

Business as usual for local pro-life group

By LAUREN WILKINS
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THE Santa Cruz County chapter of Christian Action Council knows the National Organization for Women is planning to increase its fight for abortion funding and for adolescent rights to confidential birth control and abortion services.

"We were aware that they were planning to do something," said Edith Manchester, past president of CAC. "Locally, we aren't doing anything more than usual — which is to continue to try to educate people."

That means members of CAC and other anti-abortion activists plan to picket the Santa Cruz Medical Center on Jan. 21, the

eve of the anniversary of the passage of Roe vs. Wade, the Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion.

The group will also join a prayer vigil the weekend before at Good Samaritan Hospital in San Jose.

Manchester said the group tries to educate the public on their pro-life views by "speaking to groups, speaking to churches or in schools, writing letters to the editor, interviews, talk shows. We do a great deal with writing legislators. Just any way we can."

The local branch of the national CAC also presents a weekly radio program on "pro-life and related topics." It airs Saturdays from 10 to 10:30 a.m. on radio station KKMC (880

AM).

Part of the CAC's message is that abortion is not the answer to unwanted pregnancies.

"Longterm studies are showing more and more the damage abortion does to women, not to mention the slaughter of babies that has gone on for years," Manchester said. "Abortion is not an answer for anyone."

She believes more people are agreeing with that.

"There have been some astounding changes in this past legislative session," she said, citing the passage of bills requiring abstinence and monogamy to be taught in public school courses that deal with health and sexual education.

She also said that for eight years the California legislature has voted to cut Medi-Cal funding for abortions and for eight years the Supreme Court, based on its interpretation of the California constitution, has reversed that decision.

Still, she believes the vote indicates a shifting in attitude in California.

Nationally, she said, "I believe the reason George Bush was elected was largely due to his pro-life stance." She cited polls that supported her statement.

And for the third year, Manchester said, President Reagan has proclaimed the Sunday closest to the anniversary of Roe vs. Wade "National Sanctity of Human Life Sunday." This year, the

anniversary falls on Jan. 22.

Locally, the day will be observed in at least 30 churches, said Linda Carr, director of Crisis Pregnancy Center in Santa Cruz. The center is a non-profit, volunteer, service organization that provides direct services and counseling to women and their families experiencing crises related to pregnancy.

Carr said the center will be giving presentations in 11 local churches and distributing 6,500 brochures to other churches.

The center is apolitical and has been involved in the "moral celebration," as Carr called it, for three years. It is in no way a response to efforts by NOW, she said.