

WomeneWS

W o m e n ' s C e n t e r o f M o n t g o m e r y C o u n t y

Executive Director's Report



Submitted by Maria Macaluso

In contemplating my article for this month's newsletter it occurred to me that we are coming up on two very significant commemorative occasions that reflect the essence of our organization: **Women's History Month** in March and **Volunteer Appreciation Week** in April. How fitting, I thought, that we have opportunity to celebrate our core values so closely together and to pay tribute to the essence of what makes the Women's Center of Montgomery County such an incredible organization for so many of us.

When I first thought about Women's History Month, my mind first went to our global and national heroines, the early feminists who fought so hard to advance the cause of empowering women and the leaders who followed them. But the more I thought about it, the more I came back to thinking about all the amazing women who have been involved in the Women's Center, right here in our community. What better celebration of Women's History than the opportunity to reflect and remember all of the unique, talented, dedicate and passionate women who have been a part of our lives over the past thirty-one years. From our founding members to those of you who join the Center still today with a selfless desire to serve your community and help others, you have shaped and nurtured the Center and made it an enduring testament to the empowerment of women. More than any other organization I have known, our Women's Center is truly a reflection of all that you have made it. Its possibilities, its potential and its history are all intricately entwined and infused by the love and support you have so generously provided throughout our history.

A number of years ago, shortly after I came to the Center, one of our volunteers took the time to explain to me the meaning of our logo, the three female symbols intertwined. She explained that it represented the idea of women coming together, women working together as a team to help others. Throughout my tenure here, over the past nine years, I have been inspired and driven by the depth and power of that message, and it truly is quite humbling to realize that I am so fortunate to work *with* and *for* individuals who are so creative, talented and committed, volunteers who, for the love of others and a desire to help their community, give so much of themselves.

Sadly, over the years, we have lost some of our leaders, our mentors and guides. Recent months have seen the passing of devoted friends, such as Gloria Rosenberg and Peggy Fox. The spirit of these women lives in our history, in our memories and our work. What better occasion than Women's History Month to celebrate their lives and the meaning that they brought to their work here at the Center.

So, as we enter Women's History Month, I'd like to encourage you **all** to see yourselves as I do – as the driven, empowering leaders of our Women's Center who have shaped our history. Through your efforts and your support, you have created positive change in our community and motivated others to do the same. You really are the real heroines of our women's history celebration, and on behalf of all of us – staff and Board – we are most grateful and aware of all that you do.

The following information was sent to us by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

FY 2008 Appropriations Federal Funding for Domestic Violence Programs

General Overview

The President's budget for fiscal year 2008 has a devastating affect on domestic violence programs. Next year the President had proposed to fund VAWA programs at less than half the amount authorized by Congress in 2006. In addition, the President has requested that the domestic violence emergency programs be funded at \$125 million, \$50 million less than authorized. This is the sixth year in a row that this emergency shelter program will be under-funded. For the third year, the President has asked Congress to reallocate VOCA trust funds of over \$1 billion in saved criminal fines and have it moved to the General Treasury. This plan also would require VOCA to become part of the appropriations process, pitting VOCA against many other victims' programs in the federal funding cycle.

Family Violence Prevention & Services Act (FVPSA) Domestic Violence Shelter Programs

In FY 2007 FVPSA was cut by \$1.3million from FY 2006. This cut will devastate state and local DV programs. Although FVPSA has never been fully funded at \$175 million, the President's 2008 budget only requests \$126 million for this program. FVPSA was amended in 2003 to provide a portion of all appropriations over \$130 million to programs serving children who witness domestic violence.

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

The President's FY '08 Budget Request proposes funding for VAWA programs at \$421.6 million. This amount is \$406.4 million less than authorized by Congress in 2006. This plan also asks Congress to consolidate all CJS programs and funding into one competitive block grant open to all eligible grantees, from state governments to rural shelters. This ignores the Congressional intent behind each program and creates inefficiencies and competition for these already stretched funds. Implementing this block grant would create a massive administrative burden on the Office on Violence Against Women and generate devastating chaos on local programs and state funding.

In FY 2007 Congress clearly saw the need for increased funding and responded by passing increases for VAWA funding in both the House and Senate Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations bills.

Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) State Victims Assistance Program

After two unsuccessful attempts to rescind the balance of the VOCA Fund, the President's FY '08 budget proposes to cancel the VOCA Fund, moving to a system of setting an annual appropriation from the General Fund to be offset by the amount collected through criminal fines. Such a system would eliminate the dedicated funding stream that has enabled steady support for crime victim services. Under the President's proposal, victim advocates would have to lobby for funding every year, competing against every other federal budget item.

