

December 2009
NAEA WC News Column

By Read M. Diket, President <mailto:rdiket@wmcarey.edu>

Women's Caucus (WC) Website: naeawc.net

Autumn brought rain to my area of Mississippi, and lots of work. It seems like one project is completed and another three or four emerge. A constant thread amidst all the work is that what Women's Caucus (WC) members do matters to society.

Over this past year, WC board members have been working incredibly hard to make Women's Caucus relevant, accessible, and personable. We changed the website to NAEAWC.net so as to have a consistent domain name. **Lilly Lu** builds the Web presence on a continual basis and has greatly expanded our virtual organization. For example, speeches from the 2009 WC award ceremonies can be found on the website. **Carrie Nordlund**, treasurer, and Heather Fountain, membership chair, take your responses to our WC membership calls "to the bank" and manage the WC supply orders, such as a new order of WC pins with our logo designed by past WC president, **Maryl Fletcher de Jong**. WC has established an account with NAEA, which affords our members the opportunity to pay yearly WC dues when paying NAEA dues (the procedure is described at <http://naeawc.net/membership.html>). **Karen Keifer-Boyd** has worked by my side, virtually, to develop the WC history and as activist to move WC materials into a transparent architecture of participation at the WC website. There these will serve future needs of Women's Caucus members.

Karen Keifer-Boyd shares a new link on the NAEAWC.net. Among several WC feminist activist endeavors, you will find a call for WC members to look at how art education is defined at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Art_education. Look at the "article" on art education, "discussion" that debates how art education is defined, and the "history" of changes in defining art education. The project asks—is this how you define art education? As an NAEA Women's Caucus activism project, we encourage WC members to redefine art education from a Women's Caucus/feminist perspective with all the variations that this means to you. Our goal is not to come to consensus in redefining art education but rather to bring to the Wikipedia encyclopedia definition of art education a perspective that shows that art education is not one singular concept, and that it has different histories and definitions, and to convey the mission of art education includes the perspective of the NAEA [Women's Caucus mission](#) for art education, artists, and art educators. At http://naeawc.net/activism_wiki.html we provide strategies for this activism of (re)defining our field by Women's Caucus members that will prevent the closely monitored collective online encyclopedia "article" on art education from being locked down or deleted, or from the banning of an individual from further entries due to inadvertently violating Wikipedia's policies of collective knowledge construction.

Preparations for the NAEA convention in Baltimore are year-long. WC instituted a new system of review for proposals to WC along the plan projected during the 2009 board meeting. Elected WC conference chairs, **Jennifer Eisenhauer** and **Pat Stuhr** rated all the proposals, under the categories and numeric system provided by NAEA. Your elected president and vice president split the third reviewer responsibility and calculated the final composite numbers for NAEA. If a reviewer's name appeared on a proposal, she could not serve as a reviewer of that proposal. Each proposal's final count was calculated from three responses unless one review was out of sync with the others. In those few cases, a fourth review was averaged into the final numbers provided to NAEA. I sent the rating sheets back to NAEA and they determined acceptance or rejection status, and the national committee developed the strand for WC. Details of the NAEA evaluation criteria is at <http://naeawc.net/conference.html>

I could not help but notice how vital the title, short description section, and body of the proposal are in the NAEA review process. Who the proposer is counts very little; what she or he proposes to share and how that relates to the WC mission counts! Some of the proposals suffered from a lack of explanation of previous work and its import to ongoing projects that are relevant to the WC mission (see <http://naeawc.net/mission.html>). Others appeared not to consider WC as an organization within the NAEA. Some simply described what they would present, but failed to explain why that session might be important to WC members and to NAEA as a whole. Even the "official" sessions of our organization go through the review and must contain explanations that are relevant and contributory to national and WC expectations. The national expectations are ones that we all have contributed to in one way or another and these represent the overall purposes of art educators.

Special to WC members are the things we can share with each other—our experiences, our insight, our concern for each other and support, and our expertise in arts education, especially in terms of the WC mission to eradicate gender discrimination in all areas of art education, to support women art educators in their professional endeavors, and to educate the general public about the contributions of women in the arts. Our awards show how we value those whose leadership, research contributions, presence, and service achieve exemplary levels.