honor, the William Robie award, in recognition of her contributions to NFPA and the paralegal profession.

The policy meeting concluded with the induction of the Officers and Board of Directors, including Tracey Young, RP as the new Director, Region V.