



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
NORTHWEST SUBURBAN BRANCH
Illinois

To: Mary Grefe, Association President

From: Jacqueline Duenser, President, Northwest Suburban Branch
Lorraine Tacke, President, Crystal Lake Branch
Evelyn Richer, President, Barrington Area Branch

Areas of Concern: Albuquerque Convention

1. Election for Association Officers - After the first vote President Chambers stated that more votes were cast than we had voting strength on the convention floor. Furthermore, the election judges seemed to be confused about the balloting procedures even as the ballots were being cast. Why were they not properly instructed before the convention? For the second vote the delegates had a choice: leave the convention floor with their division to cast a second ballot and miss part of the business meeting, or stay on the convention floor for the entire session and not cast a ballot. We feel this was not a fair choice.
2. Election for Northeast Central Region Vice President - We can understand the need for a second balloting as a result of the confusion of the election judges, but a third time? One of the candidates should have had a majority after that second vote. Why wasn't that candidate declared the winner?
3. Ballots for Card Count - Because there was a shortage of these cards, we spent more than fifteen minutes on the convention floor being told that yellow paper was red, pink paper was green, blue with a line through it was like yellow, etc. Most of the delegates were pre-registered. Many, however, registered on a daily basis. Assuming there were enough card count ballots for the pre-registered delegates, why was no thought given to those registering while the convention was in session? And if the guesstimate of the daily registrants was really that far off the mark, a box or two of construction paper (colors corresponding to those of the card count ballots) and someone handy with a paper cutter could have saved a lot of time on the convention floor.
4. Voting Procedures - We are convinced that on matters as important as those we were deciding, a voice vote is extremely unreliable. A standing vote can also be unreliable unless a count is taken. We are thinking of two remarks made by the Association President from the podium. One was to the effect that she could not see beyond the first few rows because of the intensity of the lights. The other remark came at the end of a standing vote when she declared a winner within seconds after the second group stood. Question: how can one see the convention hall so well after some of the votes, but not beyond the first few rows for other items of business? Granted, the standing vote count (which we did do at the convention) takes longer, but we think the time would have been well spent.
5. Dues Vote - We left one business meeting expecting to cast our multiple votes on the dues question at the start of the next session. We didn't, and we suspect that the Association board gathering that took place between those two

business sessions was designed specifically to maneuver the Association's request for the higher dues increase into a better position when the vote was finally taken. The procedures by which this change took place were never clearly explained. We were told by a former division president that we shouldn't be concerned about losing out on the card count because that type of balloting never changed the results of an election. Many delegates we talked to at the convention were instructed by their branches to split their votes on some issues. Others had three to ten branch votes to cast as a block. Can we really be so certain of the outcome? We also object to the way in which it was decided to vote on the final dues ballot. It was decided by the Association to start the vote at the highest dollar amount. When questioned from the floor, the Association representative replied that the seller always starts at the highest figure. Where does it say that the Association is the seller and the convention delegate the buyer?

6. Cost Analysis - We agree with the Spokane, Washington, branch. A cost analysis should be done by an outside agency to determine what areas of the budget need trimming and how we could better use our funds before a large dues increase is requested. We're not totally convinced that the Association has done everything it can to cut corners. We question the need for such a large increase, particularly since we will now pay much less to the IFUW and receive more from the increase in corporate member dues.
7. ERA Rally - Over \$2,000 was collected the night of the rally. What we have not seen published is the total amount generated for ERA from the sale of those \$15 and \$20 tickets. Why wasn't this published in the Convention Daily Highlights? That certainly was one of the highlights of the week.
8. Assumptions - Several times during the convention it was stated that over 50% of the delegates were attending their first Association convention. It was strongly implied that some, if not much, of the confusion on the convention floor and at the ballot box was a direct result of that inexperience. We resent being blamed for things over which we really had no control. We wonder if things might have gone differently if those in charge had done a better job on their homework.

We present these concerns in the hope that more effective procedures will be implemented for the next convention. To that end we are sending copies of this letter to the Convention Office and Design for the 21st Century.

Jacqueline Duenser
1104 Willow Lane
Mt. Prospect
Illinois 60056



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
NORTHWEST SUBURBAN BRANCH
Illinois

To: Jan Heinicke, Design for the 21st Century

From: Jacqueline Duenser, President, Northwest Suburban Branch

The board of directors of this branch has expressed concern over these items:

