



COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

505 POLI STREET, VENTURA, CALIFORNIA 93001
652-7611 or 529-2060, ext. 7611 fax: 652-7520

SPRING 1993

TEEN PREGNANCY COMMITTEE

Since the publication of our last newsletter, some 70 people have joined with the Commission for Women to form the nucleus of an advisory group on Teen Pregnancy Prevention. The committee includes representatives from schools, County agencies, Cities, private-not-for-profits, churches, the medical community and parents.

The Committee has been divided into three sub-committees to address different aspects of our project. Survey committee members are collating existing state, county and national data with our demographics to determine what the situation is with respect to teen pregnancy in this county. They are also developing a series of Focus Groups to discuss directly with young people in our county the reasons WHY girls are getting pregnant. All the Focus Group Leaders will be trained, and the entire project will be overseen by a Qualitative Research Specialist who specializes in the development of such groups.

The Resource Committee is surveying county agencies, private-non-profits, churches, cities, schools and the like to determine what is currently being done toward teen pregnancy prevention, and what has proven effective. They are also researching other communities in the state as well as national archives to ascertain what plans other communities have devised.

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COMMISSION UPDATE

Due to cutbacks in funding and the loss of our staff as the result of county-wide budget trimming efforts, the Commission for Women has spent the past several months rethinking and reorganizing our Commission to devise a plan to continue serving the Board of Supervisors and the community. Not only do we consider all the events and issues that we currently undertake - The Annual Salute to Women, The Women's Political Appointments Coalition, The Teen Pregnancy Committee, Non-Traditional Job Training for Women, Women's History Month, The Family Law Forum, The Resource Fair, and Child care, Housing, Health care, Women's Shelters and Legislative monitoring - of great importance,

we also have a lengthy list of additional concerns we would like to address at some point in time. Narrowing our focus has been a difficult task!

In the future, we will be working more closely with other women's organizations, combining efforts and expertise and drawing from their membership to accomplish our common goals. Working together, we can and will help improve the quality of life for women in Ventura County, the reason for our existence.

The Commission meets regularly on the second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., at the Conference Center, Camarillo Airport. The public is welcome.

WOMEN'S HISTORY

At the direction of the County Board of Supervisors, the Commission for Women hosts a WOMEN'S HISTORY AWARDS PROGRAM each year to focus the communities attention on the contributions of women in history, and to honor women educators and community activists who have promoted the history of women during the past year.

Nomination as well as reservation forms have been sent out county-wide for this year's event which will include the honoring of the award recipients, a local women's history presentation, and a "Tea" to be held March 27, 1993 at

the California Lutheran University Library/Forum. The University's Women's Resource Center is co-sponsoring the program. There will be a \$5.00 admission charge to help cover costs.

In keeping with the national theme for Women's History Month, "Discover a New World: Women's History", we had the good fortune to find Alberta Word, a local historian specializing in women's history, who will present "Historic Women of Ventura County", a presentation she developed 5 or 6 years ago for an A.A.U.W. (American Association of University

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TEEN PREGNANCY, continued

Both the Resource and Survey Committees are expected to complete their work late this spring. At that point, we will be able to define the nature and scope of our problem in Ventura County and work toward devising a set of solutions, undoubtedly both broad-based and complex, to offer to the community as a whole.

And finally, we have a PR/Community Committee which is charged with bringing the community along in this process. To date the committee has developed a brochure which provides a general overview of the project, and a large, more comprehensive packet of information to distribute to organizations. Additionally, they have lined up several people who will be available to speak to organizations about the project, the problems, and the ways in which the community as a whole can participate. The aim is to keep our community informed as we progress so that when the report is issued, the community as a whole will be ready to respond to the various facets of the recommendations.

The time line for this project is one year, with our target date for recommendations some time in October or November 1993. Our motto is an African proverb: It takes an entire village to raise one child. Your participation is encouraged and welcome. Please contact the Commission for Women's office at 652-7611 or Judy Bysse, Committee Chair, at 648-3224.

WOMENS SHELTERS

The Commission for Women is very concerned with the issue of domestic violence. Our Women's Shelters monitor reports that the Ventura Shelter is now named "The Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence". They have moved their office to the corner of Eastman and McGrath, 2064 Eastman, #104, Ventura. (Phone: 654-8141, hot line: 656-1111) In January they were housing 4 women and 7 children including a one month old baby. There are always 20-25 families that continue to need assistance in some way or another (food, job placement, continuing counselling, etc.).

They are now offering more programs including several anger management groups. Ongoing groups are Women's Support Group, Rape Support Group, Incest Support Group, and a Batterer's Diversion Group. The Ventura County Probation Department prompted Jamie Leigh, Coalition Director, to also set up an Adolescent Anger Management Group. A program such as this was needed as "anger management" is mandated by the courts as part of probation requirements.

Ms. Leigh has also been very busy with visits to Junior and Senior High Schools with presentations on dating violence and date rape as this has become a

serious problem with teenagers. Jamie will be presenting a shelters update to the Commission at our March meeting.

The other shelter in Ventura County is in Simi Valley. In January it was housing 2 women and 8 children including two children with chicken pox and one recovering from the pox. Their new in-house program which will continue on a regular basis deals with low self-esteem and love and bonding. (What's Love Got To Do With It?) The Church of Latter Day Saints has been helping by purchasing bedspreads, curtains, replacing panelling and general painting.

POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS COALITION

One of the current undertakings of the Commission for Women is THE VENTURA COUNTY WOMEN'S POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS COALITION which is an effort to bring more women into the political process especially at the appointments level. Our local program is modeled after a plan developed by CEWAER (The California Elected Women's Association for Education and Research).

