



## VETERAN FEMINISTS OF AMERICA

*"To document and record our history"*

*"to enjoy  
the sisterhood"*

Summer, 2004

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### *Midwest Conference August 27th and 28th Dedicated To Gene Boyer*

When Gene Boyer was dying last July, she spoke to several of us about the importance of honoring the great feminist leaders and crediting them and the mid-west for spearheading the movement. Gene was thinking of Katherine Clarenbach, Mary Eastwood and herself, from Wisconsin; Dorothy Haener of Michigan, and several others who never made it to the "stardom" status as did New York activists.

But wait! The two most famous are Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem. And while they operated from New York, they were born and bred in Peoria, Illinois and Toledo, Ohio! The fact is that the early Midwest feminists, most of whom were members of the Status of Women Commissions and the AAUW, plotted and planned before NOW was formed and were key figures in shaping

that organization.

And we must not forget that the radical women's movement also started in the Midwest, when Heather Booth, Naomi Weisstein, Shulamith Firestone, Vivian Rothstein, Amy Kesselman, Fran Rominski, Jo Freeman and several others formed Chicago Women's Liberation, and Jo published "The Voice of Women's Liberation" thus naming the movement. Joyce Follet's video STEP BY STEP: Building a Feminist Movement, tells the story, with interviews from key players.\*

In the late 1990's former Westchester, NY activist Joanne Kantrowitz moved with her family to Chicago, and thus began a long e-mail correspondence with VFA. Joanne wanted to meet Chicago feminists. From Baltimore,



*Joanne Kantrowitz and son Alexander. Joanne is co-chair of the conference, along with Judith Kagan Gardiner*

Betty Newcomb (early Indiana activist) got into the act, reaching Joanne, Kathy Rand of Chicago and Mary Lynn Myers of North Dakota. The birth of the GENE BOYER FUND (to be used to organize events in the Midwest) stepped things up, with e-mails flying back and forth, and with a growing number of Midwesterners including VFA director Dr. Alice Dan and new member, Dr. Judith Kagan Gardiner. Mary Ann Lupa joined in, and soon there was a powerful committee,

a location (University of Illinois) headed by Joanne and Judith. A date was set for August 27/28, and a theme, **The Unfinished Business of the Women's Movement - Dangers and Opportunities**, was adopted. A huge boost was given when

Joanne secured a \$10,000 grant for the conference and letters to Midwest members brought in more donations.

**CAROL MOSELEY BRAUN AND REV WILLIE T. BARROW GUEST SPEAKERS AT AWARDS BANQUET**  
Former U.S. Senator Braun and Rev. Barrow, former co-chair of the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition are guest speakers when Midwest activists will receive VFA's medal of honor, and feminists no  
*(See Conference, page 2)*

### *Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) -*

## *Revived and Very Much Alive!*

Oh, so you thought it was a dead issue! Not so! Many of the original leaders, more passionate than ever, and joined by younger women, have jump-started the ERA CAMPAIGN. But the new soldiers, not aware of the long, hard and frustrating campaign, don't understand why we great feminists of the Second Wave aren't supporting it.

**A LITTLE HISTORY** — After the

passage of suffrage, Alice Paul, realizing that the vote wouldn't give women equal rights in our Constitution, wrote the simple words: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." Year after year The National Women's Party introduced it into Congress. With the rebirth of the Movement, Paul wasted no time in getting us to take up the gauntlet. Soon the

pressure worked; Congress passed it, then the Senate, and once ratified by states in seven years it would be part of our Constitution! Thousands of new activists, many who would never have joined a feminist organization, joined the fight for ratification in their states. This awakened the religious right, who organized to defeat it. The ERA would usher in the era of shared bathrooms, they said. Women

*(See Alive! page 2)*

## Conference

(Continued from page 1)

longer with us will be entered into VFA's Hall of FAME. If you want to nominate yourself or another, please open up the websites: **VFA** [WWW.VFA.US](http://WWW.VFA.US);

**Midwest conference** <http://www.vfamidwest.org>. and follow directions.

The brochure included with this newsletter gives all the details. Workshops led by Sara Evans, Heather Booth, Mary Jean Collins, Judith Lonnquist and young feminists Ann Crittenden and Susan Ross, will discuss everything from The Price of Motherhood to Religion and Politics. Conferees will review the Midwest's feminist history, and current topics will be discussed in the open session.

