**ROSE MARY MULLER**
Summarized by Jane Kennedy

*The following is a summary of the story of Rose Mary Muller. The full story, written/compiled by Rose Mary Muller, can be found as a separate volume at the Marshfield Public Library. It includes a lot of material on the women's rights movement in Wisconsin and in the Marshfield area.*

In 2002, Rose Mary Muller was thrilled to receive an invitation to an award ceremony honoring the Sisters of '77 as the Wisconsin Women's Network Stateswoman of the Year. She reflected on her history as a leader of the Women's Movement in Wisconsin and a delegate to the National Women's Conference in Houston in November of 1977.

She stated that, "The Kenosha News reports that 28 delegates were selected from a field of 60 prominent Wisconsin women." She further recalled, "I certainly was not active in the feminist movement prior to moving to Marshfield in 1968 and continuing my college education in the traditional field of Family and Consumer Science at UW Stevens Point, graduating in 1972. However, moving next door to Eileen Kelz in the mobile home court on Peach Avene late fall 1971 changed all that, bringing me to the movement."

Rose Mary, along with some other Marshfield women, underwent training for the Wisconsin Feminist Project for Wisconsin State Employment Service employees in 1973. In 1974, she presented programs on credit for women in Wausau at Women's Action Council and the Business and Professional Women's Club. She and Eileen Kelz spoke at Marshfield Senior High on the women's movement. Rose Mary assisted two women at Citizens National Bank to sue for discrimination when they were forced to leave their jobs during their seventh month of pregnancy.

Rose Mary Muller helped found the statewide Wisconsin Women's Credit Union 1973-77 in Marshfield. In the early 70s the women's movement was rapidly gaining momentum throughout the United States. She attended the On Wisconsin Women meeting in June of 1977, thought to be the largest women's meeting ever held in Wisconsin. Meetings were held in all 50 states, totaling about 140,000 women, funded by a $5 million federal grant aiming to "identify barriers that prevent women from participating fully and equally in all aspects of national life." Two thousand delegates, including Rose Mary Muller, were chosen to the national convention. The National Women's Conference November 18-21, 1977, in Houston, was "the first meeting of its type in the United States since the Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, NY, in 1848." The convention made the cover of Time Magazine and was covered by all three media networks as well as PBS. Some of the recommendations that came out of the conference included passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, choice on abortion and federal and state abortion funding, a national health insurance plan, Social Security benefits for housewives, elimination of job, housing, and credit discrimination against lesbians, establishing the right of lesbians to have child custody, federally funded education for women on their right to credit, programs and shelters for female victims of domestic abuse, leave of absence from work for childbirth, childcare programs. One of the solid outcomes of that conference was parental leave; another was the ability of women to get credit. At the time of that conference, only five percent of all elected officials in the nation were women. The conference inspired women to try to run for office.



***Rose Mary Muller, 75th Birthday***

Rose Mary Muller summarized her work for women's rights with a quote from the 2009 book, The Lost Quilter: "There had been hundreds, even thousands, of such remarkable women in every era, but their stories had gone untold or had been forgotten. It was up to the current and future generations to preserve the fragments of women's history that remained, to mend the frayed edges, to tell everyone who would listen about the strength in the warp and the beauty in the weft so that no one could dismiss their unsung contributions as mere scraps of faded fabric, or old, yellowed stories and newspapers."