



Our History 1998 - 2003

Fall 1998 – Sally Kittredge, Executive Director

In the fall of 1998, a taskforce was established to review the current organizational structure of RWN. It was determined that the workload distribution needed to be reexamined and a better link be established between the committees and the Board. A newly defined Executive Committee was formed with a President, five Vice Presidents, and a President-Elect. Each VP would be responsible for specific areas and act as liaison between the Board and the appropriate committees. The President-Elect would be preparing to take over as President, act as Secretary, and be a support to the President.

Simultaneously, the role of Executive Director was reviewed in preparation for a search to fill the position. The new job description outlined the ED's role as an "implementer" while the President's role was redefined as a "facilitator" and the VP's as "liaisons". This same structure with some minor adjustments is still in use today. Sally Kittredge was hired to be our new Executive Director in November. She brought to the job an enthusiasm to better connect our members with the Network and each other and a willingness to be an important implementer of the Board's diverse initiatives.

1999 - Anne Norris, President

The year began with a new Executive Director and a new organizational structure in place. Anne Norris assumed the Presidency and brought forth an expanded focus for the Network. Reaching out to the community became a priority. Mary Spurrier would head up the effort as VP of Community Connections. She worked with the Women's Council, NAWBO, and Corporate Connections to develop joint programs. Suzanne Casanzio started our first Community Service Committee providing valuable opportunities for our members to give back to the community. This eventually became a joint effort of RWN and the Women's Shelter Coalition.

When RWN was approached by Women for Corporate Boards to take over their important work for women executives in our community, Board Connections was created. It began by establishing a clearinghouse for potential board members for non-for-profit boards and providing educational programs about board work. A new marketing look was implemented for the organization and a bylaw change was made to revert back to a one-year term for the presidency of the Network. Anne Benedict was elected as President-Elect to begin her term as President in 2001.

2000 – Ann Norris, President

More connections were established. RWN utilized the newly developed Susan B. Anthony Center for Leadership's community calen-

dar to spread the word about its programs. With the expansion of our networking and community outreach, a new tag line for RWN became obvious. The slogan, "women making connections" was adopted.

A taskforce on diversity was formed and chaired by Margaret Lucas to explore this important issue. In 2001 Kate Washington was hired to guide us in this effort. A paper on our objectives and strategies was issued and the President-Elect became responsible for implementation.

2001 - Anne Benedict, President

Two important new initiatives were begun. A leadership development committee was established to identify potential leaders for our Network. The Resource Development Committee was created to coordinate the efforts for fundraising under one umbrella and focus the opportunities for generating new revenue. Community involvement continued with Anne's joining of the Women's Collaborative. She participated in the first Women's Summit for Rochester. A new marketing brochure was developed. Anne put into place new procedures and a structure to support our ever-expanding operation.

2002 - Kathy Nixon, President

Many of the new initiatives that had been started in 2000-2001 were carried to completion, including our diversity effort, expanded resource development, and leadership development. A significant effort to coordinate our underwriting activities resulted in greatly improving the Network's bottom line. The Network was on solid financial ground. The Marketing Committee was reborn and the Board voted to add a VP for Marketing for 2003.

In March our office was moved to its current location at 1530 East Ave. This centralized location allows more events to be hosted on site and encourages members to keep in close contact with staff.

2003 – Twenty-Fifth Anniversary - Christine Surette, President

Special attention was given to celebrating RWN's 25th anniversary year as reflected in our two major events: the Gala and the Businesswomen's Conference. At the 2004 Gala on May 8, Dr. Cynthia McGill, founder and president of Priceless Vessels, Inc., received the highly respected "W" Award. The Gala also featured guest speaker, Pat Mitchell, President and CEO of PBS with an inspiring topic on



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Broadcasting Success. Honorary chair was Mary-Frances Winters, president and CEO of The Winters Group.

A 25th Anniversary celebration was held for RWN members in June. The Businesswomen's Conference was held on November 14 and highlighted topics on Winning Life's Marathon. Sessions were held throughout the day focusing on winning strategies in the race of life and career. The event also featured a new RWN Award recognizing 25 Up and Coming Businesswomen.

RWN's Board began updating the organization's strategic plan by revising the RWN mission and vision statements to focus on RWN's major objectives. After much consideration, the decision was made to move the membership year to coincide with the RWN business year (and calendar year). The change would be implemented with the 2004 renewal.

In December, RWN wished Executive Director, Sally Kittredge, the best of luck in her new career endeavors and welcomed Gwen Kleper as Interim Executive Director.