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Maine NOW Times (Spring 1998)

National Organization for Women - Maine Chapter Staff

National Organization for Women - Maine Chapter

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♦♦♦ *Keep On Keeping On* ♦♦♦

Do you remember that song? Seems to fit these days. Hopefully, we are moving toward spring here in Vacationland. Been sort of a rough winter with the Ice Storm and the loss of the anti-discrimination law which would have provided civil rights protection to all people in Maine regardless of their sexual orientation. The law really was for all of us, a point that did not make it "out there" very often. So much has already been said about the Feb. 10 vote...

Heck, it has been scrutinized, columnized, debated, discussed, contemplated, dissected and examined; and yet it has not been forgotten. Perhaps at some point in the future, those of us here in Maine, who believe that equality and justice for all people is not just a nice sounding slogan, will look back to February 10, 1998 as a wake up call. Indeed, there are many activities that have sprung from the despair over the vote which bodes well for the future.

The Maine Lesbian Gay Political Alliance has been holding community workshops for civil rights throughout the state. Local activists, ML/GPA members, MWD volunteers and other interested individuals are encouraged to attend these meetings which are being moderated by the Maine Chapter of the National Coalition Institute. Those attending will be asked to brainstorm about the future. ML/GPA wants to hear ideas about how to reach people in all different areas of Maine, how ML/GPA can best support that effort and how civil rights supporters can work together more effectively. All of the workshops will probably have taken place by the time you receive this newsletter, but don't hesitate to call MLG/PA with your ideas.

A number of longtime activists who live in rural Maine have begun the Maine Rural Network (MRN). MRN founders want to address queer issues and begin progressive coalitions at the truly local level. The general goal is to encourage people to form local groups, and then to provide a method for the local groups to communicate with each other and coordinate efforts. For more information please contact Naomi at 642-2015.

A one day workshop on local organizing: "Alive & Kicking: Life After Feb. 10" was held on Saturday, May 9 in Waterville. This workshop was by and for people who were disappointed with the outcome of the referendum vote and who want to do more at the local level. This event has been put together by an ad hoc group of volunteers. This group would like to repeat this workshop in other parts of the state. For more information contact Janet May 862-5907 or Mitzi Lichman 338-5889.

Symposium XXIV will be held May 23-25 at the University of Maine, Farmington. There are a number of workshops scheduled (political, educational, social) as well as a concert and dance Sunday night. Don't miss this opportunity to network and have fun too. For more information contact Jean 862-2063.

Exciting things are happening all over the state. People are getting together in small, medium and large groups throughout the state to think, plan and act! Some folks are planning to do local ordinances, some are working on creative ways to educate the public on the issues, some are working to figure out how we all stay connected. It's an exciting time and a time for each and everyone of you who was disappointed in the February 10 election to get involved. Hope you will. We're counting on you!



MAINE NOW TIMES SPRING 1998

*Don't mourn,
organize!*

There are a number of groups alive & kicking and doing good work locally, often quietly. Here are some contact numbers. They would love to have you get involved.

Common Circle for Human Rights
(Belfast area) 338-5889
Waterville MWD 465-7574 or
Kennebec Valley NOW 873-0878
or 582-1686
Penobscot Co. MWD (Bangor
area) 862-5907
Hancock Co. MWD 244-4062
Maine Rural Network 642-2015
GLSEN (Gay Lesbian Straight
Education Network)
Downeast ME Chapter
359-2347
MLGPA 1-800-55-MLGPA
Maine NOW 797-8508
MWD PO Box 11061 Portland,
ME 04104 e-mail
voteno@maine.com
NOW Chapters in Maine (see p. 11)

We Are Many, We Are One

By Renee Berry-Huffman

The first ever Maine Women of Color & Allies Forum was held March 28, 1998, at the Stone House, Freeport. It was attended by women, young and old, black and white, Latina, Polish, Irish, lesbian and straight, disabled, rich and poor, Jewish, Christian and Buddhist. The Maine Forum, organized by Renee Berry-Huffman and Ruth Osborne, was a result of the momentum and energy sparked by the National Women of Color & Allies Forum held in Washington, DC in March.

