

Washington Business Woman

Washington Federation of Business & Professional Women (BPW/WA)

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President's Message

Oh, My, things are changing!

If you are a long-time member, you will want to give a lot of thought to what you want BPW/WA to be in the future. We want to preserve the legacy and history of BPW.

Founded 90 years ago, in 1919, BPW has always had the mission to be an advocate for women. The organization has

been a place to meet and become friends with a wide variety of marvelous women from all walks of life...women we would never meet without BPW. We have been a women-helping-women organization and I know this will not change. Newer members may not be as aware of the importance of preserving this legacy, but even the newest member will already be benefiting from the networking at local organization meetings

BPW/WA can be more creative and exciting than ever. Members are coming together in a Transition Team to brainstorm what our structure will be, what new programs we want to start, and how we can be an even stronger women's advocate.

Our Annual Conference is all set for the weekend of May 29-31, at the Holiday Inn, Downtown Everett. Please make sure you get your conference registration in as soon as possible, and make your hotel reservations right away. I invite you to put your business card ad in the printed conference program...let everyone know who you are and what you do. You may want a trade-table at the Trade Expo. Have a local organization fund-raising raffle.

You won't want to miss the Evergreen's Tea, Friday afternoon, honoring the BPW/WA Past Presidents. Friday evening we will have a open-house Wine & Networking Reception sponsored by Washington BPW Foundation, and speaker Carol Keeffe. Saturday, will be a very full day and you won't want to miss a minute of it. Besides the BPW business, committee reports, etc., we have two wonderful speakers: Author and Adventurer Helen Thayer, and Jeff Guidry with the Sarvey Wildlife Center and the Beautiful Eagle, Freedom.

BPW/WA is on the threshold of a new and exciting future. Come to conference to learn more and to make your voice heard.

Robyn Whitaker

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



Carol Keeffe

"How to Get What You Want In Life With the Money You Already Have"

Simple, yet revolutionary ideas for reaching your dreams while still paying the bills. A Life Management Speaker, Author, and Life Coach since 1982, Carol brings easy-to-implement ideas to empower people in every aspect of their lives.



Helen Thayer

Author, Photographer, Adventurer

In 1988 New Zealand born Helen Thayer became the first woman to walk and ski to any of the world's poles when she trekked solo to the Magnetic North Pole. Her best-selling book *Polar Dream* tells the story of her historic adventures.



Jeff Guidry and Bald Eagle Freedom

— Together For Ten Years

"When Freedom came in, she could not stand. Both wings were broken. She was emaciated and covered in ice. We made the decision to give her a chance at life, so I took her to the vet's office.

...I used to sit and talk to her, urging her to live, to fight, and she would lay there looking at me with those big brown eyes."

Letter from BPW/USA President

The BPW/USA Executive Committee has received several emails that are of great concern. We learned that there are state federations actively promoting their members proceed with business without paying national dues. We encourage you to consider the following when making a decision and/or advising your state federation members about the payment of national, state and local dues:

1. BPW/ USA is still in business, still operational and is still an organization operating under a federated model.
2. State bylaws (generally Article I) are explicit in stating that state federations are a part of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Clubs, Inc.
3. BPW/USA owns the BPW name, the BPW logo, the BPW Signature Programs, BPW intellectual property, etc. State Federations do not own the name, logo, programs, intellectual property, etc.
4. Should state federations be in default with BPW/USA, (i.e. members not paying national dues), then state federations and the local organizations within those states, can no longer use BPW in their name, cannot say they are BPW members, cannot use BPW programs/supplies/letterhead/logo/branding, etc without explicit authorization from BPW/USA.
5. All dues being sent to BPW/USA for processing will be processed as normal. That is, dues are deposited to National, state and local organizations, respectively.

We know this listing may seem a bit definitive, but think of BPW/USA as a Franchise business – with BPW/USA as the franchisor and state federations and local organizations as the franchisees. The franchisor owns the franchises – these are not member-owned-individual-stand-alone franchises – and BPW/USA has the right and the legal obligation to protect its name and products and to protect those franchises that are operating correctly. The franchisor is the legal owner of all the products.

As we continue our negotiations with BPW Foundation, we will discuss use and guideline options going forward regarding intellectual property. However, let me remind you that up until that date, BPW/USA is still the owner and operator of BPW and all its related products and intellectual property. Furthermore please note, if state federations are in default, it could potentially affect whether or not your state federation’s members have the right to vote on any BPW matter, nationally, statewide or locally.

