



October 2009

Women's League Bulletin

Website: http://www.aub.edu.lb/women_league

A word from the President

Happy Eid Fitr! I wish you and Lebanon peace and prosperity. It is a blessing to be able to fast Ramadan, pray and forgive and to celebrate the Feast with our families and friends.

I am sure that every one of the members enjoyed and relaxed during the summer vacation and now we are all ready to get back to work.

Life is beautiful which we have to appreciate as much as possible, but at the same time it is too short. Life is a school and we are here to learn. Problems are lessons that come and go. What we learn from them will serve us for the rest of our lives.

I would like to share with you some expressions from My Favorite Philosophy:

“Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.” (An expression from Leo Tolstoy)

“Look at life through the wind shield not the rear view mirror.”

“Be nice to people on your way up because you will need them on your way down.”

As they say, nothing new under the sun, so these ideas are eternal and I am sure you do many of them. Yet it is always a nice reminder.

Last but not least, I want to thank the outgoing Executive Board who made special efforts during the last two years (2007-2009) and special thanks and appreciation go to Mrs. Christel Bikhazi who strengthened the role of the League in social and cultural activities.

On behalf of The Executive Board, I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the members of the nominating committee and to all members of the League for their appreciation and the confidence they have given us in leading the League during the coming two years 2009-2011.

I am confident in following the steps of the founders with the support and help of all members, and I hereby wish to confirm that the board will continue to serve the objective of the League.

Enjoy the League events.

Leila Ghantous
President

Her Excellency Mrs. Georgine Mallat, former Ambassador of Colombia.



This year, we celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Women's League. Through its dedication to Lebanese society and the determination of its eminent founders and of their equally eminent successors, the Women's League has been actively contributing, for almost a century now, to the promotion of the role of women and their participation to social service and culture.

It is for me a delightful privilege and honor to remember, with heartfelt gratitude, my meeting and cooperation with the Women's League as an Ambassador of the Republic of Colombia between June 2003 and November 2009 and to take pride in the ongoing vigorous relations I have since then maintained with the eminent association.

It should be recognized that the ongoing success of the Women's League since its foundation by a group of eight persons like Mrs. Bliss and Mrs. Graham lies in the personality and in the devotion of all those who were at some point or still are members of the Women's League Board and who were able to answer many of the society's vital needs sometimes in Lebanon's most difficult parts of its contemporary history.

When I was in public service and also in my private life after I ended my mission, I always felt privileged by the friendship and esteem of Mrs. Layla Gbantous, the President of the Women's League, who gave me an insight, through her personal qualities, and of the qualities of all the members of the Women's League. Through its long history, the Women's League was able to rise to the level of national example to all. For this reason, every time the chance was offered to me, I felt a personal and great joy to be present or to cooperate toward achieving the human values carried by the Women's League and that are vital to the Lebanese society.

It is in this context of friendship and trust and in the context of the cultural activities held by the Women's League, I was able to organize a concert of Colombian Ethnic Music at the prestigious American University of Beirut in October of 2003. The concert was interpreted by a Colombian band called "Los Chamanes" that came especially from Colombia to promote the country's music and dance in Lebanon.

In June 2005, we have also organized a largely attended concert of Colombian Music for the Annual Garden Party at the Marquand House, the wonderful residence of the Presidents of AUB, a university that resembles more than a great monument erected in 1866 dedicated to the promotion of education, culture, and human dignity.

If I share all these events, it is to note, once more, how much the commitment of the members of the Women's League to human and social values to which we are all so firmly attached is capable of paving the way to a local, regional, and international cooperation that can reflect the advances in the progress of society.

While I wish the Women's League all the best in the beginning of the last decade before the first centennial can be celebrated, it is also time to honor its founders and all those who participated and still participate in lifting our society to the level of true democracy and human dignity.

A Memorable Trip to Baino-Akkar



H.E. Issam and Hala Fares during their decoration in Paris in November 2008 by the Moscow Friends Club

The great landmark achievements so far realized by His Excellency Mr. Issam Fares, former Deputy Prime Minister of Lebanon, whether on the local or international level, are countless and incalculable. Issam Fares is undoubtedly a great man that history will always remember. In short, no words could define his full dimensions.

His key role as a state man and philanthropist has been recognized by nations that have granted him their highest decorations, by universities that conferred on him the honor of Doctorate Honoris, and by dozens of national, foreign, and international organizations by presenting him with their medals and awards. No wonder why he has been selected this year by the Crisis Group, an independent, non-aligned institution, to be honored on October 28 at Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York, with two other international influential figures; the 42nd and 41st Presidents of the United States of America Georges Bush & Bill Clinton.

It is true that 'You can tell the strength of a nation by the women behind its men'. Hala Fares is the pivotal axis behind her husband's remarkable realizations and achievements. She is mostly known for her active contributions in the social sphere, extending her hand to unprivileged groups or persons, or people in need, and also for her staunch support of nature.

In January 21, 2002, Hala Fares was offered in Russia by His Beatitude the Patriarch of Moscow & All Russia Alexy II an award in appreciation of her generous contribution in the social sphere. Also in November 2008 in Paris, she was decorated, along with her husband, by the Moscow Friends Club, in what represented an exceptional double decoration for the couple. The so-called Club decorated Mr. Fares the highest non-governmental Russian Public Order, awarded so far to influential figures in Russia and foreign countries. For her part, Mrs. Hala Fares was decorated with the Saint-Elizabeth Medallion in acknowledgement of her valuable charitable activities.

In our WL turn, we would like to convey our respects and thanks to the Fareses for the hospitality they granted our members during the trip we made in May, 2009 which included a visit to the Fareses never to forget!

Women's League
Executive Board Members 2009-2010

Leila Ghantous	President
Salwa Damiani	Vice-President and Public Relations Officer
Ragiha Saghir	Recording Secretary
Dina Solh	Treasurer
Khulud Karake	Membership Chairperson & Project activity
Lamia Kawar	Program Chairperson
Jaqueline Kassis	Trip Chairperson
Samia Beydoun	Hospitality Chairperson
Hasna Barakat	Representative at the Lebanese Women's Council
Rihab Ouri	Editor of the bulletin, Liaison
Lilo Maasri	Parliamentarian Chairperson
Suad Al Hoss	Advisor to the president

Dear Members

I am very pleased to inform you that, starting with the new Academic year 2009-2010; The Women's League will be resuming its Monthly General meetings at Bathish Auditorium, West Hall, AUB.

As usual, these meetings will take place on the first Monday of each month at 3:30 p.m. unless it coincides with a National Holiday. Accordingly, the dates for the coming year are as follows:

Monday, 5 October 2009,
Monday, 2 November 2009,
Monday, 7 December 2009,
Monday, 4 January 2010,
Monday, 1 February 2010,
Monday, 1 March 2010,
Tuesday, 6 April 2010,
Monday, 3 May 2010.

The Annual Garden Party which takes place at Marquand House Gardens will be on Monday 7 June 2010 at 5:30 p.m.

The Executive Board of The Women's League will resume its activities at West Hall, Room 310, at 10:30 a.m

Monday, 22 June 2009,
Monday, 14 September 2009,
Monday, 12 October 2009,
Monday, 9 November 2009,
Monday, 14 December 2009,
Monday, 11 January 2010,
Wednesday, 10 February 2010,
Monday, 8 March 2010,
Monday, 12 April 2010,
Monday, 10 May 2010,
Monday, 14 June 2010.

OBITUARY

With great sorrow, we announce the death of our League member Mrs. Nadia Wakim who passed away last month. May God bless her soul.

Editor Liaison
Rihab Ouri