

## President's Message

*By Lori Lewandowski, Wells Fargo*

As I write this newsletter message it is April 27 and SNOWING!!! I hope by the time you read it in the published newsletter we have sun and snow will be a distant memory.



Lori Lewandowski  
2011 Forum of  
Executive Women  
President

I hope that one of you was so inspired by our programs in March and April that you are ready to take on another challenge in the social media arena. If you are, we have a great opportunity for you. We are looking for a social media coordinator position. This person would help get information about our meetings out on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. If you are interested feel free to let Rebecca Kurowski know. Her e-mail is [rkurovski@gw.stcdio.org](mailto:rkurovski@gw.stcdio.org).

As we see images of natural disasters in the United States and across the world I am reminded of the great works of the American Red Cross. The Red Cross was founded by Clara Barton at the age of 60 in May 1881. During the Civil War she was dubbed the "Angel of the Battlefield" for her tireless work and support of the troops. Among her other notable accomplishments was becoming a teacher at the age of 15 when most teachers were men and being the first woman employed by the federal government.

The May meeting features a national speaker – Audrey Thomas a/k/a Organized Audrey. She will bring her humor to us around etiquette in the workplace. See you on May 11.

# Exciting Meetings Ahead

## **May 11: Do's and Don'ts of Gas in the Office All About Workplace Etiquette**



The Forum of Executive Women invites you to a lunchtime program featuring national speaker Organized Audrey. The way we interact with others on-the-job contributes to our working environment, but it is also important to a company's success. We spend many hours a day in close proximity to our co-workers. Privacy, phones, noise and even smells can create conflict and sticky situations. This presentation provides some humorous yet simple reminders that will help all of us get along at work.

Don't miss this very entertaining yet valuable session – it is open to the public and sure to draw a fun crowd!

### **2011 Meetings**

<i>May 11</i>	Audrey Thomas, Organized Audrey – “Do's and Don'ts of Gas in the Office” About Workplace Etiquette
<i>June 8</i>	Penny Beattie – “Spirit of Women” & Update on Women's and Children's Clinic Building Project
<i>July 13</i>	Hot Topic of the Month
<i>August 10</i>	Kate Hopper, Author – Motherhood, Memoir Writing and Tips for Getting Published
<i>September 14</i>	Cyrus International – Human Trafficking: “They're Bringing Terror, We're Bringing Hope”
<i>October 12</i>	MaryBeth Overland – Enneagram Inventory and Tapping Your Potential as a Leader
<i>November 9</i>	Business Meeting
<i>December 14</i>	Holiday Social

## *Featured FEW:* **Meet Mary MacDonell Belisle**

Mary's business, "mary macdonell belisle – writerforhire," formally began on her birthday, May 9, 2007. Her mission is to help businesses and non-profit organizations craft effective communication messages and celebrate – through the written or spoken word – their unique story and vision. Her website is [www.wordingforyou.com](http://www.wordingforyou.com). Prior to starting her own business, she worked in communication and advertising, however her degree is in Theatre Arts, with licensing in Speech/Education, in addition to an unofficial minor in Fine Art. So, she has a varied background to tap for her customized writing services.



Her day is filled with some social networking (LinkedIn, Facebook, Word for the Day and an e-newsletter) and organizational networking with FEW, St. Cloud Area Chamber, Business Network International (BNI), a book group and businesswomen's group. As a writer-for-hire, I write articles for *Business Central Magazine* and *Chicks Magazine*. She also takes on project work such as ads and brochures, company profiles, press releases, newsletters, script work (video/audio), and website copy and reviews. Her additional desire is to help managers and executives with their speechwriting and presentation needs, and business owners with their company blogs. Mary would like to do more voice work as talent for radio ads and videos. Last year, she voiced "Conni Fir" for a Minnesota Natural Christmas Tree Association educational DVD.

Mary's hometown is St. Cloud, although she was born in Dallas, Texas. Her alternate home is Grand Rapids, Minnesota, along the shores of Pokegama Lake, where she graduated from Grand Rapids High School. Mary is married to Mark, who is an artist (pencil and acrylic paint) and a print professional. Mark and Mary met at the CSB/SJU during orientation and were married two years later. They have four children and three grandchildren.

In 2010, Mary was a member of the FEW Program Committee, which she really enjoyed. It tapped into some of her eventing and theater interest and skill set. This year, she is the Board Historian/Secretary. Mary knows how to listen and transcribe notes, so it's a good fit. Also, she enjoys being part of a creative endeavor and appreciates how teams of people with diverse backgrounds come together to make things happen.

Other FEW members would be surprised to learn that Mary has appeared as a Renaissance-type street entertainer called "Melody Muse," singing children's songs and folk songs as well as a "love" song to her rubber chicken. Mary's biggest indulgence is going to a sentimental movie by herself on Mother's Day, leaving the planning and responsibilities of family logistics to the players themselves. She gets the nachos and a jumbo tankard of Diet Pepsi and allows herself to laugh and cry in the darkness without self-consciousness, "very freeing and a great Mother's Day gift to myself," she says.