Working together as allies, forty-four women came to the Stone House to discuss common struggles and ways of combating discrimination. Some women were concerned that there was no place in the women's struggle for them; others expressed feelings of ownership for the women's movement, handed down to them from their mothers, grandmothers and aunts. For these women, the duty to act was personal.

The morning workshop included a circle of sharing that allowed women from diverse backgrounds to appreciate and value the women seated next to them. It was at times emotional, and there were several wet eyes. Yet the process of the morning workshop established a safe place for sharing ideas in the afternoon session.

The Maine Women of Color & Allies Forum can and should continue, through the NOW chapters. Chapters should host forums that are inclusive of common struggles. The chapter could feature a speaker or panel, host a pot lunch supper, show a video and have a discussion afterward ("Soul Food" and "Boys on the Side," are some light comedy favorites of mine.) Another idea could be a book of the month club, and have a meal and discussion.

Another piece of the Maine Women of Color & Allies Forum is the "Sister to Sister" program. The purpose of this program is to connect and share with a woman of a different age and cultural background in order to begin a new alliance. The members of Maine NOW can keep this project moving.

The planning for the Northeast Regional NOW 1999 Women of Color & Allies Summit is underway. Many are thankful for what was started at the national conference and continued here in Maine. We are looking forward to future events.

Renee Berry-Huffman is the Affirmative Action Coordinator for Maine NOW and was recently elected to the National NOW Board.



Genocide Before Our Eyes

By Mary Donnelly

The send-off from Portland for our journey to Iraq was a rush of well wishing, TV interviews, and a coincidental but chilling bomb scare across the street from our apartment. Our adrenaline stayed high after 14 hours in the air, a day in Amman Jordan, and another 14 hour drive across the desert in anticipation of reaching Baghdad. Our eagerness was replaced with sorrow when we entered the first hospital and saw the face of sanctions in the Doctors, parents and children. Anxiety producing threats of military force by the US reached us through the international press along with their daily speculations on the probability of bombing.

All of our eight member US/UK delegation of the Chicago based Voices in the Wilderness were familiar with the UN numbers quantifying the sanctions -- 600,000 deaths of Iraqi children under five years of age since the 1991 Gulf War (6,700 deaths per month of children under five years of age). However, the numbers did not prepare us for the erosion of emotions from the daily worsening of sick and malnourished children, to the death of a child every ten minutes. In one ward, Mary found herself enveloped in the wailing of mothers as a child died in front of her.

We visited six hospitals, and our notes for hospitals in Basra in the south were similar to the hospitals in Baghdad.

"...no ambulances, building is run down and no

Continued on Page 3

Continued from Page 2

cleaning supplies, equipment broken, parts not available, no heat, no air conditioners, no blankets or sheets or mattress covers, surgical equipment almost non-existent, only emergency operations performed, no light bulbs, loss of electricity daily, death everywhere, no rubber gloves, no disposable syringes, not enough antibiotics, heart medicine doesn't exist, start chemotherapy for leukemia patients but not enough to continue, oxygen face masks in short supply, no equipment for processing blood, no platelets, tool's non-existent for diagnosis..."

We visited the Ameriyah Shelter on the anniversary of the US bombing on February 13, 1991. This shelter is particularly important because approximately 1,400 civilians were killed, and because cruise missiles, similar to those carried by the Aegis Destroyers made by BIW in Bath, ME, were used. The first missile opened a hole in the thick, bomb-hardened roof of the shelter, and the second missile passed through the hole and exploded after entering the shelter. The heat from the blast created Hiroshima-like shadows of people on the walls and imprinted hands and feet on the ceiling. On the lower level, stored water burst and boiled leaving patches of skin on the walls from the trapped people below.

The Ameriyah Shelter is a museum now, looked after by a woman calling herself Um Rydda (mother of Rydda in Arabic) who lost nine family members. We saw a picture of the 13 year old Rydda with candles and flowers inside the shelter. Um Rydda lives in a trailer next to the shelter. She told us that her real name is "buried with the dead," and that she would rejoin the living after the sanctions are lifted.

Everywhere we went people asked us "why, why, why does the American government want to punish us? We would rather be bombed and get it over with, rather than continuing under the sanctions like the living dead." Statements like this made us resolve to return and tell others the truth about the sanctions.

