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Greg Francia/Staff photographer

Feminists for today

Feminists for Life members Tol Clawson, left, and Debbie Rieger, dressed in late 1800s clothing to portray Susan B. Anthony and Victoria Woodhull, protest outside the National Organization for Women (NOW) annual convention at the Four Points Sheraton hotel, Rochester, July 10. With them is Rieger's daughter Megan, 7. About two-dozen Feminists for Life protested NOW's support for legalized abortion. FFL was founded by two women in 1972 who were expelled from NOW because of their pro-life views.

Mary Consler to depart from development office

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Mary Consler, diocesan director of special and major gifts for the past eight years, has resigned from her position effective July 17.

Consler, 46, is leaving the diocese for WXXI radio and television, where she will oversee implementation of a planned giving program for the Rochester-based public broadcasting operation.

Consler came to the diocesan Office of Development in 1990 as director of capital gifts. She described her early years as a time when she sought to "build the infrastructure and the relationships" that led to an expansive diocesan giving campaign.

"That was my major focus, my only focus. Major gifts, planned gifts, capital campaign — that all had to be built," Consler remarked.

Consler also helped coordinate a feasibility study in 1991 and 1992 that led to a major fundraising venture, the Miracle of Sharing Campaign.

"I think we realized we could run a successful campaign," Consler remarked.

Miracle of Sharing, launched in July 1992, involved a commitment of long-term gifts including cash, securities, property, life insurance, bequest and life payment plans. More than \$80 million, including more than \$26 million in Thanks Giving Appeal funds, was raised through June 30 this year, according to Richard Rosati, diocesan development director. The campaign benefits Catholic schools; a retirement fund for women religious; support and development of lay ministry; and enhancement of programs in faith development, parish services and social ministry. The diocese will continue seeking funds for lay ministry and women religious.

"We really got the message out about what we're (the development office) all about. That was the greatest challenge," Consler said. "We have really been able to change the awareness level."

Consler said she has also been pleased with the success of the Catholic Leadership Forum, which she helped form in 1995. Forum members, she said, are professionals in their 20s, 30s and 40s who

meet monthly — usually on the last Friday — for presentations by such speakers as Bishop Matthew H. Clark.

"The purpose of this is for people to network, to socialize, to get to know the diocese and to find future leaders for the diocese," Consler explained. Many forum participants, she added, "have become friends or are doing business" with each other.

"Mary has directed a very effective major and planned giving program," stated Rosati, who became development director on June 1. "She was a key player in the success of the recent Miracle of Sharing campaign and her efforts supported many significant gifts to our diocese. I wish her well in her new challenge."

Consler's resignation follows those in the Office of Development of Mark Seeborg, departmental director, and Tom D'Agostino, director of annual giving, both effective this summer.

The diocese is seeking replacements for both D'Agostino and Consler. Consler's replacement will be director of major and planned giving.

Although Consler said she is leaving "a lot of good people" at the Diocesan Pastoral Center, she said she's enthusiastic about her new position at WXXI.

"I'm nervous, but I'm excited. After eight years, it's time for a change," Consler said.

Sister Sobala goes off the air; will return in fall of 1999

"Good Morning God," a radio program hosted by Sister Joan Sobala, SSJ, former pastoral associate at St. Mary's Church, Rochester, presented its final broadcast this year from WWVG 1460 AM on July 11.

Sister Sobala has been on sabbatical since July 1. She said she will return to hosting the program on Sunday, Sept. 5, 1999, at 7:30 a.m.

No 'Along the Way'

Bishop Matthew H. Clark is away on vacation. His column, "Along the Way," will return in August.

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