We urge Congress to raise the VOCA cap by \$375 million one time only and extend the time in which states have to spend the money, from the current four years to six years, in order to provide additional stability. This increase in funding for FY '08 would help states respond to the current demand for services, ensure that the money collected from offenders was used for the purpose for which it was designed and authorized by law, and also allow for a modest Fund balance of approximately \$300 million to remain for future years to help guarantee more stable funding.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: visit *the NCADV website at www.ncadv.org for more details about FY '08 Appropriations, including state specific information, sample letters to your elected officials, updated fact sheets, and more.*

Condolences

The Center Mourns the Loss of Long-time Friend, Maxine Silver

It is our sad duty to report the passing of a long-time Women's Center friend and support, Maxine Silver. Maxine was among the earliest members of the Center, part of that dynamic and visionary group of women who, in 1976, saw a need in the community and rose to the challenge of fulfilling that need through the creation of organization dedicated to the empowerment of women.

I had the opportunity to get to know a little about Maxine six years ago, when we celebrated our 25th anniversary. Although her involvement in a direct services role with the Center had changed over the years, her love, pride and passion for the Center's mission, its work and its potential was still quite evident. Indeed, when we recently received a call from her son telling us of her passing and his intention of donating some of her belongings to the thrift shop, he talked about how much she loved the Center and how important it was to her throughout the years.

Although it is always difficult and sad to report the news of the loss of one of our friends here at the Center, I am also struck constantly by how the love and spirit of the person becomes an integral part of the Center, inspiring who we are and what we have become. So as we reflect on these sad tidings and mourn the loss of our friend, we must also remember her encouragement and dreams for the Center and work hard to continue the legacy she helped found.

Direct Service Statistics for the Seven Month Period July 1, 2006 through January 31, 2007

Excludes Victims Served through our Abington Medical Advocacy Project

During this seven month reporting period, since the start of our fiscal year on July 1, 2006, our volunteers and staff have provided domestic violence direct services to 2,345 unduplicated victims of domestic violence. We provided 2,551 counseling hours of service, with 5,057 victim contacts.

While these numbers do not include non-domestic violence hotline calls and referrals, community education and outreach efforts, or activities performed by our Medical Advocate at Abington Memorial Hospital, we wanted to share with you some of the wonderful work being performed by our staff and volunteer counselors, without whom we would not continue to meet our mission!

The Nominating Committee of the WCMC Board of Directors Seeks New Members

Our Nominating Committee is currently looking for outstanding community leaders and talented individuals to serve on the Board of Directors. If you or anyone you might like to recommend desires to serve in this capacity, please contact Maria at the Elkins Park office at 215-635-7340 or by email at mmacaluso@dca.net.

The Women's Center of Montgomery County
Please make us your highest priority

**United Way Donor Option
Number 00433**

**New Book Release by Women's Center Honoree
Jean Sasson Selected as a
Top 10 Non-Fiction Publication!**

As we prepare to celebrate Women's History month with our March 25th Jazz Brunch, we are thrilled to recognize yet another accomplishment by our honoree and author, Jean Sasson. Jean's latest book, LOVE IN A TORN LAND: Joanna of Kurdistan: The True Story of a Freedom

Fighter's Flight from Iraqi Vengeance, scheduled for a March release, has been selected as a top 10 non-fiction book by BOOKSENSE, the independent book seller's organization. It's a huge honor that will get extra attention for this important Kurdish story!

This is how it happened:

- 1) The early book galleys are sent to booksellers
- 2) If the booksellers particularly love a book, they nominate it for the honor of being a "top 10 book."
- 3) A special committee of the ABA (American Booksellers Association) meets and votes on the best books.
- 4) Out of 50,000 books published each year, only 120 non-fiction titles receive this distinction...
- 5) LOVE IN A TORN LAND: JOANNA OF KURDISTAN has just been selected as one of the top ten books for the month of APRIL!

We at the Center are delighted to have the opportunity to personally congratulate and recognize Jean for this honor. Her work as both an author and human rights' advocate touch the very heart of our mission, and we are proud to have her join us this month!

Thank you to those of you who have already pre-ordered the book through the Center. If you are interested in obtaining an autographed copy, please send in the pre-order form on page 6 of this month's Womenews.

And if you still haven't made plans to attend this year's Jazz Brunch on March 25th, which honors Jean, as well as our District Attorney Bruce L. Castor and Susan Kelly-Dreiss, Executive Director and founding member of the PA Coalition Against Domestic Violence, a copy of the invitation and RSVP can be viewed and downloaded at our website at www.wcmontoc.org.