The truth about sanctions is that they have been a central part of the US's foreign policy in the middle-east since the 1950's. Iraq is uniquely vulnerable to sanctions. Over 90% of Iraq's income is from the sale of oil that leaves the country from one sea port, through a few pipelines and over a few roads in tanker trucks. The embargo easily controls oil exports and is the most effective in the history of the world. Up to now, the American public has never been told the full meaning of sanctions. However, the UN has documented the results of seven years of a total embargo. According to UN figures, sanctions killed 1.5 million Iraqis in seven years. We should ask our government and our media,

"Why don't we know this?"

UN officials tell us: 1) that one third of the present generation will be physically and mentally handicapped from malnutrition; and 2) after sanctions are lifted it will take two generations to restore the food and nutritional levels that existed before 1991. Not only have the sanctions slowly killed so many, they also have condemned future generations to lives with unnecessary limited physical and intellectual abilities.

After seeing the face of the sanctions, we publicly grieve for the people of Iraq. Our government should act with a sense of ethics and integrity, and should campaign to end the UN/US sanctions against Iraq that have lasted since January 16, 1996. It will be up to the citizens to demand an end to the use of sanctions through non-violent legal and illegal acts of civil disobedience.

Every Tuesday from 12:00 to 1:00 PM a vigil is held at Monument Square, Portland calling for an immediate lifting of the economic sanctions against the people of Iraq. -----

Mary and Mike Donnelly are NOW members living in Portland, Maine. They were members of Voices in the Wilderness' eleventh delegation in Iraq from February 12 to February 22, 1998. The Chicago based organization has been campaigning to end the UN/US sanctions against Iraq since January 16, 1998. Each delegation travels defying the US ban on travel to Iraq and risks a \$1,000,000 fine and 12 years of imprisonment. The eleventh delegation was a joint US/UK effort and delivered \$125,000 of medical relief supplies to hospitals and clinics in Iraq.

Mary and Mike urge you to contact the following officials to ask for their support in ending economic sanctions against the people of Iraq.

Senators Olympia Snowe/Susan Collins
US Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
1-800-972-3524

Representatives Baldacci/Allen
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
1-800-962-3524

Pres. Bill Clinton, The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20500
Comment line: 202-456-1111 Fax: 202-456-2461

Kofi Annan, Secretary General
United Nations Headquarters, Room S-3800
New York, NY 10017

NOW In The News

Congratulations Lois!

Lois Galgay Reckitt, longtime NOW activist (a founding mother of Maine NOW), was inducted into the Maine Women's Hall of Fame in March 1998. Lois was nominated by the Bath Business and Professional Women's Club because of her work as a women's advocate, a human rights protector, a skillful mediator, an articulate educator and a dedicated feminist.

Maine NOW Board Members Elected to National Board

By Rachel Lowe

Please join me in congratulating Ruth and Renee in a successful run for the National Board!!

Ruth Osborne and Renee Berry-Huffman, Maine NOW members/activists, were elected to the National NOW Board representing the Northeast Region at the NE Regional Conference in April 1998. Ruth and Renee, both women of color, bring with them a great deal of experience, knowledge, heart and soul.

Renee and Ruth were real highlights at the NE Regional Conference. They both gave excellent speeches (that had me in tears) and had good support from across the region.

In total, five women were elected to the National Board:

Marcia Papas (NY) - Regional Director

Ruth Osborne (ME)

Renee Berry-Huffman (ME)

Andrea Lee (MA)

Judy Murphy (VT)

If you have questions or ideas that you'd like them to take to the National Board, give them a call. (See contact page for phone numbers.) Congratulations Renee and Ruth...and THANKS!

NOW DECLARES VICTORY OVER ANTI-ABORTION THUGS!

April 20, 1998

In a major victory for women's rights, the National Organization for Women won its 12-year battle to put the anti-abortion racketeers out of business. "A jury of

six men and women saw through the thugs' shameless attempt to pervert the First Amendment. Our evidence and witnesses proved the defendants engaged in a nationwide conspiracy to deny women access to medical facilities," said NOW President Patricia Ireland in celebrating the unanimous verdict in *NOW v. Scheidler*.

