

VETERAN FEMINISTS OF AMERICA

Vol III No. 1

220 Doucet Rd. #225D Lafayette LA 70503

Spring 1996

1995 RECAP

175th Anniversary of Susan B
75th Anniversary of Suffrage
25th Anniversary of Strike for Equality
Beijing International Conference
Pioneers in Family Justice honored
VFA ends year celebrating Gloria
1996 30th Anniversary of NOW
Intergenerational Dialogue

NOW IS 30!

We will honor founders on
Thursday, November 21
BARNARD COLLEGE
New York City

The reception and ceremony will
take place from 5 to 9 PM. Barnard
will host an intergenerational dialogue
between VFA members and students.
Open to the community at large. Mark
your calendars. More news later.

AFTER BEIJING

WEDO Women's Environment &
Development Organization announces
plans: To continue to monitor whether
and how governments are fulfilling
their promises, to deepen its advocacy
work at national and international
levels, to move ahead with efforts for
UN reform and democratic
governance, to continue to facilitate
the Women's Caucus at forums, to
expose the ways corporations involved
in the "cancer industry" steer health
care toward profit-making rather than
the prevention of illness and disease.
Send your tax-deductible contribution to

WEDO 845 Third Ave,
15th floor NYNY 10022.

FIGHT THE RIGHT MARCH ..

San Francisco, April 14, 1996. To
show support for affirmative action,
reproductive freedom, civil rights for
all, and of action to end violence
against women. For more
information: National NOW Action
Center 202-331-0066, fax - 785-8576.
(VFA has endorsed the march. If you
march, carry a VFA banner.

What will we do for an encore?

several commented after the Bella smash. Perhaps we're getting bored with yearly reunions? But June 1 in Irvington, New York was wonderful. Gloria's celebration in December was another smash. In fact, every reunion since 1992 has been successful. It's obvious that many enjoy these annual get-togethers.

Most take place in New York because the large feminist community gives a great support system, so it's easier and cheaper all around. No one has complained --and many out of staters attend. Now that we're tax exempt we may receive contributions and grants. Then we could celebrate in Florida, California, wherever. Do you want a reunion in your area? Invite us, and we'll make it happen, grant or no.

VFA expenses are paid by dues, contribution and annual events. There is no profit. Last year was great in every way but financially, which explains why there was no newsletter. **Please send postage money** if you can't or don't want to pay dues. Send your bio, stories, articles for newsletters and archives. *Time it is a-passing.* Everything we have will eventually go to the Schlesinger library at Radcliffe.

Happy Spring!
Jacqui

A Torrent of ACCOLADES FOR GLORIA STEINEM

For Gloria Steinem it could have been *"This is Your Life. A parade of friends and colleagues showered her with praise at a tribute by the Veteran Feminists of America at the Seventh Regiment Armory on Park Avenue. Nadine Brozan, The New York Times.*

And it was - beginning when a band called Betty sang a paean to Gloria. Then Bella Abzug, Gloria's political mentor and friend, revved us up. *Gloria went with me to see that I got what I needed when I was diagnosed with breast cancer,* she told us. After giving a post-Beijing report Bella rushed off to an international meeting.

Our MC, television anchorwoman Carol Jenkins, Gloria's friend and covenmate, was gracious -- and patient -- as the list of speaking went on and on.. Smith College roommates Phyllis Rosser and Suki Terada began, followed by Barbara Nessim, New York roomie in the 60's (and creator of the Gloria sketch). Gracie Molina-Pick related shared experiences helping Cesar Chavez and the grape pickers, and organizing a Chicano feminist caucus. The story of MS came from Pat Carbine, Suzanne Levine, Joanne Edgar, Mary Thom and current editor Marcia Gillespie; the story of MS Foundation from Idelisse Malave and Marie Wilson. Later, Tara Tremmell talked about the *Take Your Daughter To Work* project.

Flo Kennedy's stories were of experiences with Gloria on the 70's college speaking circuit. Marlo Thomas's moving talk left many in tears. We heard stories from covenmates Marilyn French and Esther Broner and feminist cronies Phyllis Chesler, Kate Millet and Barbara Seaman. Gloria's help for American Indians with Ada Deer of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, was told by Lydia Bickford.

Several attested to Gloria's ability to awaken young women to feminism, from her assistant, Amy Richards to Rebecca Walker, of the young feminist organization The Second Wave. Sixteen -year-old Sandra Gooch's personal story illustrated Gloria's help for abused children (her intervention in a legal case had saved Sandra from a ruling that would have forced unsupervised visits with her sexually-abusive father).

Rebecca Adamson, who traveled with Gloria to Botswana in June to help the Bushmen, gave us a glimpse of the two seated next to "smoldering elephant dung."

After a comedic overview of Gloria's life, Patricia Burnett and Mary Jean Tully placed our medal about Gloria's neck and we showered her with carnations. Gloria's response to all this? She had to "pinch herself to see if she was alive." Then, in her usual generous way, she acknowledged all who'd helped with the event.

As we said in the program notes, *She's kind, considerate, soft and gentle, but packs a wallop. She's down to earth yet above it all. She's loving and fun to be with. She's there when we need her, a sister in the truest sense. It was a joy to honor her.*

EDITORIAL BOX

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Joan Michel - vpresident PR
Bede Urich - secretary/treas.

Editor/Publisher - JC
Co-editor Joan Michel

Veteran Feminists of America

is a tax-exempt organization for those who participated in the early feminist movement. Goals are to keep in touch through newsletters and reunions, to honor ourselves and our heroes and to act as keeper of the flame so that the original commitment to the ideals of feminism continues to reverberate and influence others.

