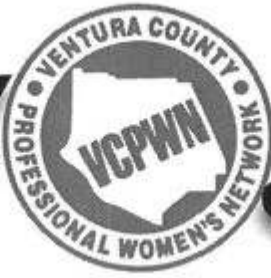


Focal Points



Ventura County Professional Women's Network

January-March 2006

Promoting the professional and personal growth of Ventura County women through education, mutual support, and sharing of resources

VCPWN



Meetings Calendar

Location:

Wedgewood Banquet Center
5880 Olivas Park Dr. Ventura

Thursday, January 12
Gina Ortiz-Wunder - *We can have it all, we just can't have it all at once*

Thursday, February 9
Networking & Silent Auction

Thursday, March 9
Program TBA

Networking begins at 5:30 p.m.
Dinner, with networking
continuing at 6:30
Program 7:15
Adjourn 8:45

VCPWN Board of Directors Meetings

All members are welcome to attend:

Monday, January 23
Monday, February 27
Monday, March 27

Location:

Courtyard by Marriott
600 East Esplanade Dr., Oxnard
6:00 p.m.

Dinner and meeting

TO MENTOR OR BE MENTORED?

That is the question!

Meet VCPWN's newest board member, Pam Vos, owner of Forever Fit. Pam has accepted the very important position of Director of Mentoring. The following article outlines her plans for developing a Mentoring program. You are encouraged both to support Pam in her efforts to help members grow, and to avail yourself of the services her volunteers will be offering.



Most of us want it, many of us need it. What is it? *Mentoring!* And now it is here. March marks the kickoff of VCPWN's all-new Mentoring Program, where members will have an opportunity to either mentor someone, be mentored, or both.

Mentoring is very popular and very effective. Most adults can identify a person who, at some time in their life, have acted as a mentor and made a significant, positive impact on them. A mentor can be a friend, relative, co-worker, or teacher. Most often, a mentor is an experienced or older person who acts as a role model, challenger, guide or cheerleader.

Research by Harvard Business School indicates that minority workers who advance the furthest share a common characteristic: *a strong network of mentoring relationships.* Many successful corporations, including, Microsoft, Boeing, Hewlett Packard, Intel, Southwest Airlines, State Farm Insurance have realized great value in mentoring programs to meet challenges. Nordstrom positions mentoring as "*instant learning that is integrated into daily work.*"

Mentoring provides encouragement, guidance, problem solving, support, personal and professional growth among many other things. Not only does the mentee receive many benefits, but the mentor herself receives enormous benefits from the sharing of experiences and wisdom.

VCPWN's mission is to... "promote the professional and personal growth of Ventura County Women through education, mutual support and the sharing of resources" and that is what this new 12 week program is designed to do. Beginning in March, each person who signs up will receive a notebook to work from, and occasional meetings will be scheduled between mentee and mentor, where support, guidance, and accountability will be offered. Come to the January meeting for details!

If you are interested in receiving information, either about becoming a mentor or being mentored, please contact Pam Vos at 805-382-4444 or email pam@foreverfitforwomen.com.

From the President

Happy New Year everyone!

I hope that you all had a safe and enjoyable holiday season. I want to begin by wishing you all a happy, healthy, and prosperous new year.

Although the December respite from VCPWN meetings gave me much needed time to do everything that I needed to do, I really missed everyone. I realized how much I enjoy seeing all of you each month. I love the camaraderie of our group and feel that it is very special. Although I am a member of several other groups, VCPWN holds a special place in my heart!

Many of us make New Years resolutions. As president of VCPWN I have made a few resolutions of my own.

They involve increasing our membership, continuing to provide high quality speakers, making sure that all of you are happy and find VCPWN to be a valuable organization, and finally, to provide an excellent mentoring program. Thanks to Pam Vos, the mentoring program will not only come to fruition, it will be AWESOME! Stay tuned for all of the wonderful details.

