

LOUISIANA FEDERATION OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB, INC.
HISTORY 1998-1999
(Recreation – original document missing)

President – Dolly Ruggiero
President Elect – Doris Sanders
First Vice President – Kathryn Fulco-Henry
Second Vice President – Dot Horton
Corresponding Secretary – Dee Dee Tusa
Recording Sectary – Linda Burns
Treasurer – Anne Storms
Chair of the Nominations – Camille Moran
Auditor – Pat Moses

PRESIDENT'S THEME

**“Steel Magnolias: Strong, Southern Women Helping to Shape the Future through Legislation –
Education - Information”**

EVENT DATES

Post Convention Board Meeting – June 15, 1997 at the Holidome, Shreveport, LA
Mid Year Board Meeting – November 7, 1997 at the Holiday Inn, Alexandria, LA
**79th State Conference – June 11-13, 1999 at the Players Island
Casino Hotel, Lake Charles, Louisiana**

BOARD MEMBERS

Parliamentarian – Glenda Prechac
Immediate Past President – Corvette J. Kowalski
Past State President 2 yr – Antoinette Gardner
Past State President 3 yr – Iona R Myers

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Finance Co-Chairs – Angelia Falogust, Diane Madere & Betty Bellina
Foundation – Wanda Ishmael
Public Relations – Stephanie Tufaro
Young Careerist – Deborah Keller
Bylaws, P & P – Shirley Horner

SPECIAL COMMITTEE CHAIRS/TASK FORCE APPOINTMENTS

Agnes Morris Ed Loan – Robbie P. (Melder) Hill
Mid Year Board Co-Chairs – Annie Cazes Price & Marie Eddlemon Lawrence
Rules and Resolution – Martha Gremillion

Nike Award – Janis Guyton
Long Range Planning – PE
Chair District Directors – PE
Issues Management – Glenda Guillory
Membership – 2nd VP
Legislation/National Leg Platform – 1st VP
State Convention 1999 Co-Chairs – Pat Moses & Anne Storm
Individual Development – Sandra Miller
National Business Women’s Week – Antoinette Gardner
Historian – Anne Storms
Chaplain – Sylvia Duplessis
Foundation Scholarship Alumnae Program – Corvette Kowalski
Legal Advisor - Vacant

DISTRICT OFFICERS

Southeast:

Director – Sheilah Auderer

Southwest Central:

Co - Director – Camille Moran and Pat Moses

Northwest/Northeast:

Director – Antoinette Gardner

LOCAL ORGANIZATION PRESIDENTS

Southeast District

Bogalusa – See Magee
Capital City – absolved
Donaldsonville – Dianne Tusa
Greater Gonzales –absolved
Jefferson Parish – Harriett Haworth
Lafitte – Mary Graham-Smith
New Orleans – Cynthia Edwards
St Bernard – Suzanne Foles
Slidell – Ginger Arnold
Westside of Gretna – Karen LaChute
West St Tammany – Patsy Theobold

Southwest/Central District

Alexandria – Marie Lawrence
Crowley – Angelique Credeur
DeRidder – Donna Milan

**Lafayette – absolved
Lake Charles – Deborah Bauman
Natchitoches – Alice Barrios
Oakdale – Linda Burns**

Northwest/Northeast

**Bastrop – Margaret Stokes
Monroe/West Monroe – Shirley Horner
Ruston – Elenora Cawthorn
Shreveport-Bossier – Antoinette Gardner**

Mid Year Board Agenda:

(Files Not available)

State Conference 1999:

This conference was held at the Holiday Inn, Gonzales with 58 members, 6 guests, and 1 visitor for a total of 65 participants. Among the business was that news that Louisiana would host the 2002 National Convention in New Orleans. This had been a shock to President Ruggiero since LA had not bid. We learned that BPW/USA had solicited bids directly from Chamber of Commerce offices across the country and New Orleans had submitted the bid. We where an expected to be confirmed at the National Conference July 1999.

National Representative was Cindy Patterson, Past National President from Arkansas. She brought greetings from National President Susan Daly and her speech on the status of BPW/USA and its mission and goals is attached to this history report.