The goals of the coalition as outlined by CEWAER are:

- to improve the representation of women on city and county boards and commissions.
- to provide information, training and support to women in the community to successfully apply for appointments.
- to provide the appointing authorities with larger applicant pool of women candidates.
- to raise the public and political expectation that there will be equal representation on public advisory boards, including "power" and "non-traditional" boards.

A number of Appointment Coalitions throughout the state have already had considerable success in improving gender equity in their area and in some cases, getting gender equity ordinances passed by the local governing body.

Locally, The Women's Political Appointments Coalition, WPAC, has held several workshops throughout the county over the last two years, introducing women to the opportunities available in local government and building a "Talent Bank" of applicants interested in pursuing an appointment. Our Talent Bank information is forwarded to the appropriate City Clerk and County Supervisor when first submitted to WPAC, and again when suitable appointment vacancies become available.

We are working with established women's organizations with similar objectives including the National Women's Political Caucus, A.A.U.W. and the League of Women Voters and are speaking to various organizations, adding to our Talent Bank and increasing community awareness. If you know of a group that

would be interested in our presentation, or if you personally would like to become involved in the Coalition, please give us a call.

SALUTE TO WOMEN

The 10th Annual SALUTE TO WOMEN which the Commission held this past November in a joint effort with the Ventura County Professional Women's Network, was a great success. Awards were given to 11 outstanding county women for excellence in their fields of achievement.

The recipients included:

Business: Ernestine Hernandez, head of the Computing Division in Information Systems for the Naval Warfare Center at Pt. Mugu, first president of a chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., an organization of professional women promoting improvement of educational, social and economic conditions for women, and life member of both NAACP and the National Council of Negro Women.

Education: Dr. Ruth Hemming, Vice President of Administrative Services at Ventura College, developer of "Women's Studies" programs at Ventura, Oxnard and Moorpark Colleges and founding member of Asilomar Leadership program which trains women for leadership positions in community colleges.

The Arts: Dr. Dorothy Elliot Schechter, Associate Professor of Music and Department Chair at Cal Lutheran University and adjudicator for the Conejo Youth Symphony.

Community Service, Professional: Bonnie Warrington, past Commissioner and aide to the Commission for Women, Housing Counselor for Area Housing Authority, Vice Chair of the County Widowed Persons Service, member of the County Council for Self-Esteem and Social Responsibility, member of the Professional Women's Network and Legislative Advocate for the Soroptomists International of Conejo Valley.

Community Service, Volunteer with Career: Mary Taylor-Parr, Founder/Director of the Genesis Adult Dyslexia Support Group, Learning Disability

Technician at Oxnard College Disabled Students Services and board member of the Ventura County Affirmative Action Advisory Commission and the Oxnard College Disabled Student Program Services Advisory Board.

Community Service, Volunteer: C. Virginia Gould, creator and mentor and past president of the Ventura County Assistance League's School for Developmentally Handicapped Children, author of "A.D.A.P.T., Curriculum for Infant at Risk for Development", special education consultant to Camarillo State Hospital and Pacific State Hospital, and Ventura County Earthquake Preparedness Advocate.

Media: Debra Werner Ryono, Editor/Publisher of the Moorpark News-Mirror, Vice President of the South Unit of the California News Publishers Association, head of a literacy grant program, and has served on the Board of Directors for the Ventura Business Labor Council, the Moorpark Rotary Club, the Moorpark Boys and Girls Club and the United Way.

Science/Health: Dr. Priscilla Partridge de Garcia, Associate in Family and Marriage Counseling, re-entry director/counselor for Oxnard and Ventura Colleges, author, philanthropist, media personality and keynote speaker, has served on the Student Personnel Committee and the Ad Hoc Committee for Sex Discrimination in the College District, the Camarillo State Hospital Education Committee and as liaison to the Hueneme Navy Base.

Legal/Law Enforcement: Marie Pouné and Patricia Ordner, Para-legals for the Commission on Human Concerns which serves low-income, disadvantaged households in the community, dealing with issues not served through public assistance including legal assistance, guidance and form-preparation in social security, social services benefits and family law matters, landlord-tenant and consumer problems.

Outstanding Young Women: Rose Banuelos, President of Oxnard College's Single Parent organization, public speaker to youth groups, especially gang leaders, and has been involved in student government and the college re-entry program.

WE NEED TO UPDATE OUR MAILING LIST

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS COUPON
IF YOU WISH TO CONTINUE RECEIVING
COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
NEWSLETTERS AND MAILINGS.

MAIL TO:

CFW, P.O. Box 6762, Oxnard, CA 93031

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please accept my donation to the Women's Activity Fund - CFW, in the amount of \$ _____ in support of CFW events and this newsletter.

**COMMISSION
MEMBERS**

DISTRICT I

Judy Bysshe
Mary Jones
Celeste Weingardt

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Pat Harris-Murray
Jeannette Scovill
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DISTRICT V

Aurora de la Selva
Beverlee McGrath
Eliza Thomas

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Women) Women's History program.

Ms. Word's current program includes the histories of seven women who lived in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: Candelaria, Native American, Chumash Culture; Theodora Olivas, Mexican, Spanish Culture; Theodosia Shepherd, Women's Suffrage, business, botany; Adelaide Comstock, Women's rights, member of the Free Thinker's Society, author, historian; Blanche Tarr Reynolds, Education; Grace Sharp Thille, Medicine; and Jessie Arms Botke, Art.

If you have not received a reservation flyer, please contact our office. We are very pleased with this year's program, and think it will be well worth attending.

DID YOU KNOW?

- In the period 1989 - 1991, 3,476 births in Ventura Co. were to girls aged 12 - 19?
- By age 20, according to surveys by the Alan Guttmacher Institute ... some 44% of all girls in the U.S. will become pregnant at least once?
- Public assistance for a teenage parent's child for 20 years is established at \$50,000?