Founded in 1992 by Jacqui Ceballos
with

NikkiBeare	SuzanneBenton
GeneBoyer	PatriciaBurnett
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GloriaSteinem	

CELEBRATING SUSAN B'S 175TH ON FEBRUARY 11, 1995 -

The Institute for Feminist Studies in San Francisco led a discussion on Civil Rights and Women Votes led by Ann Forfreedom, executive director of IFS and publisher of *The Wise Woman*. For info: 415-922-3837.

SEVENTY FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF SUFFRAGE CELEBRATED

Dallas, Tx - Dressed as suffragists the League of Women Voters celebrated with a luncheon. Later, the Women's Issues Committee with the local VFA and other organizations held a party in the park. Mayor Ron Kirk read a proclamation. *Virginia Whitehill*

Windsor, Ca. -The National Women's History Project published an issue on the history of suffrage. Get a copy by sending \$1.00 for one, \$5.00 for 25, *How Women Won the Vote*. NWHP 7738 Bell Rd, Windsor, Ca. 95492-8518, Fax 838-0478.

Montpelier, Vt - Several hundred women in white gowns and lavender sashes marched to the capitol and spent the afternoon partying with family and friends. There was music, dancing and political speeches.

Washington D.C. - Several thousands turned out for the march organized by the Women's History Project.

Sewall -Belmont House, home of the National Women's Party: It was open-house in Alice Paul's old stomping grounds next to the Senate Building, and the new statue of Sojourner Truth was on display. Allie Hixson continued celebrating Paul and the suffragists on the 28th, and gave an update of the ERA.

Aberdeen, S.D. Kicking off in her home town, Sally Roesch Wagner toured the country with her one-woman show. The historian-actor-veteran feminist performed as Stanton, Anthony and Gage. For info on tours: Barbara Dean, P.O.B. 851, Grand Haven, Mi. 49417, 919/846-5515. (check state)

Seneca Falls, NY - The Women's Rights National Historic Park held three exhibits from July to September. One of the artists was VFA Suzanne Benton whose beautiful bronze of Susan B. followed us to many early conventions.

Milwaukee, Wis. - Women gathered near the Old Milwaukee Public Museum and celebrated with music, auctions and stories of Wisconsin suffragists.

WE CELEBRATE SPRING and HONOR PIONEERS OF FAMILY JUSTICE

It was heartening to hear that an organization would concentrate on the area we once called marriage and divorce and the family, issues that affect more women than any other. How could we forget the women so tragically affected by divorce, abuse, child custody and those who pioneered in this neglected area? Betty Berry and her successors, all unsung heroes must be honored -- and what a good time get together with the Coalition women.

On a beautiful Saturday afternoon we drove up the Hudson River Parkway to Washington Irving's Sleepy Hollow village of Irvington to NCFJ's headquarters, the home of founder Monica Getz. We strolled the gardens of the Victorian estate and around the great rooms and lunched in the atrium ball room with its droopy gauzy decorations left over from the last wedding. (The estate is a favorite for wedding receptions, so ironically it seemed the appropriate setting for victims of marriages gone wrong).

Muriel Fox presented medals to Betty Berry, Elizabeth Spalding, Lilian Kozak, Noreen Connell, and posthumously to Edwin Dexter. Joan Michel and Jacqui Ceballos remembered Pat McQuillan and Millie Chatzinoff. Barbara Seaman, head of NCFJ's Advisory Board made the presentation to some of today's leaders.

This Saturday had its share of drama. Coalition members, already saddened by the suicide of one of their members who'd lost custody of her child, now witnessed the anguish of another. A young mother rushed in while we were eating, screaming that her child had been kidnapped by her ex. Two guests, a social worker and a lawyer, calmed her, promising that the following

continued on page 7

THE TURNING POINT - THE STRIKE THAT MADE US A MOVEMENT

1970 Year of the strike and great New York march

Jacqui Ceballos

I'm not an organization person! Betty Friedan protested when urged to start a civil rights group. Betty was an inspirator, able to get others to organize, and, with her leadership accomplish the impossible --- in that she had no equal. She and other great women organized NOW, and Betty set it on its course -- but it was a blessing that her term as president was over and she was free to inspire millions.

And it was another blessing when historian Betty Armstead of Florida wrote suggesting that she lead a nationwide strike on the 50th anniversary of suffrage. Betty took the idea to the national conference in March and proposed it to the new board. Except for regional directors Karen DeCrow and Shirley Bernard and a few others, the new officers weren't thrilled -- they had their own agenda. But after Betty's knockout farewell speech the media was.

"I propose that we accept the responsibility of mobilizing the chain reaction we have helped release for instant revolution against sexual oppression in this year. I propose that on August 26 we call a 24 hour general strike, a resistance both passive and active, of all women in America against the concrete conditions of their oppression. On that day, 50 years after the amendment that gave women the vote became part of the Constitution, I propose that the women who are doing the menial chores in the offices cover their typewriters and close their notebooks, and the telephone operators unplug the switchboards, the waitresses stop waiting, cleaning women stop cleaning, and everyone who is doing a job for which a man would be paid more -- stop -- every woman pegged assistant to, doing jobs for which men get the credit, stop. In every office, every laboratory, every school, all the women to whom we get word will spend the day discussing, analyzing the conditions which keep us from being all we might be. And if the condition that keeps us down is the lack of a child care center, we will bring our babies to the office that day and sit them on our bosses' laps. We do not know how many will join our day of abstention from so-called women's work, but I expect it will be millions. We will then present concrete demands to those who so far have made all the decisions.

And when it gets dark, instead of cooking dinner or making love, we will assemble, and we will carry candles symbolic of that flame of the passionate journey down through history - relit anew in every city - to converge the visible power of women at city hall -- at the political arena where the larger options of our life are decided. If men want to join us, fine. If politicians, political bosses, if mayors and governors wish to discuss our demands, fine. But we will define the terms of the dialogue. And by the time these 24 hours are ended, our revolution will be a fact.

