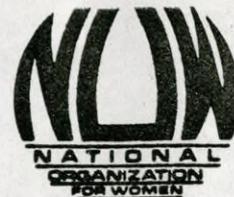


N.O.W. Bay Area Chapter



NEWS

National Organization for Women

Volume VI, Number 12, December 1978

*May the New Year
bring equality and
justice for all.*

CALENDAR

- Dec. 6, 7 p.m. - Houston Area NOW program meeting - Clayton Library, 5300 Caroline
- Dec. 7, 7:30 p.m. - BAY AREA NOW CHRISTMAS PARTY - Uniting Church - El Camino Real at Reseda
Bring your friends and enjoy our last party of the year. Members are asked to bring wine and snacks.
- Dec. 12, 2 p.m. - Consciousness Raising Group Facilitators' meeting - 1803 Fairview - Houston
- Dec. 21, 7:30 p.m. - Women's Rights Coordinating Council meeting - World Trade Building - Texas at Crawford
- Jan. 1 - Montrose NOW New Year's Day Party - \$2.50 door; drinks extra; spaghetti served around 5 p.m. The Whyburn's - 2234 Goldsmith - 667-8556.
- Jan. 20 - Texas NOW Council meeting - Austin - room at Capitol to be specified later
- Mar. 23, 24, 25 - Texas NOW Conference - Denton

The Women's Rights Coordinating Council (WRCC) will soon be electing new officers for 1979. If interested in serving, contact Nominating Committee member, Phyllis Tucker, 944-0033 or 453-5446.

The Texas NOW Conference will be held the weekend of March 23, 1979. Bay Area is seeking a volunteer to coordinate the fundraising table. Sale items should be selected and ordered as soon as possible. Contact Dorothy Howard, 486-0752 or Marjorie Randal, 488-4396, if you can help.

On November 28, Marjorie Randal appeared before the Clear Creek Independent School District Board concerning the AAUW Coalition Title IX study.

January newsletter deadline is Wednesday December 27th. Please submit entries to Melissa Weiksner, 15722 Parksley, Houston 77059, ph. 965-3032. Especially appreciated would be artwork or other zingers to punctuate the high print density in our newsletter.

Applications are being accepted for the position of lobbyist for the Texas State National Organization for Women for the 1979 legislative session. \$500.00 month minimum--benefits negotiable. Send resume including NOW activism and political experience to T. Chandler, P.O. Box 677, Lancaster, TX. 75146, by December 11, 1978.

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of Bay Area N.O.W. or N.O.W., Inc.

Textbooks and Texas State Board of Education

On November 9, Marjorie Randal to testified before the State Board of Texas Education Agency in Austin, representing the Texas NOW Education Task Force. Twiss Butler had testified there in November of 1977, and received the cooperation of a feminist Board member in removing a sexist book on secretarial training from the Texas adoption list.

We had some hope of once again exerting a little influence. We opposed the four high school literature books of Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich and the 8th grade and high school American histories of Laidlaw. Once again, Dr. Virginia Currey of Dallas, our feminist friend on the Board, was most cooperative. (This is the Virginia Currey who coordinated the IWY torch relay in Texas.) At lunch we planned strategy with two of her students, and Virginia made colorful notes for her own textbook protest for the Board meeting scheduled for the following day.

Our testimony was received by the Board in stony silence, as it was also in 1976 when Marjorie Randal last testified, and little sympathy was evidenced for Dr. Currey. On Friday she called the Harcourt series "Invisible Woman" books because they have so few women-centered stories and protested the lack of integration and general meagerness of coverage of women in the Laidlaw histories. She showed her fellow Board members "Miss Liberty in scanty panties" (a WWI recruiting poster) and an American Indian representing "man in the New World" (a pottery figurine nursing "his" baby), among other ludicrous sexist passages strongly demonstrating the lack of revision by Laidlaw editors.

