



BPW Connections – Coast to Coast Connexions BPW – d'un océan à l'autre

The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs
La Fédération Canadienne des Clubs de Femmes de Carrières Commerciales et Professionnelles

BPW Canada Newsletter – Volume 3, No. 6, Spring 2008

Editors: Judy Hagerman & Crystal Sissons

President's Report – Fran Donaldson

It has been a pleasure over the past several weeks to participate in many club events.

January 23 ~ Durham Ontario

BPW Durham held a gala dinner to celebrate the club's 20th anniversary. Many former members attended, as well as Ontario Provincial President Karin Gorgerat and members from other clubs in the area, including Gale Coburn, who is now a member of the Virtual Club, and several guests from other community groups. It was a lovely evening, presided by club president Kim Beatty. Charter President Carol Sharpe did an amazing job of retelling the club's history, enlivened by anecdotes and insights. Motivational speaker Sue Neal delivered an inspiring address. Thanks to the Durham club for inviting me, and congratulations on successful rebuilding efforts.

February 23 – March 1 ~ New York

BPW Canada was well represented at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Attendees were asked to provide a report for the newsletter, and there will be follow-up at Convention.

March 3 ~ Saskatoon

I attended BPW Saskatoon's 8th Annual International Women's Day Celebration – a gala dinner featuring our candle-lighting ceremony and the introduction of several award winners. The keynote speaker was Betty-Ann Heggie, addressing the topic of *Financing Gender Equity*, the theme at CSW this year. Ms Heggie, a member of the Hall of Fame of Canada's Top 10 Most Powerful Women, stressed the women's slow professional growth in the corporate world, reflecting the findings of the Rosenzweig Report published earlier this year. She touted the contributions women can make and offered hope that looming labour shortages may cause companies to change the "rules of the game" and become more attractive to women. Sidelight: The dinner was held just a short distance from the elegant Bessborough Hotel, where the BPW convention was held in 1982, and I recalled our famous "picnic in the park".

March 4 ~ Regina

By happy coincidence, Saskatchewan Provincial President Linda Prafke was driving to Regina and took me along. In Regina, I was the guest of Jeanne Martinson, who hosted an informal reception with members of the Regina club. It was a great time of thoughtful and stimulating conversation, with a yummy breakfast to speed me on my way west.

March 5-6 ~ Penticton

Barb Ezart picked me up in Kelowna and hustled me along to an interview at the *Okanagan* newspaper, resulting in a great feature article in Saturday's business section. The Leadership Workshop the next day was sold out, with about 30 non-members attending. It was a great group to work with, at least until the muffins arrived! Barb did an excellent job as co-facilitator, despite the fact she was still suffering from an illness picked up on her trip to Cuba. The workshop feedback was excellent, and the event provided a great way to connect with many women in the community.

Congratulations to Char Shultz and Marlene Trenholm-Pye for organizing the day, and thanks to Marge Donovan for her help and support.

March 8 ~ Kamloops

With Barb Ezart again donning her chauffeur's cap, we were off to help BPW Kamloops celebrate International Women's Day. In the afternoon, I again presented the Leadership Workshop, this time with Kamloops member Susan McIntyre, who contributed her expertise in adapting the workshop to the overflow audience, again consisting largely of non-members (aka potential members!). After a networking hour, there was a gala dinner, with the candle-lighting ceremony. The speaker was Deborah Grey, former Reform Party MP. In a lively, witty presentation, Ms Grey told the story of her life, interweaving insights and lessons learned. We need more women to be actively involved in politics at all levels, and the world would certainly be a better place if they were all as intelligent, principled and dedicated as Deb Grey.

Congratulations to organizers Pat DiFrancesco and Jes Ballam, and thanks to Louise Morash for putting together a great video presentation on BPW.

