

# Backyard NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF COMMUNITY SHARES OF WISCONSIN

SPRING 2011

## WHAT DOES 40 YEARS OF CHANGE LOOK LIKE?

In 1971, the Vietnam War and racial inequalities divided the country. A committed group of activists in Madison spoke out against the war and against inequalities.

And in the process they established what we know today as Community Shares of Wisconsin (CSW), the nation's first social action fund.



Wisconsin Historical Society (#67628)

*Forty years later, CSW continues to fund innovative, grassroots groups working on the front lines.*



Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice, 2011

**Today, our groups clearly face significant challenges. They are still working on:**

- Access to healthcare
- Justice for all workers
- Civic involvement in our government
- Democratizing the media
- Protecting our environment

Yet if we can count on your support, CSW will be there to help fund the progress that we'll celebrate in the future.

**Look inside to see what your donations have helped achieve over the years**

Women have the right to make personal decisions regarding a range of reproductive choices, including having access to birth control, bearing healthy children, and choosing legal abortion.

We were the first state in the nation to outlaw job and housing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. OutReach, a CSW member group since 1980, was a strong advocate for this law.

We have domestic violence protections, such as restraining orders, emergency shelters, and attention to domestic violence as a crime. "Decades ago when we would do presentations for police officers, we were often met with disinterest or downright hostility," said Jane Sadusky. "Today, rather than reading the paper while advocates are speaking to them, most police officers take the issue very seriously. That's thanks to many individuals, the commitment of key law enforcement personnel, and advocacy groups like Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence."

We have better sexual assault laws. The burden is no longer on the rape victim to prove that she used "utmost resistance" to prevent the attack. And her sexual history is no longer a key element of questioning at trial.

Tenants have more rights and stronger protections, thanks to the work of our early groups (for example, Madison Tenants Union) and current member Tenant Resource Center.

The first Take Back the Night March took place in Madison—focusing public attention on the issue of violence against women.

Madison has strong protections against housing discrimination, thanks to community activists' work since the 1960s. "We as a county are a national leader on this issue," said Tobi LeMahieu of Fair Housing Center of Greater Madison.

[1970s]

[1980s]

### BACKYARD ADVOCATE: Jane Pearlmutter



Jane Pearlmutter was Director of Madison Sustaining Fund—now Community Shares of Wisconsin (CSW)—in the early 1980s. In the 1970s she volunteered for various women's groups such as Rape Crisis Center. Jane is now Associate Director of the School of Library & Information Studies, UW-Madison.

***What was it like to work for CSW in its early days?***

My office was in the basement of my home, and with small children around it could get chaotic. I remember my four-year-old son helping me with fundraising mailings. He so loved the stamp I used that when I bought him his own stamp set, the first thing he did was create a stamp that said "nonprofit bulk mail."

***You worked a lot in women's issues. What changes have occurred though the years thanks to our member groups and other activists?***

Today it's hard to imagine the situation sexual assault victims faced in the 1970s and earlier. Women had to prove "utmost resistance" before a rape could be prosecuted. A spouse could never be charged with rape. The women's sexual history was a standard line of questioning.

Those with a mental illness advocate for themselves, with help from Grassroots Empowerment Project. After planning the first Empowerment Days, Executive Director Molly Cisco said, "lawmakers told me it was the first time their constituents who have mental illness were doing their own advocating."

Outhouses are out— laws now require indoor plumbing in migrant housing. The housing must provide heating for the autumn months and at least 50 square feet per person (about the size of a jail cell). All of these changes are due in part to the work of Legal Action of Wisconsin.

LGBT students get support at school—instead of putting up with intimidation and harassment—thanks to Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools.

Our environmental groups have helped achieve so much over the years: protecting our natural resources (halting the Crandon Mine), our water resources (halting the Perrier bottling plant), and our air quality.

We now have among the strongest phosphorus water quality protections in the country, which will help prevent unsightly and smelly algae blooms in our lakes.

We have domestic partnership protections in Wisconsin, which help put us on a path toward LGBT equality—and much of the credit goes to Fair Wisconsin Education Fund.