### ERA Alive!

(Continued from page 1)

would be drafted! And worse, there would be same sex marriages! . . . With millions of dollars and fanatic leadership, they scared representatives - and here we are, years later, bathrooms are shared, women are likely to be drafted along with men, and there are same sex marriages, and we still don't have equal rights under the law.

Today the ERA campaign has created a new movement. Jennifer MacLeod, a veteran of the first movement and head of the nationwide ERA Campaign Network expresses even more outrage at today's lack of interest. Her words will strike home to all our pioneer feminists interested in making this a better democracy.

**JENNIFER WRITES:** "In the aftermath of all the recent attention to the inarguably enormous significance of D-Day, I was suddenly struck by this thought: The MOST significant event/change of the past hundred years is NOT D-Day or World War II, NOT the invention of manned flight, NOT nuclear energy or the hydrogen bomb, NOT the landing on the moon, NOT the civil rights movement, NOT the defeat of Communism, NOT the environmental movement, NOT medical and health advances, NOT any particular famous person (good or evil), and NOT the holocaust or international terrorism. There have always been wars, always been shifts in dominance among nations or cultures or religions, always



Clara deMiha, Ellie Smeal, Karen DeCrow

been technological advances, always been increases in human knowledge of the earth and the universe, always been justifiably famous people, and always been brutality and terrorism on one scale or another.

What is utterly NEW in the past century or so, and thus far more momentous, is **THE EMERGENCE OF WOMEN** from what had been their universal status in society for the past several thousand years: almost total subordination to the males of the species.

This extraordinary transformation, in which thousands continue to participate constitutes the single most significant underlying theme of not only the lives of all women alive today, but of this entire era in the history of human experience.

The enormous significance of the Equal Rights Amendment includes but goes far beyond whatever happen to be today's most burning specific women's rights issues. The ERA aims for the recognition and full legal acceptance in our country (and, by extension, around the world) that female citizens and their self-determination, needs, wants, welfare, beliefs and aspirations are every bit as fundamentally important and worthy of attention, respect, influence, and power, as those of male citizens."

**TODAY'S STRATEGY: THE 3-STATE STRATEGY:** Since 35 states have ALREADY ratified the ERA, only three more need to ratify to reach the necessary 38 — three-fourths of the 50 states.

### REPORT FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

**ILLINOIS:** All needed here is for 3/5ths of state senators to vote YES for ERA ratification when Senate reconvenes this fall. (The ERA was already passed, by a 76 to 41 vote, in the House). Illinois activists are hard at work rounding up, and firming up, the necessary

This promises to be our most politically important conference to date. On this 84th anniversary of the Suffrage Movement, and just two months before our national elections, VFA will remain true to our tax-exempt status. But by highlighting current issues like the re-emergence of the Equal Rights Amendment, we hope we will motivate not only veteran feminists, but also younger women to become more involved politically, to continue the fight to liberate women **worldwide** and to make a better world for our children, grandchildren and all generations ad infinitum.

\* To purchase STEP BY STEP - Joyce Follet, P.O. Box 285, Worthington, MA 01098

votes. Please ask your friends in Illinois to contact their state senators and urge them to vote YES for the ERA: **Laurel Prussing**, an Ill coordinator and head of ERA Yes - [ote@LaurelPrussing.com](mailto:ote@LaurelPrussing.com), 217-328-2071, can provide more information.

