

Ethical issues recognized

N-plants receive clerical support

By Anita Fussell

In spite of ethical questions about radioactive dangers, 10 of 12 persons queried in a sampling of religious groups and members of the clergy endorse nuclear power as a continuing source of energy.

The majority say they consider nuclear power plants a necessary fact of life — at least until alternative energy sources can be developed.

The respondents were divided on whether nuclear power should be expanded or ultimately phased out.

Six favored a moratorium on building plants, a position held by a growing number of religious groups, including the World Council of Churches, the YWCA and individual denominations, such as the Church of the Brethren.

Four opposed a moratorium, and two were undecided.

The most outspoken champion of nuclear power was the Rev. Edwin S. Roleder of Sheridan Lutheran Church. "I have no qualms about nuclear power," he said. "From the ethical standpoint, I see nothing wrong with it, if we can control human error. The alternative would be prohibitive. We'd have to completely close down our lifestyle."

That would be a welcome development to Barbara Cameron, adult women's program director for the Lincoln YWCA. "I think it is important to learn to use less energy," she said, "especially when you think of the rest of the world."

Ms. Cameron was one of two persons who said they would consider closing Nebraska's two nuclear power plants. The Rev. Steve Evans, director of the Lincoln Fellowship of Churches, was the other.

"Nuclear power is the kind of issue we're made to believe we don't know much about," Ms. Cameron said. "But some basic things we can understand. Enough is enough."

Those basic things — and they worried almost every person who was questioned — are the problems of human error

and the future effects of radioactive waste.

"The government should be more candid about nuclear accidents that have already occurred and more realistic about the dangers of maintaining or expanding existing facilities," said the Rev. Dr. R. Benjamin Garrison of St. Paul United Methodist Church.

"Ethically, nuclear power is very difficult to justify because we do not have a solution to the waste problem," said the Rev. Dr. James Keyser of the United Methodist Church in Louisville. "The problems with low-energy radiation at the test sites in Utah and Nevada are also of concern. We may be leaving a legacy of destruction for our children and grandchildren."

The Rev. Curtis D. Lehman of Berean Fundamental Church said Americans needed a crisis like the Three Mile Island incident to force them to consider alternative directions. Although he is supportive of nuclear power, he would be willing, he said, to spend tax money for an all-out program to develop other sources of energy.

The Rev. Dr. Rodney Wilmoth of Trinity United Methodist Church said nuclear power in itself is not unethical but its misuse raises many ethical issues. "I would entertain any serious discussion on how to get along on less energy," he said. "But given the fact of nuclear power, the question becomes how to use it responsibly."

Other opinions:

- The Rev. Bruce Currier of Second Baptist Church: "There are certain hazards in any new venture. Personally, the hazards connected with nuclear power have not been shown to be so much that it should be abandoned. We have lost many more people in coal mines than in nuclear plants."

- The Rev. Charles L. Wildman of Vine Congregational Church: "Part of the difficulty is the kind of limited knowledge with which we're working. I would not be in favor of new construction unless the



Barb Cameron



Sheryl Schreft

YWCA keeps stage but changes scenery

By Linda Ulrich

In 1964, YWCA activities included meetings of the Live Wires, a club of "business girls," the Singletons, which provided fellowship for divorced and widowed women, and the Figarettes, women's physical fitness classes.

This year, YWCA programs include sessions on holistic health, aerobic dance, living single, women and money, stress management and assertiveness training for teen-agers and adults.

Along the way, the arts and crafts department became arts and skills.

Over the years, YWCA programs have changed and expanded but "the philosophy (of the YWCA) has remained the same," says Sheryl Schreft, executive director of the Lincoln YWCA. "What we want to be about is the diversity of women."

And, she says, while "we like being identified with women," men are welcome in almost all the programs and more men are becoming involved, particularly in some of the discussion sessions.

Traditional programs in arts and skills and physical fitness continue to be important, but added to that is a wide variety of programs, workshops and discussion sessions for women — and men — dealing with personal growth and self-awareness.

