

the Red Shawl

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

Volume I Issue 2

October 1976

Rape Crisis Center

by Pam Blondin Sommerfeld

The waiting is over! Saginaw's Rape Crisis Center received approval for funding from the East Central Mich. Planning and Development Region's Law Enforcement Council on October 7. \$50,000 was granted to support the Center for 1 year, beginning January 1, 1977.

A concerned group of women and men from Saginaw led by Diane Craig and Louanne Smith attended the meeting to show their support for the Center.

Things got interesting when council member, Leo Cardinal, Chief of Police in Bay City, moved that the committee hear all requests and then "vote when we're in our own session". The motion was seconded by Saginaw's Judge Gary McDonald. The motion to vote in closed session was interesting considering that L.E.A.A. funds are public and must be voted publicly.

The Rape Crisis Center supporters were prepared to object to a private vote until Bob Thorne, Regional Director of the Law Enforcement Council, pointed out the legal requirement of a public vote. Thorne's statement angered Cardinal, who said he had no objection to voting in public, but that he didn't like Thorne's interference. The vote was then taken publicly, and the request for funding was unanimously approved.

A question remains as to how the Council would have voted had there not been an audience. We'll never know, but it's worthwhile to note that the questions asked of Craig and Smith before the vote dealt with matters of policy and intent clearly defined within the grant application and that the

grant application had been in the hands of the Council for several months. It's also notable that the only woman at the Council table was the secretary.

Strong and dedicated women who worked with determination and skill, convinced the federal government, the Regional Law Enforcement Council, the county government, and the local community that there was a need for a Rape Crisis Center in Saginaw. The first battle has been won. The struggle continues.

An article concerning operation and philosophy of the Rape Crisis Center will appear in the December issue of the Red Shawl.

CDBG

Beginning the first week of November, City of Saginaw's Department of Community Development and the Human Planning Commission will be holding a series of Public Hearings to begin the process of compiling information for the third Community Block Grant application (CDBG). The purpose of the Hearings is to provide the City with citizen input regarding where the money should or should not be spent, as is required by the Rules and Regulations governing the Grant.

These Hearings have been poorly attended in the past and therefore the city has been working with, perhaps, not the real needs of the citizenry made known. It is imperative that more persons attend this year in order that the City have more data to work with. The dates and places are announced in the calendar on pg. 6. Bring your ideas and solutions and let the City know what you think!

SUNA CONGRESS

by Louanne Smith

The third annual Congress of the Saginaw United Neighborhood Association (SUNA) was held Sunday, October 17 at the Warren Avenue Presbyterian Church. Over 200 concerned Saginaw citizens attended to voice their concerns and cast their votes as to the direction SUNA will take during the next year.

The participants accepted the ten resolutions on the regular agenda with few arguments or amendments. Two spontaneous resolutions, one concerning police brutality and another concerning safe transportation of elementary school children, were also adopted.

A Women's Resolution provoked the most controversy of the entire Congress. Basically, the resolution called for the creation of a Saginaw Women's Center and the formation of a Task Force to study sexism in the Saginaw School system. The controversy focused on the Women's Center. Opponents of the resolution voiced their concerns that such a Center might offer information and referrals for abortions. To remedy this, they offered an amendment stating that no information concerning abortions would be given by the Center.

The proponents of the resolution felt that such a decision was inappropriate and the policies of the Woman's Center must be decided by the Center's Board of Directors, as yet to be formed.

Each participant on both sides of the discussion felt that their position was based on morals and therefore argued their points vehemently. Hurt, anger and frustrations

(see SUNA pg. 5)

Opinion

by Sister Louise Boyd
(mother of five)

This article is presented in the hopes it won't become another typical perspective of the Black woman:

Since the original birth of the Black woman, her ultimate goal has been to birth Black off-spring into Freedom. Being versatile in an individual society is the Black woman's barrier. Since we as Black women have taken the steps to gain complete freedom, we have been led to believe that the Black race was the race chosen to "suffer"; suffer indignities not voiced in various respectable groups. Yet Black women riled or pushed into life or death circumstances, from Sisters Sojourner Truth to Barbara Jordan, continue to strive for that ultimate goal, Freedom! Regardless of what capacities we are wedged into, from domestic laborers to elite positions of decision-making, we face world-wide animosities. It is through the Black-oriented media only, that Black women reach any recognition of their due worth.