March 12 ~ Calgary

After a brief family visit in Victoria, I flew to Calgary. With Club President Barb Francis we had a lunch meeting with the executive of the Calgary club. What a great group, full of ideas and energy – and questions! In the evening, I spoke at the regular club meeting, which included the candle-lighting ceremony. The next morning, Julia Dennis treated me to breakfast, thoughtfully choosing the best spot for an early-morning scenic view and mellow conversation.

With a renewed interest in advocacy and the international aspects of BPW, the Calgary club is already making great plans for next year.

March 14-15 ~ Winnipeg

Members of the three Manitoba clubs met for a special dinner with MLA Sharon Blady, who recently spoke in the Legislature thanking BPW Manitoba last September for honouring the 18 women elected to the legislature (highest percentage in Canada). She presented a framed copy of the Statement of Provincial President Colleen Allan, and spoke on the importance of supporting and promoting women in politics. Dinner was followed by a 2008 convention committee meeting. On Saturday Norma Boule, President of the Selkirk club and Vice-President of BPW Manitoba, lost her battle with cancer. (See the Memorial page of the BPW Canada website.) BPW Manitoba members will honour Norma's memory by making 2008 "the friendly convention" that she wanted it to be.

Women are tomorrow's leaders

Today is International Women's Day

By STEVE MACNAULL
The Okanagan Saturday

Empathy, compassion and compromise are not signs of weakness. "In fact, they are the sought-after leadership traits of tomorrow," said Fran Donaldson, in Penticton to lead a Women and Leadership for the 21st Century workshop.

"Men often consider empathy, compassion and compromise as things to avoid, but they really are strengths. And they are characteristics that women tend to have naturally."

Today is International Women's Day, and Friday's seminar led by Donaldson celebrated the day early by urging women to follow their dreams and take on leadership roles.

"If you look at the people in the world that enforce peace, lead religions, head corporations and sit in parliament, they all tend to be white, middle-aged men in suits," said Donaldson.

"Women aren't out to get or replace men, but we would like to see more balance and see our unique skills utilized."

Because men have dominated business and government for centuries, they tend to run those pursuits like they do their sports — competitively. "Women don't necessarily have to see a winner and a loser, but are more apt to be supportive and come up with a negotiated win-win deal," said Donaldson, a training consultant from Pictou, Ont.

"This is the kind of approach that reduces staff turnover, increases productivity and better profits in business."

Barbara Ezart, vice-president of the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, just happens to live in Penticton.

She did part of the workshop and stressed that women have to become better at self-promotion in order to end up in positions of influence and management.

"Women are the first to think they aren't qualified or can't do that," she said.

"Most women, even if they've been a stay-at-home mom, have the kind of life and household-running skills that translate well to working with and getting along with people."

Ezart, now retired, and who last worked in training for the federal government, said women leaders come in all guises.

Your mother, as well as the Queen of England, can be considered great leaders.

She also pointed to Canadian astronaut Roberta Bondar as a leader for cracking a male-dominated field and encouraging girls to consider careers in math and science.

Olympic silver medalist rower-Silken Laumann from Canada can also be considered a leader for urging girls to pursue athletics or whatever their dream may be.

Most women, even if they've been a stay-at-home mom, have the kind of life and household-running skills that translate well to working with and getting along with people.

Barbara Ezart

Home again

My last scheduled stop was to speak at my own club in Trenton on March 19. But Julia was right – that scratchy voice was not just from fatigue but the beginning of a cold that mutated into a sinus and ear infection (which, weeks later is still with me). Unable to fly home on schedule the only appearance I had to cancel was right here at home. Thanks to Karin Gorgerat who stepped in as speaker, and to Val Darling who knew how to make everything work, and my sincere apologies to the members of BPW Trenton. Let's try again!

Montreal BPW Club Takes on Violence Against Women

Joan Macklin – BPW Montreal

Montreal BPW Club members, **Pearl Eliadis**, human rights lawyer and President of the **Shield of Athena Family Services (SOAFS)** and **Melba Kamateros**, Executive Director of this organization are responsible for the community outreach program. The organization recently received funding from Status of Women Canada, for the development of a new three-year multilingual public awareness program on sexual assault.