With this verdict, NOW will win a permanent injunction against the defendants' blockades, extortion and other use of force or violence at clinics. In addition, the plaintiff clinics will petition for triple damages, as allowed by the federal Racketeer-Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act under which the suit was brought.

For details on this case, call NOW or go to <http://www.now.org/issues/abortion/scheidlr.html>



Dear Maine NOW friends,

I am an environmental activist, who has also been involved in feminist, civil rights, antiwar, and economic issues. *To get on the ballot, I need 4,000 verified signatures of Maine voters, which have to be gathered by mid-May.*

**If you can help, contact me at 622-0094 or
e-mail: nancyoden@cleanmaine.org.**

Check out my website <http://www.cleanmaine.org>
for campaign platform papers.

Thanks for whatever you can do.

for a CLEAN Maine,

Nancy Oden

p.s. Donations of any size are also welcome!

Nancy Oden, for a Clean Maine,
283 Water St., 3rd floor, Augusta, ME 04330.

Paid for and authorized by "for a CLEAN Maine" Peter
McFarland, Treasurer, 283 Water St., Augusta, Maine 04330.



MAINE NOW BILL OF CONSCIENCE



HONORING OUR PAST

In 1848, 300 women and men met in Seneca Falls, N.Y., to set the course for the first wave of the women's rights movement in this country. One hundred and fifty years later, the National Organization for Women will convene its 1998 national conference in Rochester, N.Y., to honor the past, evaluate the present and envision the future.

NOW was established on June 30, 1966, in Washington, D.C., by people attending the Third National Conference of the Commission on the Status of Women. Among NOW's 28 founders was its first president Betty Friedan, author of *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). Another founder, the late Rev. Pauli Murray, an African-American woman and Episcopal minister, co-authored NOW's original Statement of Purpose, which began:

"The purpose of NOW is 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."

These ongoing efforts established NOW as a major force in the sweeping changes that put more women in political posts; increased educational, employment and business opportunities for women; and enacted tougher laws against violence, harassment and discrimination. NOW's official priorities are economic equality, including an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that will guarantee equal rights for women; championing abortion rights, reproductive freedom and other women's health issues; opposing racism and opposing bigotry against lesbians and gays; and ending violence against women.

NOW is currently the largest organization of feminist activists in the United States. NOW has 250,000 members and 600 chapters in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Since its founding in

1966, NOW's goal has been "to take action" to bring about equality for all women. Both the actions NOW takes and its take on the issues are often unorthodox, uncompromising and before their time.

While celebrating NOW's 30th anniversary, delegates to its 1996 national conference called for a visioning summit to be held in 1998. The visioning process will be the major focus of the Rochester conference, culminating two years of discussion at the local, state and regional levels of NOW.

"NOW activists will gather to create a new declaration of our dreams and hopes. Our shared vision will bind us together, inspire and keep us going," according to Patricia Ireland, NOW President.

The Maine Bill of Conscience is the combined vision of the women and men who collectively form Maine NOW. We hope all who read this manifesto will be equally as inspired, empowered and motivated as we were by contributing to it.

WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE A FEMINIST MOVEMENT

Having a feminist movement means having connections between grassroots activists, the women's studies community, and public spokeswomen (elected and other); building connections between local, state, national, and international issues, groups and coalitions; believing in a sense of our place in history, as we recognize the contributions of activist women of all times, our suffrage foremothers, and out contemporary activists and groundbreakers; and, safekeeping of feminists and women's history, contributions and analyses.

The feminist movement, and NOW in particular, is a constant source of JOY, EMPOWERMENT, trusted information, EXHAUSTION and Consciousness Raising. It coaxes women to find their voice and to commit COURAGEOUS acts. It gives all people a variety of ways to be effective on behalf of feminism.

NOW IN THE PRESENT

NOW helps us all consider HOW TO GET POWER WITHOUT SELLING OUT.

NOW's role in the feminist movement is to **LEAD**, take **ACTION** to create a feminist world, to be a **VOICE** for justice, freedom, civil rights, economic security, peace & non-violence, reproductive rights, equal rights and equal access for girls and women.

NOW's ability and willingness to stand alone when necessary, and to work in coalition when possible, and to work both inside and outside the system, is an asset for women everywhere.