To be born in a country entitling that individual to equal rights of that country has proven to be a farce in reference to the Black race. Therefore, Black Sisters must continue to rear their off-spring with the intention of gaining freedom equal to all other races. Acceptance of indignity is not the choice of the Black woman. Once the brainwashing of other races has been reversed to truth and the reality that all men are human and react according to the senses nature has provided them with, Blacks will also "enjoy" what every man is entitled to: "Freedom!"

The Critique

by Sheila Smith

You've got me flying, I'm flying,
You inspired a sister-song--

Flying-Holly Near

The lyrics of feminist singer, Holly Near, seem an appropriate response to the experience of rereading Kate Millett's Flying. She truly inspired a sister-song of awareness and united action with her earlier book, Sexual Politics, a work which appealed to minds of thinking women. In Flying it is the heart that is touched, the women-memories that are stirred.

Not necessarily a book for everyone, Flying seems, however, to reach into almost every kind of woman experience. It is intensely personal and passionate, and has been criticized as such. It is, after all a brief, autobiographical excerpt.

For many the significance of this book, its relationship to their lives, lies precisely in this intimacy. It all depends upon how comfortably one can sink into the mind of this profoundly intelligent, deeply sensitive and painfully troubled woman. For those who can, who do, life becomes a bit richer.

Kate Millett's Flying, is published by Alfred A. Knopf of New York, 1974, and is 546 pages.

**BUTTONS
ON
THE
STREET**

A
WOMAN
WITHOUT A MAN
IS LIKE
A FISH WITHOUT
A BICYCLE

HER- STORY

by Pat Parthe

Jane Addams, born in 1860, was the last of eight children, lost her mother when she was two and was plagued with poor health from early childhood. She grew up unremarkable except for a keen intelligence and a sensitive conscience. When she died in 1934, Jane Addams was the most respected American woman of the century and among her many honors was the Nobel Prize for Peace. The path between was not smooth but it was trod with unwavering determination.

After her first view of urban poverty at the age of eight, Jane Addams told her father: "When I grow up, I'm going to build myself a house among the slum children and let them play in my yard." Years later, as one of the first generation of American college women, she was filled with idealism and moral purpose; but what, she asked herself, could a woman do in the "real" world? After graduation, she resisted pressures to marry or to be sucked into the comfortable, if stultifying, role of a maiden aunt. During the next seven years, she experienced the frustration and depression of life without purpose.

When she was 29, and with the support of her closest friends, Jane Addams established Hull House in the slums of Chicago, amid seas of immigrant families whose misery was overwhelming. Her central belief was that "the good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life."

Hull House attracted a group of educated women also seeking purpose in their lives and their accomplishments literally transformed the urban social scene of this nation. Their efforts resulted in the creation of child labor laws, a probation system, juvenile courts, police matrons, a free state employment agency, the en-

(con't on pg. 5)

ISSUES

politics

by Sister Ardeth Platte

Sexism is any attitude, action or institutional structure which subordinates a person or group because of their sex or an assignment of roles in society on the basis of their sex. It can be individual, cultural, or institutional and intentional or unintentional.

The effect of sexism is an ill society whether that ill is reflected in the Church organism or in government. Both females and males suffer as oppressed and oppressor and powerless and powerful. The imbalance perpetuates a breakdown in communication and response to the human needs of all persons in our society and world.

In an analysis of government, we find that there has never been a woman president or vice-president. There is only one woman in the President's cabinet. No women has ever been appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. There are only 19 women representatives and no women senators. Women hold roughly 4% to 7% of all public offices in the U.S., yet women constitute 53% of the voting population. One woman served us as a State's Governor and 3 as Lt. Governors. On county commissions, less than 3% of the positions are held by women. Among mayors and council persons in municipalities and townships, approximately 4% are women (about 104 women mayors, mostly in smaller cities). Our minority sisters fare much more poorly in all areas of government. Most women are grouped together in low-paying jobs.

Let's look at Saginaw, a city in which women comprise 52% of the city's population. The membership selecting the major slate of candidates for city council is the United Saginaw Citizens which has a non-disclosed membership listing. How many women comprise this body of forty? My guess is less than 2%, if any. Only two women have been placed as candidates for city

council in the past twenty years.

