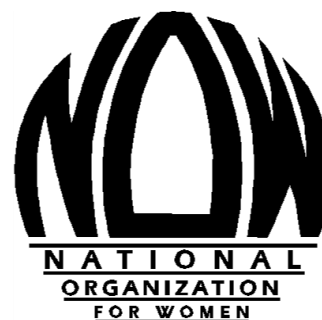


FEMINIST NEWS AND VIEWS

Morris County NOW

P.O. Box 394, Morristown, New Jersey 07960
Chapter Phone 973.285.1200



National NOW PAC NJ Endorsements-See Anjali Mehrotra Article Page 2

May/June 2020

IN MEMORIAM—MORT SOLOMON

A Covid-19 Personal Story

By Susan Solomon

On Sunday, April 5, 2020, I heard that my dear husband Mort, who was 83 years old but with no medical conditions other than his dementia, had been exposed to Covid-19 on the Memory Care Unit at Mountainview Gardens at Cedar Crest in Pompton Plains, NJ. Just 24 hours later he died, a blessing that he was not in pain nor had he suffered long and that the family got to say goodbye via phone that was quickly arranged by the wonderful Director of Nurses, Katelyn. Unfortunately, with this Coronavirus situation, I had not seen Mort for more than a month, and video chats had not worked so well. So I am saddest that I was not able to be with him all this time and to comfort him when he was dying. I do have peace in that the staff on our Memory Unit is outstanding and have so much compassion and warmth for their patients. They not only cared for him well, but truly gave Mort moments of joy, all we can hope for with Alzheimer's.

Mort's burial was very quick, even for Jewish folks, less than 24 hours. It was in New York, and with Covid-19 rules, neither the Rabbi nor family could be there. The funeral was done via conference call with just Rabbi Herson of Chabad of NWNJ, our children, Gabrielle, Greg and Corinne from around the country, and me. Rabbi Herson knew Mort for 30 years, and they had a very close relationship. It was such a moving funeral ceremony; Mort would have been truly honored.

In Judaism, there is usually a week of Shiva with prayers and visits from family and friends providing the mourners with support and love. But with Covid-19 this could only happen via Zoom (with help from my stepson Greg's synagogue) and Shiva could only be for less than 2 days due to the start of Passover on Wednesday evening. It was truly an amazing experience with over 175 people on Tuesday and another 50 on Wednesday from around the country and Israel via Zoom or phone link. There was so much support that whole week from family and friends, and three Zoom Seders with families that have not been all together for years. My lasting impression is a feeling of gratitude for the love and support expressed in Mort's honor during this Pandemic, made possible by today's technology.

OUR CONDOLENCES

Morris County NOW extends its sincere condolences to everyone who has experienced loss during this Covid-19 Pandemic.

We also wish to thank first responders, health care workers, service workers, and all who are on the job to keep us well and keep New Jersey going.

We look forward to better times ahead. STAY WELL!

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There's still hope for 2020

By Anjali Mehrotra
President, NOW New Jersey

In around 2020 a severe pneumonia-like illness will spread throughout the globe, attacking the lungs and the bronchial tubes and resisting all known treatments. Almost more baffling than the illness itself will be the fact that it will suddenly vanish as quickly as it arrived, attack again ten years later, and then disappear completely. This is an actual passage from self-described psychic Sylvia Browne's 2008 book "End of Days." It makes me think that somehow this caught Trump's eye and that's what he was waiting for – for it to suddenly disappear.

These are strange times indeed but the chickens may have finally come home to roost with this pandemic. We knew this administration was incompetent even before the current crisis, but now Trump is losing support even among his base. In the last month alone, he has dropped 20 points among voters 65-and-older, who prioritized defeating the coronavirus over healing the economy by a nearly 6-to-1 ratio. And this is a key constituency absolutely critical to his reelection hopes.

Among independents, support for Trump has fallen from 47% to 27% since December. And in a key swing state like Ohio, Trump's encouragement of coronavirus lockdown protests - against popular Republican Governor DeWine who has a 90% approval rating for his lockdown - is baffling. All of this can only aid in NOW's efforts to flip the White House and the Senate in 2020. There are key pieces of legislation that we would like to see passed that are currently sitting somewhere under McConnell's desk.

