

Sunday, February 21, 2010. Grand Opening Meeting.

MS. STEIN: If I could ask everyone to get a seat, we're going to get started. We have a busy meeting ahead of us for the next hour, and we have a particular time schedule we have to stick to.

I would like to welcome everybody. When I wrote these remarks, I was in New York and I started out by saying, "Isn't it nice to be in sunny Napa Valley?" Didn't quite work out that way, but for those of us from the snowy climes, it is a pleasure to be here even with the drizzle coming down.

I welcome all of you to the 89th meeting of the National Association of Principals of Schools for Girls. I'd like to begin by introducing a few of our guests. First -- I haven't seen her here, but I hope she's here -- Abigail Disney. Please introduce yourselves to her. She is the producer of the wonderful film that we're going to see a little bit later this evening.

Bruce, would you like to introduce our underwriters?

MR. GALBRAITH: Thank you, Ellen. Caryn Pass is here. Would you stand, please? Thank you very much for what you're doing for us. Her law firm is Venable, LLP, in Washington, D.C., and she will be here for these days.

And Greg Papay and Linda Koch from Lake/Flato Architects. Would you please welcome them? When we greeted the new members earlier, I told them that when people underwrite us, we could put their contributions in various categories. But if you'll note your program, you'll see where we chose to put these two significant gifts. They're the dinner wine and the cocktail hour.

MS. STEIN: And now to our honorary members. I would like each of you to stand. First, Joan Twaddle. You will hear from her later with honorary reflections.

Burch Ford and Bodie Brizendine, both past presidents of NAPSG.

In my very short introduction, I have a few goals. We're going to see if this PowerPoint works, because it didn't as of about 20 minutes ago. I actually had to call back to the Dalton School to have them talk to the tech people here. The background is supposed to be a beautiful blue. That didn't translate, but at least we have the words up there.

The goals I have are to share with each other, to reflect on NAPSG's mission, and to set the tone for the next few days. What educators like to do when they are teaching, when they get together, is to design a group activity. Good educators design opportunities that allow learners to be the most active participants in a setting. And as John Dewey said, there is a certain disorder in any busy workshop. In our occupation, out of doing things in a social and cooperative way, there is born a discipline of its own kind and type.

So I have three questions for you. And I would like to ask you to confer with your neighbors -- you don't have to do this on your own -- to answer the following questions about a painting that I'm about to show you. Who is the artist? What is the title of the painting? And how does this painting relate to NAPSG and to our correspondence goals? Here's the painting. Now, chat with your neighbors.

Let's begin with who is the artist? Who would like to give an answer to that? Brad?

MR. LYMAN: Picasso.

MS. STEIN: Any other responses?

SPEAKER FROM THE FLOOR: Botero.

MS. STEIN: We have Botero, Picasso. Leger? Anything else? Does anybody know the title of the painting?

SPEAKER FROM THE FLOOR: "To the Wine Tasting."

MS. STEIN: Any more answers on that one?

SPEAKER FROM THE FLOOR: He won't say it, but it was actually Peter's suggestion. "Mine Is Bigger Than Yours."

MS. STEIN: This does fit with our theme of creativity. This is good. Okay, we'll come back to the answers in a minute.

How does this painting relate to NAPSG and to our conference goals?

SPEAKER FROM THE FLOOR: "To the Wine Tasting."

MS. STEIN: Back to the wine.

MR. GALBRAITH: "Women Cooperating."

MS. STEIN: "Women Cooperating." Okay. Answer. The artist is Picasso. The title of the painting, contrary to what Peter Esty thinks, is, "Two Women Running."

But how does this painting relate to NAPSG and to our conference goals? Let's reflect on the NAPSG mission. The mission is to further the professional growth of its members by providing a forum in which issues pertinent to the education of girls and young women are presented and discussed. School heads and other representatives of member schools meet to address issues ranging from curricular and administrative policies to moral education and the role of women in a complex and changing world.

Picasso, "Two Women Running," depicts a postcard-like scene of two women running down a beach. The dynamism of the picture is in the interaction between the two figures. Picasso's canvas suggests that while the women are united, they are also pushing and pulling each other forward. Likewise, at NAPSG, we come together to further the professional growth of our members as we move forward in our own unique ways.

Picasso painted this canvas in the early 1920s, during the fervent efforts of the women's suffrage movement. The issues facing women in a complex and changing world had a direct influence on Picasso's theme in this painting.

Moving back to NAPSG, the role of women in a complex and changing world remains as vital an issue today as it was for educators in the 1920s when NAPSG was founded.

In the next few days, I hope we will continue to identify, share, and discuss the evolving roles and essential issues facing women in a complex, changing world. "Two Women Running" is a creative depiction of women united as they move forward individually. Picasso used creativity and innovation to define his legacy as one of the most important painters of the 20th century.

So in our theme, creativity, we come to model the theme of creativity, starting with this and looking at Picasso's painting, and to encourage innovative discussions and creative problem solving in our conversations here and upon our return to our schools.

Thank you. I hope we all have a wonderful conference. I would now like to call on our esteemed treasurer, Lisa Darling.