The United Saginaw Citizens group has appointed one hundred thirty persons to twenty-one city boards and commissions- thirteen of these are women. Fourteen boards and commissions have no women.

In city employment in 1974, one hundred twenty women were hired of nine hundred eighty-nine. Fifty-five were relegated to the lowest pay schedules. In 1976, two years after an affirmative action plan projecting goals of 34% women to be hired, one hundred sixteen women have been hired of nine hundred twenty-nine positions available. Most departments include women in clerical or secretarial roles and the average of all women's salaries is far below the average salary of male employees.

In summary, in decision-making, advisory capacities, and employee roles, women do not, presently, affect the determinations of legislation and policy to remove the inequalities and inef-

ACTIONS

Law

by Barb Klimaszewski

Domestic violence, husband-wife assault, battered women, wife-beating, abuse of women-- the problem has many names. We may not know what to call it, but we know we have a problem. Violence against women in their own homes is the most prevalent crime in America.

It is a crime for anyone to assault another person. Nowhere in modern American law is there an exception which allows a husband to strike his wife, a boyfriend to beat his girlfriend, or a pimp to hit a prostitute. Yet a woman who is a victim of violence in her home knows that no law protects her.

From infancy, we as women are raised to be physically weak, and dependent emotionally and economically. When these weaknesses trap us in a home where we are victims of violence, we ourselves are blamed for our condition. We are told by police that it is a "civil matter". We are ignored by prosecutors, rejected by social agencies, and diagnosed as sick by psychiatrists.

We have even victimized each other by participating in a conspiracy of silence. We have turned up our television sets so as not to hear our neighbors' screams. We have seen our sisters' bruises and pretended to believe their feeble excuses about running into doors. We have failed to shelter our friends who have been driven from their homes because our husbands didn't want us to get involved.

We are just beginning to recognize that threats of physical violence affect us all. When there is no assistance for battered women, each of us must live with the threat of physical violence.

The legal system is not working for battered women. It is time to establish a system for ourselves. The first step is providing shelter for women who have been driven from their homes by violence. Victimized women need shelter, food,



Battered Women -

Why Do They Stay And Take It ?

by Diane M. Craig

Recently the issue of domestic violence has received a lot of press coverage. From the local TV stations to the local newspaper, the issue has started the community talking about what is believed to be the most prevalent crime in America.

The topic was discussed at the first conference held to deal specifically with battered women, October 1, 2 and 3 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This writer attended as did Ms. Louise Boyd and Ms. Barbara Klimaszewski and found the weekend to be not only informative but also very frustrating. The workshops ranged from listening to battered women discuss what it was like to be beaten on a regular basis by the man they lived with, to hearing why they stayed and/or left and went back. The issue is not an easy one to deal with, for society has very deep feelings about what goes on in a person's home and the rights of the man in that home. But what about the rights of the woman?

The issue was brought to light even more clearly at a local Public Hearing in Saginaw October 12th. (RED SHAWL October, 1976) where women testified before a panel as to the violence they had had to endure, primarily because they felt that the law did not protect them and in fact allowed the man to beat them whenever he felt like it. "It's ridiculous to be beaten", one woman told the panel, "and yet I felt as though the law protected my

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The purpose of the RED SHAWL is to provide a forum for the women in the Saginaw community to deal with the problems and their solutions in the hopes that, together, we will build a better society.

Contributions (both informational and financial) may be sent to THE RED SHAWL, c/o Sheila Smith, 5903 Ambassador, Saginaw, MI 48602

children and not me". Many women report the crime to the police, many do not. " I never called the police, because I was always afraid that I would not be believed, that the officer would take my husband's side and that I would receive another beating for calling in the authorities."

Why don't they leave? One woman had run seven times in five years of marriage, but went back time after time. Why? " Because I did not know how to take care of myself. I went from the home of my family to my own home, and did not know how to even keep a checkbook. It's not as easy as a lot of people would like to believe. If you have no where to go, no one to lend support and no where to place or take the children, the choices become very limited."

One solution was presented at a Public Forum recently held at the County Court House, when Commander James Bannan of the Detroit Police Department discussed the establishment of "safe houses" where women who have been beaten can go with their children, and be sheltered from any further attacks. "Also", he said, " the presence of such homes provide the woman with a support group who, will provide the woman with care and assistance if she chooses to prosecute."

