



**National**  
Association of Retail Buyers

National Association of Retail Buyers & Sellers presents

# ACHIEVEMENTS & GRATITUDE

**A Note from  
Co-founder  
Angela Dalby**



AS THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETAIL BUYERS & SELLERS embarks on our 3rd year, I have much to be grateful for as I reflect on all the achievements and accomplishments of such a young and still growing (up to over 200 members now!) organization has celebrated in our first 2 years.

One of NARB's greatest achievements is our ongoing section of material you find here in the pages of SG&N. These pages are written and laid out entirely by and for members of the organization who volunteer their time, energy and talents to share their insights and wisdom with members of the industry. Over the past 2 years many different members of the organization have contributed to these pages and have not only created a voice of the association but also aided to the validity to our mission as an organization. I am truly grateful to each of those individuals for their contribution, talents and passion.

This month's section continues in the same spirit and includes a wonderful article spotlighting a NARB retailer's—the Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory-gift shop remodel. Also, Kerry Hand, Corporate Director of Merchandise for Great Wolf Lodge and our resident Visual Merchandising expert, puts out another fabulous piece on utilizing color and color trends in your shops. And our ongoing Retail Roundtable gives voice to vendor/buyer relationships from both viewpoints.

This past year we have really seen our educational programs and events come to maturity. NARB has offered over a dozen events including 6 educational seminars, 3 roundtable events and 3 networking mixers. And just like the magazine content, all programs are put on by volunteer members of the organization. I am continuously impressed and grateful for the volunteer time and effort of our members that help to make everything we do as an association come to fruition.

NARB's greatest feat might be defined as the establishment of the *NARB Tracy Barlow Memorial Scholarship Fund*. In the following pages we

remember our dear colleague Tracy and celebrate the awarding of the 1st NARB scholarships in her name. Tracy's passing last year was unexpected and heartbreaking to many. There was solace and healing found in the rallying of the industry to celebrate her life and professional accomplishments in the establishment of a scholarship memorial fund so that her legacy can live on forever. Personally and professionally, I have never been prouder to count myself among the members of NARB and the souvenir specialty retail industry as a whole as it has proved to have the heart and soul of a community. The private donations from members of our retailing community along with the generosity of those who purchased tables and/or raffle tickets at last year's fundraising event made the scholarships recently awarded a reality for college students in need of assistance.

The ongoing commitment of NARB to the scholarship fund will be found at *The 2nd Annual NARB Smokin Hot Hoedown* to benefit the *NARB Tracy Barlow Memorial Scholarship Fund*, to be held on November 4th, 2011 in the Sevierville, Tennessee Events Center East Concourse. Table sales to the event and/or donations to the fund can be made online at: [NARBuyers.org](http://NARBuyers.org)

*With much gratitude!*

—Angela

## MISSION STATEMENT

The National Association of Retail Buyers & Sellers (NARB) is an independent, non-profit, national membership organization dedicated to strengthening and developing the careers and/or education of its members.



**RETAIL SPOTLIGHT**

# LOUISVILLE SLUGGER MUSEUM *and* FACTORY

THEY DIDN'T REALIZE IT AT THE TIME, but in 1996 Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory's original store was built more for looks than function. An expansion ten years later added much needed space but only compounded the operational challenges.

This spring, the popular attraction in downtown Louisville, Kentucky opened a newly renovated store that still occupies the same footprint but utilizes the space much more efficiently and in a much more attractive manner.

"We made do for years with the space as it was," says Anne Jewell, executive director of the museum. "But after a significant renovation of the museum galleries the store looked especially dated and worn out. Our retail was too important to our bottom line to let it go on any longer in that space."

**The Renovation Begins**

The store was closed for several months during the museum's slower winter season, and a temporary retail space was set-up in the main lobby while the transformation took place with the new store.

The challenges of the original store included a poor layout with an awkwardly shaped cash-wrap plunked down in the middle of prime selling space, not enough wall display space, a dividing wall of shelves that took up more square footage than was useful, and a second room that looked

completely different from the front half of the store because it had once been a museum gallery.

Without expanding the 3,000 square foot outline, the renovation still managed to provide more space. The dividing wall was torn down which provided for one large open and multi-functional room. The cash wrap was moved to the side of the store and many more shelves and tables were added.

Along with the operational improvements, the overall look and feel of the store was carefully thought out. The goal was to extend the museum experience into the store by choosing colors and materials that conveyed the tradition and proud history of Louisville Slugger, a world-class brand that has been making baseball bats for over 125 years.