Betty's sensational announcement made the headlines, but how would she pull it off? She'd said all women's organizations would take part, including those of the establishment. The YWCA and the League might be sponsors, but only the feminists would do the work. The impetus had to be in New York City, Betty's home and media center -- but most important, home of the largest active feminist community in the country. Could she count on them?

Her usually supportive force was the local NOW chapter. But the officers were at odds with her. The coalition of feminist groups she'd put together had disunited at the Spring Congress to Unite Women. Add to that the movement's anti-leadership stance. *Where would she get the troops?*

Fortunately there were women who went beyond party lines to further feminism. They were the first to respond to my call. Independents Anne Hazleton-Brady, Marjorie DeFazio, June Arnold, Jill Ward and Socialist Worker's Party women led by Ruth Ann Miller, working with Betty were responsible for our spectacular success in New York.

We met in a vacant loft in the Village and in no time had drawn up a master plan, formed committees to handle everything from fundraising to a great march on Fifth Avenue. By week's end we'd papered the city with flyers, put ads in the Village Voice, sent out press releases and recruited at every feminist meeting in town (and there were many!)

Soon everyone from the Y to Radical Lesbians had a representative in the Coalition, but most returned to their groups to work. They ran everything from a shabby office on Lexington Avenue. Betty raised money, talked to the press and worked her special magic from her Lincoln Center apartment.

Some of us joined her to meet with the mayor to request Fifth Avenue for the march. The Irish, Italians, Polish, and other groups have an annual Fifth Avenue parade, but the 50th anniversary of suffrage was not important enough to give us the whole avenue. He gave us half the avenue.

The Strike was the talk of the town. New women poured into feminist meetings. Everyone was fired up by the charged atmosphere. NOW's NY president Ivy Bottini had half-heartedly appointed me strike liason, but now she threw the whole chapter's weight behind it, with me as head of the strike committee.

My committee concentrated on attracting the thousands we'd boasted would march. The 1,500 or so card-carrying feminists would show, but how could we attract others? A poor showing would increase the ridicule we were constantly subject to, and hurt the movement.

A dramatic action would do it. But what? We'd demonstrated at Ms America pageant, sat-in at The Ladies Home Journal, demonstrated at the White House and the Capitol, thrown ajax down a toilet at Colgate-Palmolive's Park Avenue office, released white mice at a bridal fair - what could we do that had not already been done?

Take over the Statue of Liberty was the response of passionate and irrepressible young Patricia Lawrence. *The Puerto Ricans took it over last year. Ms Liberty is a woman, and -- she belongs to the citizens of New York. That's us. It's right that she demand liberation for our sex!*

We'd place banners on the top two balconies. We chose the 10th, the day the ERA was up for final vote by Congress. Ms Liberty's last take-over had caused an increase of the guards, so we must be secretive. Our press releases would give the hour as 9 o'clock. We'd be there at 8.

Pat and friend, * Marian visited Ms Liberty to measure the length and width and the wind factor and bought 100 feet of strong material. Spread out on the loft floor the women cut hemmed and painted in the lettering. Pat figured how many were needed to secure the banners, how many to fend off the guards and how to carry the 40 foot banners without arousing suspicion. Plans were made for a demonstration at Ms Liberty's feet. From Manhattan Betty Berry would wire Congress - *We came, we saw, we conquered...*

Eight o'clock on D-Day was a rare, spring like day when 50 or so women waited at the pier for the ferry. With shopping bags bulging we could have been on a picnic, but a closer look showed signs in the bags, not lunches. Pat and Marian walked like robots with the banners on broomsticks inside their jeans. All was going well -- until several men shouldering huge cameras showed up. That was it! We'd not get through the guard!

How can you do this? we asked. You'll ruin it. The guards will turn us away.
We'll handle it, they promised. Relax!

Sure enough the guards were satisfied that Ms Liberty was being filmed for a news story. (What news story wasn't important). It gave us time to begin the climb up the steep stairs. The ground force made like tourists at Ms Liberty's base. (Isn't it interesting that a woman, Emma Lazarus, wrote *Give me your tired, your poor, longing to be free*)? Except for the distant chopping of helicopters, all was quiet. It would be a piece of cake!

But suddenly the chopping was above us. CBS, NBC and ABC helicopters were circling Ms Liberty! We dashed madly up the winding staircase, the guards in close chase, and barely reached the balcony ahead of them. Fending them off was not easy but someone up there was helping, and in spite of a heavy wind the first banner was secured.

Women of the World Unite

Cheers came from below. The cameras captured it all. Our message would go out, but we worried that we'd not get the second banner up before being arrested. But in the flash of a second the guards halted. The mayor had sent a message, *Leave the women alone!* Up went the second banner

STRIKE FOR EQUALITY AUGUST 26

At Ms Liberty's base the women whipped out their signs and began chanting

What do we want? Freedom! When do we want it? Now!
ERA! ERA! ERA! TODAY!

We are your tired, your poor, yearning to be free.

We are the women, We demand equal rights!

Betty Berry and Mary Vasiliades sent our messages to Congress -- *We came, we saw, we conquered, and we won't leave until the ERA is passed!*

And the Whole world heard !

THE MARCH

I boarded the 59th Street bus to join the march, still handing out copies of the NOW YORK TIMES. Since 9 A.M. when we'd invaded THE TIMES' offices with *All the news that would give The Times fits*, I'd met with the editor, attended a meeting with Mayor Lindsey, demonstrated for childcare, staged a mock mass with Connie Comer, lunched with Betty and others at a male-only restaurant, placed a plaque of Susan B. Anthony at Times Square, rushed to a pro-abortion demo at St Patrick's, and consecrated Plaza Circle in preparation for a statue of Sojourner Truth.