Diane M. Polangin, BPW/USA President

Vote to Continue the Mission of BPW

In order to continue the vital work of BPW/USA on behalf of working women, the BPW/USA Board of Directors voted in favor of a merger with BPW Foundation on Tuesday, February 17. In today’s economic climate when many are forced to close their doors, this action will ensure that the mission and work of BPW/USA will continue. In addition, it will preserve the BPW brand, visibility, and reputation. After carefully evaluating four restructuring options put for by the Task Force the BPW/USA Board of Directors determined that the appropriate business decision is for BPW/USA to merge with BPW Foundation.

It is now up to the members to vote on the proposed merger and plan. To help members understand what a merger could mean and to ask any questions, a second round of webinars are scheduled March 28 and 30 and April 2. In addition there is a special page on the website that has relevant information and documents about the merger and how the recommendation was made; there is a Quick Link on the Member Center homepage (you must log in to access this information).

BPW members, now have a unique opportunity to make a dynamic contribution to the history and future of Business and Professional Women, by uniting the two organizations. Watch for your voting materials, and be sure and vote for the continuation of our mission. Following a potential merger, membership in State and Local Organizations would not change. State and Local organizations would carry on the business of their organizations with emphasis on state and/or community activities. To assist in the transition to autonomous organizations, BPW/USA has appointed experienced members to a State and Local Organization Transition Issues Task Force. This task force is ready and willing to begin assisting State and Local Organizations.

BPW/USA will continue its operations and programs through July 1, 2009 at which time if a merger is approved by the membership, the work of the mission will continue through BPW Foundation. The missions of BPW/USA and BPW Foundation are inextricably linked. In this economic climate, it is critical that we unite by consolidating our assets to further promote workplace equity for workingwomen and their families. As workingwomen, we must understand that it is good business to combine our respective strengths toward the fulfillment of a shared vision.

A merger with BPW Foundation will ensure that the work of both organizations will continue and expand in a fiscally sound manner. BPW members’ ongoing support of BPW/USA as we complete our programs, and your support of BPW Foundation will guarantee efforts to empower working women to achieve their full potential and partner with employers to build successful workplaces.

BPW/WA Transition Team Report

Since 2004, the BPW/USA Board of Directors has committed to a strategy for a turn around.

- Stop the steady decline in membership
- Grow our organization
- Retake our place as the leading advocate for working women.

In Feb 2007, the Board approved Bylaws amendments to broaden membership categories and streamline governance. The proposals were approved at the July 2007 National Convention and at the special Convention in Feb 2008. The Board approved a deficit budget to invest the financial resources to buy time for the turnaround to work. Board and Convention action put the pieces into place to implement a turnaround;

- New membership categories enable a transition away from Federated membership model to a national membership model,
- Streamlined governance, including a smaller, more nimble board and voting by every member, and
- Investment of financial resources to re-invent BPW/USA

By July, 2008, the continued decline in membership, stock market losses on investments, low attendance at the 2008 Conference and the downturn in the economy all combined to put BPW/USA in a precarious financial position.

A resolution to Vote for BPW/USA's future was adopted at the 2008 National Conference. Following the convention, a Task Force on the Future of BPW/USA was appointed. After many meetings, personal phone calls and e-mails and the tabulations of the results from Membership surveys helped the Task Force arrive at some conclusions.

- #1 – the continued turnaround was not financially viable.
- #2 – the prudent business decision was to merge with BPW/USA Foundation.

On Feb 17, 2009, the BPW/USA Board of Directors approved the recommendation for the BPW/USA Federation to merge with the BPW/USA Foundation.

The next step was to inform the membership through webinars and conference calls.

The last step will be a vote of the membership, which is currently scheduled for April 2009.

The voting will be available both electronically for members with valid e-mail addresses on the National profile page of BPW/USA and by mail for those members without e-mail access.

A letter signed by 22 Past National Presidents was posted to the BPW/USA website, encouraging all BPW members to vote **FOR** the merger.

To make sure that BPW/WA was positioned to move forward, the BPW/WA Board of Directors appointed a Transition Task Force and I was honored to be asked to take on the role as Chair.

On March 14, the new BPW/WA Transition Team, consisting of 20 enthusiastic members from around the State, met in Issaquah and began discussions on the future of BPW/WA.

These members are charged with developing a plan for BPW/WA to move forward Independently on the assumption that the merger between BPW/USA and the BPW/USA Foundation is completed.

During the three-hour meeting we reviewed the content from the recent BPW/USA webinars regarding the upcoming vote. We split up into five groups and brainstormed ideas, which will be critical for BPW/WA success into the future.

