

**THE HISTORY 2013-2014 OF THE
LOUISIANA FEDERATION OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL
WOMEN'S CLUBS, INC.**

**President – Cynthia Cuttino Edwards
Vice President – Laverne George
Recording Secretary – Gwen Amelin
Treasurer – Angie Jackson-Wilson**

PRESIDENT'S THEME

“Let's Spice it Up!”

EVENT DATES

Post Convention Board Meeting	June 9, 2013
Mid Year Board Meeting	January 17, 2014, Baton Rouge, LA
95th State Conference	June 6 – 8, 2014, Harvey, LA

Strategic Plan and Goals for 2012 - 2013

Membership Goal: Membership recruitment and retention
Political Impact Goal: To continue the program of advocacy, education, and information as put forth in our State Legislative Platform.

BOARD MEMBERS

Parliamentarian – Glenda Prechac
Immediate Past President – Delia Flynn
Past State President 1 yr – Peggy Wells
Past State President 2 yr – Linda Burns
Past State President 3 yr – Delia Flynn

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Auditor – Pat Moses Howard
Foundation – Vacant
Public Relations – Judy Wilson
Bylaws, P&P – Lynn Hakeem
Pelican Editor – Rhonda Counselman
Chair of Nominations – Wanda Ishmael

SPECIAL COMMITTEE CHAIRS/TASK FORCE APPOINTMENTS

Agnes Morris Ed Scholarship – Linda Burns
Events Planning – Angie Jackson-Wilson/Laverne George
Rules & Resolution – Harriet Haworth
Chair District Directors – Vacant
Nike Award – Corvette Kowalski
Membership – Angie Jackson-Wilson
Legislation/National Leg Platform – Laverne George
Historian – Martha Gremillion
Chaplain – Gwen Amelin
ERA Chair – Camille Moran
Web Master – Vacant
State Conference 2014 – Events Planning Committee – Angie Jackson-Wilson/Laverne George

DISTRICT OFFICERS

Southeast:

Liaison – Kaaren Montgomery-Grimes

Southwest Central:

Director – Linda Burns/Pat Moses Howard

LOCAL ORGANIZATION PRESIDENTS

Southeast District

Donaldsonville – Wanda Ishmael & Betty Bellina

Jefferson Parish – Harriet Haworth

New Orleans – Kaaren Montgomery-Grimes

St. Bernard – Bethanne Trahan

Southwest/Central District

Alexandria – Annie Price & Delia Flynn

Lake Charles – Lois Ferguson

Monroe/W.Monroe – Angie Jackson-Wilson

Oakdale – Linda Burns

Status of Local Organizations:

Currently there are nine local organizations. Membership total on May 27, 2014 was 98.

Mid Year Board:

The Mid Year Board (MYB) was held on January 18, 2014 at the Holiday Inn, Baton Rouge, LA.

The 2014 Esther Terry Nike Award Luncheon speaker was Judge Terri Love, Fourth Judicial Appellate Court. The topic of her speech was: “What’s New for Women in the Appeals Court and How to Best Support Women Candidates.” The highlight of the luncheon was the announcement of the 2013 NIKE Award winner. The Esther Terry NIKE award is BPW Louisiana’s most prestigious award; it is given annually to a member for outstanding contributions to the State Federation, her Local Organization, and her community. Congratulations to Delia Flynn of the Alexandria BPW Club.

Beginning with the 2014 Esther Terry Nike Award, and because The Nike Award is such a prestigious award for BPW/LA, the nomination narrative will be included as part of the History of LA/BPW.

“Delia Flynn is a native of Lafayette, LA. The oldest of ten children, she and her family were deeply invested in the Catholic Faith. Delia’s father was an influential leader in the ever-intriguing Louisiana political scene so Delia gained an early knowledge of public policy and the workings of government.

Delia left Lafayette after graduation from the University of Southwestern Louisiana, now known as the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She moved to Pineville, LA to accept a position with CLECO, a utilities corporation headquartered there.

Delia carried her deep faith and commitment to the Church and serving her Lord and became an integral part of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church in Pineville. Delia has served in many positions in the church from Catechism Teacher, Reader and beyond.

Delia was also very dedicated to her career at CLECO, where she worked for thirty years, applying her education and knowledge in computer information systems to her position as an Applications System Analyst in the IT Department.

