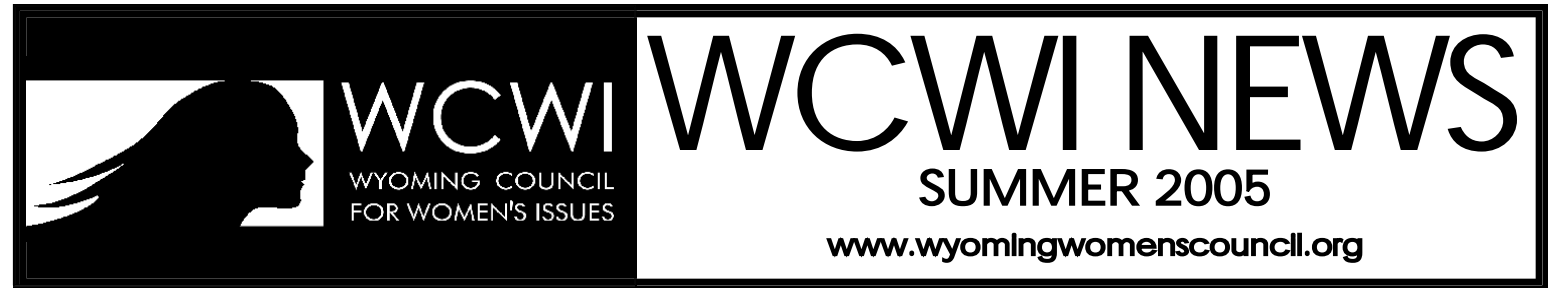


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WCWI elects officers WCWI members attend national convention

CHEYENNE - The Wyoming Council for Women's Issues elected new officers during its last meeting. The new officers are Chair: Theresa de Groh, Vice-Chair: Sherrill Helzer and Secretary: Jan Torres.

For more information on the officers, visit the Wyoming Council for Women's Issues site, www.wyomingwomenscouncil.org.

Love Your Body Day quickly approaching

Love Your Body Day 2005 is October 19 and is sponsored by the National Organization for Women (NOW) Foundation, a campaign of the Women's Health Project.

Love Your Body Day strives to promote positive images of women by encouraging events that fight the negative images of women portrayed in the media.

Visit <http://loveyourbody.nowfoundation.org> for more information.

The WCWI was represented at the National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) 36th annual convention in Miami Beach, Florida July 13-17, 2005. Hosted by the Florida Commission on the Status of Women, the convention was designed to encourage women to make change happen for the better in their communities.

Attending the convention to represent Wyoming were Jennifer Ingram, Cynthia Chavez Kelly and Sherrill Helzer of the WCWI.

Workshops included Understanding and Preventing Sexual Harassment, Parliamentary Procedure for Commissions, information on a women's health initiative in Georgia on osteoporosis, and a presentation by Diane Cabrera, Miss Latina USA. Others

included: ERA: Women's Unfinished Business, Rural Women's Health Project, Women and AIDS: A Growing Challenge, and Modern Day Slavery: The Tragedy of Human Trafficking, Women's Leadership: Programs of the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau, and Understanding and Preventing Sexual Harassment. A Women's Expo featured information and products of interest to women.

The National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) is a nonpartisan membership organization composed of regional, state, county and local commissions created by government to improve the status of women, as well as individual and affiliate members who believe in the work of women's commissions across the country.

Wyoming League of Women Voters takes on issues

The League of Women Voters of Wyoming held its annual convention in Fremont County May 21 and 22. The first plenary session took place at the Eastern Shoshone Cultural Center in Fort Washakie, where the center's director, Reba Teran, briefed the delegates on language preservation issues. At the convention banquet, State Representative Patrick Goggles and his legislative intern Andrea Clifford spoke about how Patrick's candidacy and election empowered tribal people and created an enormous voter turnout on the reservation.

"Behind me, there are others coming," said Goggles, nodding in Clifford's direction. "I'm just blazing the trail."

Women's Business Center schedules conference

DUBOIS - The 6th Annual Wyoming Women's Conference will be from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on September 10 at Headwaters Arts & Conference Center in Dubois.

