

"IoWoman"

An Occasionally Printed Newsletter

from the

Iowa Commission on the Status of Women

Volume II, Number 7

December, 1972

Commission Meeting

The new Iowa Commission on the Status of Women met November 11th. This was the first meeting as a statutory commission. Twenty-two of the twenty-four seats have been filled and the remaining appointments are expected to be made by the Governor after the Legislature convenes in January.

Iowa Civil Rights
Commission

The Commission on the Status of Women went on record in support of increased funding for the Iowa Civil Rights Commission. Concern was expressed that, due to insufficient staffing, there is not adequate investigation of complaints of sex discrimination at the present time. The Commission urged that at least one investigator be exclusively assigned to the investigation and prosecution of sex discrimination complaints filed under the Iowa Civil Rights Law. The desirability of the employment of women in administrative and investigative capacities in the Civil Rights Commission was also noted.

"Talent Bank"
Roster

The "talent bank" roster has now grown to include approximately 300 women. This information provides names of women qualified for decision-making roles in state government positions. Ms. Betty Durden, who is in charge of compiling the roster, stated that she is now receiving inquiries from private business as well as the public sector. Many of these inquirers would like to receive applications from qualified women for openings in their businesses.

These 300 names are just a beginning. If you know of qualified women who are not yet listed, pass the information to them. Additional forms may be acquired from:

Ms. Betty Durden
Center for Continuing Education
Drake University
Des Moines, Iowa 50311

* Commission Budget

The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women was created by Legislative action during the closing days of the 64th General Assembly. However, no funding legislation accompanied the creation of this statutory commission. Previously the Commission had existed as the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women and funding had been provided from the Governor's discretionary fund.

The Commission has prepared and submitted a tentative budget for the coming biennium.

	<u>1973-74</u>	<u>1974-75</u>
Salaries	\$20,273.00	\$21,560.00
Travel	4,990.00	5,275.00
Office Supplies and Expense	2,300.00	2,350.00
Printing & Binding	600.00	600.00
Telephone & Telegraph	900.00	900.00
Equipment	1,630.00	200.00
Other (research, dues, education services)	<u>1,125.00</u>	<u>1,125.00</u>
Total Disposition	\$31,818.00	\$32,010.00

The proposed budget would enable the Commission to:

- establish an office
- hire a full-time executive director and a full-time secretary
- continue to publish IoWoman
- belong to the Interstate Association of Commissions on the Status of Women
- conduct conferences and workshops
- initiate research and compile completed research.

Executive Director Needed

The employment of a full-time executive director is most pressing. The director would:

- supervise and conduct research on the position of women in Iowa today
- work with local commissions and councils on the Status of Women and assist in the formation of such commissions and councils where none presently exist
- work with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission in preventing and eliminating discrimination in employment
- work with members of the Iowa General Assembly in securing the drafting, informative debate, and passage of legislation needed to meet the needs of Iowa women
- work with other state agencies and departments, such as Merit Employment and the Department of Public Instruction
- work with companies, trade and vocational schools, area colleges, private colleges and universities, and state universities, encouraging them to make available to women counseling and educational programs designed to enable women to enter or re-enter the employment field.

Next Commission Meeting

The Commission on the Status of Women will be meeting again December 13th to establish legislative priorities for the coming session. Primary consideration will be given to the following areas: abortion, equal pay, funding of the Commission, additional appropriations for the Civil Rights Commission, penal reform, tax revision, and day care. The Commission will also be engaged in setting non-legislative goals. Discussion will center around school athletics, career education, civil rights volunteers, media treatment of women, services to women, and credit discrimination.

Women Legislators Elected

Of the 24 women candidates for the state legislature in November, 10 were elected:

Representative Elizabeth R. Miller (Marshalltown) elected to the Ser
Ms. Joan Orr (Grinnell) elected to the Senate

Senator Minnette Doderer (Iowa City), re-elected
Representative Elizabeth Shaw (Davenport) elected to the Senate
Representative Joan Lipsky (Cedar Rapids), re-elected
Ms. Mary Therese O'Halloran (Cedar Falls) elected to the House
Representative Sonja Egenes (Story City), re-elected
Ms. Emma Jean Kiser (Davenport) elected to the House
Ms. Mattie Harper (West Grove) elected to the House
Representative Lillian McElroy (Percival), re-elected

Abortion: Letters

Abortion will again be a prime target in the upcoming General Assembly. Now is an excellent time to contact your legislators and let them know your feelings. Below is a sample letter. We are not suggesting you use it verbatim but include it to give you an idea of how you might proceed. Before January 8th, write to them at their home addresses. After January 8th, the day the 65th General Assembly convenes, write to them at:

The Honorable _____
State Capitol Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Dear Senator, Representative, Mr., or Ms.:

I urge you to support a repeal of Iowa's present abortion law in favor of one that makes abortion a medical matter and that leaves the decision to have an abortion up to the pregnant woman and her doctor.