Award presented at State Conference are also attached to this report. A wonderful time was had with the theme of “Country Western Hoe Down”. The highlight award, NIKE was presented to Corvette Kowalski, Jefferson Parish and Past State President 97-98.

A significant discussion was held on forming a Foundation for BPW/Louisiana. Report from the Foundation Task Force pointed to the many challenges of set up and managing a foundation program. Positive attributes would be the 501c3 nonprofit status. However, the maintenance of this program was significant. The vote for this action is not expected until the Mid Year Board for review and adoption.

Janis Guyton, Chair for the 2000 State Conference in Monroe encouraged members to start planning early to attend. The Northeast/Northwest District looked forward to hosting the next state conference.

End//

Attachments

BPW/USA REPORT

Cindy Patterson gave her report from BPW/USA:

“Good morning. I probably don’t need this (microphone), but I’ll try. I come from a long line of teachers, in fact sometimes I have to tone my voice down. This has really been an incredible year for BPW/USA. We have proven we are an organization like no other. An organization that in many ways has surpassed our high expectations for 1998-99 and each of you has contributed to the unified effort to achieve this. This year, President Susan Dailey challenged the leadership team and the membership to take action on the issues. Not only have you met her challenge, but in many respects you have exceeded all expectations with your commitment for BPW and our vision to be the leading advocate for working women. I want to share with you this morning some of BPW’s monumental accomplishments during the past year and I believe, at least I hope, you will be as impressed as I have been.

First, BPW is helping to shape the policy debate on two key issues-social security reform and fair pay. As the leading advocate for working women BPW has engaged in discussions on how to develop solutions to strengthen the social security system for future generations. There are few issues on the national public policy agenda with a greater potential impact on women than social security reform. We began our activities in earnest in November when our working group met with Mr. Clinton and his domestic policy advisor. As a direct result of those talks, BPW was able to influence the framework of the White House Summit on Social Security. BPW secured a place at the table with members of the administration, Congress, economists, financial leaders, and researchers. Our message to them was simple-keep the heart in social security. We told those who participated in this summit, that working women have an important stake in social security reform debate. Due to pay inequity, women earn less money than do men and a lifetime of lower wages translates into less money in retirement. You can do the math-lower wages mean lower social security benefits and lower pension checks. If women are even lucky enough to have pensions at all. The result unfortunately is a life of poverty for far too many elderly women in this country. Since the summit, BPW has participated in a series of high level meetings with administration leaders, including the Social Security Administration Commissioner, staff from the Treasury Department, and leaders of the Office of Management and Budget. BPW also met with the First Lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton at her invitation to discuss her concerns regarding social security. This was an excellent opportunity to advance our position on this important issue. Then over two hundred BPW members from around the country turned policy into action at our 1999 Policy and Action Conference focusing on social security reform and the impact on women. The conference was a huge success as women heard from policy and financial experts about the different reform options. Armed with this valuable information our members descended on Capitol Hill, meeting with their members in the Congress and providing them with a checklist to make sure that reform options meet the specific criteria that are important to us as women. And I noticed in President Dolly’s report in the book that you got to meet with Senator Landrieu-that’s great. To educate our communities about social security reform, BPW launched a new turnkey program in partnership with the group, Americans Discuss Social Security. The program enables and encourages BPW members from across the country to make their voices heard and BPW local organizations are participating in this wonderful program. In the words of educational pioneer and BPW member, Eleanor Roosevelt, “It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.”, and I’m certain that Mrs. Roosevelt herself would surely be proud that BPW women are working to preserve the integrity of a program she and her husband worked so diligently to establish. BPW will make a difference for working women in shaping the future of this vital, economic program.