As a result, **CJNT Montreal**, Montreal's broadcaster on cultural diversity, in collaboration with the **SOAFS**, has launched a new Public Service Announcement (PSA) on sexual abuse. The new PSA is targeting **18** ethnic groups and is available in **15** languages. Victims are already beginning to respond.

This is part of a five year community outreach project designed to raise public awareness on family violence in ethno-cultural communities that the **SOAFS** has been involved in from 2002.

CJNT Montreal has been the major media partner in this project from 2003 and their contribution has amounted to \$250,000 for the distribution of the **SOAFS**'s multilingual programs on family violence, police procedures and existing resources for victims.



National Convention – Winnipeg July 2008!

Come to Winnipeg in Friendly Manitoba July 24 to 27th, 2008 for the National Convention, *Women Making Democracy Work*. President Fran and the committee are working diligently to make this the best Convention ever. The lovely Fairmont Hotel will make our stay most comfortable. If you haven't already registered, the registration form is on the National Web Site. Winnipeg has many very special events arranged to inform, educate and delight us. Come and meet your friends, discuss the Resolutions, see the city and have a wonderful time.

See the following link for more information!

<http://www.bpwcanada.com/convention-2008.html>

- Fran Donaldson, BPW Canada President

BPW Canada had an unusually large number of members in attendance at CSW in New York this year: Sue Calhoun, Vi Andersen, Julie McSorley, Colleen Smith-Robinson, Rhonda Perks, Sharon Hale, Louisa Barton Duguay, Maureen Craig-McIntosh, Nancy Eustace, Sharon Williamson, and me. All were asked to write about their experience. All the articles received are included in this issue of the newsletter.

Among the highlights of the CSW sessions this year was the appearance of the Secretary-General, Ban-Ki Moon at the opening session to launch his campaign to end violence against women, giving the prestige and resources of his office to a very important cause. There was also a campaign on the same subject by UNIFEM, featuring an email petition under the patronage of Nicole Kidman. Yes, it does make you wonder why they couldn't combine rather than duplicate their efforts, but I suppose there's never too much we can do to focus attention on this ongoing world-wide problem.

The apparent lack of co-ordination is related to another key issue, re-organizing the United Nations to streamline its operations and improve the delivery of services. You may remember that Stephen Lewis, in one of his last major speeches as special envoy for AIDS, spoke out very strongly for a new structure that would better serve the needs of women, combining all existing programs and entities under a single, high-level women's directorate, headed by an under-secretary and adequately resourced. Of course, re-designing something as large and complex as the UN will not be easy, but Lewis's idea was also recommended by the official panel, and is warmly endorsed by most if not all CSW participants. Like everything else at the UN, the idea soon acquired its own support group and its own acronym – GEAR (Gender Equality Architecture Reform). We were pleased that in its official statement to CSW, Canada endorsed GEAR.

I found it challenging to work with the other NGOs from Canada and the official Canadian delegation. There seemed to be just too many issues being raised, not all of them relevant to the task at hand, ie, input to the Agreed Conclusions of CSW 2008. It was good to have a strong group from Quebec, but that of course entailed the problems of translation, using up a lot of meeting time. We were fortunate to have Muriel Smith to take notes and help us make sense of it all. (Muriel, who was attending on behalf of the Ad-hoc Coalition for Equality and Human Rights, of which BPW Canada is a member, will be a key speaker at our upcoming Convention.)

The main theme of CSW this year was "Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women". It was an interesting coincidence that our federal budget was released while we were in New York, and we were able to discuss it and give feedback to the Canadian delegation. In general, we did not feel that the budget would do much to empower women nor that it had been developed using a gender perspective.

