

SBW Presentation for Sedalia Rotary Lunch Meeting

Monday, October 18, 2021

The Missouri Federation of Business and Professional Women's Club Inc. was formed in 1923 to support women in training, education, and legislative issues. The organization continued under this name until it was re-chartered in 2010 as the Business Women of Missouri.

The Business Women of Missouri is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, self-governing, and member supported organization, which encourages its members to "Believe in the Power of Women". The mission of the Business Women of Missouri is to achieve equity for all women in the workplace through advocacy, education, and information.

The Sedalia chapter of the Business Women of Missouri and Professional Women's Club was established in 1928, and when the state club re-chartered in 2010, Sedalia followed suit and was re-named the Sedalia Business Women (or SBW as we refer to it). SBW is the largest chapter of the Missouri Business Women and the second-oldest civic organization in Sedalia; second only to the Sedalia Rotary Club. Newspaper articles document the two organizations have been guests at each other's meetings since 1928.

Sedalia Business Women members represent various industries and professions, and possess a variety of skills and backgrounds. Our members range from CEOs, to those in manufacturing; from entrepreneurs to those retired from their careers. SBW meets monthly and celebrates Sedalia Business Women's Week each October with various activities. Our annual chicken dinner fundraiser is also held in October and this year was our 41st consecutive year. Proceeds from that event are given to various organizations in Pettis County. With the success of last year's dinner (despite the pandemic), SBW was able to present five different organizations a donation of \$600 each.

Working women constitute over 47 percent of the nations' work force and they strive to serve their communities, state, and nation in professional, civic, and cultural capacities. I am proud to be the 84th woman to serve as club president (if you're doing the math, there have been some women who served as club president more than once) and I have adopted the motto of "Encourage ~ Inspire ~ Empower" for the theme of my 2021-2022 term. Two SBW members currently serve on the Board for the Missouri Business Women. Donna Hirner serves as State Board President and Michelle Sparks serves as State Board Secretary.

More ladies worthy of recognition include Karen Steele, who joined in 1965 (making her a 56-year member) and Betty Blackwell, who joined in 1966 (making her a 55-year member). Sadly, we lost two very active members this past year, Mary Merritt and Cindy Weaver. Both ladies played significant roles in our organization, but also in the community. Their absence is greatly felt, both personally and professionally by many.

As we move forward into the future, the Sedalia Business Women club understands the challenge of maintaining the rich history and tradition of our organization, while also keeping up with today's economic, social, and technological times. We look forward to continued service to our members and the community, as well as maintaining our relationship with the Sedalia Rotary Club. In the spirit of that long-standing relationship allow me to personally invite you (both men and women) to attend our next dinner meeting, Thursday, November 4, 6:30pm, at the Sedalia Shrine Club, where we will acknowledge our Woman of the Year and Business of the Year for 2021.

Thank you for allowing me to share with you about our organization and I hope you will join us November 4.