Respectfully,
(include your name
AND ADDRESS)

Abortion: Volunteers

More involvement than letter writing by many women across the state will be needed to insure the repeal or reform of the state's abortion law this year. Iowan's for Medical Control of Abortion is looking for volunteers to speak, lobby, or help in mailing activities. If you can possibly give the time, write or call:

Mrs. Allan Lehl
535 Country Club Blvd.
Des Moines, Iowa 50312
(Telephone: 515-277-1957)

Maternity Leave
and Sick Pay

The Iowa Civil Rights Commission has ruled that the Johnston School Board was guilty of sex discrimination in refusing to reemploy a teacher this fall because she was expecting to give birth in October. The Commission ordered that the teacher be reinstated, given back pay for the fall semester, and given sick pay for the period of time she would have been physically unable to teach because of the birth of her baby. If the school board does not challenge the ruling within thirty days, the Commission's decision is binding. It is expected that the Johnston School Board will challenge the Commission's ruling. So far such rulings have not been tested in the Iowa courts.

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission recently issued guidelines ordering employers to treat disabilities relating to pregnancy as a type of "sickness". According to Henry Galbreth of the State Department of Public Instruction, none of the 452 school districts in the state grants sick pay for maternity leave.

Women Aware
Conference

The Women Aware Conference at Iowa City December 1-2 produced a raft of resolutions and recommendations among which was a call for appropriate funding for the State Commission on the Status of Women. The conference, attended by more than 200 women, culminated with five Action/Resolution Workshops and a general session where the resolutions were presented, revised, and acted upon. Among the other noteworthy resolutions were those calling for the following:

- repeal of Iowa's present abortion statutes and affirmation that "it is the right of a woman, regardless of her marital status or financial dependency, to choose if she does or does not want an abortion"
- adequate financing of the Civil Rights Commission
- an end to "forced sterilization and abortion" programs by the government
- elimination of sex bias in education, especially in career education, textbooks, and counseling
- provision of child care for students and school personnel at all levels of education
- implementation of "affirmative action programs" to eliminate sexual discrimination in employment at all institutions of higher education
- passage of a collective bargaining bill for all public employees in Iowa
- increased union membership by women
- recognition in hiring practices by employers of years of "home management" and unpaid voluntary work in the community
- family care leave for both sexes in case of family emergencies
- recognition of "the status of health professions other than doctoring" and an increase in the number of women and minority groups in "prestigious and power positions" in the health professions
- a "mobile counseling and information center" which would focus on employment counseling for women of all ages, assist women seeking to start new businesses and provide an avenue to file reports of alleged discrimination.

Sioux City Council

When two seats on the Sioux City Council were vacated this fall due to the election of council members to other positions, a group of women in the area organized to bring the names of qualified women to the attention of the remaining Council. The credentials of several women were given to the Mayor, numerous phone calls were made, and letters were sent to council members, by both men and women, in behalf of the women candidates.

KCAU-TV in Sioux City also ran an editorial comment urging consideration of women to fill the unexpired terms. As it stated in conclusion, "With 53 per cent of Sioux City's population being female it would take a very narrow-minded person to deny the fact that there are dozens of highly qualified women capable of serving and who would no doubt do an admirable job as well." As of press time, no appointments have been made.

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(Some of the material in this issue was submitted by Cris Wilson,
Jo Soper, Rochelle Stefanson, and Betty Durden)

Women's Studies

Courses devoted to the study of women and related topics appear to be spreading at some of the institutions of higher learning in the state. At Morningside College in Sioux City Ms. Rochelle Stefanson is teaching, through the Sociology Department, a three-hour course entitled "Perspectives: Women's Liberation". The course is divided into the following units: Myths about Women; Exploring the New Feminism; The Question of Spheres; Herstory; Women as a Minority Group; The World of Work; and Women in the Arts. Ms. Stefanson requires that her students "write a paper and do field research investigations to prove or disprove the library work they have done on any particular topic". "Pins and Needles", a column that appears in the weekly college paper on the subject of women's issues, has also developed out of this course.

Ho! Ho! Ho!

Iowa won't have a woman Santa Claus this year. Ms. Cynthia Larson applied for a job as Santa Claus in Ames. She was turned down but was offered a position as a Santa's Helper. Ms. Larson has filed a complaint with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission. Subsequently a firm in Syracuse, New York, learned of Ms. Larson's interest in being Santa and hired her for the season.

Women's Lobby, Inc.

A group of women who initially organized in 1970 to lobby for the Equal Rights Amendment have announced that they have incorporated and registered as Women's Lobby, Inc. The primary goal of the group will be child care legislation. They also plan to work for pension plans for women, social security reform, a livable minimum wage for domestic workers, tax reform, the National Abortion Rights Act, welfare reform, health care for women, the Women's Education Act, and reform of credit laws. They will continue their efforts to secure ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in the state legislatures.

The group plans soon to have regional correspondents and about 40 state correspondents and, within a few years, foresees correspondents in every congressional district to lobby members of Congress. Plans have also been made to publish Women's Lobby Legislative Quarterly and to send out Women's Lobby Alerts when they feel specific pressure is needed.