"There seems to be a hunger for that kind of experience," said Barbara Cameron, director of YWCA adult programming. But, she said, "it's not the intense sensitivity stuff of a few years ago."

One of the most popular, for instance, is the series of presentations on holistic health, in which mental and spiritual attitudes are linked with physical well-being. Sessions are from noon to 1 p.m. Thursdays with psychologists, social workers, physical education instructors, a minister and other professional persons discussing different concepts of holistic health.

The "brown bag kaleidoscope" luncheon series, Mondays during the noon hour and sponsored by the YWCA and Southeast Community College, is attended by men and women. January and February sessions will be led by state senators. "Women's Issues, Society's Concerns" will be the theme of the March kaleidoscope luncheons.

Also well-received is the living-single workshop, which Ms. Cameron said "deals with the whole area of being OK about being a woman and being alone."

The sessions on women and money, designed for novices in financial management, and a workshop titled "Women on the Rise: Beyond the Corporate Ladder" help fulfill YWCA goals, Ms. Schreft said.

"One of our goals is the empowerment of women," she said. "We want women to gain some knowledge and to learn some skills that are hooked into empowering."

As part of that goal, several programs are on the YWCA drawing board.

- A New Directions Center for Women, which, if financed, would provide personal counseling, a career-planning program and support groups for women facing transition. Women who have been separated, divorced or widowed or who have been forced to change their employment status or careers are among those who could benefit from the center, Ms. Schreft said.

- A women's weight training program designed to improve physical strength.

- A non-traditional job program to assist women to prepare psychologically and physically for the necessary training to secure jobs that are not traditionally seen as jobs for women.

Nationally the YWCA has been very vocal and has taken very strong stands, but each local YWCA can choose its own role and its own position, Ms. Schreft said.

"This YWCA seems to have gone back and forth over the years. Now it seems to be moving back into a more visible role," Ms. Cameron added.

Ak-Sar-Ben gives \$8,100 in grants

OMAHA (UPI) — The Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben announced approval of \$8,100 in grants to six communities or organizations under its agricultural, civic and educational program.

The amounts and recipients were:

- \$3,000 to the Nebraska Arts Council's Artist-in-Schools-Communities Program, now one of the largest in the nation. Last year, the organization served 64,875 children, 64 artists and 107 schools.

- \$2,500 to the McCook YWCA Fund Drive.

- \$1,000 to the NEBRASKA Land Foundation, a non-profit corporation formed to assist state government in promoting social, historical, cultural and economic development in Nebraska.

- \$1,000 to the city of Valley for buying 2 Jaws of Life for use by the community's rescue squad.

- \$500 to the Little House Girls Village of Omaha.

- \$500 to the Kimball County High School Band for expenses on its trip to Calgary, Alberta, to participate in the Calgary Stampede.

Homemakers to benefit from grant to YWCA

The Junior League of Lincoln has given a \$19,000 grant to the YWCA to activate a new Y program for displaced homemakers.

The program, conceived and developed about three years ago by the Lincoln-Lancaster Commission on the Status of Women, had stalled because of a lack of financing and volunteer support, according to Barbara Cameron, YWCA adult women's program director.

The program, called the New Directions Center, will provide career development, coping skills, peer-support groups and guidance and referral services for women making a transition in their lives. It is expected to be in operation by late summer, Ms. Cameron said.

FAT:

Is a feminist issue

By Lynn Hawkins
Star Staff Writer

While YWCA Director Sheryl Schrepf battled to lose 93 pounds last year, she concluded, "fat is programmed into a woman by her mother and society."

"We women get bombarded with messages to nurture others with food. 'The message is 'eat and be happy.' Good moms bake cookies."

"I feel obligated to eat when I'm around my mother," added Barbara Cameron, Y program director who says she continuously struggles with a weight problem. "The first day there I fight it off. The second and third day I'm eating potatoes. By the time I leave I'm just stuffing food in all day long. Otherwise, Mother says, 'I don't know why I've spent all this time and effort making desserts when nobody appreciates it.'"

"Just think about how much time a woman spends a day cooking, serving and cleaning up food," Ms. Cameron sighed. "We're socialized to be giving and caring for others' needs through food."