It was a frazzled feminist who alit at 59th and 5th - afraid to look in fear of seeing a sad-looking bunch of women in the middle of the avenue. I couldn't believe what I saw. There were thousands! Not only women, but men, some pushing babies in strollers. The women were all ages, from young adults to suffragists in their 80's and 90's. The line seemed to stretch out forever.

March captains passed the word -- take the whole avenue! The Socialist Workers Party women were up in front ready to lead with the SWP banner but when the whistle blew Pat Lawrence and the MS Liberty battalion forged ahead of the Socialist banner and led us with..

WOMEN OF THE WORLD UNITE !

*anyone know her surname?

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Ignoring police barriers, we took to the streets like a river, oblivious to the blaring horns of drivers trapped on the cross streets. Surely we were over 50,000 ! March captains with bull horns urged us on with chants and songs . Women I'd never seen carried signs -- some stating our goals -- universal childcare, abortion on demand, equal opportunity, equal education, etc... others made unique statements

DON'T COOK DINNER! STARVE A RAT TODAY!!

END HUMAN SACRIFICE - DON'T GET MARRIED

ASK GOD, SHE WILL PROVIDE

WHO SAID GOD IS HE?

These truths are self-evident, that all WOMEN and men are created equal

I am not a broad, a chick, a tomato, a c---, I am Woman

FEMINISM IS A LESBIAN PLOT

We'll be equals or WOE to MAN !

To the startled faces of on-lookers and yells and insults from some men, we marched - not in neat rows in elegant white dresses as did our foremothers --but by twos, fours, bunches; in jeans and skirts, heels, sandals and tennis , walking, dancing, skipping, running, singing, chanting, shouting. We were white, black, brown, yellow . We were students, secretaries, waitresses, stewardesses, homemakers, (1970 nomenclature) writers, actors, executives--- in all our rich diversity we poured joyously down the avenue our numbers increasing as women joined from the sidelines.

Holding the huge banner with one hand, raising the other in a clinched fist Pat and our statue liberators led us triumphantly to 42nd Street and into Bryant Park and we covered the ground like a blanket. Twilight was deepening as the rally went on and on. Women representing every pro-woman faction spoke -- so many , and they spoke too long. But no one cared. Like creme de menthe after a too-rich feast we ingested it all. It was enough to digest the incredible realization

WE ARE A MOVEMENT NOW!

Where were you on August 26th , 1970?

I worked in the Strike office. On the day of the march I took photographs. Anne Hazlewood-Brady. Kinneunkport, Me. Anne's contribution was major. She not only plunked down the seed money, practically ran the office, she also took Ms Liberty's photo and wrote We took to the streets like a river. For postcards of Ms Liberty, send \$5.00 for 10 to VFA address.

We held a rally in Los Angeles. I dressed like our foremothers - long skirt, high collar, petticoat, narrow lace-up shoes, but minus a corset. What lions were these suffragists -- to fight in that getup for 75 years! I was interviewed on television. Jeanette Rankin called expressing her pleasure at our actions, but said we were "too ladylike". Shirley Bernard, Fullerton, Ca. (Shirley was NOW's first Western Regional Director).

A missionary then, I took advantage of a cheap charter flight to 'Europe to meet feminists. August 26 found me in Oslo . My suggestion to demonstrate in front of the U S Embassy was turned down because "everyone does that." Instead, we called a press conference. I read a statement and answered questions. Later I helped start groups in England, Ireland, Belgium, Holland, Germany . Jo Freeman Jo, now a Brooklyn resident, was a grad student at the University of Chicago and a founder and editor of the first newsletter, The Voice of the Women's Liberation Movement.

In my office on Fifth Avenue I heard someone say "the women are marching". "Oh, I said , perhaps I'll join them. There was a derogatory remark. "Now I know I will!" I said. I joined the swelling masses of women. It was so uplifting! That's when I became conscious of the purpose of the movement. Dell Williams. Dell organized the first women's sexuality conference and founded Eve's Garden, a woman's sexual boutique, 150 West 57 St, NYC 10021.

I was in Manhattan that sultry day, a twenty-something young married, and was instantly seized by the logic of feminism. I remember turning the corner of 57 Street with trepidation and seeing thousands of women waiting for the march to begin. We'd been authorized to have half of Fifth Avenue, but we spilled out and took it all. Bewildered -looking spectators stared at us, some cheered, some booed and kicked.

Jane Case Einbender

There was a rally in downtown Chicago. Shirley Chisholm was main speaker. Mary Jean Collins, head of the national office, insisted I give an invocation " to make us sound respectable." This was one of our flyers:

WOMEN STRIKE CHURCH*CHURCH WOMEN STRIKE

Do your own thing. Take over a church, Pray to God, She will help!

A religious service by women for women.

Honor religious women, Memorialize women martyrs.

Pray for reparations of the churches and synagogues.

Rededicate ourselves

Elizabeth Farians of Cincinnati was NOW's head of task force on Women and Religion

The real story of the Strike has never been told and those who made it happen are never credited. In the interest of history we have a moral obligation to record their stories. If you were a key figure in the planning, if you organized or took part in an action, especially in New York City, please write your memories and send to us. They will eventually be sent to the Schlesinger Library.

Whatever ever happened to ?

MORDICAI JANE POLLOCK ? The dynamic young professor added color to early NOW board meetings. Many have asked about her. Jane's sister, Clarice Pollock was at Bella's event. Jane wrote soon after.

In 1981 I left college teaching and embarked on a second career of technical translation and writing and am now working for a large computer manufacturer writing software books. To satisfy my soul I write historical fiction. I'm writing a second book that takes place during the French Revolution when there was an active feminist political movement, the first in history, I believe. The leader was guillotined.

