

## *Women's History Month Events Listed*

### **President's Corner By Mary Seeger**

Although the Grand Rapids community has celebrated Women's History Month each March since 1988, especially during our triennial LEGACY years, the event is actually of fairly recent origin. As recently as the 1970's, women's history was almost unknown in the K-12 curriculum and the general public consciousness.

In 1978, a group in California initiated a "Women's History Week" with the focal point of March 8, International Women's Day. In March 1980, President Jimmy Carter encouraged the idea of women's history week, and a Joint Congressional Resolution declared one week in March of 1981 to be National Women's History Week. The week was expanded to the entire month of March by House and Senate in 1987. Since 1992, a Presidential Proclamation has provided the directive for what is now a major celebration in the United States and abroad.

This issue of our newsletter contains notes on numerous activities coming up in March 2005. Do plan to attend some of the events, keep your eye on the coverage in *The Grand Rapids Press*, and for fun and materials and inspiration, check the website of the National Women's History Project as well as our website,

[www.ggrwhc.org](http://www.ggrwhc.org) for updates to the information in the newsletter.

### **Vernis Schad: An Inspiration Barbara Robinson**

Vernis Schad's motto could be: "Work toward changing women's and girls' lives through education, self-esteem training and mentoring." She has long been involved in groups that espouse these principles.

Growing up in Iowa and California she was encouraged to attend Calvin College. After marriage to George Schad she became an integral part of Grand Rapids social action starting at her children's school. She was elected to the Grand Rapids Board of Education in 1970, serving until 1982, with four of those years as president of the board. In those years the board established the specialty schools, Zoo School, Blandford Nature Center, Walbridge Academy and City High.

In 1994 Vernis received the Community Service Award for her many contributions in the field of gender equity for her roles at the YWCA, in education and the Women's Resource Center. For several years she was a member of Greater Grand Rapids Women's History Council, also as president, before retiring in 2004. The last few years she and her husband, George, have been involved with the Executive Service Corps. This group matches their talents and expertise with those in many other countries, allowing them to live in other cultures while being of service.

The combination of Vernis' open and curious mind, added to her hard work ethic, which she used with passion in those areas close to her heart, has given the women of all ages in Grand Rapids the tools to succeed.

#### **In this issue you will find:**

- Information about various events taking place during Women's History Month.
- Grand Rapids Historical Society Programs for Winter and Spring 2005
- An article about Debra Muller
- The Women's History Council Calendar
- Membership information
- National Association of Personal Historians Conference in November

## Women's History Month Events

The website [www.ggrwhc.org](http://www.ggrwhc.org) will be updated as more information becomes available.  
Click on the LEGACY/Women's History Month tab.

### Greater Grand Rapids Women's History Council and Grand Rapids Historical Society

**'We Can Do It': Gathering the Histories of Women WW2 Veterans**, presenter Jennifer Holberg, English professor, Calvin College. During fall semester 2004, Jennifer Holberg's writing course at Calvin videotaped local women WW2 veterans to chronicle their experiences as part of the Library of Congress's Veterans History Project. She discusses the joys and challenges of the project, shares stories of the veterans who participated, and examines the need for oral histories.

**Thursday, March 10, 7:30 pm**  
**Gerald R. Ford Museum**

The program is free and a reception will follow.  
Contact: Jennifer Morrison 616/988-5400  
[after\\_word.jen@earthlink.net](mailto:after_word.jen@earthlink.net).

### Actors' Theatre

**The Ladies Of The Camellias** written by Lillian Garrett-Groag. Actors' Theatre has finally secured the release of this hilarious farce about an imagined encounter in Paris in 1897 between the two most famous theatre divas of their time, Sarah Bernhart and Eleonora Duse. Learning that the other is on the premises, each refuses to be the first to come out of her dressing room. In short order, we meet a Russian anarchist, two long suffering leading men, and the world famous actor Coquelin. A play for lovers of theatre. The play is written by a woman and focuses on two of the most famous women in world theatre, and will feature two actresses from the community in the title roles.

**Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, March 17, 18, 19 and 24, 25, and 26, 8:00 pm**  
**Spectrum Theater on the campus of GRCC, 160 Fountain NE**

Cost: Ticket price \$20.00 (reduced prices are available for groups, students and seniors)  
Box Office 616/234-3946.  
Contact: Fred Sebulske 616/234-3947  
[fsebulsk@grcc.edu](mailto:fsebulsk@grcc.edu).

