

Commission

Public Social Services Agency
505 Poli Street, Ventura, CA 93001
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What is the Commission for Women?

The Ventura County Commission for Women was established in 1981 to assist the Board of Supervisors in addressing areas of education & job discrimination, sexual harassment, domestic violence and other injustices that women face. The Commission serves as advisors to the Board of Supervisors on issues impacting and relating to women, and coordinates efforts with Federal, State and local community groups to improve the quality of life for women. All of the Commissioners are active in either community service organizations or social service agencies or both.

Information about social service agencies and organizations in Ventura County can be found on our web page at <http://www.ventura.org/cfw-home.htm> (link to "Public and Private Agencies.")

Some of the other "pages" to link to from our home page: Women's Resources on the Internet, Family Law Forum, Welfare Reform, Early Leaders in Women's Rights, Milestones in Women's Rights, Women's Suffrage in America, Creative Options Day. All articles from the current newsletter will be on the web within a few days.

"Breast Cancer Awareness Month"

Ventura County Board of Supervisors will proclaim the month of October to be "Breast Cancer Awareness Month" at the request of the Commission for Women. Working with the American Cancer Society,

Ventura County Region, the Commission will be participating in the fourth annual "Break the Silence" Walk and Rally on October 3rd. In addition, Commissioners will pledge to help publicize all of the other activities of

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Mentor Council

Commissioner Hillbrant reports that the Mentor Council is continuing to meet to organize trainers and

volunteers to act as mentors to the CalWORKS participants. The goal is to have 1,000 volunteers for 1,000

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One-Stop Career and Job Centers Opening Throughout the County

Ventura County is well on its way to implementing the complex changes needed as a result of the welfare reform laws passed by both the federal and state governments. Crucial to this implementation is the opening of seven Job and Career Centers, and one satellite office in Thousand Oaks.

The CalWORKS Implementation plans describes them:

These Centers will provide a dynamic, multi-agency employment service center in each community with information for all job seekers. Each Center will be staffed by a multi-agency,

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Who Are The Commissioners?

District 1 (Susan Lacey)

Ruth A. Hibbard

Vacant

Vacant

District 2 (Frank Schillo)

Angie Lavey

Karen Gorback

Corazon Ortiguerra

District 3 (Kathy Long)

Judy Cunningham

Sharon Hillbrant

Vacant

District 4 (Judy Mikels)

Bonnie Warrington

Lori Zafiroopoulos

Eileen Gordon

District 5 (John Flynn)

Bea Gan

Dorothy Maron

Ruth Ann McAllister

We are hoping to fill the vacancies. If you are interested, especially if you have experience working in the community for women's issues, call your County Supervisor.

"Awareness Month," *cont'd*

the American Cancer Society.

On October 6th, the Board of Supervisors will issue a proclamation. Commissioners will each accept a "Tell a Friend" Kit from May Lee Berry, Cancer Control Director for Ventura County. Other activities for October and beyond include Special Screening Days at schools around the County, Avon Walk, Display of Ventura Quilt of Hope, Advocacy Training, Volunteer Appreciation, Early Detection Program with June English, Mammograms for the Under-served and Under-insured with Alice Romero (in Spanish and English).

Job Centers, *cont'd*

multi-disciplinary team of public and private professionals that represent the expertise and resources necessary for CalWORKS families to achieve employment and self-sufficiency. Rather than an array of independent agencies co-located under one roof, these staff will function as an integrated, coordinated team. The team will offer CalWORKS job seekers an individualized assessment and a comprehensive package of coordinated services as specified in a Family Responsibility Plan. Teams will also provide continuous case management and client tracking with team accountability for outcomes.

In addition to prescriptive CalWORKS services, each Center and Team will offer a "Self-Help Resource Program" designed for and available to all job seekers from the community. Each Center and Team will have the flexibility to design services and strategies that maximize the unique characteristics and strengths of their community. Each Center and Team will also include CalWORKS job seekers in Work Experience roles. In addition, an extensive use of volunteers as mentors will be incorporated within strategic roles and projects.

The League of Women Voters of Ventura County has adopted welfare reform as the topic of its local study,

and members of the commission who are league members are involved. As they monitor the changes, they will become informed about the plan and about the actual results of the implementation of the plan. The County is forming Community Advisory Councils at the Job and Career Centers, and has invited the League study members to be on them. The Commission will be invited to any meetings the League puts together to report on their findings.

Mentor Council, *cont'd*

CalWORKS participants. The Council is awaiting a grant of \$76,000 for two workers at Oxnard College. Organizations and businesses are being enlisted to recruit these volunteers. Contact for those who wish to be a mentor or to set up a mentoring group--to take the training and to be responsible for overseeing the mentors--is Betty Krause at 654-3361.

The meetings take place on the last Friday of the month at the United Way building at 8 a.m. Every other month will be a training session--every member of the Mentor Council will be a trainer.

What YOU Can Do!

Get Involved--somewhere, on one of the issues that matter to YOU!

If you see an opportunity for women, let us know about it, or talk to other women you know. If you see an inequity or injustice to women, call it to the attention of the organization most likely to be able to work toward a solution. Call, or write letters to legislators; write letters to the editor; join organizations that work in an area you care about--there really is power in numbers.