Registration is \$40 and includes meals as well as seminars on Personal Financial Management, Small Business Workshops

The league passed a resolution opposing the privatization of Social Security and renewed support for a 1974 resolution calling for the elimination of sales tax on groceries. Incoming president Amy Williamson announced that the Legislative Service Office was the recipient of the 2005 Making Democracy Work Award.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Any person of voting age, male or female, may become a League member.

and a Networking Reception.

Participants must mail in registration by September 1. Registration forms are available at www.wyomingwomen.org or by calling toll-free (888) 524-1947. For more information on this event, visit www.wyomingwomen.org.

National and International Government Efforts support women

By Teresa de Groh

At this time of intense focus on the Supreme Court, I would like to raise a reminder of two documents that have been around for many years that could influence the form of national legislation. These are the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) that would attach to the U.S. Constitution and the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) that is an international treaty. Neither of these documents are legislation themselves, however, they are documents from which legislation can arise and can function as interpretive tools.

Equal Rights Amendment

The ERA was drafted by suffragist Alice Paul and introduced in Congress in 1923. It followed on the heels U.S. actions recognizing a woman's right to vote. However, it was not until 1971 and 1972 that the U.S. Congress approved the ERA for ratification by the states. Wyoming joined 35 other states in ratifying the ERA. However, by 1982 (59 years later!), the ERA still needed ratification by three more states and must now be reintroduced in Congress. According to various women's organizations, every year since 1982, the ERA has been reintroduced in Congress and every year it fails to make it out of committee.

The ERA is very short and simple:

Section 1. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

Section 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

Section 3. This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.

Information about the history of the ERA and constitutional commentaries are available on the Internet.

Commentaries providing arguments for and against ratification of the ERA are also abundant. Would the ERA be a useful tool in combating wage discrimination, improving employment practices, and obtaining needed social services? Think about it!

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

CEDAW is an international treaty that has been around since 1979 and has been ratified by 180 countries. All the G8 nations have signed and ratified the treaty, except the U.S.

The United Nations, Department of Economic & Social Affairs, Division for the Advancement of Women provides the full text of CEDAW, along with a lot of other information for consideration regarding CEDAW on their web site www.un.org/womenwatch/daw. Here are a few excerpts from the UN web site:

[CEDAW,] adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is often described as an international bill of rights for women, consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination.

In its preamble, the Convention explicitly acknowledges that "extensive discrimination against women continues to exist", and emphasizes that such discrimination "violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity". As defined in article 1, discrimination is understood as "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex...in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field." The Convention gives positive affirmation to the principle of equality by requiring States parties to take "all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men" (article 3).

The U.S. has been in the ratification process since President Carter first signed the treaty in 1980. The treaty has been in the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations committee ever since.

As with the ERA, there is a wealth of information regarding CEDAW—arguments for and against the treaty—on the Internet. Educate yourself regarding CEDAW. Form an opinion on whether the treaty should be ratified or not and communicate with your Senators!

CHAIR'S COLUMN

I am pleased to announce to you the results of the WCWI election of officers for the next two years. You may have expected this column to be written by Virginia (Nina) Romero-Caron, who was originally elected to Chair the WCWI, however, Nina has chosen to decline her election.

Nina, a University of Wyoming extension educator and registered dietician, is going to be spending a significant amount of time during the next year in South America on sabbatical. Congratulations Nina! However, the time commitment required by this sabbatical resulted in Nina declining her election to Chair the WCWI.

Teresa de Groh (me), living in Jackson and representing District 9, was elected to the position of Chair after Nina's declination. Sherrill Helzer from Torrington, representing District 8, was elected Vice Chair. Jan Torres in Rock Springs, and representing District 3, was elected Secretary. The position of Treasurer was eliminated last year through an amendment to the WCWI by-laws. Since Wyoming Business Council staff must manage WCWI finances in any case, council members decided to do away with the redundancy.

In the Spring 2005 newsletter, Michelle Aldrich (our past Chair) summarized well the accomplishments of the WCWI during her four-year tenure as Chair. All council members thank Michelle for her wonderful leadership during that time.

