



Connections

August 2011

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Message from the Chair:

by Jennifer Phillips, WLG Chair

I hope you are having a great summer and have had the opportunity to take time off to enjoy our beautiful California summer weather! The WLG Board is excited to announce our upcoming fall events and programs. Hope to see you soon.

Join us at our San Mateo Roundtable titled "Renew & Revive – Learning How to Flourish in Times of Loss and Transition" scheduled for **September 28**. The luncheon event features Jeff Malone, an integrative coach with The Ford Institute for Transformational Training. This outstanding roundtable event includes an optional afternoon workshop with the cost of registration. See attached flyer for more information.

Attending a professional conference this fall? Be sure go to the WLG sponsored breakout sessions at the MMANC Conference in Napa on **October 20** entitled, "Climbing a Curvy Career Ladder" and the CSAC Conference in San Francisco on **November 30** entitled, "Strategies for Leading Your Boards & Councils through Difficult Budget Decisions".

Also, watch for a **Noshing & Networking Luncheon** in your local area. If you want to host one (it's really simple and fun!) contact Kristen Compean at Kristen.compean@cityofrc.us

Membership renewals are streaming in, but if you haven't renewed yet, please do. 2011-12 is going to offer several great member only programs including the **Small Group Coaching Program**, which was a big success with members and coaches last spring! And the monthly **Executive Coaching Call** that received rave reviews from participating city managers.

On behalf of the entire WLG Board, thank you for your continued commitment to WLG!



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Membership Benefits All of Us

This past year, our Board of Directors has recognized the need to deliver specific return on the investment of your WLG membership.

As California's foremost professional organization focused on the development, training, and networking needs of women in local government, WLG benefits our members many ways to share, meet and communicate including quarterly e-news, regional roundtables, Noshing and Networking lunches, conference training, small group coaching, Executive Network, one-on-one mentoring and regional City Manager roundtables. Our goal is to build not just a professional organization with a roster of quality individuals, but a network of active women that mentor and support each other in a purposeful way.

We commend your decision to make your professional development a priority by partnering with WLG and we encourage you to invite a colleague or friend to join WLG to take advantage of our focused membership benefits.

Need more?
Contact us at:
www.icma.org/wlg
lsassoon@villapark.org

Noshing & Networking: Staying Involved Throughout the Year



WLG offers a variety of opportunities to stay involved throughout the year including Noshing and Networking mixers. Noshing and Networking is a prime opportunity to introduce your female colleagues to the WLG organization and network with other government professionals from your area. N&N mixers are informal and occur during the lunch hour. We are seeking support from WLG members to plan an N&N mixer in your area today! Planning for an N&N mixer can be done in three easy steps:

- Choose a date and time for your Noshing & Networking mixer.
- Select a restaurant in your area that can accommodate for a meeting with 10-20 women in attendance and will allow for separate checks.
- Spread the word! Send a flier to WLG members in your area and encourage members to bring one friend to the N&N mixer.

N&N mixers can have a theme or topic for discussion during the lunch hour. If you are interested in planning an N&N mixer in your area, please contact: Jamie Hook at jhook@newportbeachca.gov or 949-644-3335. Be sure to look out for an N&N mixer to occur in your area!

Good Reads



Members share a favorite book they recently read and offer their 30 second reviews:



Susan Loftus, San Mateo City Manager

“Switch – How to Change Things When Change is Hard” by Chip and Dan Heath

This book provides good insight for creating change within an organization. Why read it? 1) It’s an easy read, 2) has ideas you can apply immediately and 3) provides a solid framework for implementing change in many areas of your life.

Jeri Corgill, Administrative Analyst, City of Atascadero

“The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks” by Rebecca Skloot. This is a work of non-fiction that intrigued me from the diverse historical perspectives of the medical field and racial/social justice. It’s an exceptionally well-written ‘human interest’ story by an extraordinary journalist whose passion drove her to seek the truth.