### Calvin College Gender Studies

#### Film Series:

**Rebecca**  
**Friday, March 4, 7:00 pm**

**Always a Bridesmaid**  
**Monday, March 7, 7:00 pm**

**Frida**  
**Monday, March 21, 7:00 pm**

### Calvin College (continued)

#### **Mean Girls**

**Monday, Mar. 28, 7 pm**

**All films will be shown at the Bytwerk Theater, DeVos Communication Center, 1810 East Beltline Ave SE**

#### **Presentations:**

**The Daughters of Thunder: Early African American Women Preachers**, presenter Michelle Loyd-Paige, Sociology Professor.  
**Thursday, March 10, 3:30 pm**

**Chronicling the Lives of Women WWII Veterans: The Meeting of Oral History and Freshman Composition** presenter Jennifer Holberg, English Professor.  
**Tuesday, March 22, 3:30 pm**

**Leaving Eden...Early 20th Century American Women's Theological Reflections On The Original Sin Of Man...And Woman**, presenter Kristen Kobes DuMez, History Professor.  
**Tuesday, March 29, 3:30 pm**  
**All presentations will be given at the Meeter Center Lecture Hall, Hekman Library, 1855 Knollcrest Circle SE**  
Contact: Christina deGroot, [cdegroot@calvin.edu](mailto:cdegroot@calvin.edu).

#### **Croning Events**

Women of all ages are welcome to attend one or more of these events to learn more about croning.

**Workshop: What Does It Mean to Be A Crone?**  
Does hearing the word "crone" make you recoil? No wonder. Webster's Dictionary defines crone as an ugly, withered old woman, a hag. Crone means a female leader, counselor, and healer, experienced and wise. A crone is defined as a woman, age 56 or older who has entered or passed through menopause. It implies ancient female wisdom. The verb to crone means to enact a ritual announcing that a woman has reached the time in her life when she is able to integrate her many years of learning into the two greatest of all spiritual gifts: wisdom and compassion, which she shares with others. In ancient times, to crone meant "to crown." Croning is a formal ritual about accepting the passage from knowledge to wisdom and recognizing that wisdom comes from experience.  
**Saturday, April 9, 9:30 am-12:30 pm**  
**Fountain Street Church**

## Croning Events (continued)

### Community Croning Ceremony

**Sunday, May 1, 2:30-4:30 pm**

#### Fountain Street Church

Contact People: Janet Crump, Stillpoint Yoga, 616/682-8324 janet@crumpandweir.com, or Mary Thompson, Fountain Street Church, 616/459-8386, Ext. 227, mthompson@fountainstreet.org.

## Grand Rapids Art Museum

### *A Five-Part Lecture Series On Contemporary*

*Women Artists*, presenter Sara Albert, Art Professor, Grand Rapids Community College.

#### *Women Artists in History (Artemisia Gentileschi, Mary Cassatt, Berthe Morisot)*

**Tuesday, March 1, 3:30-4:30 pm**

#### *Women Artists and Modernism (Georgia O'Keeffe, Frida Kahlo)*

**Tuesday, March 8, 3:30-4:30 pm**

#### *Women Artists and Contemporary Art (Alice Neel, Louise Nevelson, Marisol)*

**Tuesday, March 15, 3:30-4:30 pm**

#### *Women Artists and Feminism (Judy Chicago, Miriam Schapiro)*

**Tuesday, March 22, 3:30-4:30 pm**

#### *Women Artists and Postmodernism (Cindy Sherman)*

**Tuesday, March 29, 3:30-4:30 pm**

#### **All programs will be held at the Grand Rapids Art Museum, North Auditorium**

The programs are free and open to the public.

### *Art 101. Anyone Could Do That!:*

*Understanding Modern Art*, presenter Sara Albert, Art Professor, Grand Rapids Community College. Join Arts Alive of the Grand Rapids Art Museum for lunch and an interactive talk about various art history topics. Every third Thursday of the month, local professors and art experts will host a fun and informative talk about artists and their art. Lunch is provided. Reservations are required.

**Thursday, March 17, 11:45 am-12:45 pm**

#### **Grand Rapids Art Museum**

Cost: \$8 members, \$12 nonmembers, lunch provided.