There is the 2019 Equality Act, passed by the House last May, that would amend the Civil Rights Act to "prohibit discrimination on the basis of the sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition of an individual, as well as because of sex-based stereotypes." The reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) that would close the so-called boyfriend loophole (which allows physically abusive ex-boyfriends and stalkers with previous convictions to still have access to guns) is another one.

And then, there is the ERA. This January, Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment after a hard fought, almost century long battle. Upon this historic ratification, the National Archives were prepared to certify the measure and adopt the ERA as the 28th amendment to the US Constitution before the Trump DOJ issued a memo saying that because the deadline has passed, it was too late for states to ratify the ERA. NOW and other ERA advocates have vowed to continue the fight to see the measure certified, in court or in Congress.

The easier way will be to remove or extend the deadline through Congress. As Congress had done it once before, the precedent is set and it can do it again. Last week, the National NOW PAC released their initial slate of endorsements, announcing support for 136 feminist candidates in 30 states to flip the Senate and keep the House. In New Jersey, the early endorsements went to our two Congresswomen – Bonnie Watson Coleman (NJ07) and Mikie Sherrill (NJ11) and three others who are facing primary challenges or are in competitive districts – Senator Cory Booker, Andy Kim (NJ03), and Tom Malinowski (NJ07).

National's focus in 2020 will be to flip the Senate. There are six states in particular where they have endorsed challengers that could help them do so: Teresa Tomlinson (GA), Kimberly Graham (IA), Sara Gideon (ME), Steve Bullock (MT), Abby Broyles (OK), and Jaime Harrison (SC). And now in the midst of the Coronavirus crisis, even the Republicans are nervous. In a talking points memo distributed to Republican Senate campaigns, the candidates were told "don't defend Trump, other than the China Travel Ban - attack China" if asked whether Trump is at fault for the nation's unpreparedness for the virus spread. The memo even urged Republicans to acknowledge that U.S. public health officials "acted late," and say "I wish that everyone acted earlier - that includes our elected officials, the World Health Organization, and the CDC."

And while this pandemic has taught us a whole new set of vocabulary – social distancing, community spread, flatten the curve and Zoom – the GOP's rhetoric remains the same. They continue the blame game - "The virus came from China and China covered it up," and attack the Democrats for criticizing Trump's China ban "as xenophobic and racist." Pandemic or not, stay-at-home or not, some things never change.

Editor's Note: On February 13, 2020, the House symbolically voted to extend the 1982 deadline for states to ratify the ERA. This is one of many bills being held hostage by Senate Majority Leader, Mitch McConnell.

NEW JERSEY COALITION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING UPDATE

By Susan J. Waldman



Please note that the Gala that was scheduled for May 20, 2020 has been postponed till either this coming October or next spring; however the Coalition is still active, continuing to hold its meetings via Zoom.

Trafficking & Exploitation Via Apps & the Dark Web Protect Children From Online Predators During the Covid-19 Crisis

By Susan J. Waldman

This program was live streamed on Facebook on April 23, 2020. The presenters were Lt. John Pizzuro, NJ Commander of the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, and part of the NJ State Police's Internet Crimes Against Children Unit; and Jeffrey W. Anthony, Certified Health Education Specialist for the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment. I "attended" the program and believe that it was extremely beneficial and timely during our period of quarantine and beyond, especially for anyone with young children/grandchildren or who interacts with young children. You can watch the recording of the presentation on YouTube [HERE](#).

Here is a synopsis of the presentation.

With over 250 online participants from multiple states and disciplines, the virtual program hosted by the NJCAHT on 4/23/20 could not have come at a more opportune time due to children in social isolation and being taught via distance learning. Their time on social media and various "apps" has increased and therefore their exposure to potential predators has increased.

The presenters gave an in-depth view of how our children are being targeted online through gaming and social media, and how we can help them and ourselves understand how these outlets are used and how we can talk with our children.

Lt. Pizzuro is worried about the increase in children being "groomed" online especially in the 8 – 9 year old range. At this age psychologists believe they do not have "shame" with the result that children "self produce" CSAM (Child Sexual Abuse Material) on their own devices and send it to online predators.