On the equal pay front, BPW has also made progress. As a direct result of our meeting with White House officials, President Clinton in his State of the Union Address pledged to insure that men and women receive equal pay for equal work by strengthening the enforcement of the Equal Pay Act. This pledge brought tremendous applause from both sides of the aisle during his address. In fact, NBC news reported that no other statement in the State of the Union Address received such overwhelming bi-partisan support as the President’s statement on equal pay. Alas, however, women cannot live on the statement of equal pay for equal work alone. We must also focus on pay equity. BPW has worked with leaders of Congress and White House staff to promote two key pieces of legislation addressing the wage gap. The first is The Fair Pay Act, which address systemic barriers to pay equity such as job segregation and will create new laws requiring equal pay for work of equivalent value. The Paycheck Fairness Act allows employees to recover damages when an employer has been found to be in violation of the Equal Pay Act and strengthens enforcement of the existing law. I’m pleased to report to you that our hard work and efforts are paying off. Jim Jeffords, Senator from Vermont and Chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Committee has agreed to hold a hearing on the issue of fair pay. This will provide BPW with a visible forum to explore ways we can work with members of Congress to address what poll after poll in this country has shown to be the number one issue of concern to working women-being paid fairly for the work we do. In our continuing efforts to raise awareness about the wage gap among members of congress, the national media, and the public, BPW members responded to President Susan Dailey's challenge to hold at least one equal pay day event in every state. And I'm very proud to report that of the six hundred equal pay day events held around the country on April 8th this year, that over four hundred of those were conducted by BPW organizations. Four hundred of the six hundred events and there was at least one in every state. We are the leading advocates when it comes to economic equity and fair pay. Our efforts have prompted the news media to focus attention on the wage gap. Articles in the Wall Street Journal, The Los Angeles Times, Newsweek, and The Washington Post are just the beginning of what's to come.

In addition to our work on social security and equal pay, BPW has had political successes this year. Some of the highlights include-our organization was appointed by President Clinton to the National Women's Business Council, which advises the administration and Congress on issues affecting women entrepreneurs. State BPW leaders were invited into the home of Vice President and Mrs. Gore at the commencement of our Policy and Action Conference. Mrs. Gore hosted a reception for BPW, providing our members with an up close and personal opportunity to discuss with her our social security concerns. BPW was active in the Washington state fight against Proposition 200-a voter initiative which sought to end all affirmative action programs in their state. Although we were unsuccessful in our endeavor and this initiative passed, we must remain vigilant because the same organizers of Proposition 200 are now talking of targeting other states for the 2000 elections. Michigan is the group's primary target and I don't know, but every time I read that, any of you that know Barb Hitton, who is our National Issues Management Legislation Chair-she's from Michigan and I would like to see these folks run up against her (because she feels passionately about maintaining affirmative action to help working women). We will need help in making sure that women are in the forefront of this debate. In both California and Washington the media never addressed how affirmative action programs have leveled the playing field for working women, instead they chose to focus completely on the rights aspect. BPW will work diligently to make sure that the voters of Michigan and other states understand the full implication of eliminating state affirmative action programs. We encourage you as BPW members and citizens not only to be informed on political issues that affect you, but also to participate in issues that affect women as a whole. The year 2000 elections will be some of the most important elections ever for working women, both the White House and Congress are up for grabs, and regardless what the polls currently show no one person truly knows what will happen. There is certainly much need for action on our issues. Our action should send a clear message to politicians the issues important to working women and family should be at the top of their agendas. Look at it this way, what sends a stronger message to a legislator, a letter from just one individual on an issue or letters signed by five hundred of his/her constituents. The answer is obvious. That's why President Dailey issued a challenge to each state president to ensure that every local organization in every state has at least one representative on the BPW/USA Grass Roots Action Team. We need the ability to inform members and mobilize them into action quickly when the matters at hand require. One of our big selling points in our legislative activities on Capitol Hill, is that we have BPW members in every congressional district across this country and there are not that many organizations that can state that. Believe it or not, political decisions made by legislators will have an impact on you and your family. These decisions can either benefit or damage the cause of workplace equity. It's extremely important that BPW/PAC take an active role in supporting legislators who will help to further our goals. We simply cannot afford to sit on the sidelines and allow others to determine our future. In our conference in Orlando President Dailey also issued challenges about BPW/PAC. She's encouraging us to get twenty-dollar contributions in each state and it's called the "BPW/PAC with 20/20 Vision". One of the things I found interesting as I was reviewing the materials on the different reports and the BPW/PAC Report is that almost without exception, (and Louisiana is one of the exceptions) over the last several years almost every state gave more money to BPW/PAC in 1992, than the years before or after it. Does anybody remember what happened in 1992? You remember the phrase "The year of the woman"? That was when women got involved in the political process and we elected more women than we had ever. Of course when I heard the phrase 'the year of the woman', I wondered do we only get one? Apparently so, because we haven't done that since. But as I said Louisiana was the exception, I reviewed your PAC history and that wasn't necessarily true in Louisiana. But almost every state gave more money in PAC that year than the years before or after. I think it just goes to show when we put our money where our mouths are we have great success. You're going to hear more

this afternoon about the work of the Foundation so I'm not going to talk about it right now but Foundation has been very active and very successful in the past year as well.

