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Undaunted Friedan continues rights crusade

By Shirley Iden
staff writer

Like the postman who grinds his way through rain, sleet and storm, Betty Friedan had the elements to fight on her way to a talk before the National Council of Jewish Women.

Shelly Cooper, co-chairman of the meeting at Adas Shalom, first became aware of the feminist author's difficulties when her phone rang early that morning. Cooper raced from the shower to find a stranded Friedan was on the line.

But despite Boston being soaked in and several delays of her timetable, Friedan was ready when she marched into the large hall to be greeted by close to 500 women.

In the large audience were women from their 60s down to early 20s. At one end of the spectrum sat those old enough that the feminist movement had come too late to change their lives; at the other, young women who know no other way but equality and personhood, and in between, those aware things aren't quite the same since 1963 and who might ponder if they're better or not.

It was in 1963 that Friedan published her manifesto "The Feminine Mystique" credited with starting the revolution we call the women's movement.

BORN IN Peoria, Ill., Friedan grew up in a home where ideas were nurtured and shared. Her mother was a newspaper editor. Friedan married Carl Friedan, had three children, and was divorced from her ad man husband in 1970 after 23 years of marriage.

"The Feminine Mystique" has been called the catalytic work of the modern women's movement. After its publication, Friedan became the founder and first president of the National Organization for Women, and the original convenor of the National Women's Political Caucus and a symbol for women everywhere.

Recently, she has been a leader in the battle for ratification for the Equal Rights Amendment and for new approaches to divorce, abortion reform, housing employment and education.

Friedan is a visiting professor of sociology at Temple University, Yale, the New School for Social Research and Queens College. She is engaged in research on changing sex roles and the aging process under a grant from the Ford Foundation at Columbia University.

Travel, teaching, research, lecturing, all have paved the way for her recent book "The Second Stage" another manifesto to women, a warning against becoming locked up in a "feminist mystique."

"Life is a trade-off," Friedan has said. "New arrangements have to be made at home and at work. That's the 'Second Stage.'"

"NOW I'M HERE and we can talk," she began, climbing to the dais in her long red chemise dress impressed with a stylized, black design. Her hair is naturally gray and brown, naturally wavy and worn mid-length.

"I think we're in the second stage," she said. "And there's no sense in having nostalgia for other times. The women's movement in the first place came because evolution brought us into the mainstream."

"Motherhood was the prime definition of womanhood before. But no way can we live our whole life around it. In an 80-year lifespan, it can't be the whole thing. Living a larger life meant entering society as a person in our own right."

"Now we consider the quality of life, not just the quantity."

Friedan said women strive for personhood as women and for equality. "After nearly 20 years of the feminist movement, now our daughters and men face new problems."

"Some of them were created by the movement I helped to start. Women are facing a set of tricky problems. But none of us can contemplate retreating."

FRIEDAN described the feminist movement as the first stage of a sexual identification revolution "but not against men."

"Women were patronized, and they had a right to be angry," she said. "Their anger was directed at their own selves, their husbands and their children. Now it's directed outward since the feminist movement."

"We had to break through the feminist mystique and find our energies."

Men also have been polarized into stereotyped roles which could be called a "masculine mystique," Friedan contends.

"Today men are groping also for a new identity. Men don't march in the streets for what they need, but I think they envy the women's movement more than rail against it."

Friedan believes that in today's society, one can see symptoms of women, and even men, being stuck halfway toward her second stage.

"Superwoman's tired," she said. "Now she's a harassed career woman with a job she's lucky to have and economically can't retreat from. She's trying to compete."

home and superwoman in the office — a very tired person.

"Is that the answer? Is this what it was all about?"

This malaise is the catalyst that compelled Friedan to write "The Second Stage." She recalled the early battles when she "fought for the right to choose, to decide where, when and whether to have a child and not have that decision thrust upon her."

"The option to choose having children is enormously liberating. The right to have an abortion at this time is an absolute necessity."

"Before now, he'd wear a chef's hat and make barbecue sauce while she cleaned the toilets. Now, economic necessity dictates they decide together whether to have a child."

Questions such as does she have maternity leave? Does he have paternity leave? Does the company have flex time and job sharing — all are part of the family lexicon now, she said.

"Our agenda was given us by men," Friedan said. "We sought equality in a man's world."

ADMITTING that the revolution she spawned seemed to challenge voluntarism, Friedan contends now that voluntarism has "created some new threads and services in society."

"With Reaganomics, services to the poor, the sick and the elderly have been

destroyed and too much put into nuclear weapons," she said. "Now it's impossible to hand all functions back to government. Now we must have a marriage between voluntarism and the women's movement."