**Request from the PA Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Resource Center**

Casey Keene, a Field Education student working at the PA Coalition Against Domestic Violence, is working on a project to document the history and context of program development and administration in the Pennsylvania battered women's movement. Her goal is to create a final product that will capture the original vision of early movement leaders so that this history can be shared with future leaders,

Casey has contacted the Women's Center for help in identifying individuals who were actively involved as founding members with the Women's Center of Montgomery County and the PA Coalition Against domestic violence. Specifically, she is looking for:

- Available archival information related to domestic violence program development or administration in Pennsylvania (newsletters, articles, notes, memos, books, etc.).
- Stories and experiences of influential feminist leaders of the Pennsylvania battered women's movement.

If you have material that might enhance this project, or if you are willing to participate in a 30-60 minute interview (or can recommend someone Casey can contact), please contact Maria by email at mmacaluso@dca.net or by telephone at the Elkins Park office.

The Women's Center Wednesday Evening Book Club March 2007

<u>Date</u>	<u>Book</u>	<u>Presenter</u>	<u>Hostess</u>
March	On Beauty (Z.Smith)	Ellen	Sunny
April	History of Love (N.Krause)	Caryn	Ellen
May	Brick Lane (M.Ali)	Linda B.	Judy M.

Reading enthusiasts please call Sunny at 215-576-6215 to join our lively and interesting book discussions. New members are always welcome!

A reminder from the Women's Center: If you are interested in buying any of these books online, we encourage you to use the shopping link on our site (www.wcmontco.org) to visit Amazon.com or Barnes&Noble.com. Both vendors donate approximately 5% of the sale price back to the Women's Center to support our efforts to empower women in our community.

Spring is Springing!

(And so are upcoming events!)

Our sincere and heart-felt thanks goes out to all of you who have come through so consistently to cover tabling events, speaking events, and going the extra mile throughout the cold winter months to help spread the word about the work that we do. Thankfully, and not soon enough, the crocuses will be blooming and the birds will be singing to welcome the spring! Yes Spring **IS** springing and so are community events. We have been invited to participate in numerous special events (33 to be exact) between now and May. We have not solicited our participation. We have been **invited**. Receipt of these invitations strongly suggests that the townships, organizations, and schools throughout Montgomery County see our services as needed and important and are appreciative of our participation in the past. We are extremely proud and grateful for the consistent donation of your time, knowledge, and passion to our mission throughout Montgomery County!

As you can see by our list of upcoming events, we will need some assistance with coverage. Most of these are taken care of but some still need the gift of your presence. If you can dedicate only 1 or 2 hours of your time, you will assist us in reaching those who need our services. Bring a friend with you. Volunteers often tell us that they can only stay for a short while but wind up staying much longer. That's because these events are not only a help to The Women's Center, but they are also educational and fun for all who attend!

Take a moment to look at the upcoming events. The events are also regularly updated on the website: www.wcmontco.org. If you've never done a tabling event, choose one that fits your schedule and give it a try! The same applies to a speaking event or a roll call. We will give you all of the information for the event where you can "shadow" an experienced speaker or Women's Center representative. We welcome you to contact:

Janine Kelly – 610-525-1428 or jkelly1@dca.net

Deanna Linn – 215-635-7340 or dlinn@dca.net

Norristown Volunteer Update

Hopefully, spring is around the corner! We could all use some spring-like weather!

IN-SERVICE:

Our next in-service will be **Tuesday, March 13, 2007** from **1-3pm** in the Norristown office. Our guest speaker will be Chuck Gallun from the Pottstown S.A.F.E. project. Chuck will discuss the group he runs for batterers and the permission slip program. Please let me know if you plan to attend.

LEGAL REMEDIES:

The next Legal Remedies Workshop will be **Tuesday, March 20, 2007**, from **5-7pm**, facilitator to be announced. The information sessions are held at our Norristown office at 18 West Airy Street, 4th floor from 5-7p.m. Please call 610-279-7474 to register to attend. Also, please refer a family member or friend to this valuable program!

Jenn B.

Norristown Volunteer Coordinator

Order Form

To pre-order a copy of Jean Sasson's soon-to-be released book, "**Love in a Torn Land: Joanna of Kurdistan: The True Story of a Freedom Fighter's Flight from Iraqi Vengeance**," please submit this form with your payment (credit cards are accepted) to the Elkins Park office. Please note that \$10.00 of every sale will be donated by the publisher back to the Women's Center, so in addition to a wonderful literary experience, your purchase will also benefit the women we serve!