A deep, rich mahogany faux wood was chosen to anchor the floor of the store. From there, several key walls feature a vintage faux brick. The color tones include greens and wood grain shelves, with doses of black and brushed nickel.

**Some Construction Curveballs**

As is typically the case with renovations, not


*Before*

*After*

everything that looked good on paper actually worked in the store, and the team had to adjust plans as the building progressed. For example, the new cash-wrap needed to be moved back two feet from where it was on the drawings, which cost some time and extra money but was necessary. Also, some custom built display cases ended up being total duds.

“The display cases looked good in the drawings and design layout, but that just didn’t translate into the actual space,” says Jewell. “We were disappointed because they were not cheap but why compound a mistake by forcing something in that will only be a detriment to our sales goals? With some brainstorming, we did manage to reuse portions of the cases in the store.”

Another change from the blueprints involved lighting. There was not enough lighting in the original plans so more was added after the store opened.

### **MVPs – Most Valuable Products**

Aside from the look and layout, the renovation included an overhaul of merchandise and products, too. With the mass appeal of baseball, it’s important for the Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory Store to have a wide-range of prices and styles for all budgets and tastes.

“Since Opening day we have been moving and adding product to meet the demands of our guests” says Laura Ginnebaugh, Managing Retail Director. “We have found that for the avid baseball fan the Louisville Slugger logo is king and we offer it on everything from a baby bottle to etched glass. We are proud to say that we have something for everyone in our new store.”

### **Getting the Word Out**

Since Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory is a shrine to baseball bats and hitting, the museum team

put its own spin on Major League Baseball’s longstanding Opening Day tradition.

Hoping to attract media attention to the new store opening, the team came up with a better photo op than your run-of-the-mill ribbon cutting. The Museum Store Opening Day fanfare began with a “first pitch” into the new store. Ginnebaugh pitched the ball to Jewell, who was positioned in a catcher’s stance inside the friendly confines of the renovated retail space. After that, the first 100 shoppers received a free Louisville Slugger souvenir baseball with any purchase. The cameras came to capture the moment and the media coverage was a great way to get the word out.


*After*

### **A Worthy Investment**

The team is still working with the space and learning new things every day. Signage, placement, lighting, and other factors all contribute to the success of selling in the new store. From t-shirts and sweatshirts, to caps and other sporty apparel, the store has items for all tastes and budgets, including personalized bats and mini-bats.

“The renovated Museum Store enhances the overall experience here, better serves our guests and offers the latest merchandise from Louisville Slugger and Major League Baseball,” says Jewell. “We saw this as a great investment in our brand because it’s now a retail experience that’s worthy of the Louisville Slugger legacy,” she added.

# Retail **ROUNDTABLE** Vendor/Buyer Relationships

## BUYER VIEWPOINT



**Christine Anderson, Merchandise Manager  
at Bay Retail Enterprises**

A successful vendor/buyer relationship is all about partnership. I have been fortunate enough to develop lasting, wonderful relationships with a number of vendors/suppliers through the years. It takes time and patience to establish the trust needed to create a full partnership that is beneficial to both parties.

Partnership is the true meaning of a buyer/vendor relationship. And as with any successful partnership you must maintain the following:

- Strive for Consistent Communication
- Be Professional
- Be Ethical
- Be Honest
- Be Respectful

By following these guidelines you will have the opportunity to develop strong and lasting relationships that will lead to success in our wonderful world of retail and wholesale.

## VENDOR VIEWPOINT

**Michael Atkinson, President at A & F Gift and Souvenir**



In challenging economic times, it is easy for the relationship between buyer and seller to become antagonistic. We are all facing unprecedented challenges of price increases, longer delivery times and sales volume challenges and these all combine to create a great deal of stress on the jobs of both buyers and sellers. These challenges will only be managed well if a true partnership exists between buyers and sellers. The elements of a partnership that will be critical to navigating through these challenges are *communication, respect, professionalism and fairness*.

There will need to be open and honest communication about price changes, so that each party can preserve margins while ensuring that items are attractively priced. We need to be respectful of each other's business conditions and requirements, with an understanding that both need to be profitable to enable future product development and to create new retail trends. Professionalism will be of utmost importance in the handling of any controversy and finally, fairness, as many issues will be outside of the direct control of vendors and buyers.