Jane Pollock

LEOTA KORNS ? The co-founder of Durango NOW writes, *I still have my boots on, but can't possibly retire. After selling some properties I am back to writing and looking for a publisher for my feminist novel. Address: P.O. Box - 1617, Durango Co 81302- 1617.*

Anselma dell'Olio? Tall, dark and handsome, charismatic Anselma was an inspiring leader who wrote New York NOW's first newsletter, organized the motorcade and demonstration against Colgate Palmolive (when we poured Ajax down Kate Millett's sculptured toilet on Park Avenue), founded, directed and acted in The New Feminist Theatre.

In 1971 Anselma moved to Los Angeles to work with the Italian and USA film industry and later moved to Rome where today she continues her work as a journalist and television personality and shares her life her husband who is a member of the Italian parliament and television show host.

MEMBER NEWS

Brenda Feigen is now a literary agent . 10158 Hollow Glen Circle Bel Air, Ca. 90077 - 310-271-0606 Fax- 274-0503.

I've shared my adventures with you and now it seems important to share the other side of life as well. ... to my shock and surprise I was diagnosed with adenocarcinoma of the uterus. Surgery was performed, the cancer's gone and chemo treatment is over, so I'm at work again.

Suzanne Benton

Sculptor, painter, actor, writer Benton lives at 22 Donnelly Dr, Ridgefield, Ct 06877-5611

I am writing a biography of Gloria Steinem and looking for anecdotes and experiences shared with her. I'd appreciate any memories you'd like to share. Sydney Ladensohn, 6 Donnellan Rd, Scarsdale, NY 10583. Call collect, 914-723-3789 or E-Mail Sydstern @AOL.COM

Snipits from a recent conversation with Jo Ann Evansgardner: *It's cold outside, but I'm enjoying the warmth of the sun room in the house Gerry and I designed. Yes, we're still involved in local NOW . So are Phyllis Wetherby and my sister, Barbara EvansCrawford. We demonstrated in Harrisburg against the Welfare Bill. I'm writing my memoirs. .Gerry, Charlie Smeal and Phyllis Weatherby practically funded the movement over here. When you see Roxcy (Bolton) tell her I think of her everytime there's a hurricane.*

VFA members are planning to hold luncheon meetings and will brainstorm how to make VFA relevant to the community -- like mentoring young people and sponsoring feminist writing contests. Grace Welch , coordinator of Long Island VFA. To join them --516-348-7199.

Wisconsin NOW commemorated NOW's 30th at their annual Feminist of the Year event. Founders Dorothy Austin and Mary Eastwood attended. Gene Boyer was snowbirding in Florida.

Kathy Grady, founder of Brooklyn NOW and head of Mass, Inst. of behavioral Medicine was named Democrat of the Year in Longmeadow -- Not a big deal, she says, but unusual that a person as "radical" as I would be so honored.

We Celebrate Spring.....

continued from page 2

day, Sunday, they'd see a judge and she'd have her child back immediately. (They did, and the child was returned.)

HONORED JUNE 3

It was 28 years ago that Betty Blaisdell Berry embarked upon the most difficult and intense 10 years of her life. A charter member of New York NOW, appointed in 1968 to head the Marriage and Divorce Committee. Betty was a key figure in the nation's re-examination of marriage, divorce and family relations. As New York chapter coordinator she advocated, lobbied and demonstrated for easy accessibility of the laws concerning marriage, tax deductions for child-care expenses, compulsory financial disclosure in divorce, individual social security for women who work in the home, continued health insurance and social security benefits for divorced persons, equal division of property, training and vocational guidance, compulsory payroll deductions for child support.

Betty worked around the clock, visiting lawyers and law makers, writing bills, lobbying, and dealing on a personal level with desperate women on her committee. When she resigned as head of the NOW task force in 1973 her committee had attracted more members than all others together. Quietly unassuming, brilliant, and determined, Betty was patiently supportive to distraught committee members and taught them to turn their anger into action.

EDWIN DEXTER - 1906-1994 . In 1974 Berry and Ed Dexter began the Marriage and Divorce Newsletter, the first national clearinghouse for divorce in formation. A Rear Admiral, Ed had long been supportive of NOW, because, said Betty, *he had a great sense of fairness, and was especially effective as a liaison with bar associations.* He and Betty formed the Marriage and Divorce Press and introduced unpopular ideas to a subscription list of lawyers, legislators, the judiciary, mainstream legal publications and individuals.

MILLIE CHATZINOFF--19? -1973. Dynamic and brilliant, Millie knew more about divorce-case law than most attorneys. Head of the L.I. NOW marriage and divorce committee, she analyzed sticky problems under New York State laws, suggested remedies and had the material translated into legislative language.

She took sticky state laws and translated remedies into legislative lingo which became NOW's Responsible Divorce Reform Bill. It didn't pass, but because of it financial forms are now sold in stationary stores. She died of cancer, too soon.

PAT MCQUILLAN -1925-'74. Ex Marine, founder of Catholics for Free Choice, Pat was crowned Pope Joan on the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral. Unflagging in the face of terminal cancer, in 1974 she did a magnificent job of organizing and overseeing the spectacular first New York NOW conference on Marriage and Divorce, which in addition to a thousand hungry women, drew attorneys, judges, legislators, authors -- the establishment that is -- and played on the early evening news. This brought desperate women running in from the streets where they found workshops, panelists and a ray of hope. It would take years for the laws to get themselves in gear, but it was Pat who gave them the gas! We loved her incredible guts, we miss her beautiful spirit.

JUDITH YOUNGER -The associate professor at Hofstra University Law School in 1970 to '74 was an indispensable ally of the NOW committee. With the help of her students she provided the material for the brochure *Your Marriage, the Law and You* in New York State. Funded and published by the President's Council on Women and the United Presbyterian Church thousands of copies were made available to women. In a revised and expanded form Younger's concept became a major project for the Commission on the Status of the Homemaker. Younger continued writing and speaking on the subject, later as Professor of Law at Syracuse and Cornell and today at

the University of Michigan, where she is Professor of Family Law.