By mid-week, most of the others from Canada had left, so only Sue, Vi and I attended the BPW International dinner, which featured promotion of the International Congress in Mexico. As a meeting of the international Executive was scheduled to coincide with CSW, it was a great opportunity to catch up with everyone, and we left with many mementos and messages of friendship to the members in Canada.



BPW Canada 1st Vice President Sue Calhoun,
BPW International President
Chonchanok Viravan (Nok)
BPW Canada President Fran Donaldson
BPW Canada Virtual Club President
Vi Andersen
At the BPW International Dinner in New York
during CSW 2008.

Equal Sharing of Responsibilities

The theme of the 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2009 will be “*The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS.*”

The Beijing Platform for Action, coming out of the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing emphasized that equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men was critical for the well-being of women and their families. An issues paper presented in New York noted that in countries around the world, women bear a disproportionate burden of household labour; that girls and young women are expected to manage both educational and domestic responsibilities, often resulting in poor scholastic performance and early drop-out from the educational system; that lack of access to productive resources and inadequate sharing of family responsibilities, combined with insufficient services such as child care, continue to restrict employment, economic, professional and other opportunities for women.

The unequal division of labour and responsibilities within households limits women’s potential to find the time to develop the skills required for participation in decision-making in wider public forums. In the context of HIV/AIDS, women and girls bear a disproportionate burden to care for and support those who are infected.

Next year’s theme is a critical one for women around the world, and we’re hoping to have an even bigger delegation from BPW Canada. The CSW experience is “not to be missed,” fascinating, exhilarating, exhausting. You’ll meet your BPW sisters from around the world. *Think about coming!*

Sue Calhoun, 1st Vice-president, BPW Canada

Report from the UN’s 52nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, (CSW) February 22-28, 2008

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) sets policy and themes for discussions on Women’s rights and equality. It has 192 state members from around the world and its appointed representatives are from government bodies who answer to the UN general assembly. In addition to state members, there is representation by NGO’s having consultative status at the UN, IFBPW being one of these.

Each year the CSW has specific themes. This year *Financing for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women* was the Priority theme. *Women’s Equal Participation in conflict Prevention management and Conflict Resolution and in Post –conflict peace building* was the review theme.

There were outstanding speakers at the CSW, one being Professor Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Director of the Centre for Comparative Literature and society. Her theme was language as a communication tool, suggesting that language is key. In many languages the term ‘child rearing’ means ‘making human’, quite a different concept for many of us.

Another point in which language shapes thoughts is in Slovakia. If there is violence, it’s considered that an individual lacks virtue and needs specific training to increase that virtue.

Other interesting remarks: Hiding behind cultural practices is unacceptable. Violence against women has created poverty, civil instability, unsafe environments and high childhood mortality.

In one session the discussion was about the Five-O projects of which IFBPW is a part. At present, Five-O has 25 projects such as teaching sewing and garment alterations, to bookkeeping.

The UN founder of the Women’s World Bank (WWB) was another speaker. The WWB was formed in the early 1980s and is devoted to helping women around the globe with financing. WWB has 54 affiliates in 46 countries, all managed by women. In 2000 UN Resolution 1325 was initiated dealing with Peace and Security for Women. The four strategic goals include reducing women’s poverty and exclusion, ending violence against women, reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls, and supporting women’s leadership in governance and post-conflict reconstruction. During the discussion of the effectiveness on this Resolution, it was recognized that the biggest gap is now in implementation and monitoring. Smaller grassroots organizations do not get the funding needed, yet they have the most impact on women’s issues.

For the complete report by Rhonda Perks and Colleen Smith Robinson, please check web site, www.bpwcanada.com



(left to right) At NGO Orientation Session: Colleen Smith-Robinson, Rhonda Perks, Chonchanok Viravan, Fran Donaldson, Sue Calhoun



At UN Headquarters: (left to right) Rhonda Perks, Colleen Smith-Robinson (Cambridge, Ontario Club)

IDP Training: So what is it anyway? By Julie McSorley

In February Julie McSorley, Young BPW Vice-President 2006-08, along with five others from her Moncton Club attended a facilitator training workshop a “train-the-trainer” for the *Individual Development Program (IDP)* in New York City.