Contact: Tracy at 616/831-2912 for more information or to register. Email inquiries to membership@gr-artmuseum.org.

## Grand Rapids Business Journal

### *Top Women Owned Businesses Luncheon*,

presented by the Grand Rapids Business Journal.

This event features keynote speaker Cynthia J.

Pasky, founder, president and CEO of Detroit-based Strategic Staffing Solutions, a provider of

## Grand Rapids Business Journal (continued)

information technology consulting services, customized solutions, and vendor management programs. She was named one of Detroit's Most Influential Women by Crain's Detroit Business.

**Tuesday, March 8, 12-2 pm**

#### **Pinnacle Center, Hudsonville**

Cost: Tickets are \$60 and corporate tables of ten are available for \$600. Reservations can be made via email at jburkett@geminipub.com.

Contact: Carole Valade, Editor, at 616/459-4545.

*Sponsored by Huntington Bank.*

## Grand Rapids Community College Diversity Learning Center

### *Betrayal of Trust: The Collapse of Global Public*

*Health*, presenter Laurie Garrett. Laurie Garrett is one of America's premier authorities on healthcare and disease prevention, and a powerful advocate for a more forceful response to threats to human health. She is the author of the best-selling books *The Coming Plague: Newly Emerging Diseases in a World Out of Balance* and *Betrayal of Trust: The Collapse of Global Public Health*, both of which have received widespread critical and popular acclaim.

She is the only person ever to have been awarded all three of the Big "Ps" of journalism. The Peabody, The Polk (twice), and The Pulitzer.

**Wednesday, March 2, 7:00 pm**

#### **Grand Rapids Community College, Applied Technology Center, Banquet Rooms**

Free and open to the public.

*Sponsored by Grand Rapids Community College Diversity Learning Center.*

### *Diversity: A Celebration of Unity Through*

*Differences*, keynote speaker, Consuelo Castillo Kickbusch - "Nurturing a New Generation of Leaders." Born and raised in a tiny barrio in Laredo, Texas, Consuelo Castillo Kickbusch overcame poverty, discrimination and illiteracy to become the highest-ranking Hispanic woman in the Combat Support Field of the United States Army. Barriers and records fell as she moved forward through her military career, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel and turning her knowledge and her experience to helping others along the path towards realizing their own effective leadership development.

Consuelo Kickbusch uses real life case studies and an interactive learning environment in support of successful leadership behaviors and guiding principals. Focusing on youth, she dedicates her passionate message to children and educators, saying that it is possible to take charge of your life and "we can all make our dreams come true."

**Thursday, March 17, 8:30 am-2:00 pm**

#### **Grand Rapids Community College, Applied Technology Center**

Free and open to the public.

*Sponsored by Grand Rapids Community College Diversity Learning Center.*

**Grand Rapids Community College  
Diversity Learning Center (continued)**

**Tres Vidas** is chamber music theatre work for singing actress and trio, based on the lives of three legendary Latin American women: renowned Mexican painter Frida Kahlo, Salvadoran peasant-activist Rufina Amaya and Argentine poet Alfonsina Storni.

**Tuesday, March 22, 7:00 pm  
Grand Rapids Community College Spectrum  
Theatre**

Free and open to the public.  
Funded by the Nokomis Foundation.

**GRCC Salute to Women Award Reception** will honor four outstanding women (alumna, students, employees, and former employees) who are exemplary in their roles as professionals, volunteers, or agents of change. Celebrate the diversity of the accomplishments of women throughout the College; and to encourage young women to pursue pathways to achievement.

**Tuesday, March 29, 1:00-3:00 pm  
Grand Rapids Community College, Applied  
Technology Center, Banquet Rooms**

Free and open to the public.  
Contact the Diversity Learning Center,  
616/234-3390, for information about all four  
programs.  
Sponsored by Grand Rapids Community College  
Diversity Learning Center.

**Grand Rapids Now**

**Roe v. Wade Fund-raiser** The event will include a showing of the critically acclaimed film "Vera Drake," about a woman in post-World War II London who helps women get abortions. There will also be raffles, displays and information on local organizations.