I greatly appreciate all of your support of the silent auctions during 2005. You all helped to make them quite a success. I hope that you continue to find them fun, exciting, and something that you want to participate in. I want to give special thanks to Sue Gary, Gina Gables, and Carrie Sharpshair for all of their hard work on the auctions. I know that there are additional people that I should be thanking, and I apologize if I have accidentally omitted you.

As 2006 unfolds we will see many new faces at VCPWN. Let's greet them all with the same love and enthusiasm that

we share with each other. I believe that because VCPWN is such a supportive group, it is good to capitalize on that fact when attracting new members. We need to project such a powerful, yet loving image that everyone will want to be on our team.

I look forward to seeing you at the January meeting!

Best regards,
Alison Balter



Between the Lines

Some important things are happening with VCPWN and *Focal Points* in the new year. Our organization has a new board member in Pam Vos as Director of Mentoring, this newsletter has a new advertising coordinator in Susan McRae, and we are going digital with our publication.

I realize that some of you would prefer to stay with the hard copy, and we will print up a few, but economics and the modern way of doing things seem to dictate that this is the way to go.

There are some major benefits to electronic publication. Namely, you'll get your newsletter in color (which is so much nicer), you'll get it faster, and you'll get "live links" that you can click on to take you all over the Internet. Besides, the post office won't have a chance to deliver you a torn-in-half copy, with apologies for their "high speed machines"!

Obviously, the key is to make sure we have your current email address. Please send any updates to VCPWN secretary, Carrie Sharpshair: brecs.carrie@adelphia.net.

If you have any ideas, articles, or comments about Focal Points, I'd love to hear them: sheila@sheilalowe.com

I'll close with my personal wishes for a fantastic new year filled with good health, happiness, and prosperity. Oh, and world peace :) ♥

Happy New Year! Your editor, Sheila Lowe



Meet new members

Laura Parson

My name is Laura Parson and I'm the owner of Data-Girl Business Services. I grew up in the San Fernando Valley, but had the good sense to move to Ventura in 1985. An avid reader, I also love to do big counted cross-stitch projects and take tap dance lessons twice a week. After getting on stage in spandex and sequins in front of hundreds of people, I figure I can do just about anything! VCPWN is a great organization and I'm glad that I'm now a part of it.

Colleen Ballew

I'm a Single mom living in Newbury Park. My teenage daughter, Brenna, is on the honor roll at NP High School. For fun, I make Soy Candles and Lip Balms, and I enjoy Yoga and Spinning. I have a Jack Russell Terrier named Tess who I believe to be the most entertaining dog in the world.

Other recent new members:

Ingrid Cabral Ward Diane Ellis Deborah Gallant
Brenda LaMar Diana McDermott James Nichol

New members are invited to introduce themselves on this page by sending a few lines to the Editor at sheila@sheilalowe.com. We'd like to get to know you, so the information should be more personal than business-related. The deadline for the next issue of *Focal Points* is March 1.

The Psychology of Money

Meeting Review By Carol Leish

How does 'Prosperity Thinking' differ from 'Poverty Thinking'? How is the psychology of money deeply rooted in childhood? What does it mean to "navigate the rapids?"

Our November speaker, Lexi Welanetz-Bursin, Psy.D., a Licenced Clinical Psychologist, answered these questions when she spoke to us about the psychology of money. According to Lexi, prosperity thinking mean thinking of the *abundance* of money that we have to spend, while poverty thinking deals with thinking about the *scarcity* of money there is to spend (which means believing that there is never enough to spend.)

Lexi shared that her own grandparents had poverty thinking. "My grandparents lived through the Depression," she said. "They lived with tight boundaries." Yet, she noted that poverty thinking can also mean living *without* boundaries. Using her parents as an example of poverty thinking, she said, "My parents were cookbook authors an

d they taught cooking classes. It was either feast or famine. They lived beyond their means."