Delia has been a member of BPW for over 30 years. She has served as an officer in every position in the Local and District and served as State President for 2008-2009 and 2012-2013. As with her faith, Delia’s interest in advocacy and public policy had endured from her childhood. She has been involved in BPW/LA’s fight for pay equity and ratification of the Equal Right Amendment and has worked with its coalition to lobby the state legislature for

support of these and other critical issues. Delia has made many trips to BPW/USA National Conventions, as well as to Washington, DC, lobbying Congress for support of BPW/USA focus issues.

She is a member of District 68 Toastmasters. Over the course of her twenty plus years in Toastmasters, Delia has served in all of the Club's officer roles for several different clubs for which she has been a member. She earned the level of DMT (Distinguished ToastMaster) the highest education level award through Toastmasters. She is also a past recipient of the member of the year award for the CLECO Club.

Delia is also a strong advocate for heart health and has traveled to Washington, DC to participate in a national lobby day for funding further research and prevention and treatment programs for heart disease.

As a recent breast cancer survivor, Delia has also become active in the fight for a cure for all forms of this deadly disease. She has participated in the relay for Life of Rapides Parish, an American Cancer Style Show, and other fund raising and advocacy programs designed to raise awareness and funding for cancer research and treatment.

In her free time, Delia's passion is taking a SPA day where she relaxes her mind and body through massage and other rejuvenating and restorative treatments.

Delia also loves to travel visiting her family and touring interesting and education venues across the country."

State Conference 2014:

State Conference was held June 6-8, 2014 at the Best Western West Bank Hotel, Harvey, LA. Attendance at the Conference was 29. This number included 20 members and 9 guests.

The morning session of the conference convened at 8:00 AM with the Call to Order by President Cynthia Cuttino Edwards, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, and the recitation of The Collect, by Vice-President Laverne George. Treasurer Angie Jackson-Wilson gave the Welcome. The formal business session followed. Jean Armstrong, with Leaders With Vision was the keynote speaker. Upon completion of the morning session a break for lunch was announced.

Tina Dandry-Mayes, a registered representative with New York Life Insurance Co. was the guest speaker at the luncheon. Her topic was: "Healthy Money-Keeping It real".

At the end of the luncheon, the Conference reconvened.

State Conference is a business meeting when membership reviews the administration activities of this organization. Committee Chairs and elected Officials are held accountable for the work performed. Challenges in the membership growth and retention under the re-organization of BPW Foundation will plague us for several years. Retention will be helped by the passage of lower dues and growth will come not from just a lower dues fee, but the value of this organization and what it offers new members. Election for the coming year was conducted and another year passed to the history file.

President Cynthia Cuttino-Edwards Message: (June 2013 - May 2014):

It's amazing how fast this year has passed by. Thank you for all the support and patience you've shown me. Here is what I've experienced since Mid-Year Board meeting in January.

We've held discussions with Southern University at New Orleans regarding the opening of student BPW chapters and with Dr. Barbara Holloway of the University of Phoenix. LA/BPW officers and members attended the Louisiana Diversity Council's Women's Conference in March 2014.

Both LA/BPW districts held their Spring District Meetings.

In April LA/BPW Vice President Laverne George and I participated in the legislative push to pass pay equity bills. We met with several key legislators and participated in a rally. In addition, we met with Rep. John Bel Edwards who will be running for Governor in 2015.

As we push to recruit new members and retain our seasoned members, and as we rejuvenate programming and events that add value to our membership, let's remember to step outside the box andSpice it up!.

Monthly communications have been sent to the membership every month since July 2013 and through May 2014. Those members with e-mail addresses have received these communications via email; others have received a hard copy via U.S. Mail.

The Executive Committee meets via teleconference (toll-free number) on a regular basis. A face-to-face Executive Committee meeting was held prior to Mid-Year Board in January. The Events Planning Committee met via teleconference on a regular basis and in face-to-face meetings when required.

As a special tribute to our Past Presidents, this History Report and future history reports will include the script of the Induction of the Immediate Past President into the PSP Council. The Script for Cynthia Cuttino Edwards' induction follows:

INDUCTION OF CYNTHIA CUTTINO EDWARDS INTO PSP COUNCIL

Sunday June 8, 2014

_____ This is our favorite part of state conference. This is when we decide if we will accept a past state president into the PSP Council.

