



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 National Newsletter – Volume 2, Issue 1, Fall 2006

President's Message

The work of BPW - here at home and internationally - is important, especially in the present climate of serious challenges to so many equity issues. To be able to continue our important work, we need an organization that is financially stable as well as sustainable in the long-term. BPW depends entirely on its members for financial support, receiving no funding from government or partisan programs and thus maintaining our political autonomy. In my message to you at the Convention in Toronto (which you can still read on our website), I promised that our Board of Directors would be committed to sound financial management and better revenue generation as well as greater use of technology to improve our efficiency and effectiveness.

This low-budget newsletter is part of the effort to limit our expenses, while providing timely information. It is my aim to communicate with you just as often but at half the cost. I count on your support and cooperation to achieve this. The insert included with this newsletter explains how you can help reduce our expenses. Clearly, however, we also need to address the revenue side of the equation.

Our membership fees- which are the primary source of operating funds - have not increased in over 15 years and most recent fund-raising initiatives have fallen short of their targets.

During the budget discussions at the Convention, many suggestions were made about how clubs and members could contribute. The Ways and Means Committee has put together a great program, details of which are on the website. Please take up at least one of the offers to purchase great products at great prices and help BPW Canada at the same time. We have already earned over \$500 through sales of the Women of the World CD. If every member takes this opportunity to do some Christmas shopping on the BPW Canada website, we could eliminate the budget deficit. Of course, memorial gifts and other donations are also much appreciated.

With a little help from every member, we can start the next budget cycle in much better shape. Let's all do our share!

Fran Donaldson
President 2006-08
fdonalds@magma.ca

BPW Canada shocked at Status of Women office closings

BPW members are certainly aware that Status of Women Canada has announced that it will close 12 of its 16 regional offices across the country next April.

This move follows an announcement earlier this fall that the department's budget had been cut by \$5 million, almost 40%. This, despite Prime Minister Stephen Harper's statement during the January 2006 election campaign that *"If elected, I will take concrete and immediate measures, as recommended by the United Nations, to ensure that Canada fully upholds its commitments to women in Canada."*

We are shocked with the Prime Minister's seeming change of heart, especially given that the closures will mean few women across Canada will then have access to or information about Status of Women programs.

In contrast, the United Nations High-Level Panel on System-Wide Cohesion in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment recently released a report, recommending that the UN create an independent women-specific agency at the UN to address issues of women's health, equality and security.

This recommendation followed lobbying efforts by Canadian Stephen Lewis, Special Envoy to the UN on HIV/AIDS, who has consistently argued that the UN has not fulfilled its mandate in addressing gender equality issues.

December 10, 2006 will mark the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), of which Canada was a signatory. CEDAW goals have yet to be met.

BPW Canada finds it curious that while international organizations are moving in one direction – towards greater equality for women in the world – the Canadian government is moving in the other – cutting budgets and closing offices that have promoted efforts towards gender equity. Moreover, we are shocked that the Conservative government seems prepared to walk away from its international commitments, like CEDAW.

BPW Canada finds this situation totally unacceptable. As your national Board of Directors, we encourage all clubs across the country to help us put these issues on the agenda in the next federal election. The women of Canada deserve better.

Long-service pins

BPW Canada has a series of "Years of service" bars, to attach to the new logo pins, to mark five-year increments from 20 years to 50 years of service. If you, as a member, have earned one of these bars, let your club president know and she will place an order with Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Hall at barbarahallbpw@shaw.ca. She just needs to let Barbara know your name, the year that you joined, and what bar she is requesting for you.

Visit our website!

