

BROOKLYN-QUEENS NOW NEWS



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CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

It's summer in the city and while we're trying to prevent ourselves from melting, it's time to catch you up on what's happened and what to expect in the coming months. We've seen the historic conclusion of **Senator Clinton's Presidential campaign**. See the heartfelt essay by VP Rachelle Suissa on page 2. We marked International Women's Day with "**Women Take the Lead**," a wonderful discussion about issues confronting women today. Our presenters, Barbara Winslow, Jenny Sunderland, Velmanette Montgomery, Yvonne Graham, all BQNOW members, and Lydia Devine spoke passionately about what we've achieved and what remains to be done to advance women's rights.

We've had a **legal success**, which protects us from discrimination based on gender identity, a **partial victory** (one-house-passed bills) protecting nursing mothers, and a "**go nowhere**" hope for state legislation protecting abortion rights (Reproductive Health and Privacy Protection Act – no bill proposed during this session).

Let us not forget that this November, not only will we be voting for President, but for every seat in the US House of Representatives and for every seat in the NYS Assembly and Senate. **Primary Date** for these offices is September 9th. The **General Election** will be November 4th. Make sure you are registered (Deadlines: August 15th for the Primary, and October 10th for the General Election) to vote!!!! Then, show up at the polls!

We encourage candidates for state and federal office who seek NOW support to download our **BQNOW PAC Questionnaire** from the website. As you know, we cannot endorse at the statewide or federal level, but we can recommend endorsement to National NOW and NOW-NYS. Members who are interested in getting active with our PAC may contact us at 718 769-8901 or by email at bklynqnsnow@yahoo.com.

This August, we're hoping to resume our **Women's Suffrage Potluck**. Our fearless leaders are searching for a good location, possibly Prospect or Marine Park or on Brooklyn College's campus. Our potlucks have been lots of fun in the past with good food, great conversation, lively discussions and the camaraderie of sisterly appreciation. If you're interested, email us at bklynqnsnow@yahoo.com and we'll keep you posted on date, location and time.

After the election, we hope to have a forum called, "**You've Been Elected...NOW What?**" We're inviting candidates who've won their (re-)election, members of mother's rights groups, LGBT groups, women who track sexism in the media, and political observers. We're looking for a location that is easy to access and open to the public. If any of you have suggestions, contact Sherry at 718 263-7638 or email us at the chapter email address above.

Our chapter leaders have been so busy representing us nationally and statewide. They discuss their findings and activities at chapter meetings. This newsletter only touches on what they've done. We love your membership support, but we'd especially like to hear your views at meