

# SUBURBAN LIFE

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## Ultra-feminist continues fight

**W**ow! According to that model citizen, the virtuous, document-shredding Oliver North, I've been promoted to Ultra-Feminist. It's ultra all the way since Col. Olle revealed that "an arrogant army of ultra-feminists opposed to traditional values has captured the political process."

Ultra, the darling of the advertising world! Ultra detergents, ultra toothpaste, ultra gasoline! Can we infer from that ultra-feminists make life cleaner and brighter than do garden variety ones? Given the small number of women in the United States who occupy positions of power, one wonders if an inability to do simple arithmetic led the colonel to his career as super patriot. The figures are plain enough: six women members out of 100 in the U.S. Senate, 48 women members out of 435 in the U.S. House, three women out of 98 in the Michigan Senate and 28 women out of 110 in the Michigan House. This is an army!

The term "feminism" and the cause it embraces have been sullied by the mud-linging of Col. North. Still, according to the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank, one-third of American women identify themselves as feminists. Additionally, whether claiming the feminist label or not, three-quarters of them support efforts to "strengthen and change women's status in society," a basic tenet of the feminist agenda.

This assessment is similar to the one found by the Ms. Foundation for Women and the Center for Policy Alternatives in their Women's Voices Project. They combined resources in 1992 to discover priorities of women.

Seventy percent of the women interviewed stated their lives were better today than 25 years ago, and many credited the women's movement with that accomplishment. A similar number thought their lives would be better still if half the leaders in the United States were women. Dissaining political rhetoric about "family values," they were looking for leaders who "valued families."

The mere presence of women in Congress has increased that body's sensitivity to family issues. Recent passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act, which languished for years, and the Violence Against Women Act, currently in conference committee, can attest to that fact. Increased funding for family planning, maternal and child health, breast and cervical cancer screening, and Head Start are further examples of congressional concern.

The Voices Project participants also listed many problems which confronted them in their dual roles in the home and in the workplace, such as job and wage inequities, difficulty in balancing job and home responsibilities, and worries about health care.

When asked to name the No. 1 problem in their individual lives, the women chose low pay, 70 cents on the dollar to men. Combining family and job duties ran a close second. Almost all of the women worry about finances, making their rent or mortgage payments, the possible job loss of a family member, or becoming the sole support of their families. Because their financial worries are so acute, 78 percent of them favor pay equity legislation, with 31 percent of them giving it top priority.

Coupled with worry about finances is concern about rising health care costs. Eighty-six percent of the women support a national universal health care program, with guaranteed health insurance for all, regardless of ability to pay.

Working schedules are another area of concern, with women expressing a desire for flexible work hours, or flex time. Given a choice, many full-time workers chose flexible hours over other benefits, including higher pay. Income was a factor here, however, with low-income women opting for pay from necessity, and higher-income ones selecting flexible schedules.

Other concerns voiced by the women include job discrimination, especially severe among women of color; sexual harassment, with 81 percent considering it a problem; and child care. As older reproductive freedom with access to abortion a priority, with 63 percent of the women interviewed thinking it should be guaranteed by constitutional amendment.

As determined by the research, women have a firm agenda, centered around equal pay, flexible work schedules, and health care. They want an end to job discrimination and sexual harassment, and they want quality child care and guaranteed reproductive rights. They want the government to take action on all of these issues.

Locally, the Michigan Women's Assembly, a coalition of women's organizations, works at the grass roots level and with the Michigan Legislature to promote the agenda made visible by the Women's Voices Project.

Olle, there is an army out there, an army of American women determined to participate in the political process and to wrest from society the equality that has so long eluded them!

Marian McCracken, a retired Farmington teacher and 39-year resident of Farmington, is past president of Michigan National Organization of Women and the national NOW board.



SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Extensive exposure: When Dawn Haselhuhn started Friends of Jack Kevorkian, she had no idea her name would be carried in countless national and international stories. Her fiancé, Jeffrey Glasfelter, writes press releases, among other duties.

## Her way

### Kevorkian supporter has death plan

A Farmington Hills woman, who knows what it feels like to face death, fights to legalize assisted suicide. She started the Friends of Jack Kevorkian organization by accident, after planning a rally against Kevorkian opponents.

BY DIANE GALE  
STAFF WRITER

When Dawn Haselhuhn was 10 years old, she was told she had diabetes. The young girl watched two of her hospital buddies die tormented deaths; one was in so much pain it hurt her to have a sheet on her body.

Haselhuhn, 54, said she started to think about her own death at that young age.

"I saw those girls in bed with tubes," she said. "They couldn't move. At 10 years old, I said I would not die that way."

Complications from diabetes

have caused nerve damage to the point where she can't feel her feet. Sores that would be slight nicks to most people refuse to heal. They mark her hands and other parts of her body. She also has problems with her eyes and kidneys.

Haselhuhn fears, too, that soon she will be immune to a strong antibiotic she takes.

"And then, what?" she said, not expecting an answer.

"Diabetes rots your body from the inside out," the Farmington Hills woman said. "When it's time for my death, I know it."

"I do not need Jack Kevorkian, because I know what I'm doing," she said, adding that some people are so ill they are physically unable to take their own lives.

"It's my life and it's my death," said Haselhuhn. She believes in God and attends a Methodist church, which she said is sympathetic to assisted suicide.

Accidental beginnings  
It's those types of feelings that gave birth to Friends of Jack

See SUPPORTER, 2C

### Attic treasures could win history contest

Sharpen your pencils and blow the dust off those old albums.

Farmington Historical Society members are planning the 11th annual Lee S. Peel Historical research writing contest to encourage original research of Farmington and Farmington Hills history.

Submissions may be entered until April 13. Anyone interested in Farmington-area history may enter. Submissions should be the original work of the author and will be divided into the following categories: first through fifth grades; sixth through eighth grades; ninth through 12th grades, as well as college students and adults.

Audiotapes, videotapes, 35 millimeter slides, photographs or texts of any length that are neatly written, printed or typed are acceptable. Audiotape or videotape entries require a synopsis suitable for publication.

Sources may include personal recollections, in-

terviews, family diaries or letters, or old photographs, paintings and sketches.

As much as possible, source material should be contemporary to the era presented in the entry. Entries consisting primarily of visual material should clearly describe the origin of the material and should include captions. All entries should also include the full mailing address and phone number of the author.

Some suggested topics include: street and place names; dairy and cheese industries; flour and lumber mills; farming; merchants and town center development; English and German settlements; schools and churches; Indian history habits and lifestyles of earlier times in the Farmington area.

Contemporary history is also welcome. Stories and recollections of living through or being a part

of World War I, World War II and other wars, or various housing developments and family history are welcome.

A bibliography of source material should accompany the entry. For additional contest entry topic ideas, contact Lee Peel, 33436 Shiawassee, Farmington 48336 or call him at 476-2073.

Entries should be mailed to Lee S. Peel Historical Research Writing Contest, 33309 Shiawassee, Farmington 48336 no later than April 13. Accompanying photographs and artifacts will be returned if requested.

Prizes include \$100, \$50 and four \$25 prizes to "best in age" categories. Honorable mention prizes of \$10 each may be awarded.

Judging will be based on historical interest, originality, quality and age category.

See HISTORY, 2C