Installation Ceremony
Expanding our Horizons by Making New Connections

Let me begin my saying how honored I am to have been asked to install your newly elected officers. Having been a member of BPW for nearly __ years, I have seen many changes over the years, but I am glad that we have maintained the time honored tradition of recognizing and thanking our outgoing officers for their service to the organization, asking our new officers to accept the duties of their office and, most importantly, asking our members to commit themselves to giving their officers their full support.

The theme for tonight's installation is the same as BPW/IL's theme for this year. It is "expanding our horizons: making new connections." For too long, BPW has only looked inward, focused only on itself and its members. But just as the light of day touches everyone and everything, so can the mission and purpose of BPW. It can help all working women better their lives, both at work and at home. Finding personal and professional growth. Enlightening their lives with education. Making new connections through networking and outreach. Improving our government and our communities through advocacy.

Today is a new day. It is filled with hope, opportunity and possibilities. Let's dream big and make those dreams come true. Let's reshape BPW to bring it into the 21st Century. To enhance the programs we currently offer with new and innovative ideas. Let's use technology to communicate more effectively. Let's give our members what they want and need. Let's offer real value for their membership. Let's do so many exciting things that our friends, neighbors and co-workers will say, can I join you. Let's re-commit ourselves to making BPW the preeminent organization for working women. Are you willing to do that?

First, I ask the outgoing officers to rise and join me up front. Please light the large yellow candle symbolizing the sun. Its warmth and light will illumine your BPW LO, your community and the whole world. Thank you for your service to the organization; for your leadership; for bringing us to this new day. For being shining examples of "women helping women." Please join me in thanking these women.

Now, I ask your incoming Recording Secretary _____ to rise and to light the red candle. This candle symbolizes one of the rays of light coming from the sun. It is red hot. It is imperative that you accurately and compassionately record all of the minutes of your organization. Recording for posterity the business you conduct at your meetings. You are also a key player on your leadership team. Support your President, fulfill all other duties as assigned, and, as a duly elected officer, offer suggestions and ideas whenever possible. Do you _____ accept the responsibilities of the position of Recording Secretary of _____ LO for 2007-2008?

Now, I ask the incoming Treasurer _____ to rise and to light the white candle. This candle also symbolizes a ray of light coming from the sun. It's bright, white light reminds you to be ever vigilant and careful with the funds of the organization. You are responsible for accounting for all of the income and expenses this year, maintaining a professional relationship with your bank, providing Treasurer's reports to your members and reminding them when their membership dues need to be paid. You are also a key player on your leadership team. You too must support your President, fulfill all other duties as assigned, and participate fully as an officer of your organization. Do you _____ accept the responsibilities of the position of Treasurer of _____ LO for 2007-2008?

Now, I ask your incoming Vice-President _____ to rise and to light the orange candle. This candle also symbolizes a ray of light coming from the sun. While it does not glow as bright as the President's gold candle, it does cast a warm glow on everyone around you. It reminds you of your growing responsibilities whether they lie in the areas of programming or membership or assisting the President in her duties. Be a valuable member of the leadership team. Demonstrate your ability to be both a leader and a team player. This is also your time to learn and plan for the future. Learn all you can; dream big. Use this time wisely for it will pass all too quickly. Do you _____ accept the responsibilities of the position of Vice President of _____ LO for 2007-2008?

Now, I ask your incoming President _____ to rise and to light the gold candle. This candle also symbolizes a ray of light coming from the sun.

You are the leader of this organization. Your light must burn brightest as you guide the organization forward. You must set a shining example for your members, leading without dominating, guiding without pushing. Set a course for them to follow with attainable and worthwhile goals. Strive to touch and to know the great common human heart of each member and bring light to the darkness that so many working women face each day. Conduct your meetings in a business-like and professional manner, but never forget to bring joy and enthusiasm to your job. Do you _____ accept the responsibilities of the position of Presidents of _____ LO for 2007-2008?

And, last but not least, I ask all of the members and guests of _____ BPW to stand and form a semi-circle around your out-going and incoming officers. I ask you to light the green candle and pass it among you. When you are holding the candle, I'd like each of you to share a thought or a hope for the future on how would like to see _____ BPW expand its horizons and make new connections.

Now, as you return to your seats, I'd like to share a short story. I'm not sure where I first heard it, but I believe it offers a valuable lesson. A very successful business-woman was nearing retirement. She had three hardworking and trustworthy employees working for her, but she wasn't sure which one should take over the business when she stepped down. She asked each of them how they would run the company if they were appointed as the new CEO. The first one said she would expand the business by breaking into several new product lines and increasing production. The second said that she would add several new locations and hire several additional employees. The third candidate, a woman, thought for a moment and then said that she would make every employee feel like a valued member of the team, heightening morale, cutting down on absenteeism, increasing productivity and helping the company grow more profitable. Needless to say, the last candidate got the job. The message to be gained is that the most important thing for any leader is how you treat the people you are leading. If you show them how important they are to the success of the organization and help them realize their own potential, everybody wins.

I now declare the officers of _____ LO duly installed. I wish all of you a very successful year as you expand your horizons and make new connections.