Fat may be a reaction, a way of saying, "my own needs aren't being met," Ms. Schrepf said.

"Because it's not been OK for women to be financially competitive in business, we have rewarded ourselves for what we do by eating," she added.

"Fat is a feminist issue," according to the two women who will teach a four-week course with that title at the YWCA beginning April 25.

Though people who have taken a similar course in other parts of the country have lost weight in the process, dieting is not part of the Y's curriculum. "Dieting talks about restrictions. We're talking about freedom to choose food," Ms. Schrepf said.

"We need to be able to take the 'illegal' label off foods like pizza and ice cream sundaes, to be free to eat what we like," she said. "If you crave pizza, you tend to eat that many calories up in cottage cheese, bags of carrots and lettuce salad without really having your craving satisfied."

You can't make a choice without recognizing the difference between "mouth hunger and stomach hunger," Ms. Schrepf added. "The first is a result of boredom, stress and the need for reward. Women are afraid to feel hungry, so we're always ahead of ourselves, eating to avoid the possibility of our stomachs growling."

Compulsive eating is like compulsive dieting, she said. "Both involve a real fear of eating and of food. When we ask women to fantasize being in a supermarket where they can bring home all they want to eat — pizza and ice cream and cookies — a lot of women just freak out."

A woman's fantasy is that if she loses weight, her life will change. She will have to deal with being a different person and "that's scary," Ms. Schrepf admitted.

"A fella I'd worked with before the weight loss said, 'If you'd looked that good when we were together, you'd have had to fight me off.' It blew me away. I backslid a while. I didn't have to deal with this kind of reaction when I was fat."

Women are taught to be passive and "blend in," she says. "One of the reasons we want to stay fat is so we won't get noticed a lot."

"It's time we owned our bodies, accepted them, and recognized our power to make decisions about food."



'Perfect 10' is perfect hogwash

Women use "disguises to protect their bodies from being seen," says Mary Stilwell, who is "outraged at the way Barbara Walters and society in general 'images' females."

"To avoid exposure, we often limit ourselves to cover-up activities. We wear long-sleeved shirts and don't go swimming," sighed Ms. Stilwell.

"Every Body is a Winner," the title of her new class at the YWCA, reflects her disgust at the current vogue to rate women on a scale of one to 10.

"We punish ourselves by not buying new clothes until we lose 15 pounds. We won't indulge ourselves on good-feeling

lotions for our skin 'because we don't see ourselves as being worth it.'"

By age 7, a girl can identify the perfect body image, according to a recent Research Quarterly study in female stereotyping. By age 11, girls are more likely than not to report themselves weighing more than they really do, the study concludes.

Girls get pushed into being child-women in nylons and training bras using seductive behavior by fourth grade, says Ms. Stilwell, a private counselor on sexuality and a behavior therapist.

The problem comes when we think we need certain measurements to be OK or

when we make body changes just to please men. "Even Bo Derek's husband said in the show that he didn't know if he would love her if she started to look different. Aging is a big part of our fears."

To begin to "own all your bodily parts, just as you are," she suggests, "stand in front of a full-length mirror in the nude. Own your shoulders. Accept each part of you as perfect because it's uniquely you."

Perhaps the scared feelings from childhood taunting or past experiences never completely go away, she said. "But by looking at the childhood tapes and realizing how we got the bad images, we can begin the healing process, to feel OK."

Coalition forms to counteract 'right-wing threat'

By James Joyce
Star Staff Writer

A new group, led by some of Lincoln's better known political activists, is being formed to counteract what it views as a right-wing threat to progressive members of Nebraska's Legislature.

The founders of the group recently mailed out some 300 letters aimed at soliciting new members and raising funds for its activities.

In its letter, the Nebraska Progressive Coalition noted the national election successes in 1978 of single-issue interest groups, such as the anti-abortion movement.

Without some sort of unified effort, the letter suggested, those successes could be repeated on the local scene and progressive positions on such issues as tax, labor and welfare reform, reproductive rights, education, civil liberties and environmental protection would suffer.

