

SKWA NEWS

Southwest Kerry Women's Association, The O'Connell Centre, Carhan Road, Caherciveen, Co Kerry

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the third issue of SKWA News, which we are now posting out to women within the SKWA area (*Kells to Sneem*). We would like to reach as many women as possible so if you are aware of others who would like a newsletter please let us know.

(Back issues can requested from the office)

The newsletter is one way we hope to strengthen the sense of a 'community of women'. To highlight issues or events whether local or national that are relevant to women and hear the views and ideas of women. To that end we would welcome your letters, articles or suggestions for the next issue.

Plenty has happened since the last newsletter was published and we report on a number of notable events which we hope you find interesting.

The SKWA office is staffed from 9.00am to 1.00pm Monday to Friday. You are very welcome to visit. We are situated behind the O'Connell Centre. Staff are: Mairead Lynch—Network Coordinator / Development Worker, Helen O'Sullivan—Office Assistant and Nancy Holmes-Smith—Development Worker. We can always be contacted on the numbers above and an answering service is on when we are out of the office.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

International Women's Day was celebrated on March 6th 2004. Guest speaker was Nellie O'Cleirigh author of '*Hardship and High Living—Irish Women's Lives 1808—1923*'. We were delighted to see women from as far as Glencar and Castlecove, to Valentia, Caherciveen, the Glen and all surrounding areas attending.

Nellie gave a very informative description of the lives of women in that era which was followed by a question and answer session. The afternoon finished off with tea, coffee and lovely home baking supplied by Ann O'Keeffe of Portmagee. Everyone agreed a most enjoyable day was had by all.

Breda Brennan SKWA Chairperson

Photographs were taken on the day as women arrived. We plan to have some words, from individuals, to accompany their pictures and then produce a little memento of the day reflecting the lives of women in 2004.

CONSULTATION DAY

A Consultation Day, open to all local women, was held in Tech Amergin on Saturday 8th May, and provided an opportunity for workshops to be run to assess and discuss the needs of local women. Such information informs the work of SKWA. A report of the day will be sent to all who participated.

Workshops looked at issues under four headings:

- **Women and Health**
- **Rural Women and Poverty**
- **Education and Training of Women**
- **Violence Against Women**

Interesting ideas emerged as to how needs could be met as well as common themes such as childcare and transport difficulties.

Some participants expressed interest in, and have put their names forward to, form groups under the above headings to work for change in the lives of local women. SKWA will be supporting this work and if you would like to join one of these 'issue based' groups please contact Nancy or Mairead on 066 9473397. (*Costs incurred in participating, such as transport, babysitting or eldercare can be reimbursed.*)

The afternoon of the Consultation Day was given over to speakers on the issue of Breast Cancer. Deirdre O'Connell from **Europa Donna**, (*the Irish wing of the European Breast Cancer Campaign*), talked about her voluntary work lobbying those in power for better breast cancer screening and patient care services. Europa Donna are able to commission extensive



reports to inform their work and also organise conferences for those involved in all aspects of cancer work, from research workers; to medics; to carers; to patients and their families which allows them to be at the cutting edge of the field.

The second speaker on the afternoon was **Marion Barnes, a cancer care nurse at Tralee General Hospital**. She was hugely informative about the breast, changes and diseases of the breast and particularly cancer and its symptoms. A big emphasis was placed on the self examination process as we do not have a screening programme in Kerry. At present Tralee can only cater for people who have symptoms or are referred by their GP's. Patients are seen as part of the general surgery clinic but the availability of an appointment is within a week and staff do their utmost to facilitate women, and the few men who get breast cancer too.

We were able to appreciate the work of both these women and they were delighted to meet all the thirty women who attended on the day.

Nancy Holmes-Smith

BEREAVEMENT COUNSELLING

Free and completely confidential service available **every Friday** in Caherciveen and is open to all individuals and families.