ELIZABETH SPALDING entered the scene from Greenwich, Ct. where she'd fought her own divorce battles. All this while leading the NOW chapter she'd helped found, attending Yale to finish the education she'd interrupted to raise six children and helping Berry on the national task force. Her main concern was child support. She succeeded Betty as coordinator in 1973. Elizabeth worked on many issues, and was active in local and national politics. A permanent member of the Commission on the Status of Women, on the Homemaker's Committee of the National Commission of International Women's Year today she is president of the NOW chapter in her new home town, Hartford. Bronx born, Manhattan bred, the LILIAN KOZAK grew up during the depression exposed to socialist philosophy, union organization, the civil and anti-war movements. Her college professor had told her "women don't belong in accounting" but she formed her own accounting business. Thrown into the whirlpool of divorce litigation and finding her knowledge of business and law useless, she was propelled by an obsession for justice, and the movement received another leader. She chaired NOW's Domestic Relations Task Force and fought off revisions to the Equitable Divorce Bill, the Preferential Joint Custody bill, had pre-divorce standards of living considered in Domestic Relations issues, was a founder of the Coalition on Women's Legal Issues (COWL) and started a career as an investigative accountant in divorce cases. Lil Kozak selflessly shares her knowledge with women in the throes of divorce.

NOREEN CONNELL was born in Mexico City and spent her youth in 12 countries. Noreen is a "generalist", working in all areas, but her background in labor unions has given her a broad concept of how the class system ties into inequities against women. Noreen worked on women's issues in college, where she published an article on childcare and co-edited the first sourcebook for women. She was president of the



VFA honorees - top L to R
Catherine East & dr Betsy 5/95
Flo Kennedy 12/95 (w/Diane
Abrams & Emily Goodman)
Hermine Tobolowsky, Ida Davidoff
Evelyn Cunningham Betty Friedan
Toini Carebillo, Virginia Allen 5/94
Lillian Kozak 6/95 (Muriel Fox in bg)
Martha Griffiths Dorothy Heener
(w/Patricia Burnett). Gene Boyer
5/94. Elizabeth Spelding. Betty
Berry 6/95. Belle Abzug 12/94
(w/Virginia Whitehill Gloria
Steinem (w/Maura McNiel) 12/95

New York Women's Liberation Center in 1975, it's representative to the White House Conference on Families and president of the City and State New York NOW. Noreen is a strong supporter of the Coalition for Family Justice. *If you're going to honor us, you have to honor Noreen, NCFJ told us. She's indispensable.*"

As author of the *Women in Divorce Report--Lawyers, Ethics, Fees and Fairness*, KAREN WINNER was the force behind the public hearings and sweeping reforms of 1993, which resulted in New York State mandate that her informative "statement of clients' rights be read whenever contracting with an attorney. It was while working with public advocate Green that she wrote this report that threatened both their careers.

Winner experienced her parents divorce -- and learned about the manipulation of women and the hypocrisy of the justice system as she saw her mother victimized, bullied and oppressed, and realized that all women in this situation are treated this way. Her book, *The Abuse of Women by Their Divorce Attorneys*, is published by John Wiley.

PUBLIC SERVANTS ALSO HONORED

MARK GREEN - A Public Advocate, Green encouraged Winner's project. As New York's Commissioner of Consumer Affairs he challenged the way divorce law and lawyers discriminate against women. "He's not threatened or intimidated, says Karen, and he uses his power to push issues that help women."

JERRY NADLER represented a Manhattan district in the State Assembly where he authored much of the State's body of law on child support, domestic violence and daycare. He was the force behind the landmark Child Support Standards Act. Now a congressman, he's initiated efforts to gain economic security for children and women in divorce.

WHITNEY NORTH SEYMOUR JR.'s interest in family justice began when a close friend persuaded the "Abe Lincoln" type lawyer to hear the Getz case, though he didn't handle divorces. Shocked on

learning of the legal atrocities to women and children, he's become an powerful advocate for legal reform. **GLORIA JACOBS** quickly became aware of what was happening to economically deprived women facing an unresponsive system. On learning about the battle over equitable property distribution, in 1979 Jacobs became involved with NOW, the only organization opposing the proposed law, which would have watered down full disclosure of assets. In 1984, with other attorneys and Icohort Kozak, she formed the ad hoc Coalition on Women's Legal Issues, COWL, which would oversee pending legislation and gauge it's affect on women. She's been involved with the National Coalition for Family Justice since its inception. **HELEN WEINSTEIN**, an Assemblywoman, established a permanent funding source for domestic violence shelters and for guidelines for batterer's programs. In 1994 she sponsored the landmark legislation - the Family Protection and Domestic Violence Act, which improves judicial and police response to victims, orders mandated arrest for family offense, longer orders of protection and training of police, judges and other law enforcement persons.

MONICA GETZ'S life reads like a Hollywood script. As a student at Georgetown College she met the young jazz musician, Stan Getz and invited him to Sweden to cure his drug habit under the guidance of a renowned physician, her father. They were married and she raised his 3 children and 2 of their own, while helping with his career. Getz was soon on an another drug, alcohol. Monica persuaded him to enter a rehab center and nursed him to health. For awhile life was good -- until he was back on heavy drugs. Rather than go to rehab he found a lawyer who advised him to divorce Monica so she could not commit him. When Stan died not long afterwards of cancer, Monica was at his side. His death left a financial mess and litigation became a nightmare round of lawyers, judges, advisors, courts -- until she found Whitney North Seymour Jr who was able to settle her case. While on one of those

rounds she met two women, all thinking their case unique. Thus was born the Coalition for Family Justice.