Dr. Currey was voted down in the Friday session. But she is a courageous woman, and she has told us by telephone that in the final Saturday Board session she managed to get the period of adoption for the Laidlaw books shortened to a year. We doubt that many school districts will order a book for only a year's use, especially since the Laidlaw representative finally admitted that the books were not extensively revised from earlier editions. Publishers know we're not going to quit, and they are revising to reduce and eliminate sexism. - Marjorie Randal

A message from Gail Baier, Texas State NOW Coordinator. "At the November 11 Texas State NOW Council Meeting at Wichita Falls, some very important decisions were made. Because of the certainty of recession effort and other attacks on women's issues here in Texas at the next legislative session, the Texas State Council has voted to hire a lobbyist for the session. This is probably the most important decision this Council has made and the most ambitious. In order to pay the salary of the lobbyist, it was decided to strongly urge each chapter to provide financial support. A majority of the chapters was represented at the Council meeting and it was unanimously approved that a chapter's fair share would be at least \$100.00. ...It is essential to have the total amount no later than April 1. Checks should be sent to our new State Treasurer, Phyllis Tucker with a notation that they are for the NOW lobbyist."

The chapter has received a letter from FLORIDA NOW-PAC thanking us for our contribution. "The members of the Florida NOW-PAC would like to thank you for your support of our 'Adopt a Winner' fundraising campaign in Florida. Thanks to you we elected three out of five of our targeted races. This outpouring of support from our sisters and brothers across the country is most heartening to ERA supporters here in Florida.

"The fate of the ERA in Florida is not clear at this moment. On election night we had the votes to ratify ERA in Florida. Since then we've had a YES vote switch to a NO and a NO vote indicate that he will switch to YES on ERA. When the dust settles we are hopeful that we will be #36!"

(Elected were Roberta Fox, Bob Hattaway, and Pat Frank. Check your November newsletter for details.)

Thanks to the efforts of Vice President Marjorie Randal, the Women's Rights Coordinating Council party, "IWY - One Year Later," was a huge success. Sixty-two women braved the rain to gather and reminisce. Rema Lou Brown brought a slide show from the UH/CLC Women's Resource Center. This IWY slide show is available to other women's groups for a rental of \$10.00. - Dorothy Howard

MAGGIE KUHN, leader of the GRAY PANTHERS and FEMINIST

Maggie spoke in Houston this month and four of us from BA -NOW went to hear her; Marie Stimson, Dorothy Howard, Evie Whitsett and Jeanne Saletan. We were part of a crowd of 200 which came to Temple Beth Israel where they have had a series of programs on growing older. These are excerpts from her talk.....

Maggie, now 73, is a woman who never married, supported herself in a job until she was forcibly retired at some mandatory age by the "rules of the game." Small, slim, white haired with granny glasses, she was in Houston and on her way to the gerontological conference next day in Dallas to speak up to the professional gerontologists on behalf of old people and their interests. "I enjoy my wrinkles and feel comfortable with my aging body", she said and refused an intended compliment that she is 73 years young. Old has no bad vibes for Maggie. Old age is a triumph, a flowering of life, not a petering out of existence. It can be a time for work, joy, service and celebration. Life is a continuum. Aging begins with erection and ends with resurrection. There is no terror in aging when you look at the process in all living things, when birth and flowering and withering and dying and decay and the return of our elements to the universe is seen in the context of the created order. We violate life when we compartmentalize it into life stages which dictate certain behaviors and treatment just as we violate our wholeness when we isolate ourselves into retirement communities which exclude other age groups.

The young and the old especially need to affirm each other if we are to survive. Maggie takes much pleasure in youth and is not put off by their life style, dress or behavior. She has found them to be natural allies, often joining as advocates in the work of the Gray Panthers. The experience of the old, when combined with the energy of the young is a powerful combination. She expressed outrage..... outrage against extremes of wealth and poverty, against the exploitation of the poor, against a health system which does not intervene until crisis or illness, against a pervasive paternalism which makes us into wrinkled babies, against the indignities of nursing home care.

Maggie calls herself a militant feminist and she urges all older women to be active in the womens movement because we have even more to gain than our younger sisters. We can expect to outlive our spouses by 8 to 18 years. We in our old age can have a new kind of sisterhood that we didn't need earlier.. We can have each other for joy and support. We can liberate men from the roles they have found onerous. We can review and influence the writing and selection of textbooks, eliminating what is racist, sexist and agist in them. Old women are seen as witches or cookie makers where they are seen at all. Surely we do more than that in life. We want to be represented more truly in our variety.

The Gray Panthers have four task forces which define its goals at present: health, housing, economic justice and youth. As individuals, too, we need to re-define our goals at least once each decade. If there is no purpose to your life, then why get up in the morning? As we age, we need to supplant family goals by goals which widen one's interest, form new alliances and associations. It takes time and effort but when you do reach out, you find that there is all this energy available. Ironically, the rich are never deemed old as long as they can purchase the trappings of youth and wield power. That is why an 88 year old lawyer, serving on the same board where Maggie sits (this board governs a retirement home) was scornful of Maggie's suggestion that every home should have a council of residents and a resident should also sit on the board. "What do THOSE old people know about running a home?" the lawyer said.