One in five children have been sexually solicited online and 14% have actually met face to face with someone they met online. Children today communicate through devices. Our brains however, are looking for release of various endorphins usually based on human contact. Children and even some adults are looking for validation of their part in the larger society of their peers by "likes" or tangible items...goods or services.

As a dopamine dependent society, face-to-face interaction is important, but the increased use of devices limits that. Apps such as Whisper and Scout are anonymous; the dark web has "rooms" where predators with the same intentions can meet. Law enforcement continually monitors these apps, etc., but is stopped from pursuing perpetrators by the very apps that are used due to anonymity.

Parents must communicate the risks and monitor social media and web activities while fostering an environment of trust so children and young adults will feel comfortable discussing what they are experiencing, especially since children younger and younger have devices with mobile apps and Internet access. It is also difficult to know what the "next" new media is and predators are often one step ahead.

Jeff Anthony and the Center for Empowerment looks to increase understanding of the digital world by "helping young people develop practical skills for the digital world." With human trafficking affecting millions whether through forced labor, sexual exploitation or organ harvesting, "victims can be any age, race, gender or nationality".

In working with victims of sexual exploitation and their partner or family member, "harm reduction" allows for the individual to understand that there are various circumstances that contribute to their being a victim, and these are not created by anything that they did. Being a Positive Decision Making Mentor gives you the tools to work with the child in an approachable manner without making assumptions. It also shows how to answer a child's questions openly and how to avoid conflict. Give children the opportunity to speak and to not judge.

Further resources can be found at www.njhumantrafficking.org.covid19.

(Continued on Page 4)

THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

By Susan J. Waldman

In our last newsletter (March/April 2020) I announced that NOW-NJ was forming a State ERA Strategy Task Force. I have since been notified by our chapter member, Bobbie Francis, who is currently the ERA Education Consultant, Alice Paul Institute, that the State of New Jersey already has a State ERA.

Bobbie has been working on the ERA for “decades” as she puts it, and was the Co-chair of the ERA Task Force of the National Council of Women’s Organizations until 2015. Below is Bobbie’s in-depth explanation.

“The NJ state ERA is intrinsic in the language in two places in the completely redrafted state constitution adopted in 1947:

Article I, Natural and Unalienable Rights:

1. All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

Article X, General Provisions

4. Wherever in this Constitution the term "person", "persons", "people" or any personal pronoun is used, the same shall be taken to include both sexes.

An official brochure in 1947 from the Constitutional Convention to educate voters about “What the Proposed New Constitution Means to You” said explicitly, “Under the proposed Constitution, New Jersey will be the first state to give equal constitutional rights to women.”

In 1975, both New Jersey and New York had ballot initiatives to pass a state ERA, but they both lost (partly because that was in the midst of the federal ERA campaign when there were so many lies circulating about it). When I later asked the then-president of the NJ League of Women Voters why there had been a campaign when we already had a state ERA, she said that question had been raised, but the people who wanted to go ahead with the state campaign prevailed (an ill-advised decision).

In 1978, the NJ Supreme Court ruled in *Peper v. Princeton* that the state Constitution’s guarantee of equal rights on the basis of sex prohibited sex discrimination in employment – still the most significant judicial application of the state ERA.

When I was Director of the NJ Division on Women in the early ‘90s, I gave a small grant to Prof. Bob Williams at Rutgers-Camden Law School for research on the state ERA, and the results were published as “The New Jersey Equal Rights Amendment: A Documentary Handbook” in Rutgers’ *Women’s Rights Law Reporter* (Winter 1994, Vol. 16, No. 2).

The best use of advocacy energy at this point would be to lobby U.S. Senators (both in NJ and elsewhere) for support of *S.J. Res. 6*, the companion bill to *H.J. Res. 79*, which the House of Representatives passed on Feb. 13. These bills would override the ERA’s ratification deadline *ex post facto* and increase pressure on the Archivist to declare it ratified, now that the 38th state has voted yes.“