Lexi explained that the psychology of money is deeply rooted in childhood and, as adults, we tend either to act the way our parents did with money or to rebel against them. Thus, she stressed that the two factors that influence us through our parents are, "How our parents dealt with us around money and how our parents acted as role models for us."

When the audience did a free association exercise to the word, "money" repeated five times, the answers were varied. They included, cash flow, funny money [money that you gamble with], food, shelter, freedom, comfort and easy.

Lexi mentioned that we use different types of prosperity thinking and poverty thinking depending on what we're dealing with. When we deal with

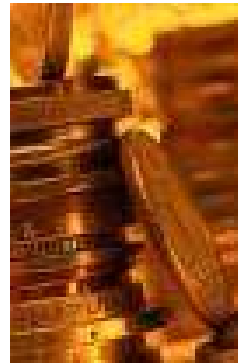
marketing, for instance, we use the more expansive prosperity thinking. When dealing with budgeting we deal more with poverty thinking by thinking of ways we can cut back.

Navigating the rapids is important, said Lexi, in order to recognize them

before they have an impact. The Rapids are rationalization, avoidance, projection, idealization, denial and splitting. She gave an example of rationalization: "We get a loan for a house and then decide that we do not want the house anyway since the house is too big. We make excuses. Idealization occurs when we have overly positive thoughts

and feelings towards something and expect an overly favorable result."

In closing, Lexi stressed the importance of setting goals. Having a written plan of where you want to be in three months, in three years, etc., is essential.



EVENTS

Call to make reservations: (805)656-6011

UPCOMING

January 12

January's meeting sponsor is Pam Vos, VCPWN Director of Mentoring and owner of *Forever Fit!* Womens Personal Fitness Studio.

The featured speaker is Gina Ortiz-Wunder. Her topic: *We can have it all, we just can't have it all at once.* Gina is a Life Coach and Motivational Speaker from Simi Valley. Her company is *Seeds of Change.*



Gina Ortiz-Wunder

February 9

February's meeting sponsor is Jim Nicoll of Nicoll Insurance & Financial Services.

February's meeting is *Networking Night.* Start practicing your 20-second commercial now! You might win a prize for Best Commercial.

There will also be a silent auction. To donate items and benefit VCPWN, contact Gina Gables: (805) 523-3432 or

maandpaw@adelphia.net

Come and bid!

Please support our sponsors!

If you would like to help support Focal Points, please contact Sheila Lowe at (805) 658-0109 or sheila@sheilalowe.com



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At a recent meeting, Maura Raffensperger announced that the winning entry of the Wind Beneath My Wings award was written by Mariaemma Pelullo-Willis.

My husband Ron has been the wind beneath my wings for both my personal and professional life for more than 20 years. From the moment I met him he has always been supportive of my work and my goals.

In 1979, when I was the director of a learning clinic, he volunteered his time to do whatever was needed. For many years he provided construction, delivery, and handyman services, plus volunteered to teach computer skills to my students. When I started my learning style work in 1989 he said, "You need to promote your work at conferences. You can do it. I'll help you." And for many years and many conferences, he loaded up products, lugged everything across the state and across state lines, did the setup and worked in the booths for 2 or 3 day stretches.

When I was writing a book, with Victoria Hodson in 1999 he was the chief cook and housekeeper. I can't say that he was always cheerful about these jobs, but he did cheer me on as I spent hours and days on end working from morning until late at night.

For the last 10 years he has been my computer consultant and website maintenance person. He has done graphics for my flyers, put my writing into Pagemaker (because I hate that program), and helped me self-publish several books. He has moved my offices 3 times, assembled furniture, and done countless other tasks to support me and my work. He continues to run over to my office when I've forgotten my lunch at home or to change my fax machine ink cartridge or fix the answering machine again!