One of the things I would like to remind you all about is our customer service department that was established about a year and a half ago. Yvette Webster who worked in our scholarship department for many years is in charge of the customer service department and we're getting wonderful feedback about this process. Some of you (leadership) should have received the customer service fax back forms that you can fill out and fax to National, if you are having a problem or a question, and you will hear back from them in twenty-four hours. You may not have the answer for your question within twenty-four hours depending on the amount of time it requires to research it but they will notify you that they've received your fax and they are addressing it. I have some of these forms with me if any of you need them I'll be happy to share them with you. Membership retention and recruitment remain a high priority. Taking action on the issue in your community remains key to your success in attracting and keeping members. Members join BPW because of what they see BPW doing and being in the community. Interesting and relevant programming is essential to this process. Take advantage of some of the turnkey programs that are available from National-The Depression Education Program, The Financial Education Program, and The Social Security Reform Program. They are all available to you to be used in your local organizations, just by calling National. One of the things I always think about when I get to this part of the presentation is The Menopause Program that we had out a few years ago. It was an excellent program, my local used it and we invited people in the community to come to the program. Every time I tell this story my local members cringe because what struck me at that year was that of all the programs that we provided in our local unit that year, the two that drew the most-the highest attendance were menopause and wine tasting. I'm not sure what that says about my local. Maybe they go hand in hand—I don't know. The Menopause Program is a fine example of a turnkey program that you can get from National and all the materials you need are there and these other programs are the same way. So, I encourage you to utilize these materials in your local community.

Of all President Dailey's challenges, the challenge to start a new local organization each day is proving to be the most difficult. Why is that? Based on what our organization has to offer it should be the easiest to accomplish. We have a rich history of achievements on behalf of working women. We offer outstanding opportunities for personal and professional development. We have good member benefits. So tell me, why then is it so hard for us to bring together women who want and need what BPW can give? I don't know the answer. I do know that chartering a local takes time and commitment on the part of existing leaders and members. I know that we are all already pressed for time. We've got to find a solution. I would welcome your input as I'm here this weekend. The future of our organization can be only made more secure by forming new and vital local organizations.

BPW has been in the news this past year. In response to her challenge to state presidents to generate five media stories about BPW President Dailey reports that her mail box has been full of clippings from local organizations in states confirming that local action on the issues generates visibility. I was looking at some of the press that was displayed out in the exhibit area yesterday and I see that ya'll have been successful in that area as well. On the national front, some of the media highlights this year include interviews with the BBC, Fox TV, National Public Radio, Wall Street Journal Radio just to name a few. Our future visibility efforts, however, will focus on technology. We recognize that our internet presence is key to both external and internal communication. Plans are underway for revamping of the National Web Site, which is www.bpwusa.org. The plans are to enhance the graphics, introduce interactivity and establish linkages to multiple related sites, including state and local web sites. The possibilities are endless and we are very excited about the marketing and visibility potential of an enhanced web presence. If you haven't visited our web site lately you really should. You can even take a virtual tour of the national headquarters now on the web site. It's really cool.

One final internal matter is the lawsuit brought against BPW by the International Federation. To bring you up to date, Susan Dailey, our National President has included a letter which she has asked us to read as we go out around the states and I originally intended to read excerpts but since there was a question brought up earlier I'll read the complete letter. So bear with me, it's kind of lengthy.

