I want to invite all of you to celebrate our Tenth Anniversary by coming to the Film Festival and the Art Auction. These events are major benefits for the Center and we are depending on your support. In addition, both will give you a fine evening of entertainment and enjoyment. If you would like to help before or during either event, please call and let us know.

Below are two very different but timely pieces. The first is Nancy Hopkins' fascinating description of the early years at WRC. How inspiring it is to see how women can pull together to build such a rich organization! Following that is the best article I've seen on comparable worth, the arguments for and against, and the court cases to date.

See you at the WRC Anniversary Celebrations and hope you enjoy an exciting Spring with us!

Cindy

Cindy Howes, Executive Director

Our First 10 Years, Herstory

by Nancy Hopkins

In the early 1970's a group of women met Sunday mornings at the Central Baptist Church to discuss the role of women in the church. The topic area soon expanded, and the group known as "Sojourners" became a vital support system to many of the women involved. Three members of this group, Jane Gammell, Ardis Ryder, and Sandy Gilmour, dreamed a larger dream. In the spring of 1974 a notice was placed in the Wayne and Suburban Times announcing a meeting of interested women gathering to discuss the possibility of developing a women's center; all were welcome. Forty-five women gathered that night from all over the Main Line area. What an exciting night it was! We broke into small groups and dreamed together -- anything was possible. Much later that night as we gathered up the many pieces of newsprint there was a spirit of anticipation. Three specific needs surfaced very clearly:

1. Women asked for a physical space in which to meet and plan together.

2. Women asked for a systematized body of information and referrals.

3. Women asked for workshops and support groups around important issues.

A group of about twelve women who had agreed to go on with the planning process met soon afterwards to continue moving the dream forward. A proposal was presented to the Board of Outreach of Central Baptist Church for use of two rooms recently vacated by an alternative school program on the second floor of the Church House. The proposal was approved, and the church began its long and very supportive role of the new Center.

And so the first part of the dream came to realization -- we met in a bare room--but it was a room of our own. The second room was part of the housing for a Vietnamese family and did not become part of the center for some time. We had received files, a filing cabinet and a desk from a group of women who had begun a center at Haverford College but had lost their space. Summer days passed, and we began discussion with the Valley Forge Chapter of the American Association of University Women. We made a proposal to AAUW for seed money -- the huge sum of $100 a month for one year. How well I remember our fears as we stood before the group answering questions, trying to create a clear picture of our dream for this group. The vote was affirmative and our energies surged! We were determined to "open our door" with something to offer the community around us. The first referral system we developed fit in one blue notebook.

In the spring of 1975 the Women's Resource Center, her place in Wayne, opened its doors. At first we were open ONE day a week! The monthly grant from AAUW paid our phone bill and some mailing fees. I remember with laughter our first community fundraiser. We sold a cup of iced tea for a quarter at the Wayne Sidewalk Sale. We had an inhouse argument over making the tea "something special" and ended up with an ocean of "Constant Comment" concentrate left over. There was a young entrepreneur across the street selling his homemade lemonade for 10 cents and our customers flocked to him. But our first piece of literature got into public hands -- a "growth green" flyer describing the Center.

Our early organizational structure was typically "everyone does everything", early staff meetings were long and somewhat chaotic. Soon we developed a system for coordinators. We struggled early with "hearing" the needs around us. One effective bit of programming that became a very important avenue for needs assessment was our monthly film. Films on women's issues were brand new to the scene and drew fairly well. Sandy Gilmour did a super job designing flyers -- some of those originals are worth saving in the archives. The most important part of the film program was the small group discussion afterwards. At that time we handed out 3x5 cards and asked for feedback concerning general

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programming ideas. That was a good way to keep ourselves in touch with what people wanted. In the meantime, phone calls increased. The church secretary, Sharon Owens, had a button for our line on her phone -- more and more of her time became caught up in covering our calls. We expanded our office time and opened three days a week. We developed a Board of Advisors, put out our first edition of the newsletter, and began to think about developing a volunteer training program.

All was not smooth in our development. At one point in our herstory our Board collapsed, our leadership was down to one or two faithful and our general numbers of calls and drop-ins became few. Sharon Owens and I began a year together as "Co-Directors" to get us back on our feet. At the end of that year, Pizi MacLean took Sharon's place and we were once again in a growth cycle and on firm ground. My three working years with Pizi were especially thrilling in terms of WRC development. The office became systematic, we developed memberships; volunteer training took place regularly; we won United Way Community Development monies; and put together the first WomanWorks art show and many other important firsts. And then it was time to turn it over to new hands. Welcome, Cindy Howes!

It is not easy to put down all the important moments. I remember filling a bus and going to the PA IWY conference in Pittsburgh and running a candidate for Houston. I remember lugging boxes and boxes of junk to the church for our flea market attempts. Yuck! I remember standing before an audience of 40 and improvising because our film projector had broken down -- the topic was "Women and Aging" and I aged 10 years that night. Most of all I remember the beauty, the inner strength, the courage, the inspira- tion that passed from woman to woman as we reached out in support. The many lives that were touched and changed through the groups and workshops offered stand out in my memory. So here's to you, WRC! A Happy Anniversary toast! May you feel the collective strength of all the hearts and hands that pulled together for ten years to make you the special place you are!

AREA HAPPENINGS

DELAWARE COUNTY WOMEN'S CONFERENCE. Saturday, April 27. In its seventh year, the Delaware County Women's conference is held every spring at Delaware County Community College in Media. A broad-based coalition of women from sponsoring organizations and as individuals plan the one-day conference. The conference features an art exhibit, entertainment, health fair, over 80 workshops and more. Keynote speaker: Patricia Carbine, publisher and editor-in-chief of Ms. Magazine. For information about the conference, call 359-5025.

DCCC CAREER CENTER is available to the public on Saturdays from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm. Counselors will be avilable on April 13 and April 17. for further information, call the Career Center at 359-5324.

COMPARABLE WORTH LEGISLATION will be discussed by representatives of Women's Alliance for Job Equity and sponsored by the Swarthmore League of Women Voters. Monday, April 15, 8:00 pm, at the Whittier House on the Swarthmore College campus. Call 328-3746 for information.

A FOUNDATION SKILLS PROGRAM FOR JOBS AND EDUCATION sponsored by Women at Work. Will teach how to set employment goals, how to search for work, how to develop skills in computing, writing, mathematics, communication. 12 week course, beginning April 15. Classes meet from 9:30 - 12:30, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. Free child care. Free tuition for those with at least a 10th grade education. Call 426-2200.

REACH, STRETCH, AND GROW: A Values Realization Workshop. Phoenixville YMCA. Call Janet Twarogowski at 933-6816 for information. Saturday, April 20, 9:00 am to 9:00 pm.

APRIL ACTIONS for Peace, Jobs and Justice is sponsoring a massive march and rally in Washington, DC on Saturday, April 20. A bus will be leaving from Central Baptist Church in the morning and returning there in the evening. Tickets cost $15 per person. For more information, call Ed Kaminsky, evenings at 687-3394.