

**National Coalition of Free Men
California Men's Center Activity Report
October 9, 2006**

- On September 8 representatives of the Department of Child Support Services, Juvenile Parole, Volunteers in Parole, the Public Defender's Office, County Mental Health, one of our volunteer law students, Elyse Bernstein, our resident attorney Craig Candelore, Nan our Project Coordinator, and I met at the Men's Center to discuss developing a "tolling" project for incarcerates, that is, a program through which those incarcerated for six or months can have their child support payments stayed until release from prison. In brief, a tentative agreement was reached between DCSS and the PD to work with those pending sentencing. Another meeting is scheduled October 11 with representatives of Corrections to open discussions concerning a program for those already incarcerated.
- September 15th through the 18th with the generous financial help of NCFM the San Diego Chapter staged the forth-consecutive exhibit at the 11th Annual Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Trauma Conference in San Diego. NCFM members Ray Blumhorst, Marc Angelucci, Deborah Watkins, and Stanley Green all helped staff the exhibit.
- During the Conference on the evening of the 18th the California Men's Centers San Diego held an open house attended by those above as well as local NCFM members and other guests. NCFMSD members Lorenda Stern, John Van Doorn, James Shaw, and Ed Gould were immensely helpful. There were eventually enough donations to cover the cost of the food and beverages as well as provide a few hundred dollars to Michael Robinson, an advocate in Sacramento.
- Beginning in early September the California Men's Centers San Diego got its own website with links to on-line and snail-mail applications to become an NCFM and NCFMSD member. The site is uncomplicated and as neutral as possible. There's a page with links to applicable PDF brochures, like NCFMLA/SD's/SD's brochure. There's a page with for applicable videos. Over the past few years, for example, I've worked in one capacity of another with FOX 6 News reporter Sherry Palmerri on I don't know how many news features. Sherri is working with FOX to make the features available so they can be linked to various websites. Two segments are available now, one on paternity fraud with Taron James and one about male rape victims. There's also a link to fantastic new feature film documentary "System Down", and expose about our Family Justice System (<http://www.californiamenscenters.org/videos.html>) You can see yours truly in one of the three trailers available for viewing. And, then

there's a page for people to donate online to the Men's Center using PayPal. So feel free to send donations, all are appreciated for sure.

- The new website was required because a professional fundraiser and grant writer is donating some time along with NCFMSD new member attorney Al Rava and we needed a non offensive website, unlike perhaps Mensbiz for example. Both fundraiser and Al are strongly suggesting other changes, like establishing a separate nonprofit and perhaps a name change for the Center.
- In September NCFMSD member Kevin Young enrolled in a paralegal course and intends to work in family law when completed.
- On September 26, I gave an hour and a half presentation to approximately 100 clients and staff at the Center for Change, an organization associated with the East County Drug Court.
- On October 4 NCFMSD member John Van Doorn picketed the San Diego Domestic Violence Council's "Not to Be Forgotten Rally" to kick off October as Domestic Violence Month. Speakers included state legislators and local elected officials. Representatives of the San Diego Police Department, the Sheriff's Department, and even the City Attorney himself mentioned men as victims, while other speakers, all women, did not. Behind the stage were large pictures of women killed by domestic violence but no pictures of men. The red cutouts of the Silent Victims Silhouettes include some deceased males though they were lined up out of sight under a covered walkway.
- On October 10, I viewed a draft of a PowerPoint presentation prepared by Kent Peters, Director Catholic Social Ministries, concerning the Safe Place Faith Community relationship violence information, education, and referral program. Kent has been invited to Oklahoma City to make a presentation before 200 or so members of numerous nondenominational groups. The Men's Center is highlighted in the presentation and will be discussed in terms of ensuring the program and materials is gender neutral as well as inclusive. We keep refining the program and hope to have it operational throughout the country within three to four years. Whenever I participate in training for new congregations NCFMLA/SD brochures are handed out. The extraordinary Safe Place Faith Community brochure is available on the "Brochures" page of our new website. If you have not seen it you should. You should be amazed.
- On October 14, I will be presenting with conference coordinator Al Schafer, President Coalition of Parent Support San Diego, at the annual international conference of the Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups.

- In between we have accompanied several men to Family Court Services Mediation and to Court. We have been very successful coaching men regarding mediation preparation, all but two gaining 50% of greater custody of their children. We have worked with several men from several states concerning restraining orders, paternity, move-aways, and other child custody issues. Nan, our Project Coordinator has taken a particular interest in custody cases and has helped several people through the labyrinth of Child Support Services, including helping them get government provided DNA testing. We have gone to Court several times with our guys as advocates and been able to sit with them during the hearing for morale support.

Respectfully,

Harry Crouch
Director