

the Red Shawl

In Dedication to Susan B. Anthony's Badge of Visibility

Volume I Issue 1

September 76

Hearings on....

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

NOTE: The Michigan Women's Commission was created by the Legislature in 1968. It consists of 15 members, appointed by the Governor, who are broadly representative of all fields of interest to women. The heads of the Dept.'s of Civil Service, Education, Labor and Social Services are ex-officio members.

One of the Commission's responsibilities is to gather information on issues important to women and make recommendations that may generate new legislation. The public hearing is a way to gather such information.

Early this fall, the Michigan Women's Commission will be holding a series of public hearings on domestic violence and the physical abuse of women. Their goal is to provide a forum for the exchange of information on this sensitive, but critical problem so that they may identify what is known about and what is needed by the victims of this kind of assault.

They are seeking testimony from individuals with expertise in this area as well as from agencies and organizations who may have dealt socially, legally, or medically with the physically abused woman, directly or indirectly. The Commission is also seeking testimony from victims of physical abuse and has made arrangements to assure anonymity if they wish to appear in person.

SAGINAW will be the sight of such a hearing, Tuesday, October 12, 1976, in the Court House in the Jury Assembly room. The times will be: 2:00pm-5:00pm and 7:00pm - 9:00pm.

Anyone wishing to make a presentation is asked to send it to: 230 N. Washington, Lansing, MI 48933.

They will also be accepting testimony in person on the above date and ask only that, if possible, the testimony be in writing so that it may be kept.

The Saginaw office of Legal Services of Eastern Michigan will be conducting a public forum on the subject of domestic violence in Saginaw County. Candidates for the office of Prosecuting Attorney and Judges will be invited to attend and share their views on domestic violence along with victims and others in the community who have had direct or indirect contact with such victims.

Commander James Bannon of Detroit (recently quoted in the August issue of *Ms.* magazine on the subject) will be the guest speaker.

The public forum will be at St. John's Episcopal Church, N. Michigan at Hancock, Tuesday, October 19, 1976 at 7:30 pm. The forum is being co-sponsored by the Saginaw County League of Women Voters and the public is invited.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Everyone of us is affected by federal health policy. Each time we take a pill or undergo surgery, use contraceptives or give birth, see a physician or attend medical or nursing school, federal guidelines are at work. Yet until now, few of us have had a voice in the formation of health policy. The National Women's Health Network has been created to give women this important voice.

The Washington D.C.-based, non-profit Network will provide its members with regular "news-alerts" on pending federal legislation, upcoming hearings and policy meetings, and proposed federal guidelines

on women's health issues. This system will allow us to make our concerns known to policymakers before crucial decisions are made affecting our health. The Network also will keep members informed of activities of local groups across the country working on women's health issues, and promote communication and coordination of efforts among various groups.

The National Women's Health Network also plans to create a clearinghouse for women's health information, providing members with new medical information from Congressional testimony, health agency reports FDA and HEW advisory committee hearings, and other sources.

Through the clearinghouse, members also will have access to the Network's national resource file on a wide variety of women's health subjects, which will serve as an important information base for those organizing around particular issues.

The promotion and protection of women's health is up to us - no one else has a bigger stake in it. Your support and involvement will help the National Women's Health Network work for all of us to assure safe, effective, accessible health care for all women.

Opinion

by Diane M. Craig

When a few women came together over a month ago to discuss the possibility of putting together a newsletter, we all agreed on one thing...that it had to be done! The reasons were a bit varied...there had to be a way of letting women know what the rest of us were doing; there had to be a forum for discussion about issues that meant something to all of us and there had to be a consistent means of communication...the right hand knowing what the left hand is doing, if you will.

The idea that there are many women's organizations in our community that are engaged in action and/or service and that many of us don't even know each other is perhaps one of the main reasons why we have not been moving toward a better society...together.

In this paper, we hope to get acquainted. So, we have put together some news, some features (such as Breaking Ground, which will focus on women in the community who have gone into business for themselves and Her-Story, which will inform us about women we know and maybe don't know about in history) and columns dealing with political issues and the Law. We will also be carrying book reviews and notices of meetings, locally and around the State.

Our editorial policy will tend to be progressive and decidedly feminist.

We invite your opinions, your input and your information. We also invite your donations. We have personally paid for this first issue because we believe in it. We hope that other women who also believe in it will send contributions toward the next issue. We hope so...because it will be an affirmation that what we're doing is indeed needed.

The Critique

by Sheila Smith

Woman Hating by Andrea

Dworkin is a book with an interestingly ambiguous title. One soon learns that the ambiguity stops there. Ms. Dworkin, in a somewhat short, extremely articulate and compelling book, neatly exposes the mythical pedestal, on and from which women supposedly reign, for what it truly is; an elevated auction block, which can easily be converted into a slaughtering pen.

The author demonstrates through analyses of fairy tales, pornography, the practice of Chinese foot binding, and the woman slaughter through witch hunts that ours is indeed a history of systematic, institutionalized hatred, fear and consequent subjugation and brutalization of women.