Aileen McMurrer, Houston Area, warns us that this is The Year of the Child, and meetings are being held in Houston. These meetings are not being attended by feminists. Aileen's warning: Resolutions affecting our "right to choose" may issue from these meetings!!! Feminists should be participating.

To Maggie, old age is not a disaster. But we do have a gerontophobia, an irrational and irresponsible fear of old people and growing old. Against this pervasive disease we need immunization stations such as synagogues and churches which can provide smaller caring communities where the elders of the tribe have a place and a real function. She rejects senior citizen programs where the old are given busy work in playpens, she rejects the attitude that the world owes us something just by virtue of our age, she refuses to take a self-centered or self-serving attitude. By the year 2000, the old may outnumber the young. So much change is needed before then. Can the old be the convenors of a new lifestyle? Our duty as elders, as survivors, extends to these tasks:

To be educators.....create new lifestyles, new family groupings. Consider a new family of choice within the worshipping congregation, defined as two or more persons who share resources, goals, lifestyles, decisions, a network of commitments and responsibilities that one comes home to. In such a family of choice, the estranged wife, the widower, the abandoned child may find a place and a home. As educators we ourselves must be good role models as advocates of social change and justice. Take our advocacy into new areas like being a patient advocate in the health system. Gray Panthers even make their points dramatically at AMA conventions.

To be social critics of systems.....analysts. Say where the changes are to be made. Work closely with youth and share your experience with their energy.

To be monitors of public bodies. Attend courts and city council meetings regularly. Rotate your membership so that you always have an advocate present. It keeps them honest and responsive who serve on these courts and councils.

Creators of new life styles. Some experimentation is going on. The Boston GP's bought an old townhouse to use for group living and health care. Lutherans have organized "good health centers" in churches. Teams of health providers are recognizing that many problems come from spiritual illness and fragmentation of ourselves and our bodies.

Be ethical counselors.....counsel the young. Be counselors to corporations in which you own stock. Exert pressure by organizing other stockholders when the company is violating ethical principles. Our very weakness can be our strength. The hearing impaired can monitor the hearing aid industry. The handicapped can get barrier free busses by demonstrating their own need.

Right on, Maggie Kuhn, we in the Older Women's Rights Committee are with you! J.S.

A few years ago the NOW chapters of Houston tried to form a Council of Houston NOW Chapters. We became bogged down in by-laws and incorporation procedures. As Membership Coordinator for our area of Texas, I have been made aware of the lagging attendance and interest (?) in our chapters. On November 18, I met with the presidents of the Houston and Galveston chapters for an informal idea swap. One of the proposals was a combined area newsletter. Another was the combination of the Houston chapters' newsletters, and another combination of the Bay Area and Galveston newsletters. There are many pros and cons to these ideas and we should give them careful consideration and be prepared to discuss them at our next meeting.

Since additional meetings are always a burden, the Houston NOW chapters will stay on for a few minutes following the Women's Rights Coordinating Council meetings to continue this idea exchange. The Council meetings are always open, and the informal NOW chapter meetings are open to ANY NOW MEMBER. We encourage your participation.

Peggy Hall, Consciousness Raising (CR) Task Force Coordinator for Texas, suggests a campaign to recruit members through CR groups. After the first of the year, NOW chapters will conduct CR groups throughout the Houston area. Peggy will hold a facilitators' meeting at her home, 1803 Fairview, on December 12, 2 p.m. Call her at 522-4468 to register for a group, or to tell her that you are willing to lead a group. -- Dorothy Howard

Doors opening for part-time professionals

By Kay Ebeling
Roundup editor

JSC ROUNDUP 11/24/78

Duane Ross: 483-2921

A bill signed by President Carter last month will change federal policy on part-time employment. It lifts bureaucratic hiring barriers and puts Personnel in an aggressive role establishing shortened hours.

The bill is of special benefit to women and older employees.

Titled the Part-Time Employment Act of 1978, the new law changes accounting procedures so that part-time employees no longer count as full-time in a division's staff ceiling. The Act calls for federal personnel offices to evaluate jobs throughout their agencies, see which ones can be changed to part-time, establish an annual goal for part-time hiring, then set up affirmative action plans to reach those goals. The bill goes into effect October 1980.