Mary's philosophy is, "Never stop learning. Don't be ashamed about what you don't know, just resolve to do the research and keep learning." She helps other succeed by giving positive encouragement, mixing it with practicality and a macro look at the inherent pluses and minuses in every decision. She has always tried to be supportive of her children and their dreams. Paired with this practical look at what we possess by way of control of our destiny is her faith in a loving God, who very much wants to assist us in the attainment of who we're meant to be.

# Upcoming Events



**Breakfast with the B.E.S.T.**

Building Excellence through Strategic Thinking

## May 11: Breakfast with the B.E.S.T.

This month's program features Tom Schlough, Park Industries, who will share how foundational principles of Park Industries has successfully guided this company through the economic ups and downs. Program is from 7:00-8:30 a.m. at St. Cloud Technical Community College, cost is \$25, register by calling 320-308-5701.



## May 19: Fireside with FEW

The May Fireside with FEW will be Thursday, May 19. Join us at the Red Carpet Martini Lounge any time from 4:30 to 7:30 and enjoy your favorite beverages and appetizers in the company of some wonderful women. This is a fun and relaxed atmosphere for getting to know our fabulous FEW members and will be hosted by FEW Board members.



## May 19: Human Resources Seminar

Speakers Teresa Thompson and Annette Scotti from RJF Agencies will present a two hour session on the "Health Care Reform". Tina Syring-Petrocchi from Barnes and Thornburg will present on the "Top Ten Labor and Employment Issues that Make Your Pulse Race". The event will be at Boy Scouts Center in Sartell. Cost is \$60 for CMSHRM members or \$75 for non-CMSHRM Members. \$10 discount given if registered by April 21st. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. Presentation from 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Register at <http://cmshrm.shrm.org>.



## May 21: Arthritis Walk

The Arthritis Walk is going to be on Saturday, May 21st. Please join FEW member, Sandra Cordie's Team Laila and walk for her granddaughter who has Juvenile Arthritis. Team Laila & walk with us! It will be at the same location as in years past—around the CentraCare Plaza— hopefully with warmer and less windy weather! Click here to visit the website for information on how to join our team. <http://stcloud2011.kintera.org>.

# Focus on FEW

Here's a WONDERFUL opportunity to leave your thumbprint on our organization for many years to come.

FEW wants to be THE organization of choice for women professionals in the St. Cloud Area. And even more importantly, we want YOU to be receiving the very most out of your membership possible. We're on a mission to find out what you appreciate about FEW today and what your ideas and wishes are for our organization for the future.

FEW will be hosting a series of FOCUS GROUPS for members and past members in the month of May. WE WANT YOU!

**New Members - FEW member 12 months or less**

**Wed., May 18<sup>th</sup>**

8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Bursch Travel Meeting Room

**General Members – FEW member longer than 12 months**

**Thurs., May 19<sup>th</sup>**

8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Bursch Travel Meeting Room

**Seasoned Members – FEW member longer than 10 years**

**Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup>**

11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Bursch Travel Meeting Room

We won't be asking for much of your time. About an hour. But in exchange for an hour of your time, we'll buy you breakfast or lunch (depending on which focus group)! Plus, you'll get 3 free guest passes so you can share the spirit of FEW with friends and/or colleagues (who are always potential members!) at future FEW meetings.

If you are willing and able to give just a hour of your time to improve the impact of FEW, please register for one of the focus groups. There will be sign-up slips on the tables at the April 13 FEW meeting or just contact Brenda Schermerhorn, VP Special Projects, 320.656.4186 or [brenda@agency128.com](mailto:brenda@agency128.com) to sign up or for more information.

The opportunity is only open to a limited number of people and groups are filling, so respond right away! We are excited to share the results with you later this fall.



# *A FEW Announcements*

## **Board minutes are on the website**

The monthly Board meeting minutes are on our the home page of the Member's Section of the FEW website. You are invited to read up on what's happening with this great organization. To see the minutes from this year's Board Meetings, visit [www.fewstcloud.org](http://www.fewstcloud.org).

## **Make the most of your membership: get involved!**

Still room on the the Marketing Committee! Members are needed to help FEW plan & implement strategic and proactive marketing efforts to retain existing members and build membership overall, as well as add value to the experience of our existing members. The team will be working together initially to pull together some broad based membership research and will then develop a 1-3 year marketing plan for FEW to be implemented beginning in 2011. The team will meet as needed to achieve the objectives set forth by the committee (we will develop these objectives together).

We also still need someone to volunteer as the Social Media Coordinator. This person keeps FEWs social media updated and relevant. This is not a board position, so it would be a great chance to be involved without a large time commitment.

Interested volunteers can contact Brenda Schermerhorn at 320.656.4186 or [brenda@agency128.com](mailto:brenda@agency128.com) or Rebecca Kurowski at (320) 251-0558 or [RKurowski@gw.stcdio.org](mailto:RKurowski@gw.stcdio.org).



## **Mission Statement**

**The Forum of Executive Women is a non-profit organization that promotes growth and connection among professional women.**