

First Timer

I admit it. I was a first-timer. Have you ever experienced something for the first time and wondered afterward why it took you so long to join in? That's how I felt after attending the 58th IAAP - Alabama Division Annual Meeting this past weekend. Although I am a charter member of our chapter, I had never attended an annual division meeting. Since it was held in Birmingham this year, I signed up and hoped for the best.

I am pleased to say that the events of the weekend far surpassed any doubts I might have had. On Friday we laughed and learned with Bonnie Powell as we encountered "*FISH! A Remarkable Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results.*" Then we cheered as we watched our own Janice Conniff, CPS/CAP, win the division Administrative Professional of the Year (APY) event.

On Saturday we were honored to have dignitaries such as Birmingham's mayor, the Honorable William A. Bell, Sr., to attend our opening ceremony and say a few words to us. During the business meeting, we listened as a representative from each chapter presented a year-end report, and it was informative to hear what goes on in other areas of our state. Our state's members are creative and have many good ideas to share. The recognition luncheon was not a staid, frumpy event, either. Instead, it was full of fun and laughter as each table had been decorated with the many hats that we admins wear and presented to us in the form of a skit by the members of the program committee. When it was time for the division president to return to the podium, she was speechless for a time. She said that was the best recognition luncheon she had ever attended at an annual meeting, and she meant it! That evening was full of sparkle and shine as admins were dressed to the hilt for the awards ceremony. I believe everyone had a very pleasant time.

On Sunday, we were treated to an inspirational talk by one of Alabama Power's vice-presidents, Myrna Pittman. She said God had led her to share His words of encouragement with us, and she closed with a beautiful song. I felt very blessed to have been in attendance. I was slightly reluctant to leave after the next meeting, but I knew I had to get back home to spend at least part of the weekend.

I would now like to add my voice to those members who were already in the know about the annual meeting. Please plan to join us next year! The 59th IAAP – Alabama Division Annual Meeting is scheduled for June 24-26, 2011 at Lake Guntersville State Park Lodge. Mark your calendars now!

Submitted by Darlene Williford, CPS/CAP