The NCFJ has sensitized state assemblies, raised consciousness and is a support system for victims of divorce. Visit the offices (in her home) during the week and you'll hear the hum of computers, copiers, printers, telephones and fax machine as volunteers counsel, recruit, plan fundraising, lobbying excursions and meetings. Go there during an NCFJ party and you'll be greeted by warmth by music, flowers, candlelight, the aroma of good food and the laughter of children.

We encourage members to help the NCFJ with contributions, publicity, organizing, whatever. 821 Broadway, Irvington, New York 10533. Ph- 914-591-5753, FAX- 591-6981.

IN MEMORY

HERMINE TOBOLOWSKY who came to Washington in May 1994 in a wheelchair to receive the VFA medal of honor, died last July in Dallas of complications from diabetes. A lawyer, she was responsible for the passage of an Equal Rights Amendment in Texas. "A mighty oak has fallen," said Virginia Whitehill.

MAGGIE KUHN founder of the Grey Panthers, whose activism for older women in no way repressed her tremendous joy of life, died in April of '95, age 87.

MARY SCOTT WELCH, Scotty - writer, editor, former NOW officer, died of cancer in New York at age 75. Author of Networking, the Great New Way for Women to Get Ahead, she was published in Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, Reader's Digest, was an editor at Look and Pageant magazines and editor in chief of Homemaker's Digest. Scotty was a great help in the early organization of the VFA.

VIVECA LINDFORS -The Swedish actor, New York resident performed her one-woman show at NOW's 1972 convention in Washington. No news of when and how she died,

YOU MUST REMEMBER THIS....

Antonia Blackmon

The best memories are born of emotion. As mine are of the late 60's, the early '70's.

- * Fascination when I first met Ti-Grace at the way she outlined her eyes like fly-away wings; then later, exhilaration as we shouted our feminist manifesto into a bitter winter wind that whirled us up 16th Street in Washington.
- * Screams when Marguerite Rawalt kept referring to us as "girls" at the Madison, Wisconsin board meeting. We held the first consciousness-raising session on the spot.
- * Curiosity at the respect construction workers across the street showed us as we picketed EEOC headquarters for the first time. Some joined us during lunch hour,
- * Thrill when finally the WASHINGTON POST printed an article on NOW -- then anger at discovering they stuck it on the obit page.
- * Helpless laughter when the Public Relations Society of America, at my suggestion, invited EEOC attorney Sunny Pressman (Fuentes) to speak about women's rights at their luncheon, telling her to come in the back door; the ArmyNavy Club was men-only. (she wouldn't go, and naturally I wasn't re-elected to the PRSA board).
- * Queasiness as a congressman groped my thigh while I lobbied him to support the ERA. (I was afraid how far I'd let him go to win his vote).
- * Commitment as we paraded in the Mother's Day march through burnt-out neighborhoods after the riots that followed Dr. King's assassination, pausing sometimes to pose for rain-coated government agents with their clipboards and cameras.
- * Distaste as I read the call for NOW to join the American Communist Party -- then amusement when I saw it was signed by the head of the Women's Auxiliary.
- * Exhaustion from laboring all day in Mary Eastwood's apartment with a bunch of brainy lawyers over an amicus curiae brief.
- * Shock when our first national office was broken into and files scattered, obviously photographed.
- * Sheer bliss when the first name I drew from the barrel of anti-ERA senators' names during my speech at our first Lafayette Park International Women's Day demonstration was Teddy Kennedy's.
- * Anger when first our office phone, then later my home phone was tapped. And much pride when, as a result, my 11-year old daughter asked if she could join NOW (with money she'd saved from her allowance).
- * Joy when Martha Griffiths brilliantly worked the ERA through passage on the House floor. Disgust when, in the executive gallery consummate democrat Perle Mesta and Gladys O'Donnell, president of the National Republican Clubs leaned across me to cry in each other's arms.

Founding president of NOW's DC chapter, Antonia, (Barbara Ireton) served on the national board, organized first NOW press conference in DC, helped form chapters throughout the country, and gave her all from 1966-71. She now lives in Pelham, NY.

BEIJING The 4th World Conference on Women last September was the largest meeting ever convened under UN auspices, with 17,000 registrants, including 5,000 delegates from 189 States and European Union, 4,000 representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and over 3,000 media representatives. The NGO Forum on Women held in Huairou drew nearly 30,000.

You've read reports -- Betty was there, Bella was all over the place, (Bob Dole felt sorry for the Chinese, having Bella running around China." Hilary Clinton's address to the Assembly drew praise from the NEW YORK TIMES "Addressing those who imagine it is somehow possible to uphold "family values" without addressing women's rights, she reminded the conference that by helping to "bring new dignity and respect to women and girls all over the world, it can bring new strength and stability to families as well."

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO?

Barbara Kevles? -- One of the Grove Press 9 - the journalist was doing a profile on Ti-Grace Atkinson and with her and others at the "take-over" of Grove Press in 1969 protesting pornography in the "radical rag". They were arrested for felonies (later dropped), strip-searched and spent the night in jail.

Barbara attended an informal talk I gave to 20 VFA members in Dallas (invited by Virginia Whitehill). She's lived in Dallas since 1992, looks like I remember her in 1969! and says "I'm doing the same old thing -- writing and teaching. Barbara can be reached at POB 65778-75016-5778,

Jacqui

FOUND Prescription glasses in brown leather case on podium at Gloria event. Call/Fax 318-984-3599

MEN IN THE MOVEMENT

Often maligned, discredited, forgotten - but with us through thick and thin. Shep Aronson, James Clapp, Gerald EvansGardner, Jim Robson, Charles Smeal, Frank Welch. Please add to this list. Send names and bios, comments, etc. to VFA

BOOK SHELF

Patriarchy, Notes of an Expert Witness - Phyllis Chesler - A collection of essays about mostly male power. Common Courage

Drinking the Rain - Alex Kates Shulman. On self-sufficiency and freedom after fifty, this is the latest by the author of *Memoirs of a Prom Queen*. Farrar Straus Giroux.

