

St. Mary's County Commission for Women
Minutes March 21, 2011
Our History is our strength

The meeting was called to order by Norma Pipkin at 5:30 p.m. Members present were: Juanita Nether, Krisanne Bentley, Denise Krumenacker, Gretchen Hardman, Norma Pipkin, Pat Friend, Meredith Wilkins-Arnold, Jamillia Thomas and Marta Kelsey. County Liaison Stephanie Figeroux was also present, as was as Sharisse Swales.

Because Meredith had to leave early, we jumped right into discussing the **Banquet** – what needs to be tweaked for next year and what worked well. Overall, the consensus was that it was a big success – lots of favorable comments afterwards. Things we need to consider next year:

- Check with entertainers to make sure they have what they need. At the last minute, we discovered Amy needed a CD player. It worked out OK, but would have been better to have not had to scramble at the last minute.
- Need to keep introductions shorter. In particular, the intro for Dottie Barclift would have been better shorter. And the introductions for the women of tomorrow were a bit too long.
- Should call name of nominee first, before we read the introduction so that they can walk up while we're reading them.
- The flowers, particularly the pink roses, did not hold up well. Perhaps we should go with carnations for everything next year.
- Consider setting a hard and fast limit on the number of people and consider having the banquet on a Friday night so the students won't have to leave so early.

Norma got envelopes to fit the CFW note paper and is sending Thank You notes to various people involved with the Banquet.

Family Violence Coordinating Council: Krisanne reported that she is also on the agenda for the next meeting, to keep everyone up to date on the school project. The Council agreed that they would write a letter of support to the school system to support the Healthy Relations initiative we have proposed. Sheriff Cameron is moving ahead with his plan to put a DV Unit under one roof at least two times a week. The number of DV incidents is going up; particularly disturbing is an increase in child abuse incidents. The general opinion is that this is a result of the economy and general uncertainty surround the comings and goings on the base.

Budget: We do not have the final figures on the banquet receipts vs. invoices but we did have a sizeable profit. Marta will get with Stephanie to find out how this translates into scholarship donations and other initiatives we might want to pursue. It is still very confusing.

Norma reported that she and Cynthia Brown had a meeting with Mr. Wyatt with the public schools regarding our letter proposing a **Healthy Relations Initiative**. He was very receptive and accommodating. He is hoping to put something together for an August kick-off. He is considering calling it "A Safety Net for Students", and would include: Safe Driving, Bullying (to follow up on last year's initiative, Cyber safety, Gangs (this is a state requirement), and adding something on relationships in dating. He would like us to identify a national figure who could come and work with staff, students, and parents, focusing particularly on the high schools. Mr. Wyatt also asked if we had any money to help pay for such a venture. Norma hopes to meet with Mr. Wyatt again in April. In the meantime, Norma will meet with Cynthia to discuss ways we can proceed. Norma has contacted the Network for suggestions on possible speakers.

Norma reported that we should have our new **By-Laws** in April.

The **minutes** for our February meeting were approved with the correction of Meredith's name.

As requested, Rear Admiral Michelle Howard's Five Points:

1. Commit to the Journey – Do what you have to do to not “burn down the wagon”
2. Travel light – have the right resources
3. Develop stamina – keep a positive mental attitude
4. Keep a sense of self ... and keep a sense of humor
5. Stay connected to other women
 - a. Invest the time to stay connected
 - b. Don't let isolation inhibit your success

Respectfully submitted by Marta Kelsey, Secretary