Saginaw needs a safe house where battered women can receive shelter and support. Interested persons can contact Barb Klimaszewski at 799-7641. Battered women need the support of the women's community in Saginaw. Their needs are real and our assistance is apparent.

An attempt at

Better Health Care

It has long been an interest of some of the members of this staff to provide for the women in this area a comprehensive source of information concerning medical care available in Saginaw County. All of us, at one time or another, have heard both negative and positive comments about doctors in and around town and have either found a doctor we felt comfortable with or changed doctors if we did not.

In an effort to provide a study of the doctors in the Saginaw area, we are asking that you send any questions, experiences (both positive and negative) to the address below. All information received will be kept confidential as to who sent it, however reports on the type of care received from the doctors will be made available upon request. We expect the study to take several months. The more information we receive, the more comprehensive the report will be. Please include the doctor's name and such information as to the length of time needed to make an appointment, how long of a wait in the office before being seen and the overall treatment you received from the person.

With all of us working together, we will not only be in a position to provide as complete a listing as possible, but will also provide the women of this area a service.

Please mail your comments to: THE RED SHAWL, c/o Sheila Smith, 5903 Ambassador Dr., Saginaw, Michigan 48602.

ISSUES, Politics
(con't. from pg. 3)
fectiveness.

"Even if women gain equality with men, they will not be free unless men are also free" challenges our unity and participation in political, economic, educational, social, and cultural justice movements to create the city we desire to live in.

ACTIONS, Law
(con't. from pg. 3)

medical care, child care services, financial counseling and emotional support. These must be provided without qualifications, recriminations, or judgements. We need to develop our own strengths, and become our own protectors.

dancing in the valley

by Linda Prohaska

If you appreciate fluidity of movement either for yourself or as a spectator, the Saginaw Valley Dance Council (SVDC) offers an opportunity for dance involvement. Organized in 1971 for bringing together persons interested in dance, SVDC promotes good quality dance education through instruction, workshops, lectures, and field trips to performances. The council's growing membership (130 and rising) includes dancers, instructors, students, musicians, and appreciative spectators and encompasses the Saginaw Valley- from Mt. Pleasant to Flint.

A SVDC membership is inexpensive, educational, and offers meaningful involvement in dance. Each member also receives an informative newsletter concerning workshops, lectures, performances and other dance interests. More information can be obtained by contacting Anne Winiarski, 7862 Una Drive, Saginaw, Mich. 48603.

" I am for keeping the thing going while things are stirring, because, if we wait till it is still, it will take a great while to get it going again."

Sojourner Truth
1867

HER-STORY
(con't. from pg. 2)

tire field of industrial medicine, playgrounds, clinics and settlement houses. A true feminist as well as a humanist, Jane Addams believed that women needed only the opportunity and the sense of responsibility, to emerge as capable innovators. She argued that women, the traditional housekeepers, were eminently qualified for participation in civic affairs which in many instances are merely housekeeping on a larger scale. In fact, most of the departments of a modern city can be traced to women's traditional activities, though, she writes, "it is true that these activities which women have always had are not being carried on very well by the men in most of the great American cities."

Hull House was many things to many people: to exploitive employers and corrupt politicians, it was a nest of radicals; to the women who lived and worked there, it was a chance to make life better for others and purposeful for themselves; and to the immigrant families, it was a place to discover each other and the larger world, to be treated with respect and concern and to find solace and aid for their myriad of troubles.

In 1915, at the height of pro-war sentiment here and abroad, Jane Addams headed the Women's Peace Party whose motto was: The dictators of the world will make you fight but the women of the world will make you free! She maintained her

pacifism throughout World War I and patriotic Americans branded her a traitor, but in 1931 she became the second American in history to receive the Nobel Prize for Peace.

The motto over the entrance to Hull House says, "May you find hope who enter here." May we who follow Jane Addams find hope in her daring example and in her refusal to submit to any but the claims of her own heart and mind. We hope too for a time when all women can sieze their power and create new worlds with it.

SUNA
(con't from pg. 1)

were felt by everyone.

At the conclusion of the heated discussion the 95 participants remaining in the hall voted on and accepted the unamended resolution.