**Saturday, January 22, 7 pm  
Wealthy Theatre, 1130 Wealthy St SE**  
Cost: \$10. (Proceeds will go toward Grand Rapids NOW, Planned Parenthood Centers of West Michigan and Fountain Street Church Choice Fund.)  
Contact: Chapter Co-Chair Rosalynn Bliss,  
616/735-4087, grandrapidsnow@yahoo.com.

**International Women's Day Celebration**  
The event will focus on women's human rights. A film series will begin at 3 pm, followed by an international speaker at 7 pm. The event also will include food, informational tables and a book sale. Speaker to be announced.

**Friday, March 18, 3 to 9 pm  
Loosemore Auditorium, DeVos Center, Grand  
Valley State University, Grand Rapids campus,  
401 W. Fulton St.**

Cost: Free.  
Contact: grandrapidsnow@yahoo.com.

**Grand Rapids Public Library**

**Rediscovering Constance Rourke and the Roots of Cultural Studies**, presenter Jo Ellyn Clarey. Turning her back on the East Coast and academic settings, Constance Rourke (1885-1941) led a rich intellectual life from her modest home in Grand Rapids. At a time when women scholars were rarely taken seriously, Rourke's ideas shaped a movement which today we call "cultural studies." In her best-known book, *American Humor*, it has been quipped is "always being rediscovered." Rourke's seven other books range from *Trumpets of Jubilee* (1927), a study of nineteenth century popular public figures like Harriet Beecher Stowe and P.T. Barnum, to *Charles Sheeler: Artist in the American Tradition* (1938). By profession, Clarey is a literary scholar; by avocation, a West Michigan women's historian, who celebrates Rourke as her main model for independent scholarship.

**Wednesday, March 9, 2005, 12 pm  
Vander Veen Center for the Book**  
Contact: Chris Byron, 616/988-5400.  
cbyron@grpl.org.

**Grand Valley State University  
History Department**

**Selling the City on Citizenship: Politics and Consumer Culture in 1920s Grand Rapids.**  
presenter Dr. Liette Gidlow, Associate Professor of History, Bowling Green State University. Professor Gidlow's lecture draws on research about get-out-the-vote efforts in Grand Rapids that she pursued in writing her new book, *The Big Vote: Gender, Culture, And The Politics Of Exclusion, 1890s-1920s* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004). She bases her analysis on three case studies, one of which is Grand Rapids. She did significant local work here (in the GRPL local history collections). Much of her analysis, moreover, concerns women's activism and the questions raised by the Woman Suffrage Amendment. Her larger argument concerns elite anxieties over equality and near universal suffrage. Gidlow's research and teaching interests include 20th-century U. S. political history, political culture, public policy, women's and gender history, consumer culture, and political development. She is particularly interested in the intersection of political culture and consumer culture, cultural studies. She has a professional background in public policy, having served as a legislative staffer in the U. S. Congress and chief of staff in the Ohio Senate, and has published in the field of policy studies as a coauthor of *The Chicago Study on Access and Choice in Higher Education* (University of Chicago, 1984). She is the recipient of a Berkshire Conference fellowship at the Bunting Institute for the Study of Women at Harvard University and is the author of *Delegitimizing 'Civic Slackers,' the Cultural Turn, and the Possibilities of*

**Grand Valley State University  
History Department (continued)**

*Politics Journal of American History* (Dec. 2002).

**Wednesday, March 23, 7:30 pm**

**Gerald R. Ford Museum**

Contact: Paul V. Murphy, 616/331-3429  
murphyp@gvsu.edu.

*Sponsored by Greater Grand Rapids Women's Greater Grand Rapids Women's History Council, the Grand Rapids Historical Commission, the Grand Rapids Historical Society, and Grand Valley State University (the General Education Program, Department of History, and Department of Political Science.)*

**Grand Valley State University  
Women's Studies Center**

**Paula Gunn Allen** presented by Paula Gunn Allen, Ph.D. Allen is an American of Laguna Pueblo/Metis and Sioux descent, one of the foremost Native American literary critics, and Professor Emerita of English at UCLA. She is credited as the founder of the field of American Indian Literary Studies.

**Thursday, March 31, 7:30 pm**

**Grand River Room, Kirkhof Center, Grand Valley State University**

Cost: Free and open to the public.

Contact: Marlene Kowalski-Braun, 616/331-2748,  
kowalskm@gvsu.edu.

