

Concerned learn many ways to better ecology

"I hate to waste anything," Pam Frucci told a crowd of concerned men and women recently at a Concern Inc. conference at the Northwest YWCA. Anti-waste, she told them, has always been a main theme of her life.

The board member of Concern Inc., who has recently announced her candidacy for the U.S. Senate, explained her role as both a concerned human being and as an active part of the non-profit organization based in Washington.

"I try to make citizens more aware of how they affect the environment as consumers," she said.

"We have a lot of power as consumers."

The Trash Can—Energy for the Future was the topic of Mrs. Frucci's talk, as she keyed the conservation and ecology conference, sponsored by Concern Inc., a volunteer staffed organization concerned about the environmental crisis.

The environmental conference, which drew about 60 persons to the Redford Township YWCA, also fea-

tured workshops led by Betty Shaw of Redford and Marietta Crabtree of Ulica. John Sobetzer, executive director from the East Michigan Environmental Council, and Kristin Martin of Birmingham.

They offered information on energy, food chemicals and kitchen ecology.

MRS. FRUCCI told about a system used in Switzerland for the last 20 years. She said it offers not only a solution to getting rid of solid waste but also turns waste into energy.

Introducing with enthusiasm a film about the Swiss plant's operations, she admitted ruefully she would have been most surprised "if anyone had told me five years ago I would be so turned on by solid waste."

The film depicted the basic system, which burns unsorted trash, channeling the released heat into energy outlets.

Iron, glass and aluminum is then recovered from the incinerated material for recycling, while still remaining refuse is used for road construction.

Mrs. Frucci explained Switzerland's lack of land space as an incentive for that country's early initiative, but said, because of America's growing population, the refuse system which has been instituted in Massachusetts should develop extensively in this country.

MRS. FRUCCI, also known by some as Mrs. Conservation, began her ecological drive in her home town of Grasse Ile when she noticed unnecessary litter defacing the community.

"I just had to do something about it," she said.

She said she then channeled her ambitions into three areas and spent time educating children about the problem, investigating recycling centers, and concentrated much of her time on the sanitary disposal of waste.

One of the results coming from her efforts is Mt. Trashmore, a landfill in the Downriver area, serving 43 communities. The fill, according to the speaker, has become a substantial-

sized hill of compacted trash, that by 1980, will be used as a ski slope.

"The dirt covering, which will surface the slope, is the ground which was scooped out of a recently man-made lake," she explained, citing the "use-everything" method. "It's a better way than just burning trash," she added.

Mrs. Frucci, who applauded Redford's successfully functioning recycling center, takes her work to heart. After purchasing a 10-year-old car for \$100, she said she drove it for four years, till it finally gave out, whereupon she had the car crushed and compacted and sold the steel for \$27.

"I still wear my 17-year-old wedding dress," she boasted, explaining that although it is white it wasn't of the traditionally ornamented variety.

Continuing with her topic, Mrs. Frucci said that the average American home has probably enough trash to light up the entire household if pro-

cessed according to the refuse system.

"We have reached a plateau," she said. "We cannot develop more resources, but must save those we have."

KRISTIN MARTIN devoted her workshop to suggestions for homemakers anxious to increase the nutritional value of food served at home.

"We need to be informed about food to make a choice," she stated. "If after getting more information we still like junk food, it's our choice, as with people who choose to continue to smoke. But we should be able to know what foods will do to our bodies, especially in the case of our children, and additives which are safe and which are not."

She said it's a cop-out to say there's nothing good on the market because of all the food problems that have been publicized.

"Good choices can be made," she said, "but there are stumbling blocks."

A major problem Mrs. Martin mentioned is television advertising which "should inform but instead uses the push and sell method."

"It's up to us to interpret when television tells our children that if we really love them we'll buy them this or that unnutritional food," she said.

"We need to show our families why good foods are better, and to start slowly to change eating habits."

She also suggested that children be introduced to food production, instead of just seeing it in the supermarket. "A trip to a farm can help do this," she said, "but so can a herb garden on the windowsill in an apartment."

JOHN SOBETZER talked of solar energy and the advantages he sees when comparing it with nuclear energy.

Pointing to the dangers that have been noted in operating plants that work with fissionable materials, he said nuclear energy has been called "a future power whose time has passed."

Packaging called useless waste

By KAREN KWASNIK

"The perfect package," suggests ecology expert Betty Shaw of Redford Township, "is the ice cream cone."

"It holds the ice cream and can be eaten, too."

Mrs. Shaw and Marietta Crabree focused attention on unnecessary packaging as they led a kitchen ecology workshop as part of the Concern Inc. environmental conference at the Northwest YWCA.

"Preposterous" was the term they used for the "monumental waste of time, energy, money and resources that goes on at the local supermarket."

"Many items don't even need to be packaged," Mrs. Shaw said, listing fresh fruits and vegetables as examples.

"One third of our weekly grocery bills is money spent on packaging," she added. Putting it in ecological terms, she stated that a third of all wood processed in the country is for wood pulp, which is used to a great extent for packaging and paper products used only once before being discarded.

If a food must be packaged, the workshop demonstrated, there are more economical and ecological packages to look for.

The cardboard egg carton is much preferred over the plastic one," Mrs. Shaw said. "Plastic is petrochemically based, and whenever we buy a plastic packaged product, we are actually adding to the country's oil depletion."

Another count against plastic car-

tons, according to Mrs. Shaw, is the fact that plastic does not break down chemically and re-enter the ecosystem when disposed of. It remains as litter for essentially decades.

Shaw and Crabree cited convenience as a common offender, resulting in tremendous waste.

"Four servings of pudding," Shaw demonstrated, "that you have to cook yourself costs one-third of the price of four servings of pre-processed pudding ready to serve in cans."

The two women also gave their audience some facts and tips on nutrition, concluding that brown rice is by far the most nutritional of the grain and when mixed with other ingredients, such as split peas or lentils, can be extremely rich in nutrition.

Carefully reading instructions and labels can be the key to choosing the most economical, ecologically safe and nutritious foods when shopping, it was concluded at the workshop.

"The ingredients are listed on the label according to the proportions in which they are added," Ms. Shaw said. "For instance, if sugar is first on the list on a box of cereal, then the percentage of sugar is higher than any other ingredient present."

Also included on labels according to the two women are listings of the amount of nutrients included.

"One product may look quite similar to another," Ms. Crabree said. "But if you look, one may include a higher percentage of protein, for instance, which would be the better buy."

Ms. Shaw said instructions should

also be read carefully and explained that some rice, for example, is enriched with a water-soluble coating, which should not be rinsed off as in preparing other types of rice.

Basically, the workshop was to

enlighten the homemaker of possible pitfalls to avoid when grocery shopping, to eliminate waste of money, time, natural resources and to get the most out of the least, nutritionally and economically.



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