For more ERA information you can visit the website: www.equalrightsamendment.org

In Memoriam—Rick Gray

I regret to report that on April 17, 2020, Rick Gray, a true feminist, died at the age of 75 of heart failure due to Covid-19. Besides his wife Rita, Rick leaves behind two sons, Chris and David, and a stepdaughter, Faith, as well as five teenage grandchildren. A NOW member for 20 years, Rick served as South Jersey NOW’s Database Manager, ALICE’S List coordinator, and as a Clinic Escort. Rick also served as NOW-NJ’S Vice President of Membership for 10 years. Those of us who attended NOW-NJ State Board Meetings knew Rick as a kind gentleman who was always eager to help with anything related to Membership. I was fortunate to work with Rick on several NOW-NJ elections. He will be truly missed. Susan J. Waldman

WHAT'S HAPPENING OR NOT

Chapter Meetings

There is no May meeting. We are working on having a virtual (Zoom) meeting on Tuesday, June 2nd and, if that works out, a virtual meeting on Tuesday, July 7th. Look for an email with information on the Zoom meetings and also check our website: www.morriscountynow.org. for updates. Hopefully the Morris Plains Community Center will be open for our August 4th meeting.

NOW National Conference

Originally scheduled for June 5, 6, & 7, the conference has been postponed. No new date as yet.

Seneca Falls 100th Anniversary of the Right to Vote: Legacy of our Foremothers July 17—19, 2020. The park is closed now. No word on whether this is canceled.

Promote the Vote

Morris County NOW is working with the National Council of Jewish Women on getting out the vote. For more information visit this website: www.ncjw.org/act/action-resources/promote-the-vote and search “promote the vote.”

Morris County NOW Garage Sale

Originally scheduled for June 20th, it will be postponed until it is safe.

Historic Coalition of Women’s and Civil Rights Groups File Amicus Brief to Stop COVID-19 Order that Intends to Ban and Criminalize Abortion

Washington, DC—April 22, 2020 – Press Release—An historic coalition of women’s rights, civil rights, human rights, and reproductive justice groups including the National Organization for Women Foundation, the Feminist Majority Foundation and Legal Momentum, joined by 18 other organizations, including In Our Own Voice: The National Black Women’s Reproductive Justice Agenda, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Transformative Justice Coalition, and the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights under the Law, filed an amicus brief yesterday in the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals supporting the federal district court’s decision to prevent Alabama’s COVID-19 order from resulting in the denial of abortion access to the women of Alabama and the potential criminalization of abortion providers.

Alabama is using the COVID-19 pandemic to essentially ban abortions in Alabama, which would especially harm Black women, low-income women, minors, victims of domestic and sexual violence, and other marginalized groups seeking safe abortion care.

For example: In Alabama, sixty percent of abortions are sought by [Black women](#), and the majority of all women seeking abortion are [low-income women](#). Alabama ranks third in the nation in [maternal death rates](#), and Black women in Alabama are nearly [five times more likely to die](#) from pregnancy-related causes than white women.

In Alabama, the Black community disproportionately accounts for 37 percent of confirmed COVID-19 cases and a shocking 52 percent of deaths from COVID-19, even though they make up only 27 percent of [the state population](#).

The amicus brief demonstrates how Alabama’s COVID-19 order, coupled with the state’s lengthy history of harassment and intimidation against abortion providers allows already hostile non-medical state officials broad latitude to second-guess the medical judgment of physicians, under threat of criminal prosecution, like lead plaintiff OB/GYN Dr. Yashica Robinson, in caring for their patients. Dr. Robinson, a Black physician who has been targeted by this harassment, testified for five hours before the federal district court in opposition to the order that could harm her patients.

“Alabama lawmakers are using the COVID-19 crisis as a pretext to advance their longstanding obsession against abortion care, the health professionals who provide it, and the women who urgently need it, by labeling abortion non-essential healthcare. But we know that abortion delayed is abortion denied,” said **Toni Van Pelt, president of the National Organization for Women Foundation**. “Alabama’s extremist anti-abortion law underlying this Order is meant to head to the US Supreme Court in hopes that it will overturn Roe v. Wade, punish women, jail physicians, and score political points, shredding constitutional reproductive rights and endangering women’s health.”

Be A Newsletter Contributor

Wouldn't you like to see your name in print? How about submitting an article to the Morris County NOW newsletter? Maybe you have an idea or an issue that you would like to publicize? Please send any articles to our email address, morriscountynow@gmail.com. Since our newsletter is published bi-monthly at the beginning of the "odd" months (July, September, November, etc.), the deadline for submitting articles is the third Monday of the "even" months (June, August, October). This would apply for advertisements also.