**FLORIDA** - A huge, enthusiastic campaign is going on. **Sandy Oestreich**, coordinator and also founder/president of Florida ERA, Inc. seems to be everywhere at once. With 26 ERA action teams at work throughout the state, some 200 Florida organizations have passed resolutions supporting the ERA; former Congresswoman

**Pat Schroeder** is their spokesperson, there is good media coverage, and members of the Florida legislature formed a leadership council to work for ratification. Florida volunteers are very much needed; **FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE EFFORT IS CRUCIAL**, and may well determine the success here - perhaps as early as 2005. Contact SandyJOestreich@cs.com, 727-393-0932, and/or send checks, made out to ERA, Inc. to 305 173rd Ave. E, St. Petersburg FL 33708-1332, Website [www.RatifyERAflorida.net](http://www.RatifyERAflorida.net).

**MISSOURI:** ERA ratification activists are numerous, committed, well organized, experienced, and working vigorously. A current focus, through their PAC, is to elect more pro-ERA legislators this fall. For more info, or to help: **Shirley Breeze**, sbreeze@mindspring.com, 314-831-5359.

**GEORGIA:** Coordinator **Idella Moore** is moving into high gear, establishing an excellent interactive website, [www.4ERA.org](http://www.4ERA.org), and building relationships with organizations and legislators. Idella conducted an ERA workshop on July 31 in Macon, Georgia, as part of the AAUW GA Leadership Training program. BPW GA members attended the workshop. This collaboration is the first joint effort of our three organizations, and was the result of an ERA coalition meeting this past June. Contact Idella, - mlord@msn.com, 770-431-1806.

**LOUISIANA:** **Sandra Hufstetler**, Coordinator, assisted by **Roberta Madden**, is forming partnerships with women's groups and sympathizers throughout the state to launch an educational effort regarding the ERA and opportunities for its ratification. A strategy session is planned for early October 2004. Louisianans...get in touch with Sandra, online at [shufstetler@i-55.com](mailto:shufstetler@i-55.com), or telephone 985-345-3001. ERA activists will meet with Louisiana's first woman governor, **Kathleen Blanco**, in the fall.

Coordinators are working for ratification in other not-yet-ratified states. PLEASE, GET IN TOUCH WITH THEM: **ALABAMA:** Elizabeth Crandall, [eac3000@hotmail.com](mailto:eac3000@hotmail.com), 334-663-1861. **ARIZONA:** **Kathy Kelly** (Fountain Hills), [ERACampaignAZ@aol.com](mailto:ERACampaignAZ@aol.com). 480-837-2621, or **Joan Meacham** (Rio Verde), [SusieQ818@aol.com](mailto:SusieQ818@aol.com). 480-471-7792. **ARKANSAS:** **Berta Seitz**, [BLSeitz@fayar.net](mailto:BLSeitz@fayar.net). 479-442-6256. **OKLAHOMA:** **Leona Evans**, [e-ERACampaignOK@msn.com](mailto:e-ERACampaignOK@msn.com), 580-536-4434. **VIRGINIA:** **Donna King**, [bioasys@usa.net](mailto:bioasys@usa.net); 703-203-4500. (For coordinators in ratified states, visit our website, [ERACampaign@aol.com](mailto:ERACampaign@aol.com), and click onto the "Contacts."

To find out whether your state reps are already cosponsors (in which case please thank them), go to <http://thomas.loc.gov>, type in the bill identifications (in the House, Rep. Robert Andrews' "3-state strategy" ERA bill, H.Res.38, which currently has 36 cosponsors, and Rep. Carolyn Maloney's "start-over" ERA bill, H.J.Res.37, which has 203 cosponsors; and in the Senate, Sen. Edward Kennedy's S.J.Res.11, which has 20 cosponsors). Then click "Search," followed by "Bill Summary and Status," and finally by "Cosponsors." If your representative and/or Senators are not cosponsors, let them know that you want them to support equal rights for their female constituents by signing on as cosponsors — and that to decline can be interpreted as meaning that they believe

their female constituents should continue to be denied constitutionally guaranteed equal rights.