Even more importantly, Ron is the person who gets me through personal and family events, whether they

be happy or sad. Think about my last name—Pelullo-Willis! Well, the Willis belongs to Ron—good English stock—they barely say two words in a conversation! The Pelullo part is mine, of course, and it's Italian. Coming into my family is like joining the cast of My Big Fat Greek Wedding. There are hundreds of cousins and lots of drama and yelling and people constantly running in and out.

Ron loves my family and has always pitched right in no matter what anyone needs. He always took great care of my mom, especially when she got sick and came to live with us. He sat up with her on her last night in the hospital, when the rest of us finally left to try to get some rest, and he was privilege to be the one to say the final goodbye. And then he was okay with my crying and sadness for months, sometimes trying to cheer me up, sometimes just being with me. I could go on forever, but it's impossible to list and describe every time and every way Ron has been the wind beneath my wings. I thank God for him every day.



Mariaemma & Ron Willis

Historical Perspective on Women

by Gwenlyn Norton, Artist

Conflicts arise daily in our busy lives, so when I learned of An Interdisciplinary Symposium of Women in Culture and Society occurring at Studio Channel Islands Art Center (SCIAC) on the California State University at Channel Islands campus (CSUCI) concurrently with our own VCPWN Clothing Exchange, I made a difficult choice. As much fun as I'm sure I missed at Sue Gary's home, I return home today so energized that I immediately sat down to write an article for *Focal Points*.

The Symposium featured all-too-brief presentations from highly educated persons affiliated with art, education and business who repeatedly spoke of the lack of female representation, documentation, and respectful portrayal in western history—from Native American Women in Film, to female art collectors, women in science, women in music, women in business, and mothers and other women writers.

One of the eleven speakers, Al Boine, Professor of Art History, UCLA, addressed Linda Nochlin's 1971 essay, *Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?* Is it because only the men were supported? she asks. Who determines quality, beauty and greatness? What is the criteria? Boine states that women tend to be individualized rather than part of a movement/unit, and he feels that this is the age where academia is re-reading women's historical impact on art.

Have you ever heard of Rita Levi-Montalcini? She won the Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine for her discovery of the Nerve Growth Factor in 1986. Amazingly, only 5% of Nobel Prizes have gone to women! Levi-Montalcini wrote *In Praise of Imperfection*. Her story is one of true determination and survival.

Stacy Peterson, SVP/Regional Manager, Commercial Banking Group, Santa Barbara Bank and Trust related that even though 75% of the Bank's employees are female, only 16% are CEO's or CFO's. Three professors of English at CSUCI, Julia Balen, Joan Peters and Renny Christopher, collectively stressed the importance of educating ourselves on women the likes of Simon de Beauvoir, Audra Lorde, Monique Wittig and Gloria E Anzaldua. I was deeply touched when Renny read to us some of her very moving poetry.

What about women in Western classical music? Have you heard of Hildegard von Bingen? Fanny Mendelssohn? Clara Schuman? Nadia Boulanger? Lili Boulanger? Ellen Taaffe Zwilich? Each has composed some absolutely breathtaking pieces. Look them up on the Internet.

You may have heard about the *Women Beyond Borders* art project where a simple wooden box was given to women around the world. Each woman was to decorate it in a way that expressed her individual voice and vision. The current collection, containing over 800 boxes from women all over the world, is based in Santa Barbara. One of our own art professors at CSUCI, Beverly Decker, was at the initial meeting in 1992.

And let's not ignore the way women were, and still are in many instances, portrayed on the silver screen in such movies as *Broken Arrow*, *The Searchers*, *Vanishing American*, *Pocohantas* and many, many others.

In my lifetime, I have seen dramatic changes for women's equality, yet these changes are just a drop in the bucket compared to where we must healthfully be as nondiscriminating human beings. We must continue to strive to make women equal in a world that has otherwise been denied them.

gwenlynsgallery.com

[Ed note: besides being an award-winning artist, Gwenlyn Norton is a VCPWN Navigator, which means she is a long-time member who is committed to the continued growth of VCPWN, including helping newer members.]