"While there are organizations supporting specific issues on this progressive agenda, there is a real need for a coalition that encompasses all these issues, especially a coalition that can endorse political candidates," the letter said.

According to Barbara Cameron of Lincoln, one of the 18 founders, the

group was not formed specifically as a result of the primary election upset of Lincoln Sen. Steve Fowler.

Instead, she said, several of the founders discussed the idea of forming a coalition "about six months ago."

Fowler finished second to Jerry Sellentin, personnel manager at St. Elizabeth hospital, by approximately 700 votes in their two-person battle in the 27th District race.

Sellentin, a Republican, has received campaign contributions from the anti-abortion Nebraska Pro-Life political action committee and the Nebraska Political Action Council, a business-interest fund-raising organi-

zation.

Fowler, a Democrat, is one of several lawmakers who have been targeted by both business and pro-life groups for special efforts to try to defeat them.

Ms. Cameron said the group plans on sending questionnaires to all 52 legislative candidates to learn their positions on issues deemed important to the coalition.

After that, she said, five "key races in which progressives are under attack" will be selected for the group to throw its financial and campaign volunteer workers behind.

Also listed as founders of the organ-

ization are Lincolmites Mike Flores, Chris Funk, Don Hunter, Alice Morton, Ada Munson, Dick Kurtenbach, Rosemary Machacek, Kay Ridenour, Rich Lombardi, Leslie Robin, Jerry Rus, Sheryl Schrepf, Carole Shein, Lois Smith, Kappie Weber and Yale Wisnick, and Omahan Mary Ellen Drickey.

Ms. Cameron, director of the YWCA adult programming, stressed that membership in the coalition is a matter of "personal conviction" and that the founders' affiliations with other organizations "should not be confused" as meaning endorsements by those other groups.

New coalition's formation shrugged off by Sellentin

Jerry Sellentin on Saturday shrugged off news of the formation of a political coalition that reportedly has targeted him as one legislative candidate to defeat in November.

Sellentin, a Republican, defeated Lincoln Sen. Steve Fowler, a Democrat, in the nonpartisan 27th Legislative District primary election. Both candidates advanced to the November general election.

Fowler reportedly has been targeted for defeat by business and anti-abortion groups. Sellentin has received campaign contributions from the Nebraska Pro-Life political action committee and the Nebraska Political Action Council, a business-interest fund-raising organization. But Sellentin said, "I've not met with the officers of those groups."

"I'm just glad to know they went public," Sellentin said. "These people have been supporters of Steve's for some time. I've got a coalition of supporters, too."

"I don't know what they mean by 'progressive.' It's obvious that Steve and my philosophies differ," Sellentin said. "If I was to say anything about the formation of this group, I'd say it means Fowler's worried about the election."

Barbara Cameron, Lincoln YMCA program director, said the coalition will provide financial support and volunteers in "five key races in which progressives are under attack," after polling the 52 legislative candidates, according to the Associated Press.

The roster of the Nebraska Progressive Coalition includes Lincoln political activists. Among them are Ms. Cameron; Chris Funk, director of the Lincoln Commission on the Status of Women and director of Dorothy Walker's 1977 city council campaign; Don Hunter, director of Lincoln Action Program; Dick Kurtenbach, head of the Nebraska Civil Liberties Union and manager of three election campaigns for Hess Dyas; Rich

Lombardi, a legislative lobbyist and former aide to Fowler.

Other organizers include Kappie Weber, who has been local president of the League of Women Voters, coordinator of the Nebraska Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights and president of the Nebraska Coalition for Women; Kay B. Ridenour, president of the Lincoln chapter of the National Organization for Women; Carol Shein, executive director of Planned Parenthood of Lincoln; Mike Flores, Lincoln regional representative of the United Auto Workers; Ada Munson, chairman of the Nebraska Coalition for Women; Yale Wishnick, executive director of the Lincoln Education Association; Sheryl Schrepf, executive director of the YWCA.

Others are Alice Morton, Rosemary Machacke, Leslie Robin, Lois Smith and Omaha resident Mary Ellen Drickey.