Anyone interested in the work of SUNA or wishes information on the other resolutions passed at the Congress, can call SUNA at 753-7719.

Persons interested in working with the SUNA Women's Committee can contact Sheila Smith or Pat Parthe (Red Shawl staff).

STONE WALLS DO NOT A
PRISON MAKE,
NOR IRON BARS A JAIL;
BUT TILL THE ERA IS
WON,
WE'RE ONLY OUT ON BAIL.

" It is not to be denied that the interests of man and woman in the present undeveloped state of the race, and under existing social arrangements, are and must be antagonistic. The nobleman can not make just laws for the peasant; the slaveholder for the slave; neither can man make and execute just laws for woman, because in each case, the one in power fails to apply the immutable principles of right to any grade but his own. "

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 1854

IF YOU (OR YOUR FRIENDS) ARE INTERESTED IN RECEIVING THE RED SHAWL MONTHLY, THROUGH THE MAIL, PLEASE FILL OUT THE INFORMATION BELOW, ENCLOSE \$3.00 FOR A YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION (25¢ per copy) AND RETURN TO: THE RED SHAWL c/o SHEILA SMITH, 5903 AMBASSADOR DR., SAGINAW, MICHIGAN 48602. THE MONEY WILL BE USED TO DEFRAY THE COSTS OF PRINTING AND MAILING.

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BREAKING GROUND

by Joanna Linsalata

Timidity on the canvas is the natural enemy of the woman painter. She must first decide whether or not art is her life. If that decision rests on clear, deep sureness, than she must conquer her culture-enforced fear of putting her power on the line.

In my case, I do not, in general address social issues because I believe that art, like love, is a place. If you know how to go there, you also know there is no need for apology or explanation. Art and love have out-lived all else out of necessity.

But in my present show at the Saginaw Art Museum, the battle of the American Indian for survival in our society moves me to speak for the Indian Nations in my language - paint. And contemporary American painting, moreover, owes an enormous, easily visible debt to the Indian artists, most particularly the women weavers.

To illustrate this indebtedness clearly, I have painted for this show eight small paintings taken directly from Navajo blankets. I hope that women will go to the Museum and look at these, because they illustrate clearly the connection between contemporary hard-edge paintings of the 60's and 70's and the work of these women of this country.

The implication is perfectly clear: the contemporary art movement in America, which is undeniably the greatest on earth, is directly indebted to the Indian woman. That is an enormously important discovery for us. Have you ever heard the question, " why were there no great women artists ? ". Please go to the museum, look at the small Navajo paintings and come away knowing that your eyes do not deceive you; there were American women artists painting here before the pilgrims arrived.

The show will run from October 20 to Novemebr 20 at the Saginaw Art Museum, 1126 N. Michigan Ave.. The Museum is open every day except Monday and there is no admission charge.

things to do

places to go...

Nov. 1- "Women in Prison" film - Ann Arbor*
Committee of the Whole
Mtng., 4:00pm City Hall
City Council Mtng.,
7:30 Chambers

Nov. 2 - ELECTION DAY
polls open 7am-8pm
Bd. of Ed. regular mtng.
(postponed)

Nov. 3- CDBG Hearing
South Jr. High-7:30pm

Nov. 4- Forum on Aging,
YWCA, 9am-3pm

CDBG Hearing- Civitan
Center, 7:30 pm

Nov. 8- "Fear Women"
film, Ann Arbor*

City Council Mtng.,
7:30pm, Chambers

Nov. 9- County Commis-
sioners Mtng. 1pm Rm. 200,
County Court House

CDBG Hearing, North Jr.
High, 7:30pm

Nov. 10- RCC Mtng. Rm.206,
Court House, 7:30pm

Human Planning Commission
Mtng., Chambers, 7pm

League of Women Voters Gen-
eral Membership Mtng., 7:30

3134 Edward Pl., "City Gov-
ernment"

Nov. 15- "Continous Women",
film, Ann Arbor*

City Council Mtng., Chambers
7:30pm

Nov. 16- Social Service
Luncheon, RCC Presentation,
Noon, St. John's Episcopal

CDBG Hearing, Webber Jr.,
7:30 pm

Nov. 17- Substance Abuse Bd.
Mtng., Rm. 206, Court House,
11:30am

and much more.....

* call 799-9166 for more information...