*Co-Sponsors: Women and Gender Studies, Nokomis Foundation, Women's Center, Multicultural Affairs, Continuing Education.*

**Hope College**

***The Middle of Everywhere: The World's Refugees Come to Town***, presenter Mary Pipher, Author, Psychologist. Dr. Mary Pipher is a clinical psychologist and an adjunct clinical professor at the University of Nebraska. Her special area of interest is how American culture affects the mental health of its people. Dr. Pipher is the author of four books: *Hunger Pains*, *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*, *The Shelter of Each Other: Rebuilding Our Families* and *Another Country: Navigating the Emotional Terrain of Our Elders*. *Reviving Ophelia*, *The Shelter of Each Other* and *Another Country* were all New York Times best sellers. Dr. Pipher travels the country sharing her ideas with community groups, schools and healthcare professionals. Her articulate and energetic delivery creates enthusiasm in a way that unites her audiences.

**Tuesday March 8, 7:00 pm**

**Dimnent Chapel, Hope College, College Ave and 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Holland**

*Co-sponsored by the Visiting Writers' Series, Communication Department, Critical Issues Series, Phelps Scholar Program, Psychology Department, Dean for Social Sciences, Student Speakers Series, Women's Issues Organization, and Women's Studies Program.*

**Hope College (continued)**

***Not Venus or Mars, but Planet Earth: Men & Women in the New Millennium***, presenter

Michael Kimmel, Author, Sociologist.

Michael S. Kimmel has received international recognition for his work on men and masculinity. His book, *Against the Tide: Pro-Feminist Men in the United States, 1776-1990* (Beacon, 1992), is a documentary history of men who supported women's equality since the founding of the country. Kimmel's newest book, *The Gendered Society* was published by Oxford University Press in 2000, along with a companion volume of readings. These have been hailed as the touchstone works for courses in Gender Studies, and social science courses on gender. Kimmel is National Spokesperson for the National Organization for Men Against Sexism (NOMAS), and has lectured at over 200 colleges and universities, and run workshops for organizations and public sector organizations on preventing sexual harassment and implementing gender equity, and for campus groups on date and acquaintance rape, sexual assault, pornography, and the changing relations between women and men.

**Wednesday April 13, 4 pm**

**Maas Auditorium, Hope College, Columbia Ave between 10th and 11th Streets, Holland**

Contact: Jane R. Dickie, dickie@hope.edu

**Humanities Council**

***Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation*** by Cokie Roberts, presenter Paul

Nelson, President Emeritus of Aquinas College.

While much has been written about the men who signed the Declaration of Independence, battled the British, and framed the Constitution, the wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters they left behind have been little noticed by history. In *Founding Mothers*, Roberts brings us the women who fought the Revolution as valiantly as the men, often defending their very doorsteps. While the men went off to war or to Congress, the women managed their businesses, raised their children, provided them with political advice, and made it possible for the men to do what they did. The behind-the-scenes influence of these women—and their sometimes very public activities—was intelligent and pervasive.

**Thursday, March 17, 9:30-11 am**

**Donnelly Center, Aquinas College**

Cost: Free and open to the public.

***Snow Island*** by Katherine Towler

Every year, summer begins for the residents of Snow Island with the return of George Tibbits, a reclusive WWI veteran and former resident who travels alone to pay homage to his two deceased aunts (Bertie and Sarah) the women who raised him and who died believing he'd been killed in World War I. Alice Daggett is a 16-year-old life-long resident of the island, whose father died in a

## Humanities Council (continued)

drowning accident six years earlier, forcing her to run the family store to support her emotionally incapacitated mother and 11-year-old brother, Will. The author writes, "I consider Alice a heroine in that she suffers many hardships, yet she holds on to the things that matter most. She makes mistakes, but she recognizes them and learns from them. She has an inner strength and a certain courage in the face of what life hands her. I believe the most heroic people (those who overcome losses and deprivations with true dignity) often receive the least notice. Alice is such a person." And the Boston Globe says that *Snow Island* is "an elegiac coming-of-age novel...luminous and moving."

**Thursday, March 24, 9:30-11 am  
Donnelly Center, Aquinas College**

Cost: Free and open to the public.

Contact: Cheryl VanTil, 616/774-1776,  
grhuman@gvsu.edu about both programs.