NOW's work as event organizers, lobbyists, selective users of civil disobedience, players in electoral politics, as movers and shakers in the courts, on the streets, on the job, on the Internet, on school campuses — all serve the feminist movement well.

NOW recognizes, with U.S. people buying 25% of the world's measured goods, **consumer activism** also has great potential to help women (and other marginalized people) trapped in a **global economy** currently geared toward exploitation of people, communities, and the environment for profit and greed.

NOW must continue with even more fearless, non-apologetic challenges to the imagery and treatment of females by religious, family, government, education, social and business institutions.

Only a true feminization of society AND a direct and complete destruction of **SEXISM, and all other systems of oppression**, will allow women (and therefore men) to reach their full potential — as sexual partners, friends, companions, parents, role models, and mentors; as earth's guardians, citizens, workers, artists, athletes, explorers, philosophers and spiritual beings. This is the potential that NOW offers.

THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

As we approach the new millenium, we offer this vision for the potential of NOW:

- **NOW must continue to prioritize a Constitutional Equality Amendment, to anchor our society's shifts toward believing in the justice of equal rights for women and men.**

- **NOW must continue to expose and challenge SEXISM, LOOKSISM, ABLEISM, HETEROSEXISM, AGEISM, RACISM, CLASSISM, and all systematic oppressions.**

- **NOW supports the right to reproductive freedom. The brutal, unrelenting attacks in the streets, the courts, the Congress and statehouses, on women's right to abortion, warrants NOW's defense as a priority. Freedom from unwanted sterilization, and coverage for abortion and birth control in insurance and government health programs are just two other hot areas as we move into the 21st century.**

- **NOW promotes a practical recognition of all the different more fluid combinations of blood relations, loves, community connections, and/or friends we now call "family." NOW works for acceptance of these more flexible forms which may or may not include a married couple, or children.**

- **NOW insists on the unsentimental challenge to the traditional family unit's usefulness to women's and children's welfare. The expectation and organization of society around one family model — a lasting heterosexual marriage with children — is not only incorrect (about 7% of families as we enter the 21st century), but harmful, since it is traditionally, BUT INCORRECTLY expected that all families can: supply one full-time worker who rarely needs time off; work out a free or affordable childcare scheme among (usually female) relative and friends; supply (usually female) relatives to care for ill or impaired family members; maintain and keep clean the living space; and perform considerable amounts of other unpaid, unrecognized, unrespected work.**

•NOW recognizes and encourages a major shift in society's expectations for the care and nurturing of U.S. children. This shift, away from isolated families providing virtually all child care to the notion that the entire community is responsible, must be realized. The idea that children are individuals, deserving of rights as well as care, must also be nurtured.

•NOW promotes and values all natural healthy sexuality choices, including: a life with no sexual partners, same-sex partners and/or opposite-sex partners, or several partners over a lifetime. NOW will not rest until all lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered individuals, heterosexuals, and questioning people have the same rights and respect.

•NOW's defense of the individual's right to bodily integrity emphasizes the right to reject violence, exploitation, harassment and gross or repeated humiliations by parents, spouses, dates, employers, or others. Violence against women and girls by boys and men is extreme in the U.S., and deserves special attention. Creating a society where incest, rape, and harassment is committed less frequently, and considered more gravely, is a priority.

•NOW supports the right to complete access to communities, education, & work for people with disabilities. Unemployment rates, and the extent to which access to all areas of U.S. society is denied, is a disgrace.

•NOW should continue to redefine liberation by redefining beauty and by making a special effort to discredit the myths about fat women, myths about diets and health, and the multi-billion industries that fuel the lies. A basic tenet of feminism is that each person is beautiful; that society's beauty standards must be disentangled from standards of respect and self-respect, disentangled from advantage and disadvantage, and most basically to be disentangled from discrimination.

•NOW will continue to challenge the political Right and defend against the increasing number of hate groups and fundamentalist sects of various

religions, in the U.S. and around the globe. The rightwing is a direct threat to the health, welfare, and freedoms of women and children. The political involvement of any religion should be viewed most cautiously by feminists. In the U.S., NOW must continue to challenge and expose the political-religious right as anti-feminist, and as partly responsible for the rise in hateful violence and harassment we currently endure.