Sharon Selkirk has been working hard to update the BPW Canada website. There are a number of new and useful resources that clubs can download to use in their work. Visit the site often (www.bpwcanada.com) and refer others to it! Here are some documents that you might find useful:

- *Tips for growing your membership* (see Federation Promotion page);
- *A Step-by-step guide to starting a new BPW Club* (also FP page);
- Resolutions from convention 2006 as well as the Brief to government (see Resolutions & Briefs page);
- Great fundraising ideas! Check out the Ways and Means page for a number of ideas for ways for clubs to raise money.
- A new Emblems page has photographs of some BPW items, and a revised order form with a number of items on sale. Great prices! Don't miss it!
- In Memoriam – to honour BPW members who have passed away. Unfortunately, we have had to post several new notices.

Upcoming events:

- The Regional Conference for North America and Non-Spanish Speaking Caribbean Countries will be held in Jamaica on February 16-18, 2007. Check out the website (www.bpw-northamerica.org/) for information and costs. Let's plan on a big Canadian delegation!
- Sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations in New York, February 26 to March 10. Details are on the BPW International website. Contact Fran Donaldson (fdonalds@magma.ca) if you would like to attend.
- BPW Canada Annual General Meeting will be held in Montreal on July 7, 2007.

Call for Resolutions - Reminder

This is a reminder for all clubs that resolutions to be presented at the Annual General Meeting in Montreal must be submitted before February 1, 2007. Please send me an e-mail if your club is currently working on a resolution so that the topic can be posted on our BPW Canada website. This will avoid duplication of effort and allow clubs working on the same area of interest to combine their efforts if they choose to do so. My email is wilma.evans@rbc.com. Please send me your updates so we can keep the website current.
-Wilma Evans, chair,
Resolutions & By-laws committee

Meet the President



Fran Donaldson

Club news:

• The Club des femmes de carrière du Sud-est du Nouveau-Brunswick (BPW Southeast NB) held its Charter ceremony in September, with both President Fran Donaldson and First Vice-president Sue Calhoun in attendance. This is the first francophone club outside Quebec. The president is Rachelle Poirier (legpoir@nb.sympatico.ca). Welcome!

• BPW Winnipeg Central also held its Charter ceremony in October, with President Fran Donaldson, Vice-President Darlene Clevin, Manitoba Provincial President Colleen Allan and Immediate Past President Darla Campbell present. The President is Sharla Yeates. Welcome to our new Winnipeg Central members as well!

• We have several other new clubs "under construction" and look forward to bringing them into our network. If you know of someone interested in starting a new club, tell them to contact Federation Promotion Chair Sue Calhoun (scalhoun@nbnet.nb.ca) and she'll do what she can to help.

Child Care Act passes second reading

- by Darla D.W. Campbell, Child Care Champion for BPW Canada

Here is an exciting opportunity to join the BPW Canada Child Care Task Force. Our position paper published in March 2005 was developed with the efforts of a virtual team of members from across the country. Now we have the opportunity to review Bill C-303 and provide feedback to the Standing Committee to improve the legislation. Contact myself at darla@amonavi.com or by phone (905-845-9760) to get involved in this advocacy initiative. Check our website for more information.

Below is an excerpt from an e-mail by the New Brunswick Child Care Coalition about Bill C-303, issued on November 23, 2006:

Excellent news - Bill C-303, Child Care Act, passed second reading last night in the House of Commons in Ottawa. The vote was 144 in favour (all opposition parties voted in favour of the child care act) versus 115 against (which included the Conservative party and Garth Turner). This means that the law will go to the federal permanent human resources committee and will then hopefully come out and be recommended for third reading.

Jody Dallaire
NB Child Care Coalition
Coalition des services de garde à l'enfance du N.-B.

National Roster

Your club president recently received the BPW Canada roster, which includes names and contact information for all members of the Board of Directors, including Provincial Presidents, as well as appointees and chairs of Standing and Ad-hoc Committees and principal officers of all clubs. If you would like to receive a copy by e-mail, please send your request to penguin1@sympatico.ca. Please remember that because of privacy laws, this list is for personal use of members only and not to be distributed outside the organization.