## SAVE THE DATES

### SCHOLARSHIP FUND RAISING EVENT

**Friday November 4th 7:00pm-11:00pm**

The 2nd Annual NARB Smokin Hot Hoedown to benefit the NARB Tracy Barlow Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Tables can be purchased online at: [www.NARBuyers.org](http://www.NARBuyers.org)

### INTERNATIONAL GIFT EXPOSITION IN THE SMOKIES, NOVEMBER 3-7

**Saturday November 5th 3:00pm-4:00pm**

Educational Seminar-Retail Pop!

Led by Diana Borcz, Director of Licensing for Rock & Roll Hall of Fame & Museum

A fun networking and idea exchange event for Buyers where roundtable type questions are discussed as they are popped out of balloons. Location—the NARB Buyers Lounge.

### SMOKY MOUNTAIN GIFT SHOW, NOVEMBER 4-7

**Sunday November 6th 3:00pm-4:00pm:**

Educational Seminar-Increasing Traffic and Sales

Speaker Angela Dalby, Co-Founder of NARB

This favorite NARB seminar will give you an array of clever and easy to execute marketing, merchandising and promotional ideas to increase traffic and ultimately sales in your independent retail store. Location—TBA

# Visual Article: **COLOR** *in* **VISUAL MERCHANDISING**

By Kerry Hand



VISUAL MERCHANDISING CAN BE DESCRIBED as the way one displays products in the most appealing manner with the end result of making a sale. An excellent way to create an enticing presentation of merchandise is the use of color. Color grabs attention, creates a mood and affects how the customer feels.

Customers will react within the first five seconds to your display. Color sends a quick message to the customer without a single word. The key use of color will draw a customer into the store or move them to specific areas within your store. The main purpose of the display is to excite customer interest in your merchandise. Your goal is to get them to stop, touch and buy.

Developing a display based on color results naturally by following a basic merchandising system. Choose one color family for the display and make it dominate by at least 80%. Too many colors only confuse customers and will weaken the presentation. As a theme builds, the more the color is repeated the more impact it has.

Use the following basic color display techniques to create an even color transformation:

- **Shelving displays** – place light colors on top and dark colors on the bottom
- **Rounders** – begin color at one point and work from light to dark
- **Waterfalls and Faceouts** – hang dark to the back and light toward the front

Color is also one of the most important design tools to communicate style and mood in store display. In addition, it is an important consideration for customers when selecting merchandise. Customers select apparel and giftware based on current color trends.

The top ten Pantone Colors for Fall 2011 combines bright colors with staple neutrals.



Use these trendy colors in your focal displays in the front entrance of your store or in your windows to lure your customers.

Remember, the main purpose of your display is to excite the customer and create interest in the merchandise so that they will want to purchase. Retailers who comprehend and apply the power of color profit from increased sales.



**Choose one color family for [a] display... the more the color is repeated the more impact it has.**



THE N.A.R.B.  
*Tracy Barlow*  
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

*2011-2012*

**ACADEMIC YEAR FUNDS AWARDED**

IT IS WITH GREAT DELECTATION THAT The National Association of Retail Buyers & Sellers (NARB) awards its 1st ever college scholarships to students pursuing a career in retail. Retail is a multibillion dollar industry as well as an industry economic indicator and there is very limited funding available for students pursuing a higher education in retailing. NARB is proud to award \$15,000 in college scholarship funds for the 2011-2012 academic year in memory of Tracy Barlow, founding director of the association who had a much celebrated career as a Retail Buyer. Money raised in 2010 for the *NARB Tracy Barlow Memorial Scholarship Fund* through the generous private donations of members of the souvenir & gift industry, as well as revenue generated from table sales of the *1st Annual NARB Smokin Hot Hoedown* and raffle ticket sales at the event held in November 2010 were awarded in August for the 2011-2012 academic year to LIM College and The University of Arizona.

**\$5,000 in scholarship funds was awarded to LIM College in NYC.**

Formally known as the Laboratory Institute of Merchandising, LIM offers undergraduate degrees in Fashion Merchandising, Management, Marketing



LIM COLLEGE

and Visual Merchandising as well as a one of a kind MBA program in Fashion Management and Entrepreneurship.

LIM's sole mission is to educate students in the business of fashion. Michael Sachs, Associate VP of Student

Affairs, stated "We are very thrilled there is a scholar-

ship dedicated to supporting students pursuing a degree and career in the field of retail buying. LIM is proud to associate ourselves with NARB, an organization who is dedicated and passionate about helping to educate the future of the retail industry."

