

Women's Equality Day Luncheon
August 26, 2010
REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Background: The League of Women Voters of Appleton decided to sponsor an event to celebrate women in elected/public office in Outagamie County as part of the 90th Anniversary celebration of the League of Women Voters.

Goals

- *Celebrating women who have served or are serving the community in elected office*
- *Inspiring women to run for office*
- *Recognizing the importance of women in civic engagement*
- *Appleton League of Women Voters Fund Raiser*
- *League Visibility*
- *League Membership*

Target Audience:

Women in Outagamie County and surrounding area

Event:

Luncheon at Radisson Paper Valley Hotel

Keynote Speaker:

Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton

First planning meeting March 2, 2010. Items of first concern:

- ✓ Date and location for celebration
- ✓ Keynote speaker
- ✓ Securing list of elected women
- ✓ Contacting women's organizations to be networking partners
- ✓ Publicity

Committee met one or two times a month. Each member assumed responsibility for specific assignments.

We decided on a mid-afternoon event so working women would be able to attend. August 26 was a weekday so we were able to have the event on Women's Equality Day. The Radisson Paper Valley is located in downtown Appleton with easy access and good parking . The hotel is adept at handling large groups.

The first call to Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton's office was actually in February. Her office was reluctant to schedule out that far in advance. Called again March 10. On March 18, Lt. Gov Lawton's office sent us a detailed request form to be completed and returned. By early July we had a commitment from Lt. Barbara Lawton.

We went to the county courthouse to secure a list of elected women dating back to 1975. We chose this year as Dorothy Johnson was the first woman elected mayor of Appleton that year. This was a daunting task as the work had to be done at the courthouse. It was a matter of going through the many archived directories at the County Clerk's office. Names, addresses and phone numbers were entered into a data base on our laptop computers. This took several visits.

Special invitations with reply cards and envelopes were printed and sent to 300 women elected officials.

We contacted about 14 different women's' groups in the area to invite them to be networking partners. We chose to have networking partners rather than co-sponsors because the league was planning the event to be a fund raiser for our local league. We had initially said groups could set up tables to display their information, but later decided against that. It became a League event, and we were happy with that decision. We had ten women's groups as networking partners. Their responsibility was simply to get the word out to their memberships and encourage attendance. We sent them information on Women's Equality Day in general and on the specific event along with an electronic invitation for their memberships.

Contacts with local women's organizations was a breakthrough event for women in our area. It was fabulous connecting with other groups and coming to know the many women leaders in the community. We believe we have created long lasting mutual networking opportunities.

Invitations, publicity fliers and even donation envelopes were developed and printed. We had electronic invitations as well as hard copy for postal mailings. This was the major cost.

The Event:

Single tickets were sold for \$15.00 per person or a table of ten for \$150.00. Some tables were purchased by the networking groups for their members. Some tables were sponsored tables, that is tables paid for by groups for young people to be able to attend. We sponsored tables for Boys and Girls Club, YMCA Youth Group and the Girl Scouts.

Boxes for collecting business cards and sign-in sheets on registration table.

Programs and League fund raising envelopes were placed on each chair.

Menu:

The lunches were on the tables when guests arrived. Tomato stuffed with chicken salad, rolls, dessert (bars)- an excellent, healthy lunch. Three members of committee went to Radisson a week before the event to test the menu. Some suggestions were made for improvement. This proved to be a good step for quality assurance.

After the luncheon, Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton spoke on the importance of women in politics and the difference they make. She is an inspiring speaker. Following the keynote speaker, the elected women present were called by name to come forward. The YMCA girls gave each a flower and the audience showed their appreciation. It was truly a special moment.

Follow-up Evaluation by the committee:

- It was suggested that the League should budget \$500-\$1,000 for events such as this.
- Repeat the elected official celebration sooner vs later to bring together elected women and those they serve
- Some committee members feel it should be financially self-supporting
- Sending individual invitations to elected women was too costly. (Cutting this cost could make the event more financially self-supporting.
- Refunding to those who were unable to attend was good PR.
- The focus for this event was pure celebratory. Do it more often. Develops good PR in the community.
- One committee member was from one of our networking groups. This offered another point of view outside of League members. (Happily she also joined the League).
- Having all names for registration would have been helpful. Some groups purchasing tables did not submit individual names. This made checking in difficult.
- Do more events that have a unique focus —novelty is attractive
- Need League photographer present!!
- Need to have publicity and press coverage...need PR person in place to make this happen.
- Someone needs to remain at registration table after people are seated to take care of late arrivals and help them find their table or a place to sit.

Committee Members:

Barb Dorzweiler, Marlys Fritzell, Carolyn Mewhorter, Jan Quinlan, Pat Schinabeck, Sue Siltan, Shirley Strange, Irene Strohbeen.

