



Business and Professional Women/Berea

NEXT MEETING
Wednesday, Mar. 3
at 6 pm - Smokehouse Grill

February 2010

Greetings from your President:

February is the month for sweethearts and love being in the air. I'm not so sure about all that love but I do know that the air has been chilly. Are all of you looking for that spring weather and the first signs of the daffodils and crocuses? I know I have been waiting and waiting and I am still waiting.



We held our February meeting on the 3rd at the Smokehouse Grill. Our vice president Arritta Morris was our speaker for the evening. She gave her presentation on couponing. She had attended a class given by the Madison County Extension Office. She supplied everyone with a handout with valuable websites and the best and most effective way to use coupons. When times are tough and money is tight any ideas can be most helpful. Thank you for the information Arritta!

We decided not to have a speaker for March because we will be doing some planning for our upcoming event in April. Berea will be hosting the South Central Regional Meeting Saturday, April 24th. Those in attendance at the February meeting had some very good ideas. I really want to concentrate on our meeting room, the food, the gift bags, registration forms and hotel rooms.

Please remember our upcoming dates, they are as follows:

- Women's History Month in March
- Equal Pay Day-April 20th
- South Central Regional Meeting-April 24th
- State Meeting Barren River State Park Resort-June 11-12th

Thanks to all of you who have been braving the weather and getting out to our meetings. I appreciate all your help and ideas.

Sending Warm Thoughts Your Way!
Rene'
Berea-President

Birthdays:

February Birthdays:

- Barbara Belcher – 2/15

March Birthdays:

- Arritta Morris – 3/3
- Carlene Zumstein – 3/4
- Edith Baker – 3/8
- Rene Poitra – 3/29

Happy Birthday!!!

◆ Next Meeting:

- Smokehouse Grill, Berea. Wednesday, March 3, 6:00 pm. Dinner will be at 6:00 pm., the business meeting at 7:00. You should call Mary Miller with your reservation!

◆ Events:

- March – Women's History Month
- March 15 – Deadline for Kentucky Cardinal.
- April 4 – PBS Showing of Seneca Falls
- April 20 – Equal Pay Day
- April 24 – South Central Regional Meeting in Berea.
- June 11-12 – State Meeting Barren River State Park Resort

◆ Current Officers:

- President: René Poitra 986-5816
- Vice President: Arritta Morris/ Bea Riley 986-8080
- Treasurer: Barbara Belcher 986-0647
- Secretary: Linda Van Winkle 986-9848



*Well-Behaved Women Seldom
Make History
— Laurel Ulrich*

Highlights from The Web — Winter '10

In honor of Women's History Month the movie *Seneca Falls* will be shown exclusively on PBS. *Seneca Falls* takes viewers on a life-changing journey with nine high school girls (and a lone ten-year-old boy) bound for the birthplace of women's rights in America. Part teenage road trip, part stunning history lesson, the film is, above all, an awakening of young hearts and minds.

This one-hour documentary breathes life and relevance into a revolutionary act barely mentioned in history books: America's first women's rights convention, a public protest meeting held in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848. The film follows WOWER Power, a struggling multi-cultural teen theater troupe, as they travel from San Francisco to Seneca Falls to perform their original play at the 150th Anniversary Celebration of this groundbreaking moment in American history.

Seneca Falls will be shown by PBS on KET Sunday, April 4th at 5:00 PM. Mark your calendars.

Wear RED on Equal Pay Day to symbolize how far women and minorities are "in the red" with their pay!

The next Equal Pay Day is Tuesday, April 20, 2010. This date symbolizes how far into 2010 women must work to earn what men earned in 2009.

Equal Pay Day was originated by the National Committee on Pay Equity (NCPE) in 1996 as a public awareness event to illustrate the gap between men's and women's wages.

Because women earn less, on average, than men, they must work longer for the same amount of pay. The wage gap is even greater for most women of color.

Learn more at: <http://www.pay-equity.org/day.html>

Top 10 Reasons for the Wage Gap

1: Wage Secrecy Hurts Women

Part of the problem is that wage data are largely kept secret in America, so women and minorities can be underpaid without knowing it. Employers frequently have policies that forbid workers from discussing their salaries, even though these policies are unfair and sometimes unlawful. Yet corporate cultures continue to intimidate workers by making it taboo to discuss salary, even among trusted co-workers.