Season's Greetings

On behalf of the Board of Directors and myself, I wish to extend best wishes to all members of BPW Canada at this holiday season. I especially hope that the New Year will bring us all the gifts of peace, health and friendship.

Fran Donaldson

BPW Canada Virtual Club - Meeting BPW Members' Changing Needs

In 2005, a number of individual BPW members undertook a novel experiment to start a club directed at working business and professional women in mobile employment situations, without local clubs, or living in remote areas of Canada. In April of 2006, *BPW Canada Virtual Club* was chartered. At seven months, the club is now engaged in monthly on-line discussions. It has a presence on the BPW Canada web site (www.bpwcanada.com) and the membership participates in interactive monthly meetings via e-mail messages and most recently on MSN Messenger. The second edition of Newsbytes, the club's quarterly newsletter, will soon appear. The first is available for viewing on the BPW Canada website.

If you live in an area of Canada, join us in this unique initiative. For more information about BPW Canada Virtual Club, contact Dr. Shannon MacNeill, Membership Chair at macfolk@telus.net, Vi Andersen, President at viandersen@sympatico.ca or Kathy Laing, Secretary/Treasurer at kvl726@sympatico.ca. The other member of our executive is Crystal Sissons, Newsletter Newsbytes Editor from Gatineau, P.Q.



Delegates at Convention 2006 had a serious discussion about financial challenges at national, given that member dues have not increased since 1990. Most clubs left the convention committed to raising funds to donate to BPW Canada. The most recent club to do so was BPW Toronto. President Patricia Prez, right, presented a cheque for \$200 to BPW Canada 1st Vice-president Sue Calhoun at the club's recent Christmas Tea in Toronto.



BPW Canada 1st Vice-president Sue Calhoun attended the recent Christmas party of the Canadian Women's Foundation (CWF) to present the group with a Commendation passed by delegates at July's Biennial Convention in Toronto. The Commendation congratulated the group for launching a Girls' Investment Fund as well as for its efforts throughout the years in investing in the power of women and the dreams of girls. From left, Leigh Natarkach and Jill Andrews, members of the CWF Vanguard youth donors group; Sue Calhoun; Bev Wybrow, CWF Executive Director; and Margot Franssen, CWF Co-President.

Good News

Last year we were forced to close the Centenary Fund and the remaining assets have been held in trust by another charitable organization, while a Task Force headed by Past President Jill Worobec attempted to set up a new trust fund with charitable status and a mandate similar to the original. After a long and arduous process, we were able to set up a new Canadian corporation, called Women's W.O.R.K. - Women Offering Resources and Knowledge. We have just received the excellent news that our application for charitable status for the new corporation has now been granted. There is still a lot of work to be done, but this was the biggest hurdle, so more good news should be on the way soon. We will keep you advised of the developments, and meanwhile extend thanks and congratulations to Jill for a very important accomplishment on our behalf

BPW MEMBER SURVEY

Like most organizations, BPW Canada has entered the electronic age. Many of our members are computer literate, have computers in the office and at home, and prefer to receive their communications that way. As an organization, we need to streamline our operation, and cut costs where possible. This is an area where significant savings can be made. We realize that some members are not able to receive e-mails. For those who are, we ask you to consider receiving your communications from BPW Canada in this way in future. You'll get your "mail" faster, and you'll help BPW Canada save money.

You'll notice that we've included an insert in this newsletter. Please take a minute to read it, check one of the boxes and fill in the appropriate information. We also ask a few questions about the newsletters that you've received in the past, and hope that you will give us your feedback on these questions as well. *This is very important if we are to continue to meet the needs of members.*

To save yourself the price of a stamp and ensure your information is copied correctly, download this form from the BPW Canada website (www.bpwcanada.com), and send it electronically to Barbara Hall, Secretary-Treasurer, barbarahallbpw@shaw.ca. Barbara's postal address is BPW Canada Secretary-Treasurer, #216-2628 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC V6H 3H8.

Thank you for your cooperation!