

President's Message

Our work in the past months has indeed become part of our history. In addition to the hard work accomplished by all over the past year, Convention, Anaheim was acclaimed as a worthwhile, educational and entertaining experience.

Please read the President's Report to the membership on page 206 as well as the reports of all officers and the minutes of the Annual Meeting. Reports of all officers are read at the Annual Meeting. If you were unable to attend this affords you an opportunity to be updated about the business of the Federation. The Annual Meeting also marked the election of new officers and regional directors. I look forward to working with these wonderful volunteers in the coming months. Finally the Annual Meeting is the time to publicly thank all volunteers who have served loyally. This year, special recognition was given to our Immediate Past President, Karen Rockwell at the final Banquet.

Our new convention event, the At Your Service Open House, was attended by 550 members on Sunday night. It was an opportunity to meet and talk with the officers and regional directors as well as greet old friends and make new ones. We plan to schedule a similar event in New Orleans and invite each of you to join us. Thanks to members attending this event, six large boxes of toys donated by attendees and \$439.00 in cash was turned over in the name of UFDC to a charitable organization benefitting children in Anaheim called Save Ourselves.

Attendance was excellent at the Open Forum this year. The Open Forum is a meeting designed to give members time to ask questions of and express opinions to the Officers. This exchange continued actively for almost two hours, probably a new record. Officers and Staff remained in the room until all present had an opportunity to speak, as the goal was for all in attendance to leave the room feeling they had an opportunity to be heard and to exchange views openly and freely. The Annual Meeting is more formal and includes official reports, elections and other routine business.

A special thanks to Ali Garcia, Director, Region 2N and Maureen Herrod, Director 2S who inspired members of each region to donate \$2, 140. Thanks also to those who responded to "passing the hat" at the final Banquet. These donations helped to defray the costs of Convention and lower the deficit. I am always inspired by the generosity of our members.

The new website is on line and it is beautiful. Turn to www.UFDC.org and see for yourself. This website has the potential to grow with UFDC. Log on and then let us know what you think and what else you would like to see.

Have you seen our new brochures? We have a special brochure for all membership categories. The design coordinates with the



The work of today is the history of tomorrow, and we are its makers.

Juliette Gordon Low

new website. Ask your club presidents to contact your Regional Director for access to copies. This is designed to be used at UFDC functions organization-wide. Currently the Member at Large brochure is available in English and French and will soon be available in Spanish as well. We express our thanks to Susan Sirkis for lending her creativity to the website and brochures.

By the way, when you call the Central Office, it will be on a new phone system. The old system purchased in 1985 was not able to meet requirements for this new age of technology. This VOICE-OVER Internet Protocol System is the type of technology which allows us to use broadband internet connection in place of regular phone connection or analog line. It will be more efficient and less costly. It will, for example, allow us to do telephone conferencing without the assistance of an operator. We are truly in the twenty- first century.

A questionnaire was distributed at the final Banquet to be used to guide UFDC in making plans for future conventions. Attendees were asked to give feedback on topics such as souvenir convention dolls, convention journals, themed event luncheons and luncheon souvenirs, workshops, seminars, doll dialogues and open programs at future conventions. Over 680 questionnaires were completed. This represented 73% of those attending the final Banquet, a phenomenal response by any standard. Although information gleaned from this process is now being collated and a final summary is not available, a preliminary view of comments generally indicates approval of the plan to shorten convention by one day, a desire for more seminars, and an overwhelming confirmation of the long held supposition that above all members feel just being together with old friends and new is the most significant aspect of every convention. We plan to send a follow-up questionnaire to all members. Support UFDC by joining us for days filled with an opportunity to learn about dolls, see the best dolls in the world, shop in the finest salesroom in the world and, most importantly, share our wonderful hobby with old friends and new. Convention next year, Jambalaya Jubilee, will be held in beautiful and exciting New Orleans from July 24th to July 27th. We need you to join us.

Now we look forward to a new year. The beauty of the fall season reminds us the work of nature during spring and summer is reflected in the golden blaze of fall and echoes the golden harvest UFDC has reaped. As Juliette Gordon Low reminds us, our hard work is now our history. We will move forward together to continue to make UFDC strong so that future generations can prosper as we do from our hobby of doll collecting the friendships it garners.

Sincerely,

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