•NOW challenges traditional ideas of economics and class issues. NOTHING LESS than redefining (country by country) what constitutes "work" and why and how work has "value" will truly honor women and children's contributions. NOW must question why certain drudgery is not "work" because it is unpaid, while some "play" is considered work because players are paid. NOW must also continue to expose the inhumanity that results from overvaluing CEOs, or judging the U.S. economy by how well the stock market is doing, instead of by the welfare of our people.

•NOW's work on citizens' rights to universal health care — including mental health care, human welfare, and equal access to quality education — for all people must continue. It is disturbing that young women and men of the 3rd wave received public education that did NOT include education about suffrage, feminism, social justice movements, nor current feminist issues. Also, attempts to insert religion into public education and censorship attempts must be opposed.

•NOW insists governments able to provide basic food, shelter, health care, and clothing for people in need have a moral obligation to do so. Current U.S. welfare policies and attitudes are punitive. NOW insists on a politics of fairness, compassion, expanded opportunities and hope.

•Women's misuse due to traditions of workplace injustice and harassment, as well as current global trade and economic policies must end. Human needs should be a priority over excessive "defense" budgets, and excessive corporate welfare. No economic system, by itself, is the cause of the exploitation of women. But, capitalism thrives when women and other marginal

workers are kept in the margins, harassed, underpaid, and not unionized. Organizing workers to demand living wages, fair benefits, a shorter work week, flexible work conditions, and integrity in the work place is critical. We also encourage a more extensive system of bartering - a formalized community exchange of services, as well as low income loans, and other unconventional economic arrangements.

RESTRUCTURING NOW

It is important to us, regardless of any path NOW may take, that the structure of the organization support and reflect the reality in which its members are active.

As such, we recommend the following...

MAINE NOW suggests an elimination of the regional structure. This level of NOW seems somewhat arbitrary, and an "artificial" level concocted for elections, which is much work for too little return for some of our busiest and most dedicated activists.

MAINE NOW encourages activists to promote the chapter level, and even smaller units such as satellite groups or liaisons of one, two, or a few activists connected either to a chapter or state organization.

We urge a more flexible notion of what constitutes a chapter, urging chapters to worry less about size and more about grassroots actions and connections to, and collaborations with, various progressive communities.

MAINE NOW encourages NOW activists to act as NOW representatives as often as possible. We know many of our activists wear many hats, do community service work, and often speak out as feminists. The work of NOW activists ought to accrue to NOW as often as possible.

Many current NOW leaders were mentored and encouraged by other NOW activists. Mentoring and skill sharing with a newer NOW member is highly recommended.

Maine NOW encourages NATIONAL in its efforts to nurture chapters, state NOW organizations, national Task Forces and PACs, as well as our connections to other progressive organizations and noted individuals in the U.S. and around the globe. We encourage national marches and actions on a fairly regular basis. Proud of our growing sensitivities around poverty, economic justice, racism, heterosexism, and international feminism, we urge National to continue its many efforts to educate our own NOW members, as well as the world.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED WITH MAINE NOW

MAINE NOW has five active chapters serving the Brunswick, Greater Bangor, Greater Farmington, Greater Portland and Kennebec Valley areas, as well as an active state-wide PAC and board.

We are always looking for feminist women, girls and men who share our principles, are committed to making positive social change and willing to dedicate time, hard work and humor.

If you are interested in receiving information about NOW or, better yet, *getting involved*, please call us at 207-797-8508.

JOIN NOW!



Primary Elections will be taking place on June 9th. Maine NOW PAC will be sending you information on NOW PAC endorsed candidates. If you would like to get involved in a local campaign please contact Rachel Lowe at 737-2329. General Election candidates will need help starting in June.

Sexual Harassment in Maine

By Renee Berry-Huffman

Carlene Harvey is someone whom I've been working with for several months. Carlene has experienced horrific sexual harassment and discrimination by representatives of her employer. The harassment exceeded levels making the work environment hostile and dangerous.

Carlene's person has been threatened. Her property has been threatened and damaged. The situation presently, is such, that Carlene is no longer able (due to employer's decision) to work on the premise. Her health insurance has been canceled, yet her employer is disputing her attempts to collect unemployment benefits. This has created an incredible financial hardship for Carlene.