**Note:** Progress is being made in the search for a US Senator to introduce a "3-state strategy" ERA bill in the US Senate, similar to Rep. Robert Andrews' bill in the House. Sandy Oestreich reports that Betty Castor, a Floridian who is campaigning to be elected a US Senator, has pledged to introduce such a bill should she win in November.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO!

Most of us belong to organizations and institutions: charities, educational institutions, corporations, media, government entities. See that they support the ERA. Use your power!

- \* **Pull out your checkbooks and contribute to the campaign for the ERA! Contributions (of any size) will be used to help increase our efforts for the ERA. Please mail checks made out the ERA Campaign Network to Esther Gelbard, 9A Betsy Ross Drive, Monroe Township, NJ 08831.**
- \* **To become personally involved in the campaign for the ERA, e-mail [ERACampaign@aol.com](mailto:ERACampaign@aol.com), mention your name and state of residence; we'll take it from there. We are growing: We now have 36 coordinators in 24 states, all around the country! For the list, with contact information, go to our website, [www.ERACampaign.net](http://www.ERACampaign.net)**
- \* **To receive the newsletter - go to [ERACampaign@aol.com](mailto:ERACampaign@aol.com), and give your state of residence.**

*"And as I have said, the Veteran Feminists of America has the knowledge and numbers to get the ERA ratified during my lifetime and you had better hurry up. I am now ninety!" Flora Crater*



In August, 1970 women marched in Washington to celebrate women and the women's movement. I helped my daughter-in-law, Fran Crater, a member of Princeton NOW. We delivered pink paper flowers to the then sponsors of the Equal Rights Amendment along with information about the ERA, and presented the "Equality Flower" to Hugh Scott and Mike Mansfield on the steps of the Capitol. It was a wonderful and exciting day and I have been working for the passage and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment ever since! I began publishing *The Woman Activist*, which I still publish, and actively taking part. Isabelle Shelton, reporter for the Evening Star, called our group Crater's Raiders, which met weekly to lobby members of Congress. And as many of us worked our hearts out, it got bogged down where it is now.

The determination of some that we not be constitutionally protected proves the need for an Equal Rights Amendment. As former Supreme Court Justice William Powell said "Until women are declared equal in the constitution of the country, they will not consider them equal." So I and others like me continue on.

## TITLE VII CONFERENCE IN NEWTON, MASS UNITES PAST AND PRESENT

### A REPORT FROM YOUR PRESIDENT:

I walked into the lobby of the Holiday Inn and stepping up to the registry, gave my name, whereupon the young clerk exclaimed, "I know you. You're famous! May I have your autograph?"

"How can you know me?" I asked.

"I've read about you in several books," she replied....

Wow! I thought... If a young hotel clerk recognizes my name when I am briefly mentioned in a few books, there must be many young women reading those books - and very aware of the feminist movement!

"Other famous feminists will be here, I told her. Her eyes widened... and yes, I'll see that you get their autographs."

What a great start to the conference! Things were looking good.

The Title VII conference, co-chaired by Boston area feminists Bonnie Howard, Priscilla Leith, with Betsy Dunn, Cheryl Garrity, and Marion Kilson, brought together some major participants in the early civil



*Aileen Hernandez, William Brown, Muriel Fox, and Betty Newcomb*

rights actions for women. Events started with a reception Friday evening at the home of friends of the planners. We were treated to a video of EEOC hearings (provided by Lois Herr) held by William Brown, chair of the EEOC from 1969-73, in Houston in 1970, where the EEOC had gone because of the high level of discrimination complaints against Houston corporations. Watching the video, we were in admiration of the young Brown as he challenged corporate leaders to remedy injustices in employment practices. Some of the testimonies about discrimination from employees were heart rendering. It was a sobering reminder of those early battles to fight injustices.

The conference brought together some major participants in the early civil rights actions for women. The first panel featured, besides Mr. Brown, NOW's second president, Aileen Hernandez, one of the first African-American Commissioners of the EEOC. The two discussed early battles and enlightened us on just how hard it was to get the agency to focus on gender inequality in addition to racial inequities.

