

## HISTORY OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA WOMAN TO WOMAN CONFERENCE

In 1978, Marge, Dorothy, and Georgia attended the Woman to Woman Conference in San Diego and a seed was planted. At that time, Northern California was coming alive with the idea of a women's conference.

The Thursday night Gibbons meeting, Women's Happy Hour, held a meeting at the home of Alma F. and began planning the new conference. Alma served a meal people still rave about. That first group included Georgia H., Pat V., Gayle C., Toni C., Mary D., Alma F., Doris S., and Jan V. The first Northern California Woman to Woman Conference (NCWW) was held in 1980 at the El Rancho Hotel in West Sacramento. Sixty women attended.

In 1981, this same group met in Hester G's living room to plan the next conference. They collected their own registration money to print flyers. Remember no one had computers, printers, or cell phones then. They had to hustle to get women interested, sweating it out to see if there was enough money to pay the bills. They learned to follow the Traditions carefully. Doris S., who volunteered at Central Office, suggested they make a list of all their intentions for the conference and send it to the office. As a result, Central Office backed them 100%.

Over the next few years they all took turns being the Chairwoman. At the Woodlake Inn, the girls involved didn't have enough money to pay for

the hotel's coffee so they brought their own coffee makers, got water from the bathtub in Gayle C's. room, and had to flush away the grounds. If the hotel knew, they were kind enough to look the other way.

At another early conference, they forgot to pass the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition bucket and had to pray there was enough money to pay the expenses. Since the checks didn't bounce, they were good to go for another year.

In about 1990, after 9 years, the original members turned the conference over to the women from the What a Way to Start a Weekend women's meeting, who met, and still meet, Saturday mornings in Fair Oaks.

Initially, there were about 12 women and over the years each took turns as chairwoman and rotated all the service positions. There wasn't much money so these women contemplated changing it to a one-day conference. However, after praying about it, they decided to trust God and stick with the entire weekend as had been done by the original group of women.

As the conference grew, so did the committee and more members from the What A Way meeting joined and rotated into service. Every year brought a new adventure. According to Georgia H., one of the original members, the What A Way women made the conference grow and blossom into a very successful event. In 2001, at what was then the Holiday Inn, 493 women attended the conference. Watching the conference grow and prosper has been exciting. The women from What A

Way had the conference for over 10 years but decided it was time to expand the committee.

Soon after that, as women came and saw the fun and benefit from working on the committee, they joined. Today there are women from many different home groups throughout the Sacramento and surrounding areas. All these women work hard to make the conference strong and meaningful.

We've been in almost every hotel in Sacramento, some that are no longer here. The El Rancho Hotel had a dog show when we were there, so some of the attendees got little sleep due to the barking dogs. At another early conference, at the Hilton Hotel, there were a group of football players who were a distraction to some of the women. That same year there was a church group on Sunday that sang loudly through the partition while we tried to hear our spiritual speaker.

The conference has had its share of struggles too. One year, due to a shortage of money, we had to have a one-day only conference. It was successful and allowed us to return to, and keep, the weekend conference ever since. The recession that started around 2008 hit the conference hard and attendance declined greatly. We were very happy to see it growing again over the past 10 or so years. We hope the Covid shutdown that started in March 2020, causing the cancelation of both the 2020 and 2021 conferences, will not adversely affect future conferences.