Thirty-five women from many countries were represented at this training program with the intention of making a difference in their respective clubs, cities and countries.

The *Individual Development Program (IDP)* comprises 14 modules designed to cover a wide range of topics, from understanding behavioural styles and personalities to parliamentary procedure.

The course was created by BPW/USA and in 2005 was adopted by BPW International. The training was offered in New York City during the three days prior to the start of the CSW sessions at the UN.

It is the intent of the vibrant Moncton Club to deliver this training not only to our membership, but also to the broader community. Only those who have attended the “train-the-trainer” sessions specific to *IDP* can facilitate the modules. Our intention is to offer this training to others in the community as a fundraiser while giving back to our community.

Those in attendance left the training with new friendships, lasting memories, and a strong sense of sisterhood. Women from different countries agreed to assist others with translations.

We, in the Moncton Club now look forward to sharing our knowledge and our renewed enthusiasm. We are excited by this new challenge to educate and empower yet even more women with greater knowledge. **Building Powerful Women!**

Report on a Public Forum on Human Trafficking.

Representing BPW Canada, at the request of President Fran Donaldson, I attended a public forum on Human Trafficking held at the National Library in Ottawa on January 30th. The event was sponsored by The Zonta Club of Ottawa, and supported by The Canadian Federation of University Women/Kanata and UNIFEM Canada. MC Rita Celli, host of “Ontario Today,” presided over a well attended meeting.

Presentations were given by the RCMP; PACT (Persons Against Crime of Trafficking) a volunteer organization; Christina Harrison Baird an international human rights lawyer, who now teaches Law at Carleton University; and Sheila Smith the Ontario Field Worker for the Justice, Peace Integrity of Creation Office of the Canadian Religious Conference at the Bronson Centre in Ottawa; Kathy Cook, author of *Stolen Angels, the Kidnapped Girls of Uganda*; and Anette Sikka a lawyer who spent four years in Kosovo with the UN to combat human trafficking and other forms of gender-based violence.

The definitions given to indicate the difference between trafficking and smuggling are.
“A person who is **trafficked** is kept under control of the traffickers, and exploited in some way after having been transported across a border”.
“A person who is **smuggled** receives help to enter a country, usually in exchange for money, and that is the end of the relationship with the smuggler”.

The RCMP stressed the need for citizens to be alert to signs of exploitation in domestic situations or the sex trade, and to notify the police so that an investigation can be made. A disc recording of the meeting was forwarded to Doris Hall VP BPW Canada, who is involved in the development of Resolutions regarding this important issue.

Kathy Laing - Secretary- Treasurer BPW Canada Virtual Club



Members of Greater Moncton BPW Celebrating the successful completion of the IDP Training. From left to right are: Sharon Hale, Club President; Maureen Craig McIntosh, Representative for North America and the Non-Spanish Speaking Countries of the Caribbean to the BPW International Taskforce on Mentoring; Janet MacDuff, Club Membership Secretary; Nancy Eustace, Club Treasurer; Sharon Williamson, Club Recording Secretary; and Julie McSorley, Club Immediate Past President and Young BPW VP Canada.



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CONVENTION 2008 – WINNIPEG, JULY 24-27

Have you registered for Convention yet?

- Information and registration forms are on the BPW Canada website: www.bpwcanada.com.
- Credentials forms and other information have been sent to club presidents.
- International President Chonchanok Viravan, International Vice President Liz Benham and International District Director Monica McNeill will all be in attendance.

The friendships and the connection with women across Canada is all an integral part of conventions. We learn so much, we share ideas, we make new friends and reacquaint ourselves with other friends. We laugh, we dine well, we sip the odd glass of wine, we get no sleep and generally have a wonderful time. If you have never been to convention, this is the time to begin. Winnipeg is waiting for you!