Lorena Weeks of Georgia, of the landmark case *Weeks v. Southern*



*Lorena Weeks*

Bell, won by NOW/LDEF's lawyer, Sylvia Roberts years ago reminded us that corporations were adamant in sex-segregating occupations (and of course paid more for male-only jobs). "Did Georgians know that she is famous?" we asked. "Not at all, she said . . . in her soft southern drawl. They haven't seen the documentaries, or read the books." She had sued Southern Bell out of need and frustration, she told us. "I was raising three children and needed more money.

Men were being paid huge salaries for doing what we could easily do, and we were told we couldn't have those jobs, as we did not have the strength to carry the weight men did." If you remember, 90 lb Sylvia Roberts won that round in court by lifting a 40 lb bench over her head, saying women carry children, groceries, etc., every day.

At the banquet that evening I greeted everyone and gave my spiel — a short history of VFA — there was laughter when I explained one reason it was founded was because "No one was honoring us, so we decided to honor ourselves."

Keynoter Eleanor Clift of Newsweek (see her as the one woman holding her own on *Washington Week in Review*), stressed the positive changes in the media and gains made by women in the media because of the feminist movement. And, she said she would never have gotten past the role as 'fact checker' had it not been for the movement.

Sunday there were more workshops, I visited most to get a "feeling" as there were always two going simultaneously. All gave a rundown of past and current situations. A popular one was "Alternatives to Title VII, Start Your Own Business, run by "Women Business Owners, an organization founded in NYC in 1973 by Ava Stern and other VFA members.

The workshop "Wal-Mart and Current Cases" brought us to 21st century sex discrimination now challenged in court by women employees of the megamart discount chain Wal-Mart. Attorneys Debra Smith of Equal Rights Advocates in San Francisco and Ellen Zucker, former President of Boston NOW, gave us a sobering picture of how women are still underpaid, overworked, and lacking in benefits ... and reminded us that there is more work ahead.

It is inspiring to be with veterans of our early wars and most still active! On panels were Shelia Tobias, VFA's Executive VP board member, Lois Herr, and member Suzanne Butler. And in the audience, Muriel Fox, VFA's board chair; Amy Hackett, VFA's treasurer; Lee Kefauver, former activist in Michigan, now a Mass. resident, and Betty Newcomb, who ran a silent auction fundraiser for VFA and raised \$300 dollars.

The Conference ended with lunch, after which board members stayed for a three-hour meeting chaired by Muriel Fox. Jacqui

**LAST CHANCE!  
PIONEER FEMINISTS BOOK WILL  
BE PUBLISHED IN '05.**

Surely you have received several requests for information on your feminist contributions (before 1975) to insure your inclusion in The Pioneer Feminists Project. The book is now planned for publication next year. No more publicity, email alerts or mass mailings are going out because we are pressured to get everything edited and approved in time to meet that deadline. Barbara Love, the chief editor, says that VFA members - those receiving this newsletter - are a special group because VFA is a partner in this project. So you can still get in if you send in your Questionnaire NOW. To see if your questionnaire - or that of your friends - has been received, go to the database at [edouglass.org/PFP](http://edouglass.org/PFP) or just Google search for Pioneer Feminists Project.

## BOOK SHELF

**Somewhere Out in the West** - Leota Korn. This novel tells the struggle of developing in the West today. It pits the stalwart people of the West with their frontier neighborliness, against the newcomers, who want the West to remain as is, except for sheep and cattle, and no water storage, so that rivers run wild and free. In this background, developer Judith Sandstrom meets documentary film producer Robert Markham and they share the same experiences. Leota is a real estate developer, and a founder of NOW in Colorado, so this novel is a bit auto-biographical. 1st Books Library. To order call 1-888-280-7715 or visit [www.1stbooks.com](http://www.1stbooks.com) Leota Korn, P.O. Box 1617, Durango, CO 81302 Leota at: [leotakorns@frontier.net](mailto:leotakorns@frontier.net) Website: <http://www.somewhereoutinthewest.com>

