Women’s League Bulletin

WL Mission Statement
The WL is an organization of women from different nationalities. Its purpose is to promote a broad acquaintance, to socialize, learn and support one another, and establish social network. Its wish is to secure a yearly scholarship fund for a disabled student.

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Live as if you die tomorrow
Learn as if you live forever

_Mahatma Ghandi_

Letter from the President

On November 3, 2014, the Women’s League will be 95 years old and heading to its centennial, but still going strong and in sound mind and we hope it will grow stronger and stronger with the help of its members and friends.

The first year of the 2013-2015 Board has come to an end because it is the last month of our meetings which is ending with our Annual Garden Party on Monday May 5, 2014.

We are very thankful for AUB in the person of President Dr. Peter Dorman and Mrs. Cathy Dorman for giving us the privilege to use the facilities of AUB, both for our monthly meetings and the Marquand House Gardens for our Garden Party.

Our first year was very successful in all respects. We had seven interesting and informative lectures. Two successful luncheons and five trips to different places in Lebanon with marvelous sceneries both in the mountains or on the sea shore. Many of the places we visited had a historic background.

I was glad to be working with the ladies of the Board for we all worked as a team and I consider that our year was very successful.

I wish you all a happy and peaceful summer vacation on the hope of meeting you all again on October 6, 2014.

_Lamia Kawar_
General Meeting on April 7, 2014

Mrs. Suad Khoury, our Program Chairperson, introduced the speaker of his month, Dr. Ogarit Younan, who is considered to be one of the pioneer figures of Civil Society in Lebanon for the last 30 years. She is the founder/president of the Academic University for the non-violence and human rights in the Arab World (ANNOHR). Dr. Younan is the initiator and coordinator of the two main civil campaigns in Lebanon since 1997. 1) The National Campaign to abolish the Death Penalty, 2) the National Campaign for Civil Personal Status Law and Civil Marriage.

Dr. Ogarit Younan presented the Lecture in the Arabic language which says:

- ان الدولة اللبنانية، لما تأسست سنة 1936، لم تنص في الدستور أي قانون مدني، وإنها تُحفظ على القانون العالمي يمادتين
- الاحوال الشخصية.
- (2)

- أي إن المرأة في لبنان المتزوجة من غير لبناني لا يحق لها أن تعطي جنسيتها اللبنانية إلى أولادها.

- اما بالنسبة إلى الاحوال الشخصية فهو بيد الطلاق (المسيحية والإسلامية) وليس بيد الدولة (أي إن معاملات الزواج، الطلاق، الأولاد،
- الإرث، كلها بيد رجال الدين) وهذه علة لبنان، إنه بلد طائفي.

- اما الحال بالنسبة إلى الدكتورة يونان، فهو بتعلية دور المرأة الام، بحيث تعلمها ونوعيها على حقوقها، بأن تطالب بقانون يعطيها حقوقها
- كالرجال. (أي المساواة)
Trip to the South of Lebanon

On a beautiful early Spring morning, two buses filled with ninety women, headed to south Lebanon on a trip to explore historic sites near the borders. On our first stop for breakfast, the Kan'an restaurant/coffee shop in the coastal city of Saida was impressively efficient in providing the group with a very attractive sea side setting and delicious breakfast items, tea and coffee. Some of us had the chance of strolling by the beach, others posed for pictures, while most enjoyed a seated sea view and a morning chat. A great start of a very exciting and memorable day!

Before long, we stopped at the Shkief Fort where the enchanting and amazing hilly countryside took our breath away. Shkief, also known as Beaufort or Belfort castle (French for a beautiful fortress), is in the Nabatiya district, just outside the historic village of Arnoun. The Fort, strategically situated on a rocky crest high up over a steep hilltop, has been the target of several hostile takeovers and military conflicts throughout history and until just recently during the Israeli invasion. It overlooks the whole Lebanese terrain extending all the way to the borders and beyond. We marveled at the sight of the winding Litani river as well as the beautiful towns of Bint Jbeil and Marjyoun, which are nestled in neighboring hilltops and across vast valleys.

Our historic tour took us next to the Shehabi castle in the border town of Hasbya. The castle was held by the Crusaders until 1171 before it was recaptured by the Shehab family. This castle is the only national monument in Lebanon that is still privately owned. It was built over Roman ruins with a beautiful courtyard in the middle. In Hasbya, the olive trees are as old as Christianity and the oldest tree is 4 meters wide in diameter.

From the castle, our guide took us to ‘Beit Al Falah Al Lubnani’, i.e. 'The home of the Lebanese peasant', which represents a complete family living experience in a typical Lebanese village. He explained that such a house is "a whole self-sufficient process", where the family lived alongside the animals. The house has a thick roof and wide/thick walls protecting it against the elements. A chimeny was used for cooking as well as for warmth, and cubby holes in the walls replaced today's modern pantry and fridge.

Our last stop before lunch was at the Souk El Khan (the stables market place) located inside a Pine forest, which was historically used for stables and passing through traders. Today, a new shaded market is erected alongside the Khan where a popular weekly market is held every Tuesday for merchants and visitors alike.

Lunch was a treat at a restaurant situated on the river banks. The cool breeze and the sound of flowing water was soothing and just what we needed after being in the scorching heat all morning. Good food was topped by exceptional dessert of exotic fruits, sweets and best of all chocolate covered halawa delicacy, the specialty of the house!

On our way back to Beirut, we drove through Marjyoun’s main boulevard. The town’s name means the ‘Meadow of Springs’. It is the largest such town along the borders and represents the commercial center of the Marjyoun District. We would have liked to further explore Marjyoun and the surrounding villages, but unfortunately were constrained by the shortage of time.

Written by Randa Theodory
1) Make peace with your past, so it doesn’t spoil your present
2) What others think of you, is non of your business.
3) Time heals almost everything, give it time, some time.
4) No one is the reason of your happiness, except you, yourself.
5) Don’t compare your life with others, you have no idea what their journey is all about. Stop thinking too much, it's alright not to know all the answers.
6) Smile, you don’t own all the problems in the world.

Mrs. Zeina Arab, our Trip Chairperson, is organizing a trip on June 4, 2014 to the North of Lebanon, first to “Oun Al-Samak” "عين السمك" to enjoy the beautiful falls there and then to the town of “Bkerzla" بقرزلا" for lunch. The fee is $50.

To reserve your place for the trip, please call Mrs. Zeina Arab at No. 01/809744 or 03/611899. Any cancellation should be done before 48 hours.

The Women’s League wishes everybody a joyful summer vacation and announces that the General Meeting will start again on Monday, October 6, 2014, as usual at Bathish Auditorium, West Hall at 4:00 p.m. and hope we will have you all as members next year.

The Women’s League would like to announce that our president, Ms. Lamia Kawar has been invited by the WELCOME CLUBS INTERNATIONAL to attend their conference, which is held in Hamburg, Germany between May 17-24 with a post conference tour until June 2, 2014, as the Women’s League is a member of the WCI. We wish her luck.

Leila Zacca Alameddine
Editor of the Bulletin