**\$10,000 in scholarship funds was awarded to The University of Arizona's (UA) Norton School of Family and Consumer Sciences Terry J. Lundgren Center for Retailing.** UA's undergraduate Retailing and Consumer Sciences program offers one of the only four-year programs of its kind in the nation and offers a broad selection of courses emphasizing retail supply-chain management principles. There are also special Professional Development Certifications programs available in their undergraduate program including



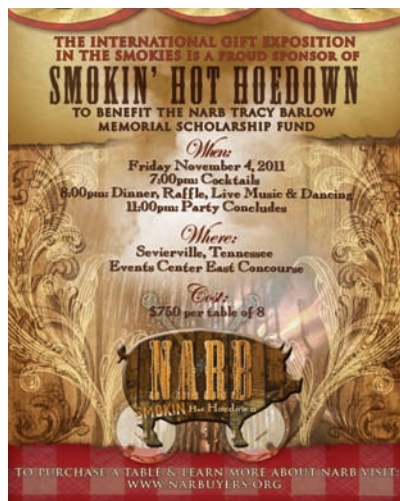
Retail Technology, Retail Financial Services, Strategy and Planning, Promotions and Product Development. UA also offers both master's and doctoral programs in Retailing and Consumer Sciences and

places their graduates both in the retail and wholesale side of the business. Melinda Burke, Director and Professor of Practice is "quite delighted to recognize our future retail leaders with two \$5,000 scholarships for the 2011-2012 academic year" and is pleased that "Terry J Lundgren center was considered and found to be an institution eligible to award the *National Association of Retail Buyers & Sellers Tracy Barlow Memorial Scholarship Funds* to".

## KEEPING THE SCHOLARSHIP ALIVE FOR 2012-2013 AND BEYOND

Tracy Barlow was an individual who lived her life to help others. She is remembered by her industry peers for her beautiful caring and giving spirit. NARB is passionate about carrying on the tradition and legacy of the *NARB Tracy Barlow Memorial Scholarship Fund*. The organization has already collected generous donations to the fund in early 2011 that will guarantee at least one \$5,000 scholarship will be awarded for the 2012-2013 academic year.

In addition to donations already collected, the *2nd Annual NARB Smokin Hot Hoedown* will be held again in November with all revenue generated from the event and raffle going to the fund. Diana Borcz, NARB Executive Director of Events shared that she is "proud to be part of an organization that not only works to educate its



current membership body, but also looks toward the future. The scholarship fund allows us to reward students who are pursuing an education in the retail field. I am hopeful that these students take the NARB mission and ideals into the work force. NARB is the future of the gift and souvenir industry."

Details scholarship criteria and fund overview are available at: [http://](http://www.narbuyers.org/112/tracy-barlow-scholarship-fund.htm)

[www.narbuyers.org/112/tracy-barlow-scholarship-fund.htm](http://www.narbuyers.org/112/tracy-barlow-scholarship-fund.htm). Online donations to the fund can be made at: <http://www.narbuyers.org/113/tracy-barlow-memorial-page.htm> and tables can be purchased for the *2011 NARB Smokin Hot Hoedown* to benefit the *NARB Tracy Barlow Memorial Scholarship Fund* at: <http://www.narbuyers.org>.



THE N.A.R.B.  
*Tracy Barlow*  
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Tracy Barlow served the souvenir industry for over 18 years before being taken away from us unexpectedly on October 12, 2010. She had a passion and love for the industry that was unmatched. Tracy was a visionary in product development and those who were fortunate enough to work alongside her benefited from her knowledge and enthusiasm. Tracy began her illustrious retail career as a Souvenir Buyer with Princess Cruises where she purchased items for the on board retail shops. From there she went to work for WH Smith where she purchased souvenirs for major airports and hotel venues throughout the country including the Las Vegas airport and the New York New York Hotel. Tracy then went to work for HMSHost where she developed custom souvenir products for the prestigious Empire State Building, Houston Space Center and over 100 specialty retail stores across the country.

Tracy was active in the retail community and served on various boards through out her career. She always had a desire to help others both in her personal and professional life—Tracy changed lives. It is fitting that the first National Association of Retail Buyers Scholarship Fund, where she served on the Board of Directors since its inception, be in her memory so that her legacy of helping others will live on in her absence.



To donate to the fund please  
visit [www.narbuyers.org](http://www.narbuyers.org)