_____ We know that Cynthia has to stop at the Chevron gas station for her coffee with a very special creamer—Pumpkin Spice Creamer. I guess we can't hold that against her. **PROP: Creamer**

_____ I'm told that she also likes red and hot peppers. I guess she wouldn't be from Louisiana if she didn't like those. **PROP: bottle of hot sauce**

_____ She has been very diligent though. When arriving for a district meeting the electricity was out at the hotel and the electric doors would not open. So she drove to another even though she had paid for the other accommodations.

_____ Cynthia is very good at brainstorming. She suggested the idea to raffle off an IPAD to raise money for the Agnes Morris Scholarship fund. **PROP: raffle tickets**

_____ And, she did continue her education to receive her doctorate. That takes a lot of perseverance and sacrifice. I think that she is the second PSP to receive a doctorate. **PROP: scroll wrapped in ribbon.**

_____ She is also a very frugal person. She likes shopping at Big Lots and Dollar Tree. **PROP: Gift Card**

_____ She does enjoy smooth jazz. Listening to that probably soothed her during her stressful year as state President. **PROP: Music CD**

_____ What about her love of poetry? Has she had any poems published? I have one for you. Roses are red, violets are blue. We are so happy that you are you. **PROP: book of poems**

_____ I have heard that she cannot drive past a Tanger outlet mall without stopping. **PROP: notebook (Shopping list)**

_____ She also likes dining at Chili's. I wonder if she leaves a big tip?

_____ Girl's lets vote. (Huddle up)

In Unison, we welcome you to the PSP council, Dr. Cynthia.

President's Message for Candle Lighting Ceremony 2014 Building on a solid foundation for our future!
Presented by Laverne George following her installation as the 2014-2015 BPW/LA President

First, I give God the glory! for making this all possible. Thanks to my family and friends who's always there inspiring me with words of encouragement. Thank to those who has helped with this events go smoothly.

It is indeed an honor as your 76st president, to share with you my first candle lighting message and representing the rich history of our organization which is in our 95th year!

In today's world, this is a very significant accomplishment, but we cannot rest and assume that it will automatically continue forever. With the current financial and moral situation in the world, major corporations, presidents, CEO's and companies are failing overnight, which reinforces and raises a keen awareness of the importance of a good solid foundation with strong ethical principles and a long term vision.

BPW Federation is the example of such vision since 1919, from our founder Agnes Morris, which was to support, engage, advocate and educate.

She connected women all over the world in our common goals on a unified international platform projecting our determination and strength. Over the years our presidents and members in all the professions and businesses have contributed to this achievement. However, now more than ever, to continue being a leader more work is needed as a critical component, not only to forge ahead, but to maintain what has been accomplished.

I therefore strongly urge all our members to become engaged in our valuable work on all levels by supporting, strengthening and helping us to grow in our endeavors and building on the foundation laid by all those before us. A monumental effort would be required today to start from the beginning, so let us never forget the work that brought us through the last 95th years to 2014. The urgent need and requirement to be visible and counted on, as the solid highly needed component of our society, on the economic, social and political levels is our most important responsibility as women, and members of our great organization. No longer can this be left to only a few. It is for the future of our daughters, sons and the world that we all make the commitment to be participants rather than observers.

These times call for action, not reaction but pro-action, in addressing the critical issues for and about women and creating innovative solutions. The reason you joined BPW was to become part of a powerful, international network. No matter what your level of expertise is, this is my urgent call for our members in all the languages and cultures to do whatever they can on the local, national and international levels of BPW. You are needed so that together we can and will achieve more. Time is at a premium for us all, especially in a voluntary organization. With consistent, committed, and focused efforts from the many members, we can maximize on our advocacy and work that will provide the desired results which we can all be proud of. Each of us can and must take ownership of this great responsibility, as women and BPW members.

In times past the question women have asked is "What does BPW bring to me?"

The answer must be, "What do we need to invest in BPW in order for it to be the strongest network, leading and advocating for women in order to reach our goals of equal status on the decision making platforms, politically, socially and economically?"

It is very clear that our investment of today will bring the continued success of tomorrow, and our dedicated commitment can and must continue!

May the lights from the candles in our Candle Lighting Ceremony tonight unite us all in these challenging times bringing inspiration, wisdom and strength to keep building on our solid foundation for our future.

Laverne George,
President BPW/LA
2014-2015

This concludes the history report for 2013-2014.

Martha Gremillion

Martha Gremillion, Historian

Date: December 17, 2014