

WOMENCENTER Information on everything pertaining to women

By NANCY STEIN

It was an all day celebration of women at Oakland Community College in Farmington.

Sponsored by WOMENCENTER, a self-help group for women, the day was planned to inform and heighten the awareness of women.

Subjects under discussion at seminars throughout the day ranged from one called, "Childcare is Caring for Children," "Black Feminism," "Rape: An Institution of Capitalism," "Self Help Clinic," and even a workshop for men called, "Our Liberation."

THERE WAS AN all women's art show that gave a chance to explore not only women's art, but her ingenuity when she hung a sign beside her work which said, "If you are interested in purchasing this work, my name is Kristin Hurlin and I am seated behind you." And she was.

It cost nothing to attend. About 200 women and about 35 men attended, along with about 30 preschool children for whom child care facilities were provided.

About half the people were students at the college. Heightened awareness, people talking about being people, a women's center, "England's finest king-Elizabeth" and everyone loving it.

"I never realized the deviousness for black men and women caused

by our patriarchal society," said Cheryl Jones after she attended the Black Feminism seminar.

AT THE MEN'S liberation seminar, which was attended by quite a few women, a young man said, "My outlook is that women use men by manipulating them and making them feel guilty and men don't even realize it."

He was answered by Thea Simmons, a student and a WOMENCENTER staff member, who said, "The important thing is to have people liberation so no one has to manipulate anyone."

In a seminar discussion called "Women's Studies," the book "Virginia Woolf, a Biography," by Quentin Bell was being explored in order to get a perspective on alternate life styles. Suddenly, the book itself became suspect when it was noted that in the extensive index at the back, the author said "see Murray" following the name of the famous Katherine Mansfield. Murray turned out to be her married name.

And so the day went.

WOMENCENTER is 13 months old and is generally considered to be the brainchild of Mary White, an instructor at the college.

The college provides two rooms in the library building for WOMENCENTER and also provides 45 hours a week of paid staff.

"Some of the men on campus are afraid of us because they don't know what we are," said Thea. "I get some feedback about our being lesbians and men haters."

"What we really are is a free referral service and a library. We try to have information about everything pertaining to women and if we don't know it and a woman needs it, we try to get. We aren't experts, we're just women helping women." Thea is 19 years old.

THE CENTER provides information on such subjects as: abortion, careers, school, children, how to deal with Friend of the Court and how to get credit in your own name.

"The WOMENCENTER Office is open 30 hours a week."

WOMENCENTER also supports local groups by furnishing them room for meetings or projects, and sometimes furnishing equipment.

WOMENCENTER and the local branch of the League of Women Voters joined hands when the LWV found themselves in need of a copying machine and called the college for help.

"We were all of a sudden a resource center, glad to be of service, and hope we can do the same for others," Ms. White said.

For additional information about WOMENCENTER call, 476-9490, ext. 552 or go to their office in Building K, room 104.

All Female Art Show

If it pertains to women, its of interest to WOMENCENTER at Oakland Community College. Therefore it followed that as a part of Women's Day celebration there should be an all female art show. It was particularly logical since so few women historically have ever been taken seriously by the critics. Kristin Hurlin is an artist who wants to be taken seriously. Her prints weren't ready when the show opened, but that didn't stop her. She displayed the original drawings from which the prints will come and beside them she put up a small sign which read, "... prints will be for sale of these drawings and others in July, for information I am sitting behind you..." and she was.

New breed Girl Scout gets herself involved

By JUDITH BERNE

The brand spanking new facilities of the Southern Oakland Girl Scouts should provide an appropriate backdrop for the younger, more hip image scouting is seeking to project.

With workmen still hammering away in their new home above Lathrup Village City Hall, 18 full-time staff members are involved in girl scout operations for 25 municipalities throughout Southern Oakland County.

From her partially completed

office, executive director Polly Monroe declared, "Real—not token—service is the emphasis these days. We don't have little brownie sweat shops making nut cups."

"A troop no longer sends favors to a senior citizens home. It makes them, takes them there and spends the afternoon entertaining and talking with the residents."

MRS. MONROE feels that a change in uniform, updating the scout promise and laws and the recruiting and training of more crea-

tive, flexible, leaders have served to change the Girl Scout from a green-clad cookie pusher to an individual who may or may not wear a uniform and who is into a diversity of things.

"I don't know how we ever got stuck with our goody two shoes image," Mrs. Monroe mused.