Carlene did pursue her case through the Maine Human Rights Commission, and she was awarded the right to sue, by the Human Rights Commission and the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). Carlene has retained attorney, Kim Matthews and has filed suit.

Carlene's courage has been exemplary. Struggling to keep it together, Carlene is also the single mother of a daughter. Carlene has tried to recharge her career, but every attempt leads to a dead-end. If you are interested in contributing to the Carlene Harvey Legal Aid Fund please contact Renee Berry-Huffman. 772-3368.



VAWA2

The Violence Against Women Act of 1998 (VAWA2) was introduced on March 19 at a packed press conference by members of Congress and leading domestic violence, sexual assault and women's rights advocates. The three leading sponsors are Rep. John Conyers (D-MI), Connie Morella (R-MD) and Chuck Schumer (D-NY). As of 3/19/98, eighty-one colleagues in the House including John Baldacci are co-sponsors. Tom Allen's office said he is considering the bill. The Senate version has not yet been introduced.

ACTION NEEDED: Contact Senators Snowe and Collins, and Rep. Allen asking them to co-sponsor.

VAWA2 will reauthorize all existing VAWA programs including assistance to domestic violence shelters and services and will add new programs that would: limit the effects of violence on children; addresses housing and insurance discrimination against battered women, and the need for increased legal representation; calls for a summit on violence and sports; promotes sexual assault prevention, supports legal action and addresses other issues related to assaults in the penal system, the workplace, in the military and in educational institutions; provides initiatives around violence against older women, women with disabilities, and immigrant women; and promotes research on violence against women.

Maine NOW Calendar

If you would like to participate in any of the following or need more information, call Rachel 737-2329.

MAY 16: Board meeting, 10 am - 3 pm, Brewer

JUNE 9: Maine Primary Election Day. VOTE!

June 13: Board meeting 10 am - 3 pm, Portland

June 28: Maine NOW/PAC Candidate Interviews.

JULY 10 - 12: National NOW VISION Conference, Rochester, NY. Maine NOW board meeting at conference site.

July 17 - 19: 150th Anniversary of Seneca Falls Convention, Seneca Falls, NY

AUGUST 8: Board meeting 10 am - 3 pm, Richmond

August 26: Women's Equality Day, 78th Anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote in the U.S. Contact Greater Bangor NOW for event info.

SEPTEMBER 19: Board meeting 3 pm - 7 pm, Winslow

September 26: Catie Curtis concert & Silent Auction, Bangor. Benefit for Maine NOW/PAC. 989-3306

\$\$\$ FAIR PAY \$\$\$

Do you believe you have been paid less in a job because of your gender?

As more and more single parents (mostly women) are going into the workforce to support their families, MAIN* wants to be sure that they are paid fairly.

Paying one worker less than another because of their gender is *against the law* in Maine.

Although this law was enacted in 1965, it has not been implemented. Several organizations representing women, labor, and low-income people, are working with the Department of Labor to create and implement rules to ensure that the law is understood and used appropriately. **The law says** that a man and woman at the same workplace must be paid the same wage if: they are doing the same job; OR they are doing jobs that require a similar amount of skill, effort, and responsibility, even if the jobs have different titles (equal pay for comparable work).

For example, in Company ABC, a secretary's job may require less physical effort than a custodian's, but may require more mental effort or skill. In this case, the value of the secretary's job could be the same as the custodian's. If it is, she should be paid the same.

Have you had an experience like this at work?

We need some real life experiences demonstrating that "equal pay for comparable work" is not being enforced. These stories will help us educate ourselves, the business community, the Department of Labor, and the public about unfair and harmful practice of gender discrimination. Please help by sharing your story so we can understand the real problems facing Maine workers. All information will remain confidential. We may contact you to ask you for additional information, or to let you know about how you can help to make this law more effective.

Please tell us your:

Name _____
 Address _____
 Town _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Best time of day to call you. _____

Please give us a short description of your experience. Be sure to include the kind of job you were doing at the time. You do not have to include the name of the employer:

Feel free to write on a separate sheet of paper.