SUBMIT AN ARTICLE FOR OUR MEMBER'S CORNER

Please note that all articles and advertisements submitted for printing are subject to the discretion of the editor.

Email Alerts

Morris County NOW wants your email address so we can keep you aware of important up-to-the-minute chapter news. Perhaps there is an upcoming event or action on an issue important to you that came up after the newsletter was published.

Since our newsletter is bi-monthly, this can easily occur. In this day and age of instant communication we want to keep in touch with our members.

Please write to us at morriscountynow@gmail.com with your email address and you won't be left out again.

Join Us On Facebook

Morris County NOW can now be found on Facebook, a social utility site that keeps people connected. If you are not already a member of Facebook, it is free and easy to join. You can use the link www.facebook.com/mcnownj



FOLLOW US ON **twitter**

http://

twitter.com/mcnownj

National NOW's Top Six Priority Issues

- Abortion and Reproductive Rights
- Economic Justice
- Ending Sex Discrimination
- LGBTQ Rights
- Promoting Diversity & Ending Racism
- Stopping Violence Against Women

Chapter Calendar

Tuesday, June 7, 2020

Morris County NOW Chapter Meeting
Possible Zoom Virtual Meeting

Tuesday, July 7, 2020

Morris County NOW Chapter Meeting
Possible Zoom Virtual Meeting

Tuesday, August 4, 2020

Morris County NOW Chapter Meeting
Morris Plains Community Center
7:30 PM

NOW'S EQUALITY AGENDA

1. Eliminate discrimination and harassment in the workplace, schools, the justice system, and all other sectors of society.
2. Secure abortion, birth control and reproductive rights for all women.
3. Ensure full civil and human rights for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people.
4. End all forms of violence against women.
5. Eradicate racism, sexism, and homophobia.
6. Strengthen women's economic security.
7. Promote equality and justice in our society.



If you feel inspired by something in this newsletter, please send your Covid-19 story to Morriscountynow@gmail.org.

Membership Application

Morris County NOW (NJ0200)
P.O. Box 394
Morristown, New Jersey 07960

I wish to join NOW and commit myself to take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

National, State, and Local Dues:

- \$35. Regular Dues
- \$15-\$34. Reduced Dues
- Additional support
- \$5. Newsletter Only

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Please return form with your check to the address above.

Our TV show "New Directions for Women" is available on YouTube

Most of the shows from 2007 to September 22, 2016, and some from as far back as 1994 are now available for on-demand viewing. More recent shows are in one 29 minute presentation. Because of limitations previously imposed by YouTube, older shows are presented as three separate ten minute segments. To help improve continuity, each subsequent segment begins by replaying approximately the last 20 seconds of the previous part. As time permits, the archives will expand to include all previous shows (to date we have produced 285 programs). To access "New Directions for Women," go to www.YouTube.com/menownj.

Come to Our Morris County NOW Monthly Meetings

Wonder what NOW is all about? Looking for sisterhood and good conversation? Is there a women's rights issue you would like to get active around? Here's your opportunity. All are welcome. Meetings are on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Morris Plains Community Center, 51 Jim Fear Drive, Morris Plains. (Unless indicated in the chapter calendar on our website.) We hope to meet you there. For more information, call our chapter phone or visit www.morriscountynow.org.

Morris County NOW
P.O. Box 394
Morristown, NJ 07960

Going Green

Thank you to all the members who replied to our "Going Green" campaign. You can still let us know if you want to receive your newsletter by email only. Contact us by phone, 973 285 1200, or by email, morriscountynow@gmail.com.

Feminist News and Views

News and Views is published six times a year by Morris County NOW as a means of informing the membership of current activities and issues.

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Rosemary Lontka, Executive V.P.
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Stacey Gregg, Action V.P.
Susan J. Waldman, Fundraising VP- 973.895.2218
Rosemary Lontka, Shirley Henderson, Susan J. Waldman - State Board Delegates
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Susan J. Waldman, Newsletter Editor - 973.895.2218

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For Information

Chapter Phone - 973.285.1200
morriscountynow@gmail.com
www.morriscountynow.org