**AMERICAN WOMEN - 400 Years of Dolls, Drudges, Helpmates and Heroines** - by Gail Collins. Virginia Whitehill of Dallas says it is a "must read," and is very enjoyable. Collins shows that female roles changed according to what men wanted. During the depression, married women who worked were seen as a menace to society; a few years later government pleaded to women to take defense work and blamed war losses on those who shirked. After the war women were fired so male veterans could take their jobs. "While progress has come in fits and starts, it's impossible still not to cheer the undeniable advances, says Collins. In 2002 women were awarded 55% of all college degrees and accounted for almost half the students in law and medicine. Women are in the executive suite, the Supreme Court, and in space - but they may still be expected to know how to bake a pie." Morrow 555 pg. \$27.95.

**BUSHWOMEN; TALES OF A CYNICAL SPECIES** by Laura Flanders. An investigation into the women in George W. Bush's Cabinet. Reports are that it is brilliant. Flanders was seen on CSpan, and she is articulate, charismatic and a fantastic spokesperson for women. Pioneer feminists are aware that they and our few spokeswomanes are aging, and there is an urgent need for younger "stars." So many are impressed by Laura Flanders and are urging those who have money (like the Dallas groups) to invite her to speak, and encourage her to take a leadership role, much like Gloria Steinem did years ago. For her book, and to reach her for speaking dates.. [www.lauraflanders.com/lo](http://www.lauraflanders.com/lo)

**BOUNDARIES OF HER BODY A Political History of Women's Legal Rights in America** -Debran Rowland, a young, black, civil rights attorney and award-winning journalist, writes a compelling look at the history of women's rights in America, in which she documents the debates over women's rights from the 1600's to today Sourcebooks Inc. \$27.95.

### And DON'T FORGET THESE BOOKS BY VFA MEMBERS!

**MASS MEDIA AND THE SHAPING OF AMERICAN FEMINISM, 1963-1075** by Patricia Bradley, a professor of communications at Temple University. Patricia describes the media coverage of the early feminist movement and thus gives fascinating history of the movement told through coverage of feminist events. You'll read about many early feminists who used the media to get out the feminist message. University Press of Mississippi 3825 Ridgewood Rd, Jackson, MS 39211. Online ordering [press@ihl.statems.us](mailto:press@ihl.statems.us); [pbradley@temple.edu](mailto:pbradley@temple.edu) (PAPER BACK) ISBN -1-57806-613-1 - \$18.00 T

**Sex, Lies, and Rabbis: Breaking a Sacred Trust.** Charlotte Rolnick Schwab, PhD, This powerful book is about sexual abuse towards young females by rabbis. Charlotte writes about her own frightening experience as the wife of a rabbi - perpetrator of sexual abuse of other women and his violence toward her, Bloomington IN: 1st Books Library. 316 pp (PB \$18.95; Dust Jacket \$32.95; e-book \$10.95). Call the publisher, toll free at: 800.839.8640

**"Eat First—You Don't Know What They'll Give You, The Adventures of an Immigrant Family and Their Feminist Daughter"** - Sonia Pressman Fuentes. Sonia, a founder of NOW and the first woman attorney in the EEOC (for starters) has written the story of her childhood, starting of the family's escape from Hitler's Germany to the U.S.A., To order 1-800-EXLIBRIS.

**THE CHALICE & THE BLADE** - Riane Eisler A must read classic! Riane gives the history of the feminine/masculine roles from the beginnings of civilization and explores the possibilities of a true civilization when the roles of women and men are rebalanced and we have a true partnership. Ashley Montagu says it is "The most important book since Darwin's Origin of the Species. Eisler is co-director of the Center for Partnership / studies in Pacific Grove, CA. HarperCollins.

Barbara Seaman's book, **The Greatest Experiment Ever Performed on Women** is now in paperback, and the June 11 NY Times Book Review calls it "one of the New and Noteworthy paperback listings." Also it recently made the Best Books of 2003 of the Library Journal, the ONLY book of their top 22 consumer health books in the "women's health" category.