"Most any kind of work can be established on a part-time basis," said Kay Keener, senior staff specialist at headquarters. "Anywhere a specific job is done over a period of time, or where someone else can pick up where you left off is a possibility."

Keener said the new law is "directed towards two areas: working wives and older employees," and that it is "particularly adaptable for women," where two

roles, professional and mother, are taken on. Full-time hours can be a problem for a woman with a family. As it is now, most part-time jobs are in department stores or fast food houses.

The new bill opens the option to be a part-time professional. For the woman who takes a few years to devote to a

it. Response so far has been low.

At JSC, five jobs were made into ten part-time positions. To date, four are filled, two are being held for handicapped, and four are still available. Agency-wide, out of 60 jobs created, only 15 were filled, Keener said.

The biggest deterrent has been in ac-

New law creates options for working wives and retirees; it may increase productivity.

family, "it's a whole lot easier to come back later on" if you've been working part-time, Keener added.

Promotions can happen, even in part-time jobs, although "that is something you have to weigh," Keener said. "It doesn't necessarily follow that there are other part-time jobs to move into," she said.

"Some of our (HQ) part-time people have been promoted, but to date there just aren't that many part-time jobs."

NASA began its part-time employment program last summer, after Carter circulated a memo to all agencies requesting

counting. If a person were hired part-time, he was counted as full-time in the agency's hiring ceiling. "Under the new law, we will count the number of hours, not the number of bodies," Keener said.

Women are only one group who will profit. A person approaching retirement may not want to retire, or may want to ease into retirement by working part-time. Under JSC's new policy, that person can accrue health and vacation benefits, prorated according to the hours worked. Also, a retiree who worked 20 hours a week receives the full annuity, based on grade level and the full-time salary.

And NASA as a whole could gain from the new law. A recent Labor Department study found that part-time employees in general are more productive, more loyal, and less inclined to absenteeism than full-time employees—while putting less strain on company payrolls, the *Wall Street Journal* reports.

The study covered 68 major corporations and concluded: "Employers are going to be money ahead using part-timers."

In that same flurry of bills, Carter also signed a law for agencies to experiment with "flexi-time," varied hours: ten-hour days four days a week, 9:30 - 6 workdays, etc. Although NASA is not one of the agencies in the initial flexi-time experiment, "it is an option we are considering," Keener said. "Some of our centers are toying with the idea."

Here at JSC, Duane Ross, Personnel Management Specialist, was pleased to hear about the new bill. "It means we won't have to go to OMB to get a derived ceiling when we want to hire part-time employees," he said.

"But we'll still have to go through the same hoops getting people certified through the Civil Service Commission."

On November 27, I received a call from Langston Gillam, Equal Opportunity Officer of Northrop. He explained that he had been referred to me as a "NOW contact" by Chuck Hoskins of NASA. Northrop is trying to hire women into non-traditional roles. He will send us specifics, and I shall pass it on to you. I also referred him to Rema Lou Brown, Director of the UH/CLC Women's Resource Center. In the meantime, Gillam can be reached at 488-2500. Northrop's offices are at 16915 El Camino Real, Clear Lake City. - D

Education Gains Fail To Help Women Win Jobs, Study Maintains

WASHINGTON, Nov. 19 (AP) — A white man who dropped out of high school made more money on the average in 1976 than a white woman with a college degree, according to a private study of Labor Department figures.

The study, by the Scientific Manpower Commission, found that women and minorities have made dramatic gains over the past decade in acquiring the education required for a professional career.

But it also found that opportunities for employment, advancement and good pay — particularly for women — have increased very little. In many cases, job inequities between men and women have widened, according to the report.

The commission is a nonprofit organization formed by the country's major

scientific societies to investigate employment trends and problems common to the sciences.

Women Gaining in Science

The study found that white men who dropped out of high school earned an average of \$9,379 in 1976, while white women with a college degree averaged \$7,176.

The report said the percentage of degrees going to women in the sciences, engineering, medicine, dentistry and law had soared in recent years. For example,

19 percent of the new medical and law degrees in 1977 went to women, compared with only 5 percent in 1970.

The percentage of degrees going to minorities in those fields has increased, although not as fast, the report said.

It also said that, except for beginning engineers and industrial chemists, "women's salaries are lower than those of men with comparable training and experience at every age, every degree level, in every field and with every type of employer."

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