

## LEADS – EDUCATIONAL, EXCITING, ENERGIZING!

Thursday evening, June 11<sup>th</sup>, found the Leads Candidates being warmly welcomed by International President Rose Ditto. The executive committee served refreshments and Rose presented each candidate with a beautiful ceramic rose she made herself!

Friday morning, forty-six enthusiastic ladies gathered for breakfast, followed by warm welcome remarks.

After seating ourselves at tables according to our region, I was privileged to meet five other Leads candidates from Mississippi Valley Region. Michelle Marcoot, GFWC Senior Director of Membership and Programs, started the Know Your Organization program with a short “teamwork” quiz. Immediately the MVR ladies knew we would work well together!

We not only discussed some of the history of GFWC, but we became aware of the many resources that National has to offer members. It became clear how each member, club, district, state and region fits into the overall scheme. When recruiting new members, this can be a valuable resource when an individual person realizes where they fit into this large and inclusive organization. The various programs can be used and adapted so that every member/club can find something of interest.

Our next presenter was Chris Sienkielewski, Chairman of Leadership Committee. Capitalize your strengths, and recruit people to make up for your weaknesses. It is important to allow people to perform tasks “their” way. Learn to delegate. A mentor is one terrific idea that will help a new

member become more a part of your club. From time to time, members need to review their club projects, and decide which ones to keep and which ones to stop. Everybody has something to offer and everyone needs to feel important.

After a delicious box lunch, our afternoon continued with Patty Whitehouse, New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs, giving a class on Conflict Resolution. We started out with a self-test, to determine if we were: a Director, an Influencer, a Stabilizer, or a Perfectionist. Knowing what makes the other person "tick" is the beginning of working together successfully.

Try to understand the other person's point of view, and do not be accusatory or judgemental. When resolving a conflict, allow the other person to speak without interrupting. Do not listen only to words, but read their body language. There are four generations of people in any club: WW IIers, Baby Boomers,

Gen Xers, and Millennials. In any conflict always assume best intentions!

Our next speaker was Marian St. Clair, GFWC of South Carolina, giving the program on How to Give a Great Presentation. When writing a speech start by "Taking the Lid Off". Success or failure depends on getting the audience's attention. Tell them what you are going to tell them, cover a little at a time, then reinforce your message. End with a bang! She reminded us that when giving a speech, always make two numbered copies typed in a larger font, and stored in two separate places.

Following our class photo, and regional photos, our last speaker was Nikki Willoughby, GFWC Senior Director of Public Relations. [PR@GFWC.org](mailto:PR@GFWC.org) should be very important to us. Any news items that we submit can be emailed there to the public relations department. Members should be encouraged to check out the [GFWC.org](http://GFWC.org) website frequently, and to “twitter.” Our Leads class will be the test group for a new web project. Each participant received a booklet with information on communicating.

The Leads candidates of 2009 became Leads graduates and were recognized individually when we received our certificates and Leads pins.

The next morning we were joined by Leads graduates from previous years for an informal breakfast at which time President Rose Ditto stopped in and presented everyone with a bookmark.

This was a very intense experience and I came away with a lot of knowledge and a greater appreciation for all that GFWC is.

Thank you to MISSOURI GFWC for allowing me to represent you as the 2009 Leads Candidate.

Carol Shoener