Dear Members,

Greetings and congratulations for a great year. Thank you for responding to my challenges to take action on the issues. It's what makes us the premier grass roots women's organization. I'd like to take a moment to update you on the status of the International litigation. Your state president and other members of the Board of Directors have been kept fully informed about this suit since its filing. I won't go into detail here but I will give you a synopsis of what has transpired since last July when one of our members, an attorney from the New York Federation attempted to

serve us with a summons and complaint on behalf of the International Federation, stemming from events of the late 80's and early 90's. Immediately upon the conclusion of the Conference we retained the services of an excellent litigator. In light of the strong substantive defense we have, we responded to the lawsuit on Sept. 30, 1998 by filing the complaint as to all defendants including the state federations, except California which chose to appear on its own. After many missed deadlines and extensions, the plaintiff's attorney eventually filed a literal volume of paper in response in late January and early February, 1999. Included in the mountain of paperwork filed by the plaintiff was an amended complaint. In an attempt to address some of the deficiencies of her original pleadings the plaintiff re-filed the complaint as she has the right to do under the federal rules of civil procedure. The amended complaint adds three additional counts against BPW/USA and the Foundation but more significant, it drops the State Federations as defendants. Therefore, it is official the State Federations are no longer defendants in the suit. It was necessary for us to respond to the amended complaint on behalf of BPW/USA and the Foundation so our original motion to dismiss was withdrawn and then revised to address the additional counts of the amended complaint. The revised motion to dismiss was timely, March 26, 1999. The deadline for response by the plaintiff was April 16, 1999. Our reply was due April 23rd, at that time the matter was submitted to district judge for consideration. It could be several more months before the judge makes a decision, so now we wait.

I want to mention a couple of things. First, there have been questions if current or former board members have personal liability in connection with the lawsuit. I would point out that no member has been named individually as a defendant in the suit. If however any board member was named individually BPW maintains directors and officers insurance. In order to find a board member liable the standard a court would use in assessing a board member's conduct is whether that member exercised sound business judgment. If so, there is no liability. Finally the current Board of Directors could issue an indemnification, finding that any board member named individually would be protected in the event that a judgment was ever entered against her. I've also been asked if the assets of the State Federations or their Foundations could be at risk should a judgment be entered into this matter against BPW. The only way a State Federation's assets would be at risk is if a judgment was entered against the state, which won't happen now that the states are no longer defendants in this suit. As there were in the early 1990's when the International issue culminated in our abrogation, there are members who hold differing views on this matter now. However the position we established back then was not one we established in a vacuum, but one based on the action taken by several different Board of Directors and conference bodies. It is to no one's benefit to rehash the merits of the issue now. This would only serve to undermine our organization. I can appreciate and respect that members continue to hold different opinions. I do find it disheartening however, that members act to the detriment of our organization to assist IFBPW. I want you to know that my written communication on this matter has consistently ended up in the plaintiff's attorney's hands. One memo was faxed to the plaintiff's attorney within less than a week of its mailing from me. So please keep in mind that I must be vigilant in guarding our organization's position when I communicate with our board members and other members. I will not jeopardize our position. I also want you to know as your National President, I will do everything within my power to preserve and protect the assets of BPW/USA, our Foundation, State Federations, and Local Organizations. My judiciary responsibility, indeed the judiciary responsibility of the entire Board of Directors is to BPW/USA. Your Executive Committee and I remain committed to that standard and will continue to use it as a guide in the decisions, which must be made during the course of this litigation. We have and will continue to act in the best interests on the Federation. I will inform the State President and other members of the Board as soon as we receive a decision to dismiss. As always, if anyone has any questions please do not hesitate to call me.

Best wishes for a successful conference. Hope to see all of you in Rochester.