**TRUE COLORS...AN ARTIST'S JOURNEY FROM BEAUTY QUEEN TO FEMINIST** - Patricia Hill Burnett - Patricia tells her story...and it is fascinating! How can a beauty queen end up as a feminist?! Patricia is founder of NOW in Michigan, was NOW's International Chair, and is on VFA's current board. Momentum Books, Ltd. 810-828-3666

## VFA'S CALENDAR....

**AUGUST 27, 28 2004 MIDWEST CONFERENCE** (see front page of this newsletter) **AUGUST 29- VFA BOARD MEETING IN CHICAGO.**

**INTERGENERATIONAL CONFERENCE PLANNED FOR APRIL IN CT POSTPONED:** Events Chair, Sheila Tobias and Stephanie Gilmore, who had negotiated with CT State College in New Britain to co-host a day-long "Intergenerational Conference and an awards dinner for April of 2005 report that the grant they applied for was refused, so the conference is off. We may still have an awards dinner to honor CT pioneer feminists. Sheila reports that there is a very strong Connecticut committee who will take responsibility to find the pioneer feminists of that state and help plan a banquet to honor them. More info later.

**JULY, 2005** - No plans made yet to join Opening of Women's Rights Park in Seneca Falls, NY. Nan Johnson is in charge of WR Park. Stay tuned.



*Jacqui Ceballos (right) on the bus with Betty Friedan (left) at the March for Women's Lives, April 25, 2004. Photo by Carole de Saram.*

## From the Past . . .



*Artist Alida Walsh at the 1970 March in New York City. Photo by Bettye Lane.*

## THE APRIL 25 MARCH FOR WOMEN'S LIVES

### A DAY TO REMEMBER WITH BETTY FRIEDAN

We were among the thousands of marchers, but we didn't march. Carol Coucil of San Diego and Carole DeSaram and Sandy Zwerling of New York City were Betty Friedan's advance guard. It was thrilling to see so many women, men and children of all ages wave and shout to Betty, giving her the Victory sign, coming up to her on the bus and thanking her for all she did, having photos taken with her . . . One woman ran on board and, holding her hand said, "Are you the real Betty Friedan?" and Betty replied with a smile, "I used to be." Later, having lunch at Union Station, she was her old self - brilliant, witty, impatient, intellectually provocative . . . and again, a constant flow of people stopped by at our table to praise her. She was attentive and appreciative . . . Jacqui

### YOUNG WOMEN AND FEMINISM



*Gloria Steinem*

NEWSWEEK interviewed Gloria Steinem earlier this year: One question provoked an interesting answer from the brilliant Gloria.

Q - Some young women seem to run from the feminist label. How can you inspire them to be passionate about women's rights? Gloria — If younger women have a problem with the label, it's only that they don't yet know that there is a problem. The kind of radicalization that happened to my

generation when we tried to get a job happens to them 10 or 15 years into the job, when they fail to get promoted. Women tend to be conservative in youth and get more radical as they get older because they lose power with age. So, if a young woman is not a feminist, I say, just wait.

## We Say Goodbye To . . .

**SHEILA CRONAN** - Barbara Mehrof emails: "Just heard of the death of Sheila Cronan, who was a member of New York Radical Women, Redstockings and The Feminists before becoming a lawyer. She worked at the Dept of Labor in Washington. We were all just out of college and social workers at the Bureau of Child Welfare when we went to our first demonstration against Colgate-Palmolive. Cindy Cisler was giving out leaflets for a WL meeting and the rest is history."



*Millie Jeffrey (right) whooping it up on being honored by VFA, April 1998, in New York City, with Nikki Beare (left) and Jacqui Ceballos (center). Photo by Jo Freeman.*

**MILDRED JEFFREY** - who had told friends, "I'll retire when I die," was living in a nursing home in Detroit and still at it until her death at 93. The wonderful Millie was, among other things, the great behind-the-scenes strategist of modern feminism. On the staff of the United Auto Workers she helped organize the National Women's Political Caucus and was its president for two terms. She helped launch a campaign to have delegate slots to the Democratic National Conventions equally divided between women and men.