## Michigan Military Preservation Society, Inc.

### *"Women in the Military"*

In honor of Women's History Month, the Michigan Military Preservation Society is presenting a program featuring mothers and daughters who have both served in the military.

**Thursday, March 3, 7:00 pm  
Gerald R. Ford Museum, 303 Pearl St. NW,  
Grand Rapids**

Cost: Free.

Contact: Joan Raymer, 616/974-1955,  
jraymer@mmals.org.

## Progressive Women's Alliance

### *The Resilient Tradition of Grand Rapids Women in Elective Politics: Then and Now,*

Presenter, Jo Ellyn Clarey. Then: Grand Rapids women were a vital political force long before we usually assume. As soon as they could run for elective office, they did; and sometimes they won. Now: The passionate example of these early women can still inform and invigorate our efforts today. We are part of a surprisingly long and grand political continuity.

**Wednesday, March 16, 5 pm  
Women's City Club**

Contact: Jo Ellyn Clarey at  
joellynclarey@yahoo.com or Helga Kleinschmidt at  
hk.pwa@earthlink.net.

## Women's City Club

*An Update on GRCCI*, presenter Juan Olivarez,  
President, Grand Rapids Community College.

**Thursday, March 10, 11 am with luncheon at  
noon.**

**Women's City Club, 254 E. Fulton**

Cost: \$15.00.

Reservations are required: call 616/459-3321.

## Women's City Club (continued)

*Past, Present and Future of Gwen Frostic*,  
presenter Pam Lorenz, new President of Frostic's  
studio in Benzonia.

**Thursday, March 31, 11 am with luncheon at  
noon.**

**Women's City Club, 254 E. Fulton**

Cost: \$15.00.

Reservations are required: call 616/459-3321.

Contact: Carol Dodge, 616/459-3321,  
dodger@voyager.net.

## Women's Resource Center

### *16th Annual Employer Recognition Awards,*

keynote speaker: Dr. Barbara Mieras, President  
Davenport University Foundation. The Employer  
Recognition Awards is West Michigan's only award  
to publicly recognize employers' contributions to the  
success of women in their workplace. The awards  
are designed to showcase employers' best practices  
to the rest of the employment community and  
encourage other employers to adopt similar  
practices. Each year, WRC selects several West  
Michigan employers to be recognized at its annual  
luncheon in March, during Women's History  
Month. Proceeds from this awards event are  
used by WRC to provide an array of comprehensive  
employment services to disadvantaged women.

**Wednesday, March 23, 11:45 am-1:30 pm  
Ambassador Ballroom-Amway Grand Plaza Hotel**

Cost: Tickets are \$45 each; reserved table for 8 is  
\$400. Call Charlette at 616/458-5443 ext. 14 to  
purchase tickets or for information on securing a  
Corporate/Organizational sponsorship.

Contact: Primary contact: Charlette Howell-Partee,  
616/458-5443 ext. 14, chowell@grwrc.org  
Secondary contact: Sharon Caldwell-Newton  
616/458-5443 ext. 13, scnewton@grwrc.org

## Grand Rapids Historical Society Programs in 2005 By Ruth Van Stee

*All programs are held at the Gerald R. Ford Museum  
at 7:30 pm and are free and open to the public.*

### **February 10, 2005**

#### *African Americans in Grand Rapids.*

Randal Jelks will continue his history of the African  
American Community in Grand Rapids, beginning  
this time after the Civil War.

### **March 10, 2005**

#### **Women's History Month**

#### *'We Can Do It': Gathering the Histories of Women WW2 Veterans.*

During fall semester  
2004, Jennifer Holberg's writing course at Calvin  
will videotape local women WW2 veterans to  
chronicle their experiences as part of the Library of

**Grand Rapids Historical Society  
Programs in 2005 (continued)**

Congress's Veterans History Project. Holberg discusses the joys and challenges of the project, shares stories of the veterans who participated, and examines the need for oral histories. *Co-sponsored with the Greater Grand Rapids Women's History Council.*

**April 14, 2005**

***The American Civil Liberties Union in Grand Rapids History.*** Gil Davis, Emeritus Professor of English at Grand Valley State, has been an active civil libertarian for 40 years. He will report on the activities and the people of the ACLU in Grand Rapids.