Sincerely,
Susan B. Dailey
President, BPW/USA

Now speaking of Rochester, anybody here going to National Conference? Great and for those of you who didn't raise your hands I'd like to personally extend a personal invitation to attend the BPW Annual Conference from July 14-19 in Rochester, New York. With a theme of "Our Vision-Your Vision" this year's conference program focuses on our unique career needs because we know there are no one size fits all answers to a successful career. If you've seen a schedule and have a chance to look over it, it offers some exciting things for us. Our keynote speaker is a role model for all working women, the Honorable Ann Richards, the former Governor of Texas. So this is your opportunity to hear one of America's truly distinguished women, someone who with hard work and her own beliefs in her own abilities made success a reality. Now I know after last night you like to party, then you need to be in Rochester to help us celebrate BPW's 80th birthday. We have some very special plans underway to celebrate 80 years of success but we need your help. Local Organizations will be receiving, if you haven't already, an action mailing. In that mailing will be two surveys we plan to use in our birthday celebration. The first survey called "Women Leading the Way" asked for information about family ties in BPW and I've learned since I've been here this weekend that you have some family ties in this organization. It asked also about people who are 50 year members or founding members of the organization, so please fill out the survey and send it back in. The second survey is our philanthropic impact survey and by this survey we are trying to establish the total charitable giving of all levels of BPW. Frankly, I for one, am tired of hearing the Miss America Pageant say it is the largest source of scholarship dollars for women in this country. I believe we can prove that BPW is the largest source of scholarship dollars for women. I have copies of these surveys if you haven't gotten one yet or if you want to go ahead and complete one just let me know.

The Conference this year has been condensed into a one-week time frame. For several years it's been part of one week and part of another week. The Executive Committee heard from members that that

was not conducive to being able to come to conference so they've condensed it into a one-week time frame so I think the schedule will be much more working woman friendly in this manner.

The close of one BPW year in Rochester signals the beginning of another and President Elect Robin Robinson is ready to lead BPW "rocking into the new millennium". The VIP challenge she has issued is to motivate national, state, and local leaders to meet goals designed to achieve maximum visibility, impact, and purpose for BPW at all levels. There are four new programs being developed for use by Local Organizations and they will be unveiled at our National Conference. It's certainly clear that the Rocking Robins and the entire 1999-2000 leadership team will not let this century end quietly. So as you can see, it's been an exciting year filled with national, state, and local action on our issues. Together we can achieve our goal of equity for all working women in the workplace but it takes all of us doing our part to advocate, educate, and inform. It takes all of us, taking action on our goal to be the leading advocate for working women.

Thank you."

NIKE/AWARDS BANQUET
 "COUNTRY WESTERN HOE DOWN"
 Grand Ball Room 7 P.M.
 Friday, June 11, 1999

Introductions Debbie Chaddick

Entertainment Rody Broussard & The Cajun Land Dancers

1998-99 LA/BPW AWARD WINNERS:

National Business Women's Week (NBWW) Best Program	<u>St. Bernard</u>
NBWW-Honorable Mention	<u>Natchitoches</u>
Public Relations	<u>St. Bernard</u>
Foundation Financier Awards: Silver Certificates	<u>Donaldsonville</u> <u>New Orleans</u> <u>Natchitoches</u> <u>Lake Charles</u>
Golden Circle Award Foundation Most Outstanding Program	<u>Jefferson Parish</u> <u>Lake Charles</u>
National Foundation Award presented by Cindy Patterson, National Representative	<u>LA BPW</u>
Legislation National Legislation and Issues	<u>St. Bernard</u>
Most Outstanding Program/Project	<u>Lake Charles</u>
10% attendance at Lobby Day	<u>Natchitoches</u> <u>Donaldsonville</u> <u>Jefferson Parish</u>
Advocacy 2000	<u>St. Bernard</u>
Membership Plus Five Recruiters	<u>Alice Barrios</u> <u>Deborah Bauman</u> <u>Camille Moran</u> <u>Debbie Simmons</u>
LO Membership Growth Awards	<u>Lake Charles</u> <u>Natchitoches</u> <u>St. Bernard</u>
Golden Star Membership Award	<u>Slidell</u>

Received the Membership Basket	<u>Camille Moran</u>
Best District Award	<u>Southwest Central District</u>
Young Careerist	<u>Kelly Bessonet</u> <u>Donaldsonville</u>
Young Careerist (Runner-up)	<u>Karen Barrington</u> <u>Lake Charles</u>
Most Outstanding LO Traveling Award	<u>Slidell</u>
President's "Excellence in Leadership" Award	<u>No LO met the</u> <u>criteria set for</u> <u>this award</u>
NIKE Award Winner	<u>Corvette Kowalski</u> <u>New Orleans</u>
Best Western Costume Award	<u>All were winners</u>
Dolly Parton "Look Alike Winner"	<u>Kelly Bessonet</u>
Emblem Benediction	<u>Debbie Lejuene</u>