[1990s]

[2000s]

# OUR MEMBER NONPROFITS

- 1000 Friends of Wisconsin
- ABC for Health
- ACLU Foundation of Wisconsin
- Arts Wisconsin
- Bayview Foundation
- Center for Family Policy and Practice
- Center for Media and Democracy
- Chrysalis
- Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger
- Citizens Utility Board
- Clean Wisconsin
- Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups
- Common Wealth Development
- Community Action on Latin America
- Community GroundWorks
- Dane County TimeBank
- Disability Rights Wisconsin
- Fair Housing Center of Greater Madison
- Fair Wisconsin Education Fund
- Freedom Inc.
- Friends of Wisconsin State Parks
- Gathering Waters Conservancy
- Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) for Safe Schools
- Grassroots Empowerment Project
- Grassroots Leadership College
- Housing Initiatives
- Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice
- League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Fund
- Legal Action of Wisconsin
- Madison Area Community Land Trust
- Madison Audubon Society
- Midwest Environmental Advocates
- Madison HOURS \*
- NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin Foundation
- New Harvest Foundation
- Nuestro Mundo Inc.
- OutReach
- Physicians for Social Responsibility – Wisconsin
- The Progressive
- Project Home
- Rape Crisis Center
- REAP Food Group
- River Alliance of Wisconsin
- Sierra Club Foundation, John Muir Chapter
- Sustain Dane
- Tenant Resource Center
- UNIDOS Against Domestic Violence
- Wheels for Winners \*
- Wisconsin Apprentice Organizers Project
- Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- Wisconsin Community Fund
- Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Wisconsin Council on Children and Families
- Wisconsin Democracy Campaign
- Wisconsin Early Childhood Association
- Wisconsin Family Ties
- Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters
- Wisconsin Literacy
- Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice
- Wisconsin Wetlands Association
- Wisconsin Women's Network
- Women in Transition
- Working Capital for Community Needs
- WORT 89.9 FM Community Radio

\* CHIP-only groups

It took so many people working together before laws were passed that helped better protect women. People like me met with any group of women who would host us—for instance I often went to Jaycettes groups, which was an organization for the wives of Jaycees.

I ate a lot of jello salad at those lunch meetings in the 1970s! Once you started talking about the issue of sexual harassment or sexual assault, and how we were vulnerable because we had been brought up not to make a scene, heads would start to nod immediately.

Women who were sexually assaulted often lived with shame, thinking that something was wrong with them. But when you began questioning—"why should someone be able to harass or assault people and get away with it?"—then people opened their minds to the possibility of change. And they got involved.

### **What is the value of CSW in funding grassroots organizations today?**

What's going on right now legislatively makes it crystal clear that all these issues, which are so important to us, are under attack. Funding for advocacy groups to protect women's reproductive rights, our environment, those with disabilities—this is an essential role for CSW. This is also the major reason why it deserves our support.



## WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE:

- What does 40 years of change look like? Community Shares of Wisconsin celebrates turning 40!
- See what your donations have achieved
- Meet our Backyard Advocate: Jane Pearlmutter

### SAVE THE DATE! SEPTEMBER 27

What does 40 years of change look like? Find out more at the Community Shares of Wisconsin Annual Awards Event, which will be held on Tuesday, September 27. We will premier a short video and welcome special guests. Join us for the celebration!

### UPDATE ON CHIP DONATIONS

Last year's fundraising by Willy Street Co-op shoppers set a fundraising record, bringing in over \$119,000. That increase is due in part to the opening of a second Willy St. Co-op site in Middleton. Thank you to all who CHIP!

**BUILDING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUITY AND A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT**

[WWW.COMMUNITYSHARES.COM](http://WWW.COMMUNITYSHARES.COM) | 608.256.1066



612 West Main Street, Suite 200  
Madison, WI 53703  
608.256.1066  
[www.communityshares.com](http://www.communityshares.com)



**Return Service Requested**

**We've moved!  
New suite number**

Marketing and Communications Director  
Maira Urich

Executive Director  
Crystel Anders

Backyard News is published by Community Shares of Wisconsin. Call 608.256.1066 or email [csw@communityshares.com](mailto:csw@communityshares.com) to subscribe or to make corrections to your mailing address.



Non Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Madison, WI  
Permit No. 154