Lori Sassoon, City Manager, City of Villa Park

My fave current book – “The Help” by Kathryn Stockett on which the new movie is based; it’s about how white families treated black household workers during the early 1960’s, right at the start of the Civil Rights movement. It’s especially interesting to me because my father grew up in Yazoo City, Mississippi, and as a child in the 1970’s I saw this reality first-hand.

“Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln” by Doris Kearns Goodwin is about appreciating and capitalizing on the strengths of those with whom we disagree, or who may even work actively against us, not that this sounds like any given city council in California, of course.

Jennifer Phillips, Santa Rosa Assistant City Manager

“The Great Reset” by Richard Florida. This book talks about how communities create new ways of living and working that ultimately help drive post-crash prosperity. It showed me that after the Long Depression of the 1890’s and Great Depression of the 1930’s, periods of prosperity built cities, created suburbs, and changed community priorities. It challenged me to look at how local governments can partner with their community to fuel prosperity during this new decade following the Great Recession that we all just survived!



Meet Your WLG Board

Membership Chair: Lori Sassoon



Women Leading Government Board Member Lori Sassoon serves as the Membership Chair for the organization. She is the City Manager of Villa Park, located in Orange County, California, and lives in Claremont with her husband Marco, daughter Noel and border collie Cocoa. Lori talk about her job saying, "I love waking up with the goal of solving today's problems in a constructive way, and working with elected officials to map out the course for the future. I also love helping others along in their public service careers." She earned a BA from Cal Poly/Pomona and an MPA from California State University/San Bernardino.

WLG is important to Lori because, "It is so important to have real connections to other local government professionals. It's not 'fluff' - it's essential to providing the best service we can to each of our communities. I learn something new from other WLG members every time I'm engaged in conversation with them."

Lori's perspective on her profession is this: "The tools of the trade in public service are passed from one professional generation to another. We have an obligation to our communities to always learn and always look to support that next generation. You are never too early in your career to reach out to someone else, share your mistakes, and help them along. I hope WLG can be known as the ultimate mentoring organization – like a long chain of people climbing a mountain, holding the hand of the person ahead as well as the person just behind."

Financial Chair: Sarona Vivanco

Women Leading Government Board Member Sarona Vivanco serves as the Financial Chair for the organization. Sarona serves as Senior Management Analyst in the City of Santa Clarita Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department, and lives in Los Angeles. She is married and has "three fantastic kids." She says her favorite parts of the work are, "Two things - I love that every day is different and challenging, and I also get fulfillment knowing that people's lives are touched by the work that we do."

Sarona earned a BA in Political Science with an emphasis in State and Local Government from CSUN, and she has an MPA from the University of Southern California. She is a member of ICMA member and past president as well as current member of the Municipal Management Association of Southern California.

She shares why WLG is important to her: "I remember being in on the conversation a few years ago when someone said, 'Wouldn't it be great if there was a professional organization that specifically met the needs of women in the profession?' At the time, I thought it was a great idea, and now this idea is reality. I am very proud of the strides we have made as an organization, and it has been wonderful interacting with so many smart, driven, talented, and successful women that are Women Leading Government."



Reaching Beyond the Clouds –

Mt. Everest Climber and WLG Speaker Cindy Abbott

On May 18, 2011, WLG hosted a Roundtable event in Southern California and were honored to have CSUF Professor Cindy Abbott as the featured speaker. Just a year ago, on May 23, 2010, after 18½ hours of nonstop climbing, Cindy Abbott made the round trip from the final camp to the summit of Mt. Everest at more than 29,000 feet. Cindy is one of fewer than 45 U.S. women to have successfully summited the peak. During the presentation, Cindy shared how her dream of climbing Mt. Everest came about and her personal journey of being diagnosed with a life threatening disease. As she battled both her rare disease and endured her intense training regiment, Cindy decided to use this climb, not only to fulfill her dream, but also to raise rare disease awareness and to raise money for the Vasculitis Foundation. Cindy's journey and determination are truly inspiring and attendees at the Roundtable event were grateful to have had the opportunity to meet her and hear her amazing story. Her story is now available in paperback and eBook in the newly released book, "Reaching Beyond the Clouds", by Cindy L. Abbott.