

EXPAT WOMEN

THIS IS THE OFFICIAL BLOG FOR EXPATWOMEN.COM - A SITE DEDICATED TO HELPING WOMEN, OF ALL NATIONALITIES, LIVING OUTSIDE OF THEIR HOME COUNTRY.

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About Us

ANDREA & JILL

Hi Everyone! This is the behind-the-scenes blog for our main site, ExpatWomen.com - which has more than 4000 pages of resources, stories, interviews, mentors, expat women blogs, articles and more. Thanks in advance for your support.



POSTED BY ANDREA MARTINS & JILL LENGRE AT 3:37 AM

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2007

Made it to Norway!

Finally, after a 40-hour transit from Australia, a race through Heathrow, lost luggage, lost plane meal, a fall over someone's legs in the plane aisle and an aggressive physical and verbal attack by a woman (to her husband!) in the row behind me on board.... I'm very happy that I made it to the WIN conference in Norway!

The official conference starts in about 30 minutes (cue that I better shower and get dressed quick smart!), but last night, I was fortunate to attend three pre-conference gatherings:

(1) Network President's Meeting.

This was a meeting of about 12 women from around the world, who led local and/or international women's organisations. The women in attendance included:

Stephanie MacKendrick (Canadian, based in Canada)

President of The International Alliance for Women (TIAW)
President of the Canadian Women in Communication (CWC) network

Diane Morris (British, based in Britain)
First VP and President Elect, The International Alliance for Women (TIAW)

Ania Jakubowski (Polish/Canadian, based in Switzerland)
President of the Geneva Women in International Trade (GWIT)

Patience Allen (American, based in Norway)
President of the Association of International Professional & Business Women (AIPBW)

Kristin Engvig (Norwegian, based in Switzerland)
Founder and CEO of Women's International Networking (WIN)

(2) VIP Cocktail Session

Not sure how I made the VIP list, but I must have smiled at the right person online at some point.
;-)

(3) Pre-Conference Networking Dinner (open to all conference attendees)

For now, I better down tools and get ready to start the conference. So I'll jump online again later and fill you in more.

Warm wishes,

Andrea.

Posted by Andrea Martins & Jill Lengré at 3:37 AM

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2007

WIN - Network President's Workshop

Hi Everyone,

A little late, but I want to fill you in on the Network President's Workshop (explained in the previous mail) that I attended on the first night here, Wed 26 Sept.

Some of the issues/themes discussed were:

- **The challenges of operating women's professional or social organisations on a volunteer basis** (eg. women regularly moving in and out of town, women dealing with other life issues [such as pregnancy, children, relationships, work issues, work/life balance issues etc.], and some women not carrying the responsibility through its full term, perhaps due a "too-casual" sense of responsibility towards the organisation (eg. once the honeymoon phase of being on the board of the organisation wears off). One group talked about how they transformed their group into a legal entity, to try to increase the sense of legal responsibility for at least a few of the board members, and how this approach had seemed to work to date.
- **Ideas about how different women's organisations can better collaborate** (to share ideas, resources, networks etc.) The group were talking about not just organisations in your area, but organisations across borders.
- **What processes in the organisation can be automated**, so that board members' time can be focussed more on valuable strategic contributions, rather than spending lots of time on admin and the taking of membership monies etc. Ideas included using a website (to disseminate information and to link members) and using PayPal (and/or similar applications) on websites, to accept member money.
- **Thinking seriously about employing an administrative assistant** (full-time or part-time), to again alleviate some of the burden of the mundane admin tasks, so that the board members' volunteer time could be used in other ways.

Stephanie MacKendrick (talking about the Canadian Women in Communications organisation) stressed how **funding and focus** were key elements to grow an organisation. She speaks from experience - as their organisation has 1400 members, 9 chapters across Canada and very healthy corporate support/sponsorship.

Food for thought, if you are involved in a professional and/or social organisation....

Andrea

POSTED BY ANDREA MARTINS & JILL LENGRE AT 8:38 AM

Sunday, September 30, 2007

WIN Conference - The Highlights

It's true that time flies. It's already Sunday and the WIN Conference for 2007 is nearly all wrapped-up. There are some optional workshops running this morning, but the bulk of the 700 women here for the core 2.5-day program have either left or are now in their rooms packing their bags for room check-out.

It was a weird site just now at breakfast... a hotel completely overrun by women over the last 3-4 days, now had lots of men in the breakfast buffet room. It's funny how the eye became so familiar looking around and only seeing women, that the men at breakfast became "an unusual sight"!

Even though I wasn't able to blog about the conference on a daily basis, I still have lots to fill you in on, so probably the best way to do that is via our normal website. I'll write up a two-part report - posting part one October 1 (US time) and part two when we update our home page again on November 1 (that will give me time to write a part two!). It will be easy to find the reports, as we'll put a photo and prominent link on our [home page](#), for both October and November.

Amongst all of the speakers who really inspired me, I'd have to say that my favourite was definitely Norwegian Explorer, Lecturer and Educator - **Liv Arnesen**.

This lady was amazing, yet so incredibly humble. Since the age of 8, Liv had dreamed of skiing to the South Pole. At 41, she realised her dream and became the 1st woman in the world to ski solo to the South Pole.

But as if that was not enough, she later went on to ski on a trip with **Ann Bancroft** (American) - the 1st woman in the world to ski to the North Pole. Together, they skied across the Antarctic continent (in reaction to her critics who said that skiing to the South Pole, a 1200km trek that reached 3000 meter elevation, was "too short" a journey!).

Equally impressive, was that Liv and Ann, who had designed their Antarctic trip as an educational trip for children - both to empower them and to encourage them to dream - reported on their website each day what they were up to. By the end of their trip, with the help of a lot of US media, they had **10 million** children registered on their site to track their journey online. That's just phenomenal. What an empowering experience for all who were involved.

You can check out their website [here](#). Their stated shared mission is "to inspire people, particularly women and girls, to follow their dreams".

Here's cheers to Liv (& Ann). I take my hat off to you and wish you all the best for every adventure you embark on in the future.

Andrea