

CFUW National President Susan Murphy
Speech to the CFUW AGM, Waterloo, Ontario
Sunday June 22, 2014

It is my pleasure to speak to you this morning at the close of my two year term as President of CFUW. It has been an incomparable experience - one that I hoped would enable me to make a contribution, with my Board colleagues, to the ongoing progress and future of our organization.

Henry Ford said "Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success." In my judgement, we have all succeeded.

This morning I am going to talk briefly about the Board of Directors, my personal experiences and my thoughts for the future.

The five strategic aims of this Board have been Membership, Advocacy, Scholarships and Fellowships, Public Profile and Sustainability. Our goal has been to strengthen this organization and all members of the national team have focused our activities in these five areas. These aims are easily transferrable to regions and clubs, and I have encouraged all Clubs to consider using them too.

Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, and the first woman finance minister of a G7 country was recently interviewed by Anna Maria Tremonti on The Current. When asked what it would take to regain the public trust regarding the world economic situation, Lagarde responded, "Trust begins with **transparency.**"

That resonated with me because this Board has embraced the concept of transparency

- clarifying roles,
- documenting policies and procedures,
- making clear and formal decisions at Board meetings,
- sharing minutes, financial and other reports, discussion papers, and notices for members.
- publishing and distributing all material to Clubs and posting on the cfuadmin website in a timely manner.

We have built on the work of previous boards to have a solid foundation for the future.

We know that small changes can make a big difference. Darwin said that it is not the strongest or the most intelligent who will survive but those who can best manage change. And that is the challenge ahead for CFUW.

- MEETINGS - The Board of Directors met regularly throughout the past year - eight times by teleconference - and twice in person at last year's AGM. It is a very efficient method of moving our agenda forward quickly and it is very cost effective.
- COMMUNICATIONS - We have worked hard to improve our communications with Clubs and members:
 - the addition of the Press Agency articles for Club newsletters,
 - CFUW News and Updates for Club executives,
 - CFUW Week in Review now issued once every two weeks,
 - Delegate Advisories for this AGM and Workshop leaders contacting registrants to provide information ahead of the AGM,
 - our "modernization" initiative in which we have adopted a new masthead, new tag line "the power of women working together", an

innovative business card and brochures soon to come. We encourage Clubs to take the opportunity to use them to brand our federation.

- There is nothing to substitute for personal contact; however, our ability to connect has been good - through Skype, three way phone calls and teleconferences. We continue to take advantage of technology to improve our operations and work with Clubs.

On a personal level, the past year has been a whirlwind of **TRAVEL**.

I have gone from Nanaimo on Vancouver Island right across this wonderful country and back. Some examples

- Three Council AGMS in Barrie, Ontario; Vernon, BC; and Prince Albert, Saskatchewan;
- visits to CFUW St. John's, Truro, Cowichan Valley, Victoria, Kanata, Fredericton, Etobicoke, Dartmouth, and Halifax;
- to CFUW Kincardine for a visit with Huron Region Clubs;
- to the 75th anniversary of CFUW Wolfville; 30th anniversary of CFUW Comox Valley;
- to Ottawa and the National Office; and to the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO in Victoria.
- leading the 30 member CFUW Delegation to the IFUW Triennial in Istanbul Turkey last August
- leading the 13 member CFUW Delegation to the UN CSW in NY in March as A/VP International Relations. We published special issues of the CFUW News and Updates with articles and photos to share these two international

experiences with members. I invite all members to consider attending one or both of these events.

- in late May, a participant in the first ever CFUW trip, the Literary Legends Cruise and Tour. Sixteen travellers ventured out on the ocean-liner Queen Mary 2, from New York to Southampton and toured about by land and attended three plays - two at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford and one at the Globe Theatre in London. Fran Mitchell from Richmond and Fran Leggett from Lethbridge were on the trip and you may have heard about their experiences. We hope that a future CFUW trip may be possible in the fall of 2015 and if so, you will hear more.

Travel can be tiring; however, it gives you an unparalleled exposure to the uniqueness of clubs and regions, the challenges and successes experienced by members and the sharing of their personal stories..... which I love to hear.

I'll tell you one story about my travels.

On one stop, Janet Willwerth, RD for Nova Scotia, and I had a date to have breakfast in New Glasgow with the members of CFUW Pictou County who are a very small group and who had invited a staff member from the local Women's Centre to join us. When I walked up to the door, it was opened by a woman who introduced herself as Frances Campbell, one of the members. I said, Frances, it's nice to meet you....and she said, Oh, I feel like I know you... I have been following you on facebook right across the country ever since you left home. Of course, we had a great breakfast and visit and took some pictures.

I have used my smart phone to post regularly from all over the world on my personal facebook page and on the CFUW administered facebook group. I've tried to share my CFUW experience in words and pictures wherever I go, believing that the more we get

to know one another, share stories and successes, the more CFUW clubs and members in our federation will feel a kinship among us and all benefit from those experiences.

What About the Future?

Recent article in the Globe and Mail noted that.... "the mark of a successful leader is the ability to see opportunity where others see problems". I know that our 2012-14 board met that definition and I am confident our next board does too.

That Globe article had three ideas that reminded me of what we are doing and that we are on the right track.

1. **COMMIT TO WHAT IS IMPORTANT** - We must be clear about what is important to our organization and to us as members. We are focusing our national advocacy on four main priorities, Women and Education, Women's Economic Security, Women's Leadership and Violence Against Women. Clearly these are what we are about. Let's not let the little things take over from the important issues.
2. **ENGAGE OTHERS** - We gain support from others, and in our National Initiative on Violence against Women, Clubs have demonstrated that there are others who share our concerns and who will partner with us. We have been able to build and nurture relationships in the community, regionally and nationally. Continue that building.
3. **SHOW YOU CARE** - Everyone needs to be appreciated and at this meeting, we have taken advantage of this in-person opportunity to spend time with friends

and colleagues, to show that their efforts are valued and that their contributions are important. Carry that back to our regions and clubs.

I have loved the work of the Presidency of CFUW - I want to reiterate my gratitude and thanks

- to the Board of Directors, Regional Directors and Standing Committee Chairs and members for their support and enthusiasm and commitment to CFUW and
- to Robin Jackson our Executive Director and her staff for their excellent work. It has been a team effort throughout.
- to Regional Councils and clubs for all your work in communities and provinces to improve the lives of women and girls and to raise our profile.
- to all of you who offered such warm hospitality as I travelled across the country and those individuals and Clubs for the your great generosity towards my Camino walk in Spain in support of the 2019 Goal for Scholarships. So far over \$12,000 in pledges have been received.
- And last but not at all least, to my husband Bob for all his encouragement and support and his fortitude.

I wish all of you the very best personally and in your Clubs as we move towards our 100th anniversary in 2019.

It has been an honour and privilege to serve as your President, to be a part of this period in our history - to see the potential - and to know that we are in good hands with the 2014-16 Board and team going forward. Thank you.