

Collection #
M 0709
OMB 0072

INDIANA WOMEN'S POLITICAL CAUCUS RECORDS, 1967–1983

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7 May 1998

Revised 23 January 2002

Updated 9 March 2004

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 9 manuscript boxes, 1 oversized manuscript box, 4 artifacts

COLLECTION 1967–83

DATES:

PROVENANCE: Molly Rucker, Indianapolis, IN, 1 May 1987

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: M 0587, Audra Snyder Bailey Papers; M 0610, Joline Moore Ohmart Papers; Additional volumes of GIWPC newsletters and IWPC directories are housed in the library's printed collections.

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1987.0356

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The national women's movement that began in the 1960s was well represented in Indianapolis, where participants pursued legal, political, and social changes in the status of women. The decade of the 1970s saw the most action and influence by women's advocacy groups. Both the Indiana Women's Political Caucus and the Greater Indianapolis caucus were formed in October 1971 as affiliates of the National Women's Political Caucus, a multi-partisan organization. The organizational meeting of the IWPC was chaired by prominent Indianapolis attorney, Virginia Dill McCarty (b. 1924) and Rae Ginger, temporary state coordinators appointed by the national caucus. The goal of each caucus was to advance the status of women through political action. Major issues pursued by the organizations were passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), equal pay and job opportunities for women, and more women in policy-making positions in politics and government.

The focus of the state and Indianapolis caucuses during the campaign year of 1972 was on the ERA. Indianapolis native and NWPC spokesperson Jill Ruckelshaus was instrumental in getting the national Republican Party to include the ERA as part of its platform. The first attempt to ratify the amendment was unsuccessful, due in part to Senators Joan Gubbins and Angeline P. Astatt, who led ERA opposition in the State Senate. However, Indiana eventually ratified the amendment on 18 January 1977.

The caucuses also addressed the issues of abortion, woman's health, discriminatory practices in the areas of housing and credit, and rape. The caucuses were active into the 1980s.

The Julian Center (formerly the Julian Mission), a human services organization for women, was founded in 1975 by the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis. It became an affiliate of the United Way in 1981. The center began has a counseling center for women in crisis, but expanded its services into other areas. The Sojourner Shelter was opened in 1977 as a shelter for battered women. Due to a continually growing demand for services, the Julian Center moved twice between 1984 and 1989. Since 1990 the agency has increased its emphasis on the prevention of violence against women. By 1992, the Sojourner Shelter was providing services to over 700 women and children annually.

Sources: Material in the collection.

The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis, pp. 856, 1442-1444.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of the records (1971–83) of the Indiana Women's Political Caucus created or collected by president Molly P. Rucker (b. 1941). Included are records relating to the Greater Indianapolis Women's Political Caucus (ca. 1971–78) and the National Women's Political Caucus (1971–83). Also present are subject files on the Equal Rights Amendment, International Women's Year, records relating to the Julian Center (1979–83), and a folder of miscellaneous correspondence (1967–83).

The records have been maintained, for the most part, in the arrangement in which they were received. Many of the folder headings have been preserved, while the material in each folder may have been placed in chronological order. Because of the inter-related nature, members and activities of the three organizations (local, state, and national), an analysis of one level requires a survey of the entire collection.

Material relating to the Greater Indianapolis caucus includes correspondence, minutes, reports, membership and contact lists, subject files, newsletters, and a 1976 yearbook. The records of the Indiana state caucus are comprised of constitutions and by-laws, minutes and agendas of the state policy council, financial records, materials concerning the caucus' annual convention, correspondence, membership and contact lists, newsletters and other printed matter, subject files, information on other women's organizations in Indiana, and a banner. The national caucus records include by-laws, correspondence, minutes, steering committee files, printed material, and buttons.

Correspondents in the collection include: Bella Abzug (1920–98), Birch Bayh (b. 1928), Dell Morgan Chumley (fl. 1969–83), Virginia Dill McCarty, James Danforth Quayle (b. 1947), and Molly Patricia Rucker. The collection also contains material that provides a look at the political careers of Abzug and Bayh, particularly their support of the ERA.

The subject files on the Equal Rights Amendment and the International Women's Year contain material relating to the caucuses' involvement with those activities. The records of the Julian Center include correspondence, minutes and reports, and relate to Molly Rucker's involvement with that organization.

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Series 1: Greater Indianapolis Women's Political Caucus Records, ca. 1971–78

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Correspondence and Papers, 1976–78, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 4
Meeting and Committee Notes, ca. 1973	Box 1, Folder 5
Financial Records, 1974–76	Box 1, Folder 6
Membership Forms (1 of 2)	Box 1, Folder 7
Membership Forms (2 of 2)	Box 1, Folder 8
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Series 5: State Conventions, 1972–1976

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State Convention, 1973 (3 of 3)	Box 2, Folder 20
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NWPC Convention, 1973, Registration Forms	Box 2, Folder 23
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State Convention, 1975	Box 2, Folder 25
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Series 6: Financial Records, ca. 1971–1976

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Series 7: IWPC Records: Correspondence, 1971–1980, n.d.

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Other State Caucus Newsletters

Other State Caucus Newsletters

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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0709).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.