Welcome to Washington State Chapter’s first online report of Convention of International Chapter, P.E.O. Every P.E.O. is now able to learn about the business held at the convention by going to the International website, by reading the November-December issue of the RECORD, viewing this presentation, reading the script, or by contacting the delegate representing her chapter. We’ll report the business and try to relay the excitement and joy of attending.
The Convention of International Chapter, P.E.O. takes place every two years and every two years we hear questions like, “When is it our turn to send a delegate to International Convention? Seems like we haven’t sent a delegate in a long time.” You’ll be pleased to know that our Washington State chapters are placed in a rotation so that every chapter gets a chance to send a delegate every 10 to 12 years. International uses our membership numbers to come up with a number of delegates who are “entitled”---who will have a vote, and have expenses paid for housing and meals. Our 246 chapters in the state entitles us to 37 delegates who will report to about 6 chapters each. 1 past state president for every 5 living past state presidents is also entitled to vote and have expenses paid for housing and meals. This year 5 past state presidents were entitled and 5 others joined as visitors. Past state presidents do have voting privileges for life. This means that this year Washington State Chapter held 47 votes.

Quick FYI: WSC Delegates

- Chapters rotate
- Average number of years between delegates = 10-12
- “Entitled” delegates based on state membership total
- Includes chapter delegates and past state presidents
Being a delegate to International Chapter is quite a responsibility. Delegates solicited views and comments regarding the proposed amendments from the chapters they represented before coming to convention. They then considered those viewpoints as they heard discussion during convention and voted their conscience. The delegate representing your chapter made her own travel arrangements and it was amazing to see how we all came together from far and wide. Each attendee registers, signs in, and then attends required seminars. In addition to seminars, each delegate chooses 3 workshops to attend. Business sessions began on Friday morning at 9:00 am and continued until dinner time. Business resumed on Saturday and again, lasted all day. It is the responsibility of every delegate to participate in all convention business sessions and to report the business to their assigned chapters.
The 70th Convention of International Chapter, P.E.O. was held in St. Louis, Missouri in the shadow of the famous arch which commemorates Saint Louis’ role in the westward expansion of the United States during the 19th century. Exactly 1,500 voting members were in attendance which included 859 local chapter delegates. They were joined by more than 2,100 visitors, making total attendees more than 3,600.
Our 37 local chapter delegates, plus 5 entitled past state presidents, and about 10 visitors flew to and from St. Louis on 17 different airplanes and one BIL chauffeured automobile. P.E.O. recognition pins and P.E.O. luggage tags were spotted on our flights and were attached to delegates from British Columbia, Alaska, Oregon, and Washington. It made it easy to join other P.E.O.s for dinner on the evening we arrived.
At 7:00 on Wednesday morning our chartered bus awaited us outside our hotel door. A busload of 40 happy Washington State P.E.O.s began their 4 and ½ hour ride to visit the college that they own…our Cottey College in Nevada, Missouri. 283 miles and 283 thousand smiles later, we arrived in Nevada.
Delegates were greeted by the Cottey staff and given a tour of the Performing Arts building. Several of our 16 Cottey students from Washington State joined us for lunch in the dining hall.
Then the Golden Key seniors broke us into groups of 10 as we toured the campus. All were impressed by the sculptures and various works of art scattered throughout the campus as well as the friendly students who seemed happy to have us on campus. Buildings have been restored over the years so that the historical charm remains. One delegate was over heard to say, “I thought I’d see an old lady college----the science labs, campus, buildings and classrooms are beautiful! Young college students must love it here. I’ve got to tell the chapters about Cottey!”
With a teacher-student ratio of 1-10, top notch professors, and state-of-the-art facilities, we can all be proud of our college. The delegates especially enjoyed being invited into the Washington State suite to get a glimpse of suite life where about 4 dorms are joined by a common room for the 8 to 10 students to relax and chat together. Yes, some dorm rooms are neater than others---some things never change. You can imagine the 4 ½ hours of chatter and fun that was had on our bus ride back to St. Louis as we munched on a box-lunch type dinner that was provided by the Cottey dining crew. Memories were made, friendships cemented, and beds were welcomed as we pulled into the driveway of our hotel around 9:30 pm that night.
Convention began on Thursday morning. Each delegate attended the required “Finance/Budget Seminar” and the “Study and Research Amendments Seminar” to gain a better understanding of the workings of our monies and just how we would implement Robert’s Rules of Order throughout convention. The afternoon was a time to view project displays and attend workshops. The workshops presented were entitled, “Powerful Decisions, Confident Lives”, “What’s Cooking at Cottey”, “Show Me Cottey Dancing”, and “How to Dig Up Your Roots (without gardening)” through genealogy. This made for a time to “seek growth in knowledge and culture” and to “obtain all possible wisdom...”
The formal opening of convention began with a Parade of Flags where each state/province/or district was represented as their president and organizer proudly marched throughout the auditorium. Traditionally the president and organizer wear matching shirts and Kay and Nancy had fun by donning matching rain jackets to represent our state of Washington…yes, we know that the sun shines on the east side of the mountains. The flag parade reminds us that P.E.O. is much bigger than our own chapter and state. Every delegate wore a scarf, collar, sash, or badge to identify their state/province/or district. We are an International organization of women with high ideals and purpose.
There was assigned seating for the delegates of each state/district/or province. Business meetings involved voting on an electronic voting pad which is much like your television remote “clicker”. Amendments were presented, addressed, and then each delegate pressed a “pro” or a “con” button on the remote. Ballots were then tallied electronically and results were shared immediately.
Wearing our Washington State sashes made it easy to spot each other and for others to recognize those of us from the Evergreen State. Friendships were renewed, chapter successes were shared, commonalities and differences were celebrated.
Meetings & Greetings