Check the web site of the Commission for Women for more information about organizations and services for women:
www.ventura.org/cfw-home.htm

"Declaration of Sentiments"--Updated!

by Ruth Hibbard, editor

I am "updating" the Declaration of Sentiments issued 150 years ago after the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York, to make the same points in modern language.

WHEREAS, the essential nature of humankind--women no less than men--is to pursue "true and substantial happiness", therefore no laws in any country or religion can be valid that ignore this first law; therefore

RESOLVED, That such laws that conflict, in any way, with the true and substantial happiness of women, are unnatural and will fail.

RESOLVED, That all laws which prevent women from using her own conscience to decide what she wants to do in life, or which prevent her from achieving because she is a woman, are contrary to nature and therefore have no force or authority.

RESOLVED, That woman has always been man's equal, from the beginning of time, and humankind cannot achieve the highest good unless this is recognized.

RESOLVED, That women should know the laws which govern them, both the good and bad so they can bear equal responsibility in achieving better laws, and not assert that they have all the rights they need and assume they will keep the ones others have fought to give them.

RESOLVED, That if men really believe women alone are meant to nurture children because they have higher moral standards, then men should allow women the right to leadership roles in all areas of government, business, education, religion.

RESOLVED, That both women and men should be held to the highest moral standards and both should expect equal social and legal sanctions, equal to the seriousness of the transgressions.

"Declaration of Sentiments"-- Updated, cont'd

RESOLVED, That those who encourage the viewing of women as sex objects by going to prostitutes, strip joints, or generally treating women as bodies to be used rather than whole human beings, should be socially and legally sanctioned.

RESOLVED, That women should never be satisfied to be limited to the comfortable prison in which the past--and some current customs--kept her, since they have seen the greatness women can achieve when they escape that prison.

RESOLVED, That it is the duty of women to honor the nearly 75-year struggle of her predecessors to achieve for her the right to vote, by becoming an informed voter.

RESOLVED, That equal human rights are achieved by both men and women, since both have capabilities and therefore responsibilities.

RESOLVED, therefore, That since both men and women have capabilities it is the right and duty of women, equally with men, to promote causes that are for the good of all humankind, and it is obviously her right to advocate for these causes by writing, teaching, engaging in any business, holding any office or leadership position; and any laws or customs which prevent women, or men, from fulfilling the highest achievements of which they are capable is an unnatural law, and at war with humankind.

RESOLVED, That the success of full happiness for each member of the human race depends on the passionate and untiring efforts of both men and women, for the overthrowing of any custom or law which prevents women, or men, from achieving whatever their highest capabilities and best inclinations allow, and for equal participation in every right and responsibility the world--the universe, even--holds within it.

Susan B. Anthony, Tireless Organizer



Anthony, like her co-worker, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, took her first steps in community organizing in the anti-slavery movement. But Anthony began in a different social strata than Stanton; her father

had lost his business and returned to a family farm, where Susan helped out for a time. She taught school, the only job open to a woman of education; she rose to headmistress, but the insulting treatment angered her so much she gave it up. She tried organizing temperance societies, but failed from lack of support for a woman in a leadership role. Yet she learned a valuable lesson: women must have money of their own to accomplish anything. She determined to organize women to change laws, inspired also by her mother and sister's account of the convention at Seneca Falls.

She identified three reforms in New York: control by women of their own earnings; guardianship of their children in case of divorce; the vote. She found sixty women to be "captains." Each traveled all over their assigned territory to gather signatures on petitions. It sounds so obvious and pedestrian now, but in an era when women didn't travel much, and certainly not alone, they endured in spite of bad weather, uncomfortable to the point of painful travel conditions, horrible accommodations, hostile crowds. They persisted, and slowly began to succeed.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was the thinker and writer, while Susan B. Anthony organized, traveled and gave thousands of talks in hundreds of rented halls. Stanton describes their work together: "*Whenever I saw that stately Quaker girl coming across my lawn, I knew that some happy convocation of the sons of Adam was to be set by the ears, by one of our appeals or resolutions.... We*

never met without issuing a pronouncement on some question...She supplied the facts and statistics, I the philosophy and the rhetoric, and, together, we have made arguments that stood unshaken through the storms of long years; arguments no one has answered. Our speeches may be considered the united product of our two brains."

The two women worked together first for the emancipation of slaves, then against the proclamation as written--because it included for the first time the right of men to vote, not citizens. They realized this meant a constitutional amendment would be necessary to give women the right to vote. They wore bloomers, until the scorn heaped on them became worse than the comfort. They helped organize unions. They wrote and published a magazine together, "*The Revolution*." They even supported the first woman to run for President!

When a split in the women's rights movement occurred, these two headed the National Women's Suffrage Association, and gave all of their efforts to achieving the vote through a national amendment. They both traveled to Great Britain and helped start an International Suffrage Movement.

The amendment--finally passed as the Nineteenth--was known since 1878 as the Anthony Amendment, when it was introduced by Senator A.A. Sargent of California, a close friend of Anthony. It reads in full: "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." When she died in 1906, Susan B. Anthony had not yet achieved her ultimate goal. But she had secured finances, brought the idea of women voting into the realm of the possible and even inevitable, and she recruited and helped train her successor: Carrie Chapman Catt.

Information from *Century of Struggle*, Eleanor Flexnor, revised edition 1975.