She was the "unelected leader" of a committee which promoted the idea of a female vice presidential candidate and helped get Geraldine Ferraro on the ticket. Michigan's governor Jennifer Granholm and Senator Debbie Stabenow said they would not be in their current positions had it not been for Millie's decades of work on behalf of equal opportunities for women.

Millie began in the 1930's when she organized clothing workers in the South. In 1944 she became the first director of the UAW's Women's Bureau, helping secure child care and transportation for the quarter million Riveting Rosies - and teaching the women skills they needed to have a role in their union. By the end of World War II Millie helped Walter Reuther mold the auto workers into a great force for social democracy. She introduced young John Kennedy to NAACP leaders, and got UAW support for him. Her energy was legendary... At 91 she traveled from Detroit to Cleveland to witness Joan Campbell's swearing-in as mayor. VFA honored Millie in NYC in 1998, when she led a rousing salute to the recently deceased Bella Abzug. Amazing woman, a treasure of the feminist movement, we were fortunate to have with us so long.

**CORRINE GRAD COLEMAN** - Writer, and a founding member of Redstockings, Corrine died on July 4 at her home in Manhattan, of heart disease. She was 77. Corrine was at the Ladies Home Journal sit-in (see her photo in Marcia Cohen's "the Sisterhood,") and took part in the Women's Liberation Conference in Lake Villa, Ill, 1968. She was an editor of Feelings, a women's liberation journal, in which some of her poems appear. In recent years, she was active with Redstockings Allies and Veterans. The mother of four, she was a longtime English teacher in the NYC public schools. Kathy Sarachild reports that she was moved to feminism in the 1950's by Simone de Bouvier's "The Second Sex." Somehow, VFA never found her, nor she us - which reminds us all to give us names and addresses of others who were there in the first years.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE** — Jean Ledwith King of Detroit - Chair. Jean, an attorney, was honored by VFA for her work, especially on Title XI, in 2002)

Members — Carol Council of San Diego, Winnie Wackwitz of Dallas and Grace Welch of New York.

The committee asks that members nominate themselves or someone else for the 2005/2007 board - But please be sure that your nominee is willing to serve, and promises to be an active board member - and has a "portfolio."

## Veteran Feminists of America

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**REACH OUT — SHARE YOUR MEMORIES**  
**JOIN VFA'S SPEAKERS BUREAU**

WE, the veterans of the second wave of the most powerful revolution of all time, have A LOT to say - and we should say it before it's too late! Clubs, organizations, schools, colleges and universities should be thrilled to have a local pioneer feminist share her memories! So VFA is launching the SPEAKER'S BUREAU — from our Web site ([www.vfa.us](http://www.vfa.us)), which Gene Boyer had for years urged us to do. Betty Newcomb has taken up the banner. The idea is to educate audiences about VFA, the issues we fought for, what gains were made and are now threatened, and what remains to be done. COME ON — join the roster. Send a short bio to BETTY NEWCOMB, 509 Old Orchard Rd, Baltimore, MD 21229, or email it to [bnewcomb@verizonmail.com](mailto:bnewcomb@verizonmail.com). Include a brief history of your feminist experiences, your special areas of interest, and contact info (how, when to reach you). Betty will organize it and turn it over to web manager Jan Cleary to be entered in our speaker's bureau web site, where, we hope, requests will pour in. The idea is to let you make the arrangements — dates, fees, etc. And so all pertinent info, like how to arrange fees, how to donate a percentage of it to VFA, will be given on the web site. If you have suggestions about ways to make this work better get in touch with Betty. Remember, you won't have to travel beyond your home town unless you want to.

**INFO ON MIDWEST CONFERENCE IN CHICAGO**  
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