A quarterly publication of
Ventura County Professional
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For additional information call
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Blow Your Horn!

- * Gwenlyn Norton reports: Excitement filled the air as the 11 fabulous Women and one Remarkable Man's 2006 Women's Political Caucus Calendar made its debut at the Ventura County Museum recently. Two VCPWN members were so honored. Deborah Sutherland as Miss January and Bonnie Warrington as Miss December. Each in their superbly gracious way glorifies what it means to give so much of her time and energy to her respective communities. Our heartfelt congratulations to you both. Maura Raffensperger also attended, along with other VCPWN members, Debbi Steele, Lisa Burton, Martha Jaffe, Nancy Gregg, Merle DiVita. Last year, Merle DiVita was an honoree.
- * In August, Laura Crutchfield hiked from Glacier Point to the top of Half Dome and then down to Yosemite Valley—a journey of 18.8 miles, to 8836 feet elevation and 12.5 hours long. Laura says, although it was tough, it was also exhilarating.
- * Sheila Lowe became approved by the State of California as a provider of continuing education for marriage and family therapists. She was also interviewed about



handwriting analysis for the January issue of National Geographic for Kids and about the signature of actress Angelina Jolie for *Us magazine*

- * Tessa Weeks has been appointed Region 6 Representative for the National Résumé Writers' Association (NRWA). Her territory covers California, Oregon, Washington, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Nevada, and Hawaii. In September, Tessa attended the NRWA annual conference which took place in Stamford, Connecticut. It was three days packed with informative and inspirational workshops presented by national leaders in the résumé industry. A highlight of her trip was a night out in New York City and a climb to the top of the Empire State Building.

Send "Blow Your Horn" announcements to Focal Points Editor Sheila Lowe at sheila@sheilalowe.com, or complete a Blow Your Horn form at one of the VCPWN meetings. Remember, the articles are for-interest items only. To purchase an advertisement and publicize your business or an event or place a classified ad, please let us know. It will benefit you and help support Focal Points. Call Sheila Lowe at (805) 658-0109 or email: sheila@sheilalowe.com

Gourmet Dinner Group

VCPWN's Gourmet Dinner Special Interest Group held its December Feast at Mary Phillips' home, December 3rd. Prior to enjoying their Early American Christmas-themed meal, the group selected hosts and themes for their meals in 2006.

The Gourmet Dinner Special Interest Group is made up of current VCPWN members, former members, spouses, and friends. The pot luck style dinners are held on the first Saturday evening of every other month. Prior to the meal, each person (or couple) describes the recipe they prepared. Any member of VCPWN who would like to participate may contact Barbara Greene at bgreene@tonguethrust.com or phone her at 985-6779.

Share this wonderful group through photos contributed by Sue Gary on page 8.

To the wonderful circle of VCPWN Women

When I was little, I used to believe in the concept of one best friend, and then I started to become a woman. I found out that if you allow your heart to open up, you would find the best in many friends.

One friend is needed when you're going through things with your man. Another friend is needed when you're going through things with your mom. Another when you want to shop, share, heal, hurt, joke, or just be.

One friend will say let's pray together, another, let's cry together, another let's fight together, another let's walk away together.

One friend will meet your spiritual need, another your shoe fetish, another your love for movies, another will be with you in your season of confusion, another will be your clarifier, another the wind beneath your wings.

But whatever their assignment in your life, on whatever the occasion, on whatever the day, or wherever you need them to meet you with their gym shoes on and hair pulled back, or to hold you back from making a complete fool of yourself...those are your best friends.

It may all be wrapped up in one woman, but for many it's wrapped up in several...one from 7th grade, one from high school, several from the college years, a couple from old jobs, several from church, on some days your mother, on others your sisters, and on some days your daughters.

So whether they've been there 20 minutes or 20 years, Pass this on to the women that have been placed in your life to make a difference.

[From the Internet, author unknown]



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The Gourmet Dinner Group



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