**May 12, 2005**

***Banquet and Annual Meeting***

Guest Speaker: Tom Logan is the author of forthcoming book on the history of Heritage Hill Historic Neighborhood.

**Membership Campaign**

Have you paid your membership dues for this year? If your address label has an asterisk, your membership is not current.

Membership rates:

|         |          |             |         |
|---------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Sponsor | \$100.00 | Contributor | \$50.00 |
| Basic   | \$25.00  | Student     | \$10.00 |

**National Association of Personal Historians  
Fall, 2005 Conference**

The National Association of Personal Historians is a nonprofit international organization of 450 professionals who help people share their life stories in a variety of formats, ranging from books to multimedia documentaries to heirloom artwork. The APH recently celebrated its tenth anniversary at the group's annual conference in Baltimore, Maryland.

The organization's 2005 national conference is scheduled for Grand Rapids, Michigan. Jennifer and John Morrison of AfterWord Professional Historians LLC, a local personal historian business, will serve as hosts for the conference. The conference will take place at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel November 2 - 6, 2005.

Past conference sessions have focused on such topics as interview techniques, video and audio technology, public presentation skills, American history review and others. More information will be available as the conference plans proceed.

Contact Jennifer or John Morrison, AfterWord Professional Historians LLC, (616/248-2706, [after\\_word@earthlink.net](mailto:after_word@earthlink.net).

**History in the Future**

**(Calendar of Events)**

**FEBRUARY 2005**

- 8 4 pm GGRWHC Board Meeting, The Michigan Room Gerald R. Ford Museum  
History in the Making Topic: *Hispanic Culture*, Wanda Toohey Olave

**MARCH 2005**

- 8 4 pm GGRWHC Board Meeting, The Michigan Room Gerald R. Ford Museum  
History in the Making Topic: *The History of Volunteers at Clark Retirement Community*, Nelle Frisch
- 10 7 pm Women's History Month Presentation  
(See page 2 for more information.)

**APRIL 2005**

- 12 4 pm GGRWHC Board Meeting, The Michigan Room Gerald R. Ford Museum

**MAY 2005**

- 9 4 pm GGRWHC Annual Meeting, The Michigan Room Gerald R. Ford Museum

**Debra Muller Featured in  
*The Grand Rapids Press***

GGRWHC Board member, Debra Muller was featured in the *Your LIFE* section of the December 5, 2004 *Grand Rapids Press*. As a citizen of the Nottawaseppi Huron Potawatomi Nation and also with lineage to the Grand River and Little River Bands of Ottawa, Debra has spent her life working with, and for, Native Americans. After "retiring" from her corporate career for Michigan Bell/Ameritech/SBC, Debra was able to pursue her real love – support for the Native American Community. Her latest career choice took her to the Public Museum of Grand Rapids where she heads up the Norton Mounds project, the burial site for the prehistoric Hopewell Indians.

Debra's "people," as she calls the Native American community, have benefited from other projects as well. The American Cancer Society asked Debra to be their spokesperson for breast cancer education and awareness for Native American women. Through the Public Museum, Debra educates people of all ages about the lives and traditions of Native Americans. She was one of the founders and chair for the *Theater of the Three Fires*, a Native American theater group. They gave many performances in the Grand Rapids area and were well-received by the community. Debra also chaired Native American Media who provided scholarships to two older youth to pursue media education. Debra serves as the chairperson of the Coalition of Indian Programs and Services of Grand Rapids and Kent County.

Debra's other interests include playing classical piano and dancing. She has taught

dance, including jazz, tap and ballet. She is part of a jazz group called *Debra Muller with Diversity*. She was the choreographer and dance teacher for a group of young ladies, ages 15 – 22, and taught them ballet-based jazz to contemporary Native American music with traditional teachings throughout.

Debra's commitment to the Native American community is very deep and strong. As a result, "She was selected as the head female dancer for the Second Annual Traditional Powwow Along the Owashtinong" last November, according to Pat Shellenbarger, author of the article in the Press.

The Greater Grand Rapids Women's History Council is proud to have Debra as a Board Member. Her expertise in the Native American community has brought a new dimension to the History Council as we continue to learn about women in West Michigan.

Thanks to Pat Shellenbarger at *The Grand Rapids Press* for featuring Debra Muller in the December 5, *Your LIFE* section of the Press.