I wish to order _____ copies of Jean Sasson's book, "Love in a Torn Land: Joanna of Kurdistan: The True Story of a Freedom Fighter's Flight from Iraqi Vengeance" at a cost of **\$26.95 per copy**, which includes \$2.00 for shipping per copy. Enclosed please find my check in the amount of \$_____. If you plan to pick the book up at one of our offices, please do not include the \$2.00 shipping cost!

Name: _____

Address: _____

To charge your payment to your Visa, Mastercard, Discover or American Express, please provide the following information:

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Please make your check payable to the
Women's Center of Montgomery County and mail to:
WCMC 8080 Old York Road, Suite 200 Elkins Park, PA 19027

To end domestic violence, we must change our behavior.
To change our behavior, we must change our attitudes.
To change our attitudes, we need education.
To educate our communities, WE NEED YOU!

Check our website for current updates - www.wcmontco.org

Pre-School Program – My Hands Are Not For Hurting

March 20, 2007 – Lower Providence Preschool – 10:30 AM

March 28, 2007 – Lower Providence Preschool – 10:30 AM

May 3, 2007 – Saint Andrew Preschool

2 groups @20 minutes from 9:15- 10:10

2 groups @20 minutes from 12:30-1:20

May 4, 2007 – Saint Andrew Preschool

3 groups @20 minutes from 9:15- 10:40

2 groups @20 minutes from 12:30-1:20

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WORKSHOPS And SPEAKING EVENTS

March 24, 2007 – Paralegal Association – 9:00 (location tba)

April 16, 2007 – YWCA – Pottsgrove Middle School 3:00-4:30

April 17, 2007 – YWCA – Pottstown Middle School 3:00-4:30

April 10, 2007 - Harriton High School –9:30-10:30

April 11, 2007 – Harriton High School – 8:30-9:30; 10:50-11:50AM; 12:30-1:30; 1:30-2:25PM

April 11, 2007 – Grace Lutheran Church – Royersford – 7:00-8:00 PM- Week 1 of 3

April 12, 2007 – Harriton High School – 8:30-9:30; 10:50-11:50AM

April 17, 2007 – Jenkintown High School 8:10 – 8:52; 11:43 – 12:25; 12:28 – 1:10

April 18, 2007 – Grace Lutheran Church – Royersford – 7:00-8:00 PM Week 2 of 3

April 25, 2007 – Grace Lutheran Church – Royersford – 7:00-8:00 PM Week 3 of 3

April 30, 2007 – New Choices – Montgomery County Community College Pottstown – 6:30-7:30

May 3, 2007 – 18th Annual Teen Parent Conference – 9:00-10:00 – Norristown – Workshop time TBA

TABLE EVENTS

March 15, 2007 – 2007 Family Fest – Pottstown Middle School –5:00-7:30PM

April 11, 2007 – 2007 Spring Career Fair – Penn State Abington – 10:00-1:00PM

April 17, 2007 – Mont. Co. Community College Blue Bell – “Do Something Tuesday”-10:00-2:00

April 20, 2007 – Healthy Lifestyles Expo – Montco Community College - Pottstown – 9:30-1:30

April 21, 2007 – 16th Annual International Spring Festival – 11:00AM – 5:00 PM- Lansdale

April 25, 2007 – Dock Woods Community Health Fair – 12:30-3:30PM-Lansdale

May 3, 2007 – 18th Annual Teen Parent Conference – 9:00-10:00 - Norristown

Contact Janine Kelly

The Women’s Center of Montgomery County

Community Education Coordinator

610-525-1428

616-525-1429 (fax)

jkelly1@dca.net

www.wcmontco.org

The Women's Center of Montgomery County Presents a Jazz Brunch Celebration

With Music By Ken Silver

Celebrating With Our Honorees:
Montgomery County District Attorney Bruce L. Castor, Jr. ,
Susan Kelly-Dreiss, Executive Director of the PCADV
and Jean Sasson, author and human rights activist
Sunday, March 25, 2007

If you haven't already sent in your RSVP, a copy of our invitation and response card can be viewed and downloaded on our website at www.wcmontco.org.

Please join us for the celebration and fun! Reservations required!

Women's Center of Montgomery County

Elkins Park Office

215-635-7344

Thrift Shop: 215-885-0620

FAX: 215-635-7347

Norristown Office

610-279-1548

FAX: 610-279-7740

Pottstown Office

610-970-7363

FAX: 610-970-0705

Lansdale Office

215-853-8060

FAX: 215-853-8065

Bryn Mawr Office

610-525-1427

FAX: 610-525-1429

www.wcmontco.org

**1-800-773-
2424**



DATED MATERIAL

**NONPROFIT
ORG.
U.S.POSTAGE
PAID
JENKINTOWN
PA
PERMIT NO. 5**