

Distinguished Women's Lodge

At a special ceremony held on December 10, 2005 by the European Forum of Women Business Owners (EFWF) in the headquarters of the Business Centre Club seated in the Lubomirski Palace in Warsaw, the title of "Distinguished Woman" and membership of the Distinguished Women's Lodge was bestowed on Krystyna Woźniak-Trzosek, the editor-in-chief of *Polish Market*. Marta Kaczkowska, the president of the EFWF described Mrs Woźniak-Trzosek as an unusual personality in the media world.

The Distinguished Women's Lodge is a small group of women nominated as members in recognition of their outstanding professional achievements and business feats.

The Lodge affiliates morally and ethically upright women, who have contributed significantly to the welfare of others and who represent the interests of Polish business at home and abroad well and with dignity.

Members of the Distinguished Women's Lodge include the acclaimed Polish writer Katarzyna Grochola, founder of the Polish Humanitarian Campaign Janina Ochojska, the well-known songstress Krystyna Prońko and fashion designer Teresa Rosati.

"I am happy to say that our group of distinguished women is growing", said Grażyna Jaskuła, vice-president of the Business Centre Club. "It is noteworthy that while they differ in terms of their profession, they



Krystyna Woźniak-Trzosek
Editor-in-chief of *Polish Market*

have much in common in terms of high ethics of executing their duties. They are ambassadors for Polishness. They are both strong and sensitive. They are women people are looking forward to. They are without a blemish".

Taking the floor after receiving the distinction, Krystyna Woźniak-Trzosek spoke of her work and elaborated on the role of media in shaping the future. "It is most gratifying when we meet with appreciation for what we are doing. That inspires our strength and motivates for further work. We badly need that strength and motivation, particularly as we are living in a society where it is mainly the men who decide on matters affecting us all, and they do so even in Parliament. Debates of many years on abortion preoccupy mainly men. And what about women? Women are simply forging ahead with their job. Women are capable of making the best use of the day along Horatian lines, of taking full advantage of what life is offering

and at the same time of finding time for their families and friends. But all the time, as we, women, are pursuing our professional ambitions, we have been impelled to prove to the world that we are first rate, because in order to match men we have to be simply better than them. But from year to year ever more women are scoring success in their profession.

In the course of cultural transformations now under way in our country women take a more amiable and optimistic look at the world and at

the same time they are capable of being very determined and consistent in action as present-day Judyta is in Katarzyna Grochola's book. It is but only women that are most fully aware that development has both a spiritual and a material dimension. Hence apart of business topics, so much space is devoted in the *Polish Market* magazine to culture".

Speaking of the role of media in shaping the future, Krystyna Woźniak-Trzosek observed that "particularly nowadays, in times of democracy, when journalists can freely write about everything, they should nevertheless be also responsible for every word they utter. What *Polish Market* is offering amounts to positive journalism. I be-





lieve that the presentation of even bad or unfavourable developments against the background of their possible positive solutions does not deny the principle of objectivity. We show the various threats because they constitute a genuine part of life, also that in the economy. Positive solutions, effective ways of overcoming difficulties can but be seen in or around every threat. And that is what positive journalism is all about.

Since this meeting is taking place in a pre-Christmas atmosphere let me wish you all persistence in pursuing your objectives and in implementing your plans. If we are strong in our belief that we shall reach the goal we are aiming at, if we very much want to do what we are striving at, then – as Paolo Coehlo said – the whole universe will be on our side in achieving our objective.

HENRYKA KOPACZ



Club of Creative Women



Interview with MARTA KACZKOWSKA

President of the European Forum of Women Business Owners (EFWF)

Q: Why is the Forum called European? Is it a branch of an international organisation? Why did the Forum members decide to form a club. What do they have in common?

A: We are a European association because we operate in Europe and do not put restrictions on anyone's membership. Our association already has Italian and even Australian members. Apart from clear membership criteria, defined in our code of ethics, almost everyone of us is different. We have different personalities, career and life experience. What we have in common is not only diligence and determination in running our businesses but also commitment to business ethics. We are striving to overcome stereotyped views that employers are not always honest, that they try to outwit the customer, deceive the tax office or employees by not paying them for their work. Our mission is to generate entrepreneurial spirit. The EFWF cooperates with governmental, social and private organisations which support women's participation in social and economic life.

Q: How do you do that?

A: We do not agree with the quite widespread opinion that women are discriminated against in Poland. But we know that the situation with

women's enterprise is bad. Many women are unemployed. Meanwhile, it turns out that only two in 10 people registered in employment agencies show any interest in free business courses, seeing them as a chance for changing their fate. We want to help these women regain self-confidence and free themselves from helplessness and inactivity. We have applied for EU funds to organise special entrepreneurship courses for them. We want to prepare them for opening their own businesses and conducting business operations. We want to show that market economy is friendly to people, that entrepreneurial traits are present in everyone of us and one only needs to release them. There are many niches, for example in services. We are in contact with the Women's Information Centre, an association which provides assistance to unemployed women and has much insight into their situation. We want to help especially those women who are on very low incomes, have small children, and pregnant women.

Q: What prestigious goals have the Women Business Owners set themselves?

A: In order to be a good business owner one has to learn all the time. We have established contact with one of the schools and are going to start business diplomacy courses. EFWF members are well educated, run their own businesses. They have vast knowledge of business and experience. But they often lack openness to the world, knowledge of mechanisms governing political and economic changes. The post-graduate courses are designed to improve this sort of knowledge, which is so needed in business. We also want to firmly voice our opinions about excessive tax burdens, incoherent regulations, unfriendliness towards entrepreneurs on the part of authorities who seem to ignore the fact that the power of the state is based on those who create new jobs.



Q: How does the association honour women who stand out from others in business?

A: We have established the Distinguished Women's Lodge and every year award this title to an outstanding personality in the business world.

Q: Who can be honoured with the title of Distinguished Woman?

A: Our logo features the image of Athena, a daughter of Zeus. Courageous in battle, she fought only in defence of the state and home against external enemies. She was the goddess of the city, handicrafts and agriculture. She invented the trumpet, flute, pot, rake, plough, yoke, ship and bridle, which enabled man to tame horses. She was the protectress of the arts, the incarnation of wisdom, reason and purity.

Our Distinguished Women have all these attributes. Six women have been honoured with the title so far: Janina Ochojska for her total dedication to those in need and strength in overcoming her own physical weakness; Teresa Rosati, known not only as the wife of a well-known statesman, Prof. Dariusz Rosati, but also for her success, achieved through hard work, in promoting her own brand as a fashion designer; Krystyna Prońko, a famous singer who has remained faithful to an ambitious music style and has continued her artistic work in her own record company; Katarzyna Grochola, a talented writer who has opposed the greed of publishers and publishes her books on her own; and Krystyna Woźniak-Trzosek, who not only created a unique publication promoting the Polish economy, enterprise and culture across the world but is also a priestess of the hearth and home.

Interviewer: KRZYSZTOF GRZEGRZÓŁKA