Women: A Feminist Perspective -5th edition Jo Freeman..

Broken Patterns: Professional Women and the Quest for a New Feminist Identity - Anita Harris . Award-winning journalist writes about a group of women in male-dominated professions who chose their careers largely because they didn't want to emulate their mothers. Harris discovered they looked to their grandmothers (heirs to the suffragist movement) as role-models, rather than to their mothers, the products of the post-war push to domesticity.

The Education of A Woman- The Life of Gloria Steinem -- Carolyn Heilbrun, former Columbia University English professor has been criticized for writing a hagiography - life of a saint. The book is hard on NOW, middle-class feminists and Betty Friedan, but read it for a wonderful overview of Gloria's service to humanity and fascinating life

The Sisterhood - Marcia Cohen's history of the early movement is a must. With a few exceptions it is an accurate and exciting account . (Some who were there, including yours truly, say a few important people and their views are missing.) Cohen traces the lives of Betty, Kate , Gloria and Germaine from childhood to the movement. Watch for an updated version. Simon and Schuster.

Winning the Chemo Battle _Joyce Slayton Mitchell -- author of *I Can Be Anything* , Mitchell's journal of her second bout with cancer has a lot of good advice for all cancer patients. The book is a rediscovery of the joys of living and has a message for everyone. Joyce Mitchell formerly of Vermont, is Director of Nightingale Bamford, a New York.

True Colors -- An Artist's Journey from Beauty Queen to Feminist - Patricia Hill Burnett. The founder of Michigan NOW and head of the International Committee in the '70's, Patricia's fascinating life is told with humor and a dose of conventional wisdom . Her joyous spirit is contagious. Momentum Books, Ltd.

Ann ForFreedom announces volume 15 of *The Wise Woman*. The topic is Women Suffrage. Ann started WW in 1970 with Varda Mannell in Los Angeles. For info on WW - 2441 Cordova St., Oakland, Ca 94602.

A New Prescription for Women's Health, Getting the Best Medical Care in a Man's World - Bernadine Healy, M.D. is Dean of Ohio State University's College of Medicine and former director of the National Institute of Health.

The Republican War Against Women - An Insider's Report from Behind the Lines - Tanya Melich. Bantam.

FAILURE IS IMPOSSIBLE -Susan B. Anthony, *In Her Own Words*. Times Books. Lynn Sherr allows Susan to speak for herself through her diary, notes, letters, quotes. What a great woman! Simple, down-to-earth, practical, kind, generous, modest, caring, a brilliant organizer and speaker -- and determined, indomitable, *the dominant mind that guided the destinies of the greatest women's movement of the century, perhaps of all time*. You've read it before . Read it again . Give it as a gift to a young one.

Meg Bowman received a grant from TheThanks Be to Grandmother Winifred Foundation to write a collection of second wave writings entitled *Women's Words That Changed the World*. Send \$2.00 for a copy to Hot Flash Press, POB 21506, San Jose, Ca 95151.

The Amazon Chronicles - an historical novel by Jane E.M. Robinson (Jane Pollock) A saga about the ancient Amazons - their power struggles, jealousies, love triangles, betrayals. Available at women's book stores and the publisher, Clothespin Fever Press 1-800-231-8624.

The Dialectics of Sex by Shulie Firestone has been reissued. Incredible!

What's in a name?

Apparently, to feminists, a lot. Many changed theirs, dropping father's, husband's: Nola Similack of Syracuse long ago became Nola Claire and now lives in Tempe, Az. Using mother's name: Kathy Amatnick is Kathy Sarachild (today living in Florida). Joining father's and husband's: Jo Ann EvansGardner of Pittsburgh. Taking a new name: Elizabeth Raintree of Portland was Ellen Morgan of Princeton; Antonia Blackmon of Pelham, NY was Barbara Ireton of Washington, DC. Then there are Betsy Warrior of Oakley, Laura X of Boston and Ann Forfreedom of Berkeley. Who knows what is on their birth certificates. Ellen Cooperperson, nee Cooperman, of Long Island took her case to court. After a two year battle the judge denied her request and the story became national news. She later won.

VIDEOS AVAILABLE - May, 1993 Catherine East event; May '94 in D.C. - Betty, Martha, Toni, Gene, Dorothy, others; June, '95 at Shadowbrook; December '95 for Bella. Unedited. In spite of poor lighting and shaky camera all have some wonderful scenes. \$30.00 a copy. VFA office address.

NEW WOMEN'S HISTORY LIBRARY
New York University Library is starting a History of Women section. Taminment InstituteLibrary, Robert F Wagner Labor Archives

SHARE YOUR STORY What did you do in the movement? How has it affected your life? What are you doing now? What would you like to see done? Send articles, letters, photos to VFA address. Everything you send will be in the Schlesinger Library through this newsletter.

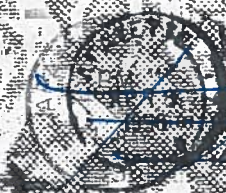
We took to the streets like a river
flowing into history. Women.
Women who have borne the world's children.
Women who are jailed for whoring and for loving.
Women who will not be fouled, fooled or frightened anymore.
Women from the Grecian urn; truth and beauty made flesh.
Women from the sounds of silence
from the sun's first beam
from the wind's hot advances
and the sea's murmuring.

Women out of the earth's very beginning
arose and walked arm in arm
past stunned and jeering faces,
and we will not know today
nor yet in the blue tomorrow's wake
what churned behind those faces.
It was enough, being a woman, to be there.
Demanding, by our numbers,
our rightful place
to make a better world.

Ann Hadenwood Brady

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO VFA ARE NOW TAX DEDUCTIBLE! HELP US RECORD OUR HISTORY!

VETERAN FEMINISTS OF AMERICA
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