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN TO: MAIN, c/o MEJP, P.O. Box 5347, Augusta, ME 04332
 If you prefer to call, contact Rita Furlow or Chris Rusnov at the Maine Equal Justice Project at 626-7058 ext. 200.

* Maine NOW is a member of the Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods (MAIN), a coalition of individuals and organizations addressing issues that affect low income people.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN

Maine's Leading Feminist Grassroots Organization

Phone Number: 797-8508

Maine State Coordinator - Rachel Lowe 737-2329
 Assistant State Coordinator - Cynthia Phinney 778-9506
 Scribe - Joyce Blakney 825-3962
 Treasurer - Annie Lunt 883-1195

Task Force/Coalition Contacts

Affirmative Action Task Force - Renee Berry-Huffman 772-3368
 Computer Wizards - JoAnne Dauphinee 989-3306
 Consumers For Affordable Health Care-VACANCY
 Dirigo Alliance - Beth Edmonds 865-3869
 Lesbian Rights Task Force - Janet May 862-5907
 Maine Choice Coalition - VACANCY
 Maine NOW Phone Coordinator - Renee Berry-Huffman 772-3368
 Maine NOW PAC Treasurer - JoAnne Dauphinee 989-3306
 Maine NOW Times - VACANCY
 Women's Legislative Agenda Coalition - VACANCY
 Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods - Chris Rusnov 873-0878

NORTHEAST REGIONAL NOW BOARD MEMBERS

Marsha Pappas, Albany, NY, Regional Director
 Judy Murphy, Manchester Center, VT
 Ruth Osborne, Falmouth, ME 797-9772
 Renee Berry-Huffman, Portland, ME 772-3368
 Andrea Lee, Cambridge, MA

GREATER BANGOR NOW

87 Sunset Strip, Brewer, ME 04412
 Coordinator - JoAnne Dauphinee 989-3306
 Meets second Monday of each month

GREATER FARMINGTON NOW

P.O.Box 375, Farmington, ME 04938
 Coordinator - Aimee DesRoches 778-6107

KENNEBEC VALLEY NOW

P.O.Box 503, Augusta, ME 04330
 Coordinator - Don Craig 582-1686
 Call for meeting schedule.

BRUNSWICK AREA NOW

P.O.Box 133, Brunswick, ME 04011
 Coordinator - Anna Boll 729-1952
 Monthly meeting - 3rd Monday of every month

GREATER PORTLAND NOW

P.O.Box 4012, Portland, ME 04101
 Contact - Melissa Frye 797-8508
 Call for meeting schedule.

 e-mail feminists:

Cynthia Phinney CPHIN@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Our vision is to empower women to take feminist action to make feminist social change. Our top five priorities are: ERA, economic justice, eliminating racism, lesbian rights, and reproductive freedom. **JOIN US!**

MAINE NOW, P.O. BOX 4012, Portland, ME 04101. Make check payable to MAINE NOW.

NAME (Please PRINT) _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

RACIAL/ETHNIC BACKGROUND (optional) _____ to help us analyze our organization's diversity.

CHAPTER (see above) _____ If there isn't a chapter near you, leave this space blank and we will enroll you as an at-large member.

Dues rate includes membership at the national, state & local level.

\$ _____ dues enclosed. \$35 Regular Dues. A sliding scale of \$20 - 34 is available, if you need it.

\$ _____ additional contribution enclosed. \$ _____ Political Action Committee contribution. Payable to Maine NOW PAC.

I would like to be a sustainer, donating \$ _____ per month. (\$5 minimum per month)

☐ PLEASE CHECK HERE IF YOU DO NOT WANT MAINE NOW TO SHARE YOUR NAME WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.

☐ Please check here if you do not want National NOW to share your name with other groups.

NAME SHARING POLICY: Maine NOW shares our member list for coalition work, in which we are active (see list above). We also occasionally, on a case-by-case basis, will share the list with progressive groups who are advertising events or sharing information.

What's Inside?

First Maine Women of Color and Allies Summit

**Lois Galgay Reckitt Inducted into the Maine
Women's Hall of Fame**

**Maine NOW Board Members Elected to National
Board**

**NOW DECLARES VICTORY OVER ANTI-
ABORTION THUGS!**

Genocide Before Our Eyes-The Donnelly's in Iraq

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