

Mary Ann Palmer

Mary Ann Palmer says she worked to make Roseville the best it could be, including more parks and a new city hall. “I even did a lit drop! I was working for the City Roseville part time in the old city hall, so I really knew we needed a new one.” Mary Ann also knew the women employees needed pay equity. “Because I was a ‘floater’ at city hall, I worked in every department except police and fire, so I found out, when I worked in accounts payable, that that the city manager’s administrative assistant who dealt with essential city issues earned \$7.50 per hour while the janitors earned \$14. I talked to the finance department about this, but they blew me off. They said all the women working there were working for ‘discretionary funds,’ except for one who was a head of household. I wanted to quit I was so frustrated. When I talked to my husband Otto about it, he said, ‘Don’t rant at me about it, do something.’ So I did quit my job at city hall, went back to school, and became an accountant. When I went in for my exit interview with the city I pointed out the inequities. Two years later, all the women at city hall got raises. The same thing happened at the University. I noticed inequities and complained and two years after I departed they made salary changes. At this time in the 70s and 80s, the women’s movement was really progressing and I am proud of the role the League played in new pay equity laws. But even today we’re still not where we should be. Women still don’t have equal pay for equal work.”