1. ERA Funding - For years the Association has been exhorting us to get active, to become involved, to do something that will make a difference. To do that we need the direction, guidelines, and resources of the Association. Now suddenly a very small percentage of the Association membership decided for all of us that 70% of program resources and staff time will go to help ERA. In what shape does that leave our topics for this bieneum? ERA is important; it needs to become the law of the land. But not at the expense of Association topics and programs. The Association board knew at Albuquerque how many days were left for ERA. Why didn't they ask us then to vote on transferring funds to help ratification? We realize that the Association board and executive committee have certain powers. But to transfer almost a quarter of a million dollars - even for a worthwhile cause - without informing the general membership ahead of time is wrong. Most of us are in agreement in principle, but like neither the manner in which the decision was made, nor the percentage that was transferred. We fear it might be setting a dangerous precedent.
2. Proxy Vote - ~~It~~ has recently been brought to our attention that only 45 of the Illinois branches were represented at the convention in Albuquerque, less than half in our division. On the key issues, every branch should have an opportunity to vote. Corporations have procedures to authorize proxy votes. Shouldn't we give our members the same advantages that stockholders get? Even if it's nothing more than one branch authorizing a neighboring branch to cast their votes as instructed.
3. Dues Increase - Conventions are expensive to attend and many branches can't afford to send even one delegate. We believe the problem will be compounded with the dues increase the size it is. This is unfortunate in a democratic organization. We also believe the dues increase might have an adverse effect on our local membership; fewer will be paying more to keep the Association going. Ours is a diverse branch in age, educational experiences, net worth, and professions. That's what makes us great! It would be sad to lose this. We fear we might.

Please let us know your reactions to these concerns.

Jacqueline Duenser
1104 Willow Lane
Mt. Prospect
Illinois 60056

Copy to Mary Grefe, Association President

AMERICAN ASSOCI

President
MARY A. GREFE

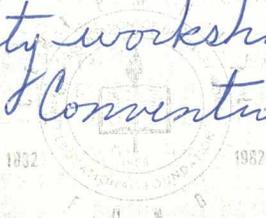
TO: Jacqueline Duenser, Lorraine Tacke,
FROM: Mary Grefe
SUBJECT: Areas of Concern: Albuquerque Convention

I fully appreciate your concern regarding the voting procedures at the Albuquerque convention and am taking steps to prepare us for a more sophisticated and accurate process in Boston. To date I have named a Convention Procedures Committee composed of convention chairmen of former Association conventions where the voting was handled exceptionally well. These seem to be the Chicago convention of 1969, chaired by Lida Sigg; the Denver convention of 1963, chaired by Polly Carter; and the Minneapolis convention of 1977, chaired by Alberta McNeal. I have asked them to meet with the rules committee as well as the local convention committee in Boston to work out the procedures so that there will not be repetition of the inaccuracies and misunderstandings. The officers of AAUW have also been attending other large conventions of women's organizations such as BPW, National Women's Political Caucus and NOW to see how they handle their voting. I hope to have a parliamentarian, on a consultative basis, at each microphone so that the delegate may ascertain the proper form of what she wishes to accomplish. At this point I am powerless to make amends for the Albuquerque convention and I would hope that we could move ahead to seeing that it doesn't happen again.

I would like to correct some inaccurate assumptions or suspicions. There was never any board meeting or even a meeting of the officers taking place between any of the business sessions. Dr. Chambers met with the Bylaws chair, the parliamentarian, Dr. Wolfe and Dr. Joyner to try to straighten out the mess. I assume Dr. Joyner was involved in the procedure because anytime the Convention votes to go into the Committee of the Whole, she has to preside as first vice-president, and you will recall that the suggestion was made several times that we discuss things informally under such a structure. I was never contacted, never summoned to any meeting or asked my opinion in any way. To my knowledge the other members of the Board were not either with the above noted exceptions.

The necessity for a third ballot for RVP from your region was because no candidate had a majority. According to the tellers 760 votes were cast. Because our Bylaws call for a majority vote in all balloting it was necessary to Jan to get 366 votes, or one over half. The tellers indicate that she received 323 votes and was thus short the necessary number for election which required a third ballot.

At the Action for Equity workshop M. G. discussed some of the problems at the Convention. Will fill you in on the 23rd.



It is my understanding that on the third ballot that members from Michigan switched their votes for Betty Davis to Judy Buroff although I have no proof of that action.

In another message, a copy of which I received I also detected another inaccuracy. I refer to the memo sent to Jan which discusses ERA Funding. I believe if you will re-read my letter I stated that program funds and staff time would be directed towards Action for Equity. It would be illegal to use program funds for political action to obtain ERA ratification. Those funds (ERA ratification) are coming from fund raisers and the sale of items such as ERA buttons and bumper stickers. Incidentally now that the last bills have been paid, we raised \$12,995.04 at the rally in Albuquerque. The amount could not have been announced because if you were there you will know that there was a shortage of food and we engaged our lawyer to pursue breach of contract with the consultant who planned the affair. I can assure you that the topics are not being shorted in any way. In fact I hope to be able to announce in February some exciting new plans relative to each of the topics as we have been approached by the National Endowment for the Humanities as well as the Environmental Protection Agency as possible recipients of grants relating to the two topics. Of course this biennium ends June 30, 1980. None of the dues increase is involved in Action for Equity because of course it does not take effect until July 1 and the funds will not be available until August or September because most branches wait until the bulk of the members have renewed before sending in the amount to the Association.

I understand and appreciate your concern over the many issues, but I am anxious that so much time, energy and paper is being used to discuss what is past. As an organization we are really moving forward and are in much better shape than most every other women's organization. I meet regularly with the other presidents and we share our problems and our successes. Each time I come away both proud and grateful to be your president. We need your talents and skills in the next decade if AAUW is indeed to be a voice for the future. Frankly if we don't take the lead I am wondering who will?

With my very best wishes,

Mary Gelfe