Please call: 087 9230160

A WOMEN'S MODEL FOR SOCIAL WELFARE REFORM

SKWA were one of several women's groups and organisations that worked with the National Women's Council of Ireland to launch their campaign to reform the social welfare system in Killarney in January.

Since then, Nancy from the 'Learning for Living Project' (SKWA), and Mary Grandfield, Citizens Information Officer have visited several groups to explain and highlight issues in this report and this work will be continued in the autumn.

One concern that has come to the forefront is the eligibility for a state pension and the disadvantaged position women find themselves in.

Because women tend to be the carers of children and stay at home for a proportion of their working life they may find themselves short on PRSI contributions to qualify for a contributory state pension.

Before you can calculate if you are entitled to a state pension you need to know how many PRSI contributions are recorded for you. To help you take this first step we have enclosed a standard letter which you can fill in with your details and send off. You should receive back a table showing the record held for you.

Nancy Holmes-Smith

DON'T FORGET TO VOTE ON JUNE 11TH

2004

LOCAL ELECTIONS

Impact on all our lives our communities and area

WHY?

Because Local Authorities have responsibility for:

- Road Transport and Safety
- Housing and Buildings
- Water Schemes and Sewerage
- Environmental Protection
- Agriculture, Education, Welfare

EU ELECTIONS

Why vote in the EU elections?

The EU Parliament has an ever greater impact on our lives.

More and More policies which affect us are being made in Europe.

- Laws on employment and rights
- Policies on food and water safety
- Peace and Prosperity are at the heart of the E.U

We need MEPs who will be good

How do I know I am registered?

- Check the current Register of Electors at the Post Office, Library or Garda Station
- If your name is not on the register get a green Supplementary Registration form
- Complete the form and take it to the Garda Station with some form of identification such as a driver's Licence or a passport. Have the form stamped and signed.
- Post the form to your Local Authority Franchise Section

EVENING AT THE BRANDON

The National Dairy Council of Ireland hosted an information evening at the Brandon Hotel, Tralee on Wed. 28th April. SKWA ran a bus from Valentia picking up ten ladies on route, for the evening. The event was chaired by Vera O'Leary of the Kerry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre.

The first speaker of the night was Dr. Helen Casey, Nutritionist with the National Dairy Council. She instructed those present on what constituted a well-balanced and nutritional diet which in the long run leads to a healthier lifestyle and the prevention of many illnesses.

Osteoporosis (thinning of the bones) is one illness where a good diet rich in calcium can help. Dr. Helen Casey stressed the importance of a minimum intake of 3 servings from the milk group per day an 5 servings for teenagers and pregnant women. A serving is equivalent to one of the following (or similar):

A glass of milk (all types) / 1 oz of cheese / ½ cheese sandwich / 10oz of cottage cheese / a carton of yogurt / a bowl of breakfast cereal with milk / 1 slice of pizza / 1 portion of lasagne.

Since many of us experience a life filled with work, homelife, childcare etc. we often feel like we are being stretched every which way. Mr Armien Abrahams, Clinical Psychologist, was on hand to explain how to recognize stress and, more importantly, how to deal with it. I for one was glad to learn that stress can be healthy (in small doses).

Along with eating well and feeling well a woman must also look well. Riding to the rescue was Nuala O'Farrell of *Clarins* who advised us on skin care and make-up tips. It's amazing what a little lipstick and mascara can do! The evening rounded off with a serving of cheese and wine.

Attendance numbered 265 and all the proceeds raised (€1325.00) went to the Kerry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre.

Christine Cahill, Valentia

PARENTING ALONE

The Southwest Kerry Women's Association in conjunction with Citizen Information Services and the South Kerry Development Partnership held an information day in the Caherciveen Library on 30th April 2004. Two speakers from SPICE (which is a network of one parent families in Tralee) gave a presentation on their or-

ganisation. They spoke about the support they got from being in a group with other one parent families.

