

TURNING FIVE

by Beverly Denver

This issue marks the fifth anniversary of Houston Woman Magazine, and folks around here couldn't be happier. There is the high that comes with accomplishment, but greater than that are the deep feelings of gratitude we have for all our loyal readers and supporters. Clearly, we would not be here without all of you!

In the spring of 2004, we started with one mission – to inform, inspire and connect successful women – and 60 months later that goal still dictates everything we do and everything we don't.

It justifies the selection of every story that is published in our magazine, and it is the only reason other stories don't make the cut. Our mission is the motivation for events we sponsor — like the annual Nominate HER Awards that honor excellent role models or the selection and featuring of the 50 Most Influential Women in Houston each year or the founding of the new Houston Woman Business Book Club.

Believe me, our focus is clear and constant. We've not tried to be all things to all people — only the best source of information, inspiration and connection for this city's smartest and most savvy professional women! And, I truly believe, our staying focused is the reason we're still here and still adding new subscribers each and every day.

Recently, we celebrated our "birthday," as well as the release of our new publication — the First Annual Houston Woman Business Directory — with a super "thank-you" event at Del Frisco's Double Eagle Steakhouse. In five years, it was the first such event for us. Always, we were "just too busy to stop long enough to party!"

The gathering turned out to be a great networking event for all who attended. I spotted lots of people re-connecting with old friends and acquaintances; I overheard so many saying, "Hi, I'm so-in-so. I've been wanting to meet you." I witnessed big smiles, firm handshakes and more hugs of recognition than you can imagine. If I say so myself, it was fabulous!

That party at Del Frisco's reminded me just how much the women of Houston want and need opportunities for real connection. And, when those kinds of opportunities are presented, they will be supported. It made me realize that Houston Woman Magazine should host more networking events in the future. So, we will.

That celebration event was wonderful and uniquely special for me. As I looked around the room that evening, I realized that — with only a few exceptions — the 200+ guests were individuals I didn't even know five years ago. Wow! Imagine that!

Some I met when we first started the magazine; some I had met or started doing business with only recently. But, amazing enough, we all had become good friends and treasured associates.

That night, many told me they adore Houston Woman Magazine. That the stories inspire them. That they feel connected to the publication, and in an odd way, to the people we write about. I'd be lying if I told you I didn't love to hear that.

But, the truth is, it is I who have become most inspired by Houston Woman Magazine, the stories told and the people met along the way. And, as you might expect, I look forward to Houston Woman Magazine's next five years more than you'll ever know.