- #1 – Communication Options – Website upgrade, Blogs, Webinars and Zoomerange surveys with our membership.
- #2 – Dues Collection and Budgets – Create a new dues structure that will define categories to ensure increased membership during economic downturn. Determine how dues will be shared between Locals and State.
- #3 – Marketing – Member retention, consistent program and event promotion and recognition. How to connect to younger and potential members.
- #4 – Bylaws / Articles of Incorporation – Evaluate what changes are needed.
- #5 – Signature Programs – Young Careerist and Individual Development Plan. What format do these programs continue in with no National meeting and how do we insure the content is meeting today's needs of young professional?

From our discussion, sub committees were identified. We will meet separately, search out answers to our questions, and gather additional information which will be reviewed at the next meeting on May 2nd. The Transition Team will then prepare how best to review our findings and determine the best way to present the results to WA membership at the State Conference in May.

I encourage any BPW/WA member who is interested in the future of BPW/WA to join us. Contact me to be added to one of the committees described above. Or, if you have any questions, comments or feedback, The Transition Team would love to hear from you.

To review, please make sure you are knowledgeable about the changes coming to BPW. Be watching for your opportunities to vote on the merger question at the National Level. If you have any questions or comments, just contact me. I encourage you all to vote YES for the merger and to provide your voice to the future of BPW/WA.

Margaret Way
BPW/WA Transition Team

Nomination Criteria

The Nominations committee continues to look for qualified BPW members to fill our BPW/WA state officer positions. At this time the early nominations are closed. If you are interested in an elected position the nomination can be made from the floor by a member *in good standing* [i.e., dues are paid] at Conference.

The same criteria apply for nominations from the floor, including completion of the "Consent to Serve" form countersigned by the presiding officer, or designee, after a meeting and vote endorsing the nominee by the nominees local.

NOTE: The Nominations chair requests that anyone interested complete the Nomination form, have their local endorse the candidacy [vote and countersignature] and send this along with the candidate's picture and bio (200 words or less) to the Nominations Chair (see address below) as soon as possible. This will allow the nominee's qualifications to be certified prior to the state conference.

Criteria for nominees for state office:

- 1) BPW member must be in-good-standing in a local organization [dues are paid]
- 2) Nominee must officially and publicly support the National Legislative Platform
- 3) Consent to serve if elected [Original signature on form, countersigned by local organization's presiding officer (see *Endorsement* below)]
- 4) Have their local organization's endorsement.
- 5) Served as a local organization president or are completing a term as a local organization president

Additional criteria for the office of President or Vice president:
ELECTIONS:

- Section 3. a. Be in good standing [dues paid] and;
 b. Be employed;
- Section 5: a. Having served one year as a state elected officer, state appointed officer or state standing or special committee chair, OR;
- b. Served two years as an elected state officer (secretary or treasurer), or;
- c. Served one year as an elected state officer and two years as a standing committee chair, or;
- d. Served three years as a standing committee chair in three different capacities along with the written recommendation of the State Executive Committee.

Questions have been posed that needed clarifying. The Nominations chair, in consultation with the Bylaws committee and the Parliamentarian has determined the following criteria:

Endorsement: The normal process in preparation of submitting the nomination form would include the nominee's local unit members to vote to endorse the candidate at their regular meeting. The local unit's presiding officer would sign the form. In the event that the presiding officer is the candidate, it would be appropriate to have another officer of the local unit sign the document validating the local's endorsement.

Definition of Section 3.b.: *Employed:* It is determined that the definition of *Employed* includes those actively seeking employment and currently receiving unemployment compensation.
Kay Bradley Kampsen, BPW/WA State Nominations Chair
24302 23rd Ave S, Des Moines, WA 98198
[questions call cell: 206-854-6315]

Washington State Foundation Report

The Washington State Business and Professional Women's Foundation will be meeting in April 2009 to elect new officers and discuss our fundraising at the BPW/WA State conference at the end of May, 2009.

At the October 2008 BPW/WA Fall Board Meeting, Foundation members put on a silent auction featuring jewelry and sold raffle bags.

It was fun, competitive and profitable!
Foundation earned \$550 from the 2 fundraisers – enough to fund one full scholarship for the 2008/2009 year!

And speaking of scholarships, we envision that due to the economy and tough economic times, more people will be going back to school. We anticipate a record number of applicants for the 2009/2010 school year.

Your contribution now or at State Conference in May will be greatly needed to provide as many people as possible with scholarships.

The Foundation Board and the scholarship recipients appreciate all your help and monetary donations during this difficult time for the women of Washington State.

Sue Suwiwattanakul

BPW/WA – Foundation Liaison