OBSCENE, OUTRAGEOUS were the terms she used to describe the "temporary" defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment.

"The U.S. is making itself a backward nation with this action," she said. "Seventy percent of men and women wanted it."

Friedan contends that women are now recognized as a voting group that votes its conscience and causes and not the way their husbands do.

"And we'll get the ERA when we get the government turned back to the interests of people."

For the better part of an hour, Friedan spoke nonstop to a silent audience that hung on her words. On child raising in the next generation, she said there will be shared nurturing and children will be better for it.

"And there must be child care! I will uphold our right to dispose chicken soup, but there must be child care."

And finally:

"I welcome you to the second stage," she said. "The problems are more complex. New kinds of families are needed. But life is what it's all about."

Fumes fell Doodle patrons

Improper venting of carbon monoxide fumes at Dr. Doodles restaurant in Farmington Hills sent eight employees and two restaurant patrons to nearby hospitals for treatment late Friday night.

Fire officials say a piece of sheet metal that is supposed to divert carbon monoxide fumes created by combustion in a large 550,000 BTU hot water heater was torn down. High humidity outside created a "negative draft" which sent exhaust fumes into the lounge area of the restaurant instead of up the chimney, according to Farmington Hills Fire Marshal Bill Gearhart.

General Manager of the restaurant, Michael Colo, said the vent was removed by an employee of the heating contractor hired to do a winter inspection of the heating equipment.

The 10 persons who were hospitalized are Karen Shinney, 29, Natalie Nuccitelli, 28, and Ruth Schechter, 54, all of Farmington Hills, and Leah

Blair of Novi who were taken to Providence Hospital's Novi annex. Taken to Botsford Hospital were Karen Kirsch, 28, of Inkster, Janice Moore, 20, of Farmington Hills; Diana Irwin, 21, of Farmington; Peter Durkin, 26, of Detroit; April McCaughan, 25, of New Hudson; and divert Muzzey, 43, of Livonia.

Colo said the restaurant management hopes to re-open by this weekend but has used the closed time to make renovations. The Oakland County Health Department and the Farmington Hills Building Department is involved with the fire department in investigating the facility to determine its safety, said Fire Chief Larry Karon.

Two persons were on the ground outside the restaurant gasping for air when firefighters arrived at the scene, said Steve Fume, acting district chief at the time of the incident which was reported at 11:32 p.m. Friday.

north on Middlebelt Road when the passenger side of the car was struck by a car — driven by Joyce Turnbull, 46, of Redford Township — heading westbound on Schoolcraft Road, police said.

The motorists were also treated for minor injuries as a result of the crash but were released the same day, police said.

No traffic citations were issued.

Lt. Richard Widmaier, head of the Livonia Traffic Bureau, said one of the cars drove through a red light but declined to comment further because the case is still under investigation.

Widmaier said police planned to continue questioning witnesses to the accident this week.

Hills girl critically injured

A five-year-old Farmington Hills girl remains in critical condition and on life-support systems in Children's Hospital, Detroit, this week after a traffic accident in Livonia Monday morning.

Jessica Canveth suffered severe head injuries as a result of a two-car collision at Middlebelt and Schoolcraft roads about 11 a.m. Monday, said hospital and police officials.

Jessica was taken to St. Mary Hospital in Livonia where she underwent neurosurgery immediately after the accident. She was transferred to Children's Hospital Tuesday afternoon.

Jessica was a passenger in her babysitter's car, driven by Rose Sanborski, 33, of Livonia, when the accident occurred, police said. The car was heading

Store hit by arson

The Last Stop party store at 29154 Grand River, Farmington Hills, was intentionally set afire early Saturday morning, according to local fire officials.

The incident was first reported at 12:31 a.m. on Sept. 18 as a burglary, says Rich Marinucci, assistant district fire chief, when an alarm sounded following the breaking of a rear window at the store. The establishment closed at 11 p.m., officials say.

"The guy who set the fire broke it (the window)," Marinucci said Wednesday. "As much as I can say, it's arson."

Samples of charred material are being analyzed to determine if a flammable liquid was used, says

Fire Chief Larry Karon.

The listed owner of the store is Raid S. Khunorka, 22, of Detroit, but fire officials say the store is a family operation owned by more than one person.

The fire was under control within 25 minutes, says Marinucci, but firefighters' progress was hampered by thick doors and iron bars over the window and doors.

Damage is roughly estimated to be \$50,000 by the department. Flames were contained in the rear cases created heavy smoke, and the heat caused the roof to buckle, said Marinucci.

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