CAROL AUBY FARBER
by Eileen Kelz

Carol Auby Farber was born in Stoughton, Wisconsin, in 1942. She moved to Marshfield in 1971 with her husband David and two young daughters, Terri and Karen. Shortly after moving to town, she joined the group working to form a Marshfield Chapter of National Organization for Women (NOW). She felt the mission of the organization provided a vehicle to work toward her deeply held belief in gender equality. Carol's introduction to inequality between the sexes came at an early age as she worked a summer job in the fields detasseling corn. During the summers in the rural midwest, corn seed companies hired busloads of teenagers and set them loose in the fields to pull tassels off corn so that it would not produce pollen. It was hot, humid, often muddy, hard work regardless of who was doing it. Carol was disgusted to find out that the boys were being paid significantly more than the girls for equal work.

She was aggravated that after a divorce from her first husband, she learned that she could no longer buy car insurance, even though her husband could. Being a divorced woman in those days put a target on her back. These experiences were the making of a feminist.

As the mother of two daughters, Carol's consciousness continued to grow. She badly wanted them to have all the opportunities they could and to be in control of their own bodies. As a sports enthusiast, she especially wanted them to have access to the same opportunities in school as their male counterparts. Like what she had encountered as a student, she was dismayed to learn that girls still had limited sports available in school. Sports for girls were a low priority and were often limited to cheerleading for the boys' teams. A swim team was available for Terri, but she had to practice at 6:00AM before school so the boys' team could have the prime time after school. Carol's commitment to her daughter had her getting up at 5:00AM to get there on time.

As a founding member of Marshfield NOW, Carol worked on many issues: women's health care, pay equity, childcare, Wisconsin Equal Rights Amendment, sexual assault team and reproductive rights. Most notable was a program she designed and presented with NOW member Mary Rein as an in-service training program for area school districts. The intent of the program was to enlighten and encourage teachers on how to institute attitudes and practices in the classroom that would empower girls to reach their full potential. Like many people, Carol was terrified of public speaking, so this took



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a great deal of courage and fortitude on her part. Her drive to make things happen in this world for women spurred her on.

Of the things that Carol was most proud was her work toward the passage of Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972. Title IX prohibits sex-based discrimination in any school or other educational program that receives federal money. As noted above, prior to Title IX, girls sports were virtually unavailable in schools or were considered a low priority. Along with feminist groups across the nation, Carol wrote letters, made phone calls, lobbied her congress people and helped to organize others to push toward its passage. Title IX passed and became law in 1972 in time to benefit her daughters as well as millions of girls across the nation. Today, the strength, confidence, athleticism, and power of many women evolved from the opportunity to participate in sports programs on an equal basis with males.

Life moved on. Carol eventually moved away from Marshfield due to job changes but she continued her commitment to work on gender equality in sports and academics.