2: Suing is Not a Practical Remedy

Taking an employer to court under the Equal Pay Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, or appropriate state laws is an option out of reach for many women. "I don't have \$250 for an initial consultation with an attorney," said one woman who contacted NCPE. Because awards are severely limited in Equal Pay Act cases, there is a lack of incentive for attorneys to accept cases.

3: When You Take Home Less, You'll Stay Home More

Given their lower earnings, women are usually the parent who takes time off to raise small children. That means they are out of the workforce for a few years, which lowers their earnings when they return.

4: Even if They're Equal In Value, Women's Jobs Pay Less

Sometimes the jobs dominated by women in a company are not valued in the same way that men's jobs are. Studies have shown that the more women and people of color fill an occupation, the less it pays. Using a point factor job evaluation system, the state of MN found that the "women's jobs" paid 20 percent less on average than male-dominated jobs, even when their jobs scored equally on the job evaluation system. (Pay equity adjustments were phased in over four years at a cost of 3.7 percent of overall payroll.)

5: Market Forces Are Not Eliminating Discrimination

Some say market forces will eliminate salary inequities, yet it has been 41 years since the Equal Pay Act was signed into law and 40 years since the Civil Rights Act was signed into law. Still, discrimination exists. If we had relied on market forces to implement fairness, we never would have needed the Civil Rights Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, or the Americans

with Disabilities Act. Market forces do not overcome bias in the workplace. Bigoted employers will pay more to work with white people, for example. Even Alan Greenspan has acknowledged that too often, companies practice discrimination, which hurts America's economy.

6: Discrimination is Intangible, But It's There

Discrimination is almost never found in the form of a smoking gun - like the Texaco tapes, for example, in which senior executives at the company were heard making racial slurs. Instead, discrimination takes a more subtle yet pervasive form. For example, in the class action sex-discrimination suit filed against Merrill Lynch, female employees complained that the accounts of retiring employees, walk-ins, and other lucrative networking opportunities were steered towards the men in the company. Another typical concern is that women are not offered career shaping assignments or spots on important committees. NCPE often hears from women who say there is an "old boys network" or glass ceiling at work. When women have trouble advancing, in a company, they can't gain the experience needed to lead.

7: Old Stereotypes Die Hard

In this day and age, women are still told they don't make as much as the men because the men have families to support. Women are not working for pin money. They are supporting America's families. As one plaintiff recounted, a manager told her, "You don't need pay equity, you're married." There are also stereotypes about what kind of work is appropriate for women, which hinder women's advancement in some fields currently dominated by men.

8: Not all Jobs are Open to Women

Over half of all women are concentrated in the broad categories of sales, clerical, and service jobs. Women can have a hard time breaking into the male-dominated jobs, as evidenced through Department of Labor audits of federal contractors. For example, in 1999, Berkline Corporation and its parent company, Lifestyle Furnishings International, agreed to pay \$300,000 in back pay for refusing to hire women as woodworkers. Kohler Corporation, a national plumbing hardware manufacturer in Wisconsin, agreed to pay nearly \$900,000 to 2000 women who were not hired because of their gender. When women do break into male-dominated jobs, sometimes they experience hostile work environments and find little support for their presence there.

9: Companies Fail to Address Unfair or Haphazard Pay Practices

Why won't employers address the issue on their own? Perhaps they are worried about future liability. Part of it may be psychological -- many employers don't want to believe they are discriminating or that they have tolerated discrimination. But because our socialization in America is not free from sex or race bias, it can lead to undervaluing women and minorities on the job.

10: Current Laws Are Not Strong Enough

Put simply, current laws prohibiting wage discrimination need to be strengthened. The Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act are important laws, but they are hard to enforce, and legal cases are extremely difficult to prove and win. Because enforcement of the laws is complaint driven and most of the information needed to prove a complaint is held by employers, these laws lack the ability to completely rid America of discriminatory pay practices. In addition, the Equal Pay Act does not allow women to file class-action lawsuits, and it provides very insubstantial damages.

If you have any comments, complaints, corrections, announcements or contributions (always very welcome), please contact:

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