

Law concerning women discussed at conference

By CANDICE HILL
Battalion Reporter

The "Legal Rights of Brazos County Women" conference held Saturday at Bryan High School produced some very positive reactions from the women who attended, said Rita Marsh-Birch, the program coordinator.

About 160 women attended. The only problem, said Sarah Ryan, Child Services attorney for Brazos County, was that there were not enough women from the lower socio-economic class present at the conference. These women, less educated than middle class women, are the ones the conference should have reached, Ryan said.

The conference had five topics: family law, women's credit rights, Title IX, women's employment rights, and crime (assault). Ryan discussed the state regulations concerning family law.

Ryan said that the duty of the husband has always been to support his wife, but she does not have the reciprocal duty unless he is incapable of doing so. But Ryan said she believes that the times are changing.

"I think in these modern times, the courts are beginning to recognize that the traditional concepts of the husband's powers, as well as duties, are changing," she said. "The powers between the husband and wife are being more divided by agreement."

Ryan also discussed community and separate property and what happens in the case of dissolution of a marriage. Dissolution can occur by death of a spouse, annulment or divorce.

One of the most popular topics was women's credit rights, Marsh-Birch said. The speaker, Ginger Lenihan, an officer of the City National Bank, spoke on four main topics: What is a financial statement? Where does one get financial help? How does one establish credit? And what information is available at the Brazos Valley Credit Bureau?

The bureau offers information on one's personal credit standing. Education and Title IX were discussed by Charol Shakeshaft, editor of the South Central Women's Studies Newsletter. Title IX ended sexual discrimination in the schools and colleges in the nation. Shakeshaft mentioned a few areas where practices have had to be changed: admissions and recruitment, physical education classes, extracurricular activities and honors and awards.

Girls must be given the same consideration as boys in every area of school except the bodily contact sports such as football, wrestling and boxing, she said.

Morris Jennings, Compliance Officer of the Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor in Bryan, spoke about equal employment opportunities for women.

Jennings was a replacement for scheduled speaker Rhobia Taylor, an administrator with the Southwest Regional Office of the U.S. Dept. of Labor, who was fogged in in Dallas.

He said that according to the Equal Pay Act, employers are required to pay equal wages for equal work. Equal work is that which requires equal skill, effort and responsibility. Jennings said that these three terms are the most important ones in that law and that the jobs should be performed under equal working conditions.

Judith Wooten of the Educational Psychology Department spoke mainly about sexual crimes. She said that 60-70 percent of the sexual crimes which occur are at least partially planned.

Wooten said 66 percent of the rapes studied are committed by strangers to the victims, but 34 percent are committed by a person who has known the woman in some way.

Judge Bradley Smith of the County Court-at-law also spoke about sexual assault.

According to the Penal Code of Texas, there are two main categories of sexual assault. The least serious is the simple assault. This is defined as intentional and offensive bodily contact with another person. The other, more serious, type occurs when a person intentionally brings about bodily injury to another person.

The first thing a woman should do after being raped is to notify the police as soon as possible, Smith said. She should also be taken to the hospital for a medical examination. Victims should be encouraged to go to personal counseling services, he said.

Once the victim has completed a police statement and the case has been filed, she has no more involvement with the case unless it is brought to court, Smith said. Only about 10 percent of the cases are brought to trial.

Marsh-Birch feels that the crime topic was liked the best by the majority of women.

One woman said that the reason she came to the conference was because it is rare in this area to find things that deal with women's problems. Another woman said that she did not know much about women's legal rights and it is something she felt she should know about.

Old doughboys mark Armistice

United Press International
PARIS — Eleven doughty Michigan doughboys Saturday saluted at the moment World War I ended 60 years ago as France's President Valery Giscard d'Estaing laid a wreath at the tomb of France's unknown soldier.

The leader of the group, Oral "Moose" LaCombe, shook hands with Giscard after the ceremony at the Arch of Triumph.

"Where are you from?" Giscard asked in English. "From Michigan," replied the voluble LaCombe, speechless for once.

The 11 were part of the last surviving World War I veterans drum and bugle corps. Their trip was paid for with a fund-raising drive given by their fellow townspeople of Sault Sainte Marie, Mich.

The old soldiers, aged 79 to 87, their wives and friends — about 50

people in all — attended a memorial mass at Notre Dame Cathedral with the French president and other French and foreign dignitaries.

The veterans shivered in the pale autumn sunlight as Giscard placed the wreath at the arch at the stroke of the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month — 60 years to the minute of the end of the "war to end all wars." They shivered again as a military parade wound down the Champs Elysees.

Asked how the French naval band compared with their own drum and bugle corps, Jim Callon, 79, said, "They make us look sick. But then they're a little younger than we are."

"Words can't describe the way I feel," LaCombe said. "The Soo (the local nickname for Sault Sainte Marie) is going to seem awfully tame after this."

Frank Miller also celebrated his 87th birthday Saturday. "I never expected to celebrate it here. This is a wonderful day," he said.

On Sunday the veterans visited

battlefields at Chateau Thierry and Belleau Wood where some of them fought and where some of their comrades are buried.

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