Ruling reversed; No jobless benefits in Catholic schools

By United Press International

An appeals tribunal has reversed the state Labor Department's determination that employees of Roman Catholic parochial schools are eligible for unemployment insurance benefits, Labor Commissioner John Hanlon said Saturday.

He said the department had ruled the Roman Catholic schools were subject to the Employment Security Law in compliance with the U.S. labor secretary's interpretation of recent changes in federal law.

The schools appealed the department's ruling, Hanlon said.

Patrick W. Ash, chief administrative law judge, rejected the labor secretary's interpretation of the Unemployment Compensation Amendments of 1976, Hanlon said.

"Judge Ash found no clearly expressed intention by Congress to extend coverage of the unemployment insurance laws to church-related primary and secondary schools, coverage which he said was constitutionally questionable," Hanlon said.

Public Mind

Evolution

Our Creator designed evolution.

Those who object to teaching children what has been learned about the universe in which we live depict God as a super magician, acting on impulse.

Hugh P. Stoddard
Auburn

Supports program

In response to the criticism directed at Planned Parenthood of Lincoln in recent letters, I would

like to express my support for a valuable and needed community service.

In my work as a program director at the Lincoln YWCA, I have worked numerous times with the educational staff at Planned Parenthood. They are knowledgeable, well-trained professionals who are sensitive to needs in the areas of family planning and sexuality and willing to work cooperatively in a variety of ways with other community groups.

Barbara Cameron
Lincoln

Judge says extension unconstitutional; states may rescind

Deadly blow dealt to ERA

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — A federal judge delivered two severe blows to the Equal Rights Amendment Wednesday, ruling that Congress lacked authority to extend the ratification deadline and that five states acted within their rights when they rescinded approval.

If upheld after an expected appeal, the long-awaited ruling by U.S. District Judge Marion Callister effectively would kill the proposed 27th constitutional amendment, which would prohibit discrimination based on sex.

Callister's ruling came on a suit filed by Idaho and Arizona and three Washington state legislators after Congress voted in 1978 to move the ratification deadline from March 29, 1979, to June 30, 1982.

In Washington, D.C., Cathy Bonk, a spokeswoman for the National Organization for Women, a leading ERA advocate, said: "Our lawyers are here now. We will have no comment until we have had a chance to go over it."

Phyllis Schlafly, leader of the Stop ERA organization, called the move "a tremendous victory for women."

"It's a great victory for constitutional integrity and fairness and government by law instead of by demand of special interest groups," she said in a telephone interview from her home in Alton, Ill.

Since 1977

Sen. Jake Garn, R-Utah, who led the Senate fight against extension in 1978, lauded the decision.

"I said at the time that the extension was unfair and unconstitutional, and Judge Callister's ruling upholds that assessment. . . . The extension supporters preached fairness and justice but chose to ignore those principles in pushing for the extension."

The ERA requires approval by 38 states and no state has ratified it since Indiana became the 35th

Nebraskans: Opinion not final

An Idaho federal judge's opinion about the Equal Rights Amendment isn't the final answer on the subject, two Nebraska ERA supporters said Wednesday.

State Sen. Shirley Marsh of Lincoln said, "This is one decision, which certainly will have some effect, but it's not the U.S. Supreme Court." She said she hopes the matter will go before the nation's high court soon.

Idaho U.S. District Court Judge Marion Callister upheld the right of Idaho and other states, including Nebraska, to withdraw ratification of the amendment to the U.S. Constitution. He also said Congress did not have the authority to extend the ratification deadline.

Barbara Cameron, chairwoman of the Nebraska Coalition for Women, said women's groups will wait to see what happens on the national level and will continue to focus their ERA efforts on states that have not ratified the ERA.

If the amendment does not pass, she said,

women's groups probably will begin work on a state ERA this summer; if the national measure passes, they would begin work on implementing it in the state.

Mrs. Marsh said history supports those who say that states cannot ratify a constitutional amendment and later rescind their action.

She said Congress decided in 1868 and in 1870 that states that had approved the 14th and 15th amendments and later withdrew their ratification were to be counted as approving the measures.

