

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH
March 2009

We honor the contributions of women in our society throughout March during Women's History Month. Started in 1978 as a weeklong celebration coinciding with International Women's Day, over more than three decades it has grown to highlight the great accomplishments of women past and present, as well as the growing opportunities for young girls. The theme for 2009 is *Women Taking the Lead to Save our Planet*, and we specifically honor women who, in the spirit of Rachel Carson, have worked hard on behalf of our environment.

Ms. Carson, who spent most of her adult life in Silver Spring, Maryland, was a pioneer in the modern environmental movement. She made invaluable contributions to our knowledge of the natural world, showing how indiscriminate use of pesticides leads to pesticide-resistant organisms and describing how pesticide levels in organisms become concentrated as you move up the food chain. Her 1962 book, *Silent Spring*, detailed how synthetic chemicals accumulate in the nature, and her findings in this book led directly to the domestic ban on the sale of DDT in 1972. Her life serves as an inspiration to all who care about the environment.

Women's History is American History. This month and year-round we need to remember the struggles and achievements of the great women in our lives and dedicate ourselves to providing real opportunities to every woman and young girl for they will shape our nation's future.