THE RED SHAWL...is published by Diane Craig, Barb Klimaszewski, Pat Parthe', Linda Prohaska, Sheila Smith and Pam Elondin Sommerfeld in Saginaw, Mich.

Information and contributions may be sent to:
THE RED SHAWL, c/o Ms. Sheila Smith, 5903 Ambassador Dr., Saginaw, Michigan 48603

Ms. Dworkin offers hope for a new kind of community in the revolutionary concluding chapter, which of itself is "must" reading for all people seeking an end to oppression through role stereotyping. She posits that the concept of men-women different and polarized is based on myth. Her conclusion is that we are not one or the other of two sexes, but rather a unique point on a vast continuum of sexuality. The human race is multi-sexual.

The afterward, like the rest of the book, is a mind stirring and at times a mind blowing experience. The book is here, world, ready or not.

Woman Hating, is published by E.P.Dutton, Inc. of New York, is 193 pgs. and sells for \$3.95. If local bookstores don't have it, ask them to order it.

HER- STORY

by Pat Parthe

This year we celebrate our first 200 years as a nation, but did you know that it was only 56 years ago that American Women won full citizenship? As we recall the long and difficult struggle that made that possible, one name is foremost: SUSAN B. ANTHONY, who devoted her life to making this nation aware that American women were denied every right under the law and that this was intolerable.

Ms. Anthony began her lifelong commitment to the Rights of Women in 1852 after attending a Temperance Convention where she attempted to speak but was promptly silenced with the admonition that women could listen and learn but must not speak publicly. She was angry and insulted, but that fury led her to the firm conviction that nothing short of complete and equal rights would guarantee women the justice they deserved. This incident lit the fire of a deeply committed feminism that would consume the rest of her life.

As a part of her commitment, Ms. Anthony organized the Women's Suffrage Movement; she founded Revolution, a newspaper whose aim was "The True Republic--- Men, their rights and nothing more; Women, their rights, and nothing less"; she was jailed in 1872 for trying to vote; and for over 50 years educated and aroused this nation about women's rights. Little by little changes came.

During her lifetime, she saw women achieve the right to own property, to make contracts, to keep their earnings and to have joint custody of their children. Though she died 14 years before women received the vote, her faith and determination never wavered. Her last public words at the age of 86 were; " Failure is impossible!"

At the first International Women's Rights Council, she wore a red silk shawl symbolizing the revolutionary changes she advocated. We chose The Red Shawl as our title in memory of Susan B. Anthony and her passionate devotion to feminist causes which we share.

ISSUES

politics

by Pam Elondin Sommerfeld

Washington's program of General Revenue sharing was greeted with both eagerness and skepticism by state and local officials throughout the nation when it began in 1972.

The intent of Revenue Sharing is for local governments to seek and develop solutions to their own area's unique problems using federal money. The idea that local governments are better suited to provide solutions to their own human needs rather than a distant bureaucracy, is a good one. Let's examine how Saginaw has addressed its community's needs through Revenue Sharing.

Over the past five years the County of Saginaw has received over \$6,000,000.00 in Revenue Sharing money. That money has been allocated to 26 projects some of which have been funded every year, others which have been funded only once. The category receiving the overwhelming bulk of the money has been law enforcement with a total of \$2,636,521.00 from December, 1972 until December 31, 1975. This money has been put directly into the Sheriff Department's budget. The second largest amount, \$1,130,397.00 was allocated to secondary road bridge construction in rural Saginaw County. Construction costs for a new Saginaw County Infirmary was the third highest allocation with \$748,000.00 going towards a new facility for indigent adults unable to live without supervision.

The Perfect Place, a temporary shelter for women, received two entitlements for a total of \$24,000.00 They are no longer funded through Revenue Sharing.

Family Education, Inc. received a total of \$59,400.00 spread over three entitlements and is an agency that deals comprehensively with families in trouble.

The local 4-H program received \$8,000.00 and was funded only once.

The Federal Revenue Sharing Act established guidelines for the use of funds. High priority categories listed were:

1. Public Safety
2. Environmental Protection
3. Public Transportation (including roads)
4. Health
5. Recreation

" I'm happy for my sisters who have been waiting so long and I'm happy for my brothers who have made their priesthood whole."

Dr. Jeanette Piccard

WE applaud the recent action of the Episcopal Church in recognizing the right of women to take part in the privileges of priesthood. It is our hope that this vision and sense of justice will be an example to other institutions, both Church and State. Congratulations to our sisters who have at last won the struggle for acceptance. We celebrate with you in spirit, with love and joy.



ACTIONS

law

by Barb Klimaszewski

The American Legal system has, historically, been a male system. That system, established and controlled by men, has subjugated women, ignored women, and controlled women. In recent history, it has occasionally attempted to emancipate women, protect women, and, in some areas of the law, end discrimination against women.