As Michelle noted, however, there is still much to be done for the women and children of Wyoming. Over the next few months, the WCWI will again assess project goals and resources. The Wyoming Women's Issues Survey, completed last year, will be an important tool for the WCWI in prioritizing projects and focusing progress on issues that matter most to Wyoming women.

As the newly elected chair, I welcome the leadership opportunity council members have offered to me. I am looking forward to building on the WCWI's accomplishments to improve the lives of Wyoming women. And I am looking forward to keeping you informed about WCWI's activities via this column and the rest of the articles in our newsletter.

Teresa de Groh

Vacation Health News: Ten tips for sticking with the diet while on the road

By CNN.com

(AP) -- Here are tips from LSU's Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Baton Rouge for staying on the diet wagon while vacationing:

1. Plan ahead. Check dining options on the road and at your destination. Skip hot dogs and pizza and look for fruit, soup and sandwiches. Enjoy local fresh specialties, farm stands.
2. Understand the Menu. Watch out for high-fat warnings, such as fried, buttery, au gratin, etouffe, sauteed, rich, creamy, and breaded. Ask about sauces, toppings, methods of preparation. Always choose grilled. Beware of the breadbasket.
3. Think outside the box. Many fast food places have added healthy options and even offer fruit as a side dish.
4. Watch portion sizes. Split entrees. Restaurant servings are typically far larger than recommended portion sizes.
5. Be salad savvy. Some have more calories than a cheeseburger. Steer
6. Consider a condo or unit with kitchenette where you can store healthy snacks. Or bring a cooler for bottled water and low-fat dairy products.
7. Watch the alcohol. Choose light beer or wine rather than hard liquor and sweetened drinks.
8. Be aware of your emotional response. If you eat more than you plan, seeing it as a catastrophe will only set you up for failure. Get back on track at your next meal, and try for extra activity.
9. Plan pleasures other than food or drink -- including physical activity. Park farther away, and walk when sightseeing.
10. Hold a family meeting ahead of time and discuss ways you can help each other eat less and stay active.

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Library to host traveling Elizabeth I exhibit

POWELL - The Powell Branch Library will host a traveling exhibit about Elizabeth I from August 11 to September 30, 2005.

The event comes from the American Library Association (ALA) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). *Elizabeth I: Ruler and Legend* is a new traveling exhibition for libraries that commemorates the 400th anniversary of the death of Queen Elizabeth I of England. In addition to the exhibit, the library will also have related events of their own to accompany it. The exhibition encourages audiences not only to reacquaint them-

Wyoming Race for the Cure® slated for August 20

The 2005 Race for the Cure has been scheduled for Saturday August 20th, 2005 at the State Capital in Cheyenne.

Last year the organization granted over \$230,000 throughout the state of Wyoming to fight this disease. Donations granted on behalf of the organization fund breast cancer awareness, education and detection programs. Seventy five percent of net proceeds raised stay in Wyoming. The remaining supports national breast cancer research.

To register for the 2005 Komen Wyoming Race for the Cure, visit the Web site at www.komenwyoming.org.

clear of cobb salads, Mediterranean salads and taco salads, or at least ask the waiter to hold the cheese, refried beans and other high-calorie items. Get dressing on the side and ask for light vinaigrette.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thurs., August 11, 2005

Powell Branch Library opens the traveling exhibit, *Elizabeth I: Ruler and Legend*. The exhibit runs through September 30. For more information, call (307) 754-8828.

Sat., August 20, 2005

The 2005 Komen Wyoming Race for the Cure will be in Cheyenne. Visit www.komenwyoming.org for more information.

September, 2005

Two Sheridan County venues will host the Wyoming Council for the Humanities book discussion program "Ordinary Lives, Memoirs of American Women" starting in September: the Clearmont Branch Library and the Tongue River Branch Library. The six books in the series are "Bronx Primitive" by Kate Simon, "An American Childhood" by Annie Dillard, "Coming of Age in Mississippi" by Anne Moody, "Road Song" by Natalie Kusz, "All But the Waltz" by Mary Clearman Blew, and "Two-Part Invention" by Madeleine L'Engle. Norleen Healy will be the discussion leader for both groups. Please contact the library to register.