"Probably because we stress a value system. Actually we are probably the swingiest, most active group around."

To Mrs. Monroe, women's liberation has always been inherent in scouting. "Curiously enough, we

may have even invented women's lib," she pronounced. "It's just not a male dominated outfit. Here women run the show."

THE FORTHRIGHT executive director has a background of 25 years as an adult addicted to scouting. She started simply "because my daughter's troop needed a leader."

For 10 years she served as a troop leader, then as an administrative volunteer. In 1961 she joined the paid professional staff and became executive director in 1967.

"I personally have experienced the opportunity to develop as a person and as a woman."

"No one has ever succeeded in measuring the opportunities in scouting for volunteer adult women, professional staff people and the girls themselves to expand and achieve their own potential."

DESPITE the innovations, scouting in the Southfield and Farmington areas involves fewer girls than in the past. But Lin Cargo, public relations director for the Southern Oakland Girl Scouts

feels much of the drop can be attributed to the decline in school age population.

Indeed, Mrs. Monroe has high hopes for what can be offered through their more central, expanded facilities. "I hope to present a really good image to the community, worthy of the good organization that we are."

"We are now the girl scout headquarters" of yesteryear, or the girl scout office of yesterday. We are now the Girl Scout Service Center—which is what we intend to be."

TV comedy writer, next at Town Hall

Irene Kampen, script writer for the Lucy Show with Lucille Ball and Vivian Vance, comes to the Farmington Town Hall on March 21.

Mrs. Kampen was a widow raising children singlehandedly who turned her experiences into a book, "Life Without George." TV viewers have since been enjoying those experiences for the past seven years on the Lucy Show.

When she returned to college as a 45-year old undergraduate she turned those experiences into the best-seller, "Due to Lack of Interest, Tomorrow Has Been Cancelled" which is now being turned into a TV situation comedy series by a major network.

In addition to six other books, she is a regular contributor of short stories to McCall's, Ladies Home Journal, Woman's Day and Good Housekeeping.

The lecture is held at 11 a.m. in Northland Theater, in Southfield, followed by a celebrity lunch at Vlad-



IRENE KAMPEN

mir's restaurant on Grand River and 8 Mile Rd.

Reservation inquiries are to be addressed to the Farmington Scroptinist Club, 34032 Moore Dr., Farmington, 48024. Telephone calls will be taken by calling 474-9204.

Flora Hommell, a pioneer for childbirth without pain

By SHIRLEE IDEN

Life can be beautiful. And so should the birth of a child.

Flora Hommell has spent 24 years of her life as an advocate of painless childbirth.

"Our goal is to get the best birth experience possible," she said.

"We need to teach women that childbirth is a nice experience and not a bad one. Childbirth has been made into a sickness when it should be treated as a normal, healthy event."

"PAIN IS not a part of normal childbirth." Mrs. Hommell was first exposed to the idea of painless childbirth when she had a baby of her own with no pain.

"I got into it quite by accident

because I had a lot of questions," she said.

Her curiosity led to taking classes in France where she lived. "I didn't know any alternatives," she said, "except suffering and pain or being knocked out by drugs."

CLASSES demonstrated what the stages of a normal childbirth are, proper breathing which prevents pain, and included involving the husband in the birth.

For Mrs. Hommell the training worked well and she suffered little discomfort.

Subsequently, she studied with Dr. F. Lamaze and Dr. Pierre Velay who had studied in Russia to augment their knowledge of childbirth.

"In France, the method spread rapidly," she said. "I brought the message to this country," she said.

And she has been crusading to reach more people for two decades.

IN ORDER to do this, she entered Wayne State University and became a registered nurse.

"When you have a good experience, you want to share it," she said.

"Most people have the desire to contribute to their fellow men and I want to use my own life to make things better for others."

"In America, we are entrenched in our technology," she said. "Close to 90 percent of doctors are male, so it has to do with male chauvinism."

"Textbooks about women are

written by men, and most physicians are abysmally ignorant about sexuality."

MRS. HOMMELL believes every woman can gain through taking painless childbirth classes.

"Most are looking for pain relief," she said.

"The degree of pain relief is a major criteria. We're not really trying to get rid of drugs, but the need for them."

"About half the women using the method don't have any pain at all and others say they didn't have enough pain to require drugs."

"They know a drugless birth is better for the baby."

Another reason for taking the classes is that women want their husbands involved.