

2007 Recipient of the Dr. Lois-Higgins Grote Heritage Award L. GALE BUCKNER



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Gale Buckner's involvement in IAWP started with her membership and grew from member, to conference coordinator, to third vice president, to president, and finally to chair and member of the Board of Trustees (BOT). During this time, she was instrumental in the professional advancement of IAWP that essentially brought the organization enhanced visibility and authority.

Heritage Award winners represent the legacy of the IAWP. They are the historical memory of an organization that continues to grow by virtue of knowing its history and having a resolve from which to understand and evolve. The wisdom gained from women like L. Gale Buckner, the battles they fought, the challenges attempted even if not always successful, give the organization continual momentum and purpose.

L. Gale Buckner was the first President of IAWP to really envision a strategic plan for the IAWP and who set a schedule to meet that objective--that meant practically locking the BOD up in a room for two days in a Georgia wilderness camp to brainstorm the future of our organization.

None of these visions or efforts were done without challenge or consequence. It is not easy to be a leader. If it were, everyone would be one. Leadership takes courage to do what you know is the right thing to do, even if others disagree. Respectful disagreement is often the sign of a healthy

organization. It takes someone extraordinary to motivate talented volunteers to participate in a rewarding fashion, to excel personally and professionally. It takes vision and authenticity. It takes honesty and character to be authentic, to be one who people follow because they want to, to be well respected and to have done something worthwhile in one's life, and to give others credit for the successes one has achieved.

So, now we remember and honor this petite, southern woman, with an enchanting voice, sensible character, and far-sighted vision. We give her the accolades she never asked for and has long succeeded without. We thank her for her work and her wisdom. Please join me in honoring, and recognizing the legacy that L. Gale Buckner is to the IAWP by congratulating her as the 2007 recipient of the IAWP Dr. Lois Higgins-Grote Heritage Honor.