The day was not very well attended but the people that were there were very interested in setting up a group for people parenting alone. At the meeting it was suggested that interested people from the South Kerry area would visit the SPICE group in Tralee to see for themselves how the group works. The Southwest Kerry Women's Association will organise this. If there are any One Parent Families who would like to join the group please phone 0669473397 and leave your name and telephone number and we will get back to you.

Mairead Lynch, Network Coordinator

CORNER ON HEALTH

With breast cancer being the topic on our Consultation Day we have enclosed literature from the Irish Cancer Society with this newsletter. The following topic was also raised on the day and we thought it was worth raising again.

FITTING A BRA

We wear bras to provide support to delicate breast tissue and give a sculptured shape. A bra should be comfortable and like a shoe, should fit properly or it could cause problems. Similarly, the same size may be slightly different in different makes so always *'try before you buy'*. It is estimated that eight in ten women are wearing the wrong bra size! It is best to get a professional fitting at least once a year or after dramatic weight loss or gain. Go to your local department store or specialist boutique.

A bra's cup size is the difference between measurements around the rib cage and the apex of the bust. If your bust is one inch bigger than your rib cage, an 'A' cup should fit; two inches and you need a 'B' cup, and so on.

To check that the cup is correct, bend over as if to touch your toes, each breast should sit neatly in the cup and not spill out over the top or sides.

If it does, you need a bigger cup size. Most of the support you need comes from the strap around your body, so make sure it's not too tight or loose. Equally shoulder straps should be adjusted so they sit comfortably and do not leave red marks. Make sure your breast



is completely cupped by any under wiring. They should hold your breasts rather than sit on them.

DO YOU DRIVE?



Are you a woman over 50 without a driving licence? Would you like to drive but need fi-

USEFUL ADDRESSES

ADAPT- Kerry Women's Refuge Service
(066) 7129100

Kerry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre
1800 633 333

The Tralee Women's Resource Centre
(066) 7120622.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY Specific interest to women

Notice of all up and coming events organised by SKWA can be found in the **Kerryman Newspaper** in the **Community Notes** under **Southwest Kerry Women's Association**.

NOTICE BOARD General interest

Yoga Studio, St. Brendan's Terrace, Caherciveen.

Tania Dennehy is offering classes from her own studio from July to September.

Monday and Thursday evening 7.30pm—9.00pm and Tuesday and Friday mornings 10.00am—11.30am. Classes must be booked as places are limited—call **Tania on 066 9473790**

Cost is €7.00 / class but payment is required monthly in advance.

The Irish Baroque Orchestra will be coming to Valentia Island to play at the 'Slate Quarry' from August 15th—22nd we will have more information nearer the time.

LDSIP - Bursary Fund for Individuals Tom Mc Bride Fund

Under the Services to the Unemployed measure, an education and training support fund is available to assist people on low income to get qualifications. This fund, called the Tom Mc Bride Bursary Fund, has been helpful in assisting with fees, travel costs, childcare costs, and books required for courses.

The fund is helpful to people engaged in certified further and higher education part time courses.

A small fund is now available to help people who are currently undertaking courses in education or training. The closing date for applications will be 20th September 2004.

The fund is administered by the Education & Training committee of SKDP.

Application forms and further details are available from:

Mary Lyne, Head of Education & Training Dept (066 9472724)

Email: mlyne@skdp.net

Employment Rights Awareness Day

25th June 10am — 4pm

Caherciveen Library

Hosted by the Citizens Information Centre **ALL WELCOME**

School of Health and Social Care

Introducing New Courses for the training and Education of Carers of older people

Morning / Evening / Saturday or Distance Learning courses available in:

- Working with Older People (FETAC Qualification)
- Caring for the Carer
- Certificate in Caring Skills
- Certificate in Caring for the Child and Adult with a Disability

Course venues; Dublin, Tralee, Killarney and Home Study / Open

Leaning Nationwide / On-site and group training available by arrangement.

For a brochure contact: School of Health and Social Care

27 29 Carysfort Avenue

Blackrock, Co. Dublin