Know that the delegates representing your chapter took their responsibilities seriously. They diligently studied the proposed amendments, listened to the discussion, your input, and then voted accordingly. It made for productive, fulfilling, long days which we counted as a privilege.
Project Night

- Cottey- “Defining Moment”
- ELF – Smithsonian Museums
- IPS – Amazing pianist
- PCE – Art to the homeless
- STAR – Princeton Leader
- Scholar Award - Hope

Project night proved to be emotional and uplifting. Cottey’s Defining Moment campaign was kicked off and the new Baccalaureate programs are now in place. An ELF recipient relayed how her return to school has brought her to extensive studies and research with the Smithsonian museums...including being able to wear the Hope diamond for a moment or two. The IPS student received a standing ovation for her amazing piano performance. A PCE recipient told how her study in art history led to working with digital media and to bringing art to people who are homeless. A STAR recipient is now the Vice President of the Student Body at Princeton University...a first for a woman. She hopes that her studies will help to improve the education of women in South Africa. Our Scholar Award recipient brought such hope to all of us who have been touched by breast cancer---everyone in the audience. She is a mechanical engineer who went on to receive an MD in radiology and she has created a way to use bio chemical signals to identify cancer cells. She was pleased to let us know that mammograms and “being crushed” will soon be a thing of the past and cancer will be detected in the very earliest stages. Our P.E.O. Projects are changing lives...changing our world.
You can imagine how much chatting goes on at meal time. Our delegates took advantage of the chance to meet P.E.O.s from all across the USA and Canada. The well thought out meals added to our experience. Have you ever tasted St. Louis’ “Gooey Butter Cake”? We have. Look out Paula Deene.
A notable fact is that all 47 delegates plus our visitors arrived a few minutes EARLY to every appointed meeting time....and they brought their smiles with them.
Our state officers, Treasurer Elizabeth Humphrey, Vice President Kay Ebert, President Nancy Stannert, Organizer Milla Oestreich, and Secretary Susan Heiser enjoyed getting to know our sisters from around the state. We were surrounded by the enthusiasm of our state’s delegates and loved seeing the warmth bounce from one P.E.O. to another throughout our time together.
Delegates were shuttled to the airport at various times on Sunday. Quite a few flew on the flight scheduled to depart at 6:00 p.m. so we used the time to do a little exploring. The St. Louis arch is quite a sight. Climbing into the 5 passenger, knee-to-knee trams was not for the claustrophobic. The view from the top of the 630 foot Gateway Arch was well worth any trepidation. Although your state president’s eyes are closed in this photo, she can attest to the grandeur of the land viewed from the observation windows. Those who knew that they would rather have their feet on the ground enjoyed the gift shop and joined the adventurers when they came back down to earth. A museum at the base of the arch highlighted Westward Expansion and told of the Lewis and Clark expedition from St. Louis to our Washington coast. Other sights included the Old Courthouse where the Dred Scott trial was held. Remember that Dred and Harriet Scott were slaves who sued for their freedom and when the case was lost, it triggered the beginning of the Civil War. The Mississippi Riverfront called many of us to it’s shore as we enjoyed lunch together. A nearby Botanical Garden and an Interactive Art Museum delighted others.
32 amendments were voted upon and 16 were adopted. All adopted amendments became effective October 1, 2011 but are not to be implemented until the official written notice appears in the November-December issue of the P.E.O. RECORD and/or instructions with implementing materials are received in the winter 2012 chapter mailing.

Many of the amendments which passed were “housekeeping” amendments which will strike obsolete parts of our Constitution and clarify others. Of particular interest is the amendment that passed which has allowed a $3 increase in dues to International Chapter and an amendment which was passed that changes the vote necessary to defeat the ballot from one con vote to two con votes and allow a second ballot if there are only two con votes. Changes in the wording to the Ceremony of Initiation and prayers were considered. Washington State’s proposed amendment was passed which will entitle the presidents and vice presidents of state/provinces/and districts to be members of Convention of International Chapter. If you are curious about the amendments, the voting, and to learn more about the outcomes, please go to our peowashington.org website where those details are posted. We are looking forward to our next Convention of International Chapter which will be held in Dallas, Texas. The theme “Deep In The Heart” will surely include more than the heart of Texas. The Texas delegation has bellowed a hearty “Y’all come. Y’ hear”.

Convention Outcomes

- Amendments adopted
  - “Housekeeping”
  - Dues increase
  - Vote necessary to defeat the ballot

- 2011-2013 Convention of International Chapter –
  - “Deep In The Heart”
  - September 26-28, 2013
  - Dallas, Texas
Remember that the Convention of International Chapter is OUR convention. It is where change is made. If you see a need for a change in our Constitution, take it to your chapter. The chapter will then vote on whether to propose an amendment and present it at the Washington State Chapter convention in June. The state delegation would then vote on whether to propose the amendment at the International level. If the proposed amendment passes at the Convention of International Chapter, the Constitution is changed.
For more specifics on the business held in St. Louis, do go to the www.peointernational.org website and know that all the information will be printed in the November-December RECORD and in the official Proceedings. Your chapter has been assigned a delegate who has taken on the responsibility to inform members on the proceedings of the International Convention. Feel free to ask questions.

Our goal in creating this presentation was to report the business of the Convention of International Chapter and to try to relay the excitement and joy of attending. We hope we have accomplished just that.