Mon., September 5, 2005

Labor Day

Sat., September 10, 2005

The 6th Annual Wyoming Women's Conference will be from 7:30 a.m to 6 p.m. at Headwaters Arts & Conference Center in Dubois. For more information, visit the Wyoming Women's Business Center at www.wyomingwomen.org.

Wed., October 19, 2005

Love Your Body Day - Sponsored by the National Organization for Women (NOW) Foundation, a campaign of the Women's Health Project. Visit <http:////loveyourbody.nowfoundation.org> for more information.

Legislative Committee Update 2005

By Teresa de Groh

In this edition, I'd like to report on legislative interim committee activities and raise awareness regarding two national & international efforts that could impact legislation. In the next newsletter, we will have information regarding WCWI's activities, such as an up-date of the Legal Handbook and efforts to publish Spanish language versions of WCWI documents.

Legislative Interim Committee Activities

Spring, summer and fall are times when our legislators are busy obtaining information on issues of interest, as directed by the legislature. Formal studies are approved by the legislature and assigned to Interim Committees. The Wyoming legislative web site <http://legisweb.state.wy.us> contains information regarding all approved Interim Committee studies, committee members, meeting schedules, and meeting minutes. Check it out!

I have included a selection of approved interim committee studies in this column. As you may know, in 2004, WCWI commissioned an issues survey of Wyoming women. I used the results of this survey to guide my selection in reporting the following list of approved interim committee studies. The description of the studies is as provided on the legislative web site.

Judiciary

Health care reform. Tort reform, including issues related to formation of a risk retention pool and details relating to a medical review panel. Examination of the medical care provided to inmates at the state and local level, including costs and liabilities related thereto.

Justice related issues. Review court-ordered placements of juveniles under Title 14 and involuntary commitments under Title 25, the roles of courts, the Department of Health, the Department of Family Services and service providers, as appropriate. Pursuant to 2005 HB340, the Committee will receive a report by November 1, 2005 with recommendations for statutory changes relating to substance abuse and mental health systems, which may result in significant additional work for the Committee late in the interim. Subcommittees may be necessary to review some of these issues more comprehensively.

Mineral, Business & Economic Development

Economic development programs. The Committee will look at all economic and community development programs, including the Wyoming Business Council Challenge Loan Program, State Lands and Investment Board grants and loans, the Business Ready Community Program, proposed venture capital programs and community enhancement programs. The Committee will look for any duplication, inefficiencies and ways to make these programs more user friendly. The Minerals Committee will coordinate with the Revenue Committee regarding the proposed venture capital programs.

Health & Social Services

Reports. Develop appropriate legislation to respond to the numerous reports required by law to be given to the Committee. The Committee

expects the following reports to generate the most legislative activity:

- The methamphetamine initiative planning study (2005 HB0275), report due 10/1/05.
- The Health Care Commission studies, including the health care IT study (2004 SEA31/SF0029) and the Medical Errors Commission Study (2004 Special Sess. HEA02/HB1010), due 10/1/05, and the WyoCARE study.
- The Children and Families Initiative (2004 HEA28/HB33), report due 10/1/05.
- The Department of Health review (2005 HEA99/HB338) report due 9/1/05.

Health care/health insurance costs. Study to investigate the rising health care/health insurance costs in Wyoming. Questions to be asked include:

1. Are health care costs higher in Wyoming than other states and, if so, why;
2. Why are private health insurance costs rising faster than underlying health care costs? Particular areas of interest include cost shifting, structural problems, use of out-of-state providers and prescription drugs. The Health Care Commission has already done much of the necessary research. The study itself should both directly result in cost control legislation and prepare the Committee to deal with the expected reports from the Health Care Commission.

Health care provider shortages. The Health Care Commission is developing a database showing health care provider shortages, building on work done by the Department of Health. The Committee will examine strategies to train and recruit health care professionals to fix identified shortages.