Today, the growing ranks of female attorneys still make up less than 5% of the practicing bar. But, as the numbers of women practicing law and on the bench continue to increase, and as more women become active in the political process, the legal status of American women continues to improve.

Some of the legal problems of women are peculiar to women, and some are general problems which women encounter for the first time as active members of a changing society. Some of these problems include obtaining credit, marriage and divorce, name changes and the right to retain birth names, child custody, sex discrimination in employment, legal rights of non-nuclear families, rape, domestic violence, child neglect charges, and discrimination in educational and sports programs. In this column I hope to address some of these problems as well as other areas of the law which may be of special interest to you, as a woman. I will not be able to give specific legal advice regarding individual cases. However, I am willing to answer general questions or give information on a topic of general interest.

If you have suggestions for a topic, contact:
Barb Klimaszewski
110½ N. Michigan
Saginaw, Michigan

799-7641 during the day.

6. Social Services for poor and aged
7. Financial Administration
8. Libraries

In total, \$631,100.00 has been allocated to human services programs in Saginaw County. The rest, \$5,509,050. has gone for capital improvement, Sheriff's Dept. and studies on flood control, storm drainage and mosquito control.

The Federal Revenue Sharing Act is before Congress again and one House has already passed a revised version with fewer restrictions for spending. Any comments on the new or the old version should be addressed to your local Representatives, Senators or if the legislation is enacted again, contact your County Commissioner. It is still not too late to let your representatives know how you, the voter, feel about the program.



BREAKING GROUND

by Linda Pronaska

Realizing a business as a means of expressing myself as an artist, as financial stability, and as a long held dream of self-sufficiency (emancipation from the chains of an unfulfilling hum-drum job-lifestyle); I was overcome by enormous fear, cried, and quickly said no when Brenda suggested going into business for ourselves last February. The thought of successfully supporting myself doing what I loved and wanted to do was a dream but a seemingly impossible reality. A reality that brought back words from a former professor who said " it's hard to make it in art particularly if you're a woman - however, if you were married (therefore, financially secure) you could do your art work on the side and maybe be successful."!

But after examining my belief that what you believe to be true is true, I decided to accept the challenge, incorporate with two other women artists, Valarie Fair and Brenda L. Marshall with the name Picture This Inc. with the purpose to produce creative silkscreened products. The Articles were written by us and ratified by the State, June 25th, 1976.

With our Articles finally legitimate, we pooled our equipment, resources, blood and sweat together to begin business full time in Valerie's basement. Since none of us were financially affluent or had some one to hand us our business on a silver platter, we toiled long hours with what we had. The frustrations were high since our equipment was crude, working conditions were far from ideal, and we had low capitilization. Operating from a cash basis with the money we made, we purchased more materials to keep going. During this time, we also sought financial assistance from various sources so we could secure the finances needed in order to operate to our capacity. Picture This, Inc. was considered a "high risk" and we were, more or less, politely turned away by most investors. However, one source, the Saginaw Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) stayed by our side, believed in us, our potential and our goals. Without Jose Parker, Mr. Kulish and the rest of the SEDC Board members' support our efforts would have been set back. The SEDC granted Picture This, Inc. a loan on September 8th (the Full Moon), 1976.

Picture This Inc. is located at 1730 Hess in the Lufkin Complex in Saginaw. Our phone number is 753-9291 and we're there 9-5pm. Monday through Friday. We produce greeting cards, calenders, posters, show cards, signs-banners, decals, stationary, creative T-Shirts and textiles and personal artworks. Our designs are original and we do not limit ourselves as to what we can accomplish. We are women artists; young fresh seedlings with a sound root structure, who have just broken ground.

things to do

places to go...

Sept. 27 - City Council Meeting, 7:30pm, City Hall Council Chambers

Sept. 28.-Human Planning Commission Public Meeting. 7:00pm, Unity Hall, Civic Center

Oct. 4 - City Council Meeting, 7:30pm, City Hall Council Chambers

Oct. 7 & 8 - Women's Resource Center in Grand Rapids - Workshop on Grants and Planning - register by Sept. 27th (616) 456-8571

Oct. 11 - City Council Meeting, 7:30pm, City Hall Council Chambers

Oct. 12.- Michigan Women's Commission Hearings on Domestic Violence, 2-5 & 7-9pm Jury Room, County Court House

Oct. 13 - Sag. Co. Rape Crisis Center Meeting , 7:30pm RM.206, Court House

Oct. 17 - SUNA Community Congress, Warren Ave. Pres. Church, 1:45 pm.

Oct. 18 - City Council Meeting, 7:30pm, City Hall Council Chambers

Oct. 19 - Local Forum on Domestic Violence, 7:30 pm, St. John's Episcopal Church

NOTE: The article on Women's health on page one was reprinted from a flyer. If you desire more information contact Sheila Smith, 5903 Ambassador Dr., Saginaw, Michigan 48603 or call .799-9166 after 5pm.