A Lincolnite who opposes ERA, Twila Birdwell, said she agrees with the judge's decision that states should be allowed to rescind their approval.

"My personal conviction is that I don't think that it (the ERA) is the best for the nation," she said. She has not actively opposed it, she said, because she believes it has little chance of passage.

to do so in 1977.

Callister wrote that Congress, by a two-thirds vote of both houses, can set a reasonable time limit for states to act on ratification.

"When this time is set, it is binding on Congress and the states and it cannot be changed by Congress thereafter," the judge wrote.

Callister's ruling Wednesday could mean the death of the ERA because the five states that rescinded their ratification no longer can be counted among the 35 states that voted to ratify.

He said Idaho, Tennessee, Kentucky, South Dakota and Nebraska effectively nullified their ratification and may not be counted as ratifying states.

He also said the same would be true for any other states that properly certified to the General Services Administration their rescission.

'Debased'

"The basis for the Idaho legislators' claim of standing in this suit is that as participants in the ratification process, their individual votes in favor

of ratification for the seven-year time period, or for the rescission of the prior ratification, have been debased by the actions of the defendant (Congress) and a suit of this nature is proper to vindicate their vote," Callister wrote in his 72-page decision.

The judge ruled that the five states' votes for rescission were every bit as much a part of Congress' amendment rights under Article V of the Constitution as were their original votes to ratify.

"The plaintiffs (these states) have exercised their right to participate in the amendment process by voting in favor of ratification and at a subsequent time voting for rescission of that prior ratification," Callister wrote.

He said that Congress has no power to determine "the validity or invalidity of a properly certified ratification or rescission."

The proposed 27th constitutional amendment, passed by Congress in 1972, reads in full:

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex. Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article. This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification."

Opponents say the amendment has the potential of upsetting traditional family relationships and the role of women by, for example, making women eligible for military draft.

Congress never has accepted rescissions of a ratification vote. Lawyers for the government and NOW have said that Congress has absolute authority over amendment processes.

NOW lost an appeal before the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco to have Callister disqualified. NOW said Callister's former position as a high-ranking official in the Mormon Church is a conflict of interest.

Homemakers invited to YWCA convention

A convention for homemakers will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. April 24 at the Lincoln YWCA, 1432 N St.

"Paid employees get to attend conventions, but until now, there's never been one for the unpaid homemaker," said Barbara Cameron, volunteer with the Lincoln-Lancaster Commission on the Status of Women and YWCA program director.

The convention will feature a candlelight lunch, a dramatic reading from Ibsen's "A Doll's House," and workshops on property rights, self-esteem, families and health problems unique to homemakers, Ms. Cameron said.

Pre-registration for the convention is required by April 17. The \$8 fee includes lunch, and child care is available for \$2 per child. For more information, call the YWCA at 476-2802.

Need understanding

I am thankful that my family raised me with an open mind and taught me to place a value on justice and dignity for all people.

It has been very clear to me since the sexual orientation amendment was proposed where the injustice was and with whom I wanted to align myself.

One of the real joys of working for the amendment has been to be joined with a group of committed and gentle people who also see clearly that lesbians and gays deserve basic civil rights, equal treatment in the areas of housing, employment and public accommodations.

I know that many people have uneasy feelings about this amendment, genuine concern for how it will affect their lives and their community. I don't discount those emotions and hope individuals will take advantage of educational programs and earnest discussion with others, including lesbians and gays, to understand their feelings and to come

to a deeper understanding of this issue.

For some, that process will take a period of years. But we need to make a decision now to end discrimination against lesbians and gays in our community. Good workers should not be denied jobs, nor responsible tenants a place to live, on the basis of their sexual orientation.

In response to a question frequently asked me, I am not and have never been related to Paul Cameron.

Barbara Cameron

Lincoln

lincoln

Kiwanians choose officers

Gerald D. McCracken has been elected president of the Lincoln Center Kiwanis Club. Other new officers are: Howard H. Fletcher, president-elect; Kenneth B. Clark, vice president; G. Vincent Nelson, secretary-treasurer; Roland H. Tornblom, immediate past president. New board members, elected for three-year terms, are: Randall E. Dinsdale, Glenn D. Johnson, John F. Smeltzer and Lowell A. Vestal. Elected to the Kiwanis Foundation Board were: Joe C. Geist, Don F. Newville, Charles J. Probasco and Tornblom.