Task Force

The Ford Foundation has consigned \$75,000 to the Task Force on Equal Opportunity for Women to examine and identify potential directions for foundation action in equal opportunity for women.

IoWoman

Since the Commission on the Status of Women has not yet been funded by the legislature, the continued distribution of IoWoman has been made temporarily possible by a grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Ms. Cris Wilson, who originated the publication and continued as editor until November, 1972, has resigned her post to become Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women. In her new position she will continue to contribute greatly to the production of this newsletter. The new editor is Ms. Clay Morain, a member of the Commission.

We are beginning to receive news items and leads on stories from a number of readers. This is most helpful in broadening coverage and helping to make this newsletter truly the IOWA-woman. If you know of any pertinent local events and activities or potential sources of information, please send them to:

At present, federal civil rights investigators handle 40 cases at a time; Iowa investigators handle 150. More investigators are needed. More complaints are now coming from outside the large Iowa cities, so staff travel time and costs have increased. At present there are 20 cases ready for public hearings; it can cost from \$1500 to \$2500 to conduct a two-day hearing. The Commission also has 500 open cases presently. In 1969 complaints were processed to the hearing stage within 60 days. It now takes eight months or more because of the lack of manpower.

Find out how legislative candidates in your area stand on additional funding for the Civil Rights Commission and support those who favor increased appropriations this biennium. Write to Governor Robert Ray urging him to recommend an increase in the Civil Rights Commission's appropriation; he will be making his budget recommendations in mid-November. (The budget developed at the mid-November hearings will be basis for the legislature's consideration of appropriations, regardless of who is governor in January.)

Child Care

We need to update the Iowa statutes regarding child care operations in order to make sure that Iowa facilities can qualify for federal funds when they become available. High standards for child care are important if the goal of making available quality care to every child in need of care outside the home is to be attained.

Maternity Leave

The Attorney General's office and the Employment Security Commission have offered rulings on maternity leave since the 64th General Assembly adjourned (IoWoman, Sept., 1972), but these have yet to be tested. There are varying opinions among people in state government as to whether or not legislation is needed in this area. The Commission on the Status of Women will be making further study.

Credit

Difficulties in credit and banking are a problem for many women. Although there is no Iowa or federal law that specifically allows discrimination on the basis of sex by the financial world, neither is there any law that prevent such discrimination. Failure to permit women to buy cars or homes, or to receive credit at major department stores in their own name is ridiculous. Also needing change is the practice of not considering or considering only partially the wife's salary when a husband and wife apply for a loan. Eastern banks have said they are less likely to give credit to a woman because (1) women are more likely to quit work, and (2) women earn less than men. Congresswoman Bella Abzug has introduced three bills that would prohibit discrimination by federally insured banks, savings and loan associations, and credit unions. Iowa must have similar legislation proposed and acted into law.

Inheritance
Tax

Along these same lines are found problems for women in estate planning and inheritance taxation. This entire area is scheduled for study by the General Assembly as it surveys the whole area of taxation and tax reform. Women must have input into the changes that are made.

Career
Education

Career Education in public schools is about to become an integral part of state curriculum requirements, K-12. This is a much needed part of every child's education. However, women must take part in the planning and implementation of this program or it will result in further sex role stereotyping. The recent Department of Public Instruction publication shows pictures of female students typing and cutting hair, and boys working in carpentry. The accompanying story told of a pilot summer program in which girls learned welding and boys, sewing -- but a girl quoted in the article was "giggling" about welding. We must be sure that career education allows - in fact, urges - all students to explore all types of vocations, regardless of the sex of the student.

By the way, another useful and excellent booklet on sex roles and images is "The American Woman," an AEP (American Education Publications) unit book. It is available through AEP. Education Center, Columbus, Ohio 43216. The cost is 40¢ a copy, but you must order a minimum of 10 copies. However, it is well worth the price and I urge anyone interested in education to order it. It is copyrighted 1972 and extremely relevant to young people today.

Penal Reform
Rulings

Two cases involving sex discrimination against minor offenders may have significant ramifications for Iowa courts. In August, an Illinois Circuit Court ruled unconstitutional that state's law that treats 17 year old boys as adults in court proceedings, but treats 17 year old girls as juveniles.

And in July, the highest court in New York, the Court of Appeals ruled that there is no justification for greater punishment and censure of girls who engage in sexual misconduct than boys. Neither should reform institutions place greater control and restrictions over girls sent to same for sexual misbehavior than boys who are in such institutions for the same offense. In Iowa, most of the girls sent to Mitchellville are there for "sexual misconduct" or running away from home; most boys are at Eldora for petty theft or car theft.

VOTE!!!

Be sure to vote November 7th. Support candidates who have expressed opinions or who have performance records favorable on issues of concern to women. Also vote YES on the three constitutional amendments that will be on the ballot. These include a four year term for elected state officials, judicial removal, and repeal of the prohibition on lotteries and lottery ticket sales.