Cameron to head coalition

The Nebraska Coalition for Women elected Barbara Cameron of Lincoln its 1981-82 president. Other new officers are: Rosemary Machacek, Lincoln, vice president; Betsy Mulliken, Nickerson, secretary; Caroline Sedlacek, Omaha, treasurer; and Nancy Erickson of Lincoln, Virginia Walsh of Omaha and Lyn Waltemath of North Platte, legislative district chairwomen. At its annual meeting, the 270-member group passed a resolution reaffirming its support of religious and personal freedom in the matter of abortion and its opposition to various human life amendments and statutes pending in Congress.

NOW members elect 1986 officers

The Des Moines Chapter of the National Organization for Women elected 1986 officers at its annual meeting. Jean Classon of Des Moines was named coordinator; Phil Moffitt of Mitchellville was voted in as assistant coordinator; Betty Christensen of Urbandale was named secretary; and Noreen Arnold of Des Moines was picked as treasurer.

New committee chairmen and women also were elected. They are: Patricia Faulkner, finance, Patrice Sayre, membership, Merilee Johnson, newsletter, Barbara Cameron, media, Shelley Bain, reproductive rights and Phil Moffitt, legislative.

Connie MacLellan and Madith Peterson were selected as at-large members of the board of directors.

Trauma of teen pregnancy

I AM SHOCKED and saddened by the Urbandale and Lamoni incidents involving teen mothers and their babies. From my experience working with young women and especially young, pregnant women, I know how frequently they can feel isolated from their peers, family and community.

Despite increasing sexual activity among teens and more open depiction of sex on TV and in the movies, young women still lack accurate information about sex, pregnancy and birth control and often have had few frank conversations with supportive adults about sexual decision-making. Pressure from a vocal minority makes schools reluctant to deal with sexual information, even though a majority of the general public supports the school playing a role in family-life education.

Denial is also a factor which may have entered into these reactions. It is not unusual, at least initially, for young women and men to deny the consequences of sex. Once the woman becomes pregnant, she may deny the pregnancy right up to the birth. . . .

And where are the fathers of these babies? Their denial of responsibility leaves the young woman with the full emotional brunt of the pregnancy and birth and with no promise of support. . . . We must have compassion for the young women as well as for the babies who died.

Teens receive mixed messages about sex, pregnancy and early parenting. While teens are sure that "everyone else is doing it" they are not as convinced that they have the option to say no or that they have a responsibility to "love carefully."

Young women are encouraged to

carry to term and keep their babies, and while their decision may not bear the stigma of earlier times, it creates educational and economic barriers that may be lifetime disadvantages. These young women have fallen off the high wire of sexual risk-taking, and there is no safety net of support for themselves and their families. . . .

Adults who come in contact with young people have a responsibility to shed their denial about the level of sexual activity among teens and to have honest conversations with them about sex and sexual decision-making. Ideally, this conversation starts at an early age. The media should do their job of reporting with as little sensationalism as possible and address the complexity of the problem, including the societal roots and implications. The media also have a responsibility to share prevention strategies and build awareness about the array of local services that can help individuals facing such crises.

Over 3,800 teen women in Iowa gave birth in 1985. If those women mirror national statistics, only half will graduate from high school, 2 percent go on to college. They will earn 50 percent of the lifetime income of a woman who has children in her 20s. Their children are 3½ times as likely to be victims of child abuse.

At some time, nearly every one of these young women will feel isolated and desperate. How they will react, whom they will call, where they will find support depends on our ability to meet this challenge. — **Barbara Cameron**, executive director, **Young Women's Resource Center**, 416 12th St., Des Moines.

"He's remarkable. He's one of the most decent human beings I've met in political life," Lux said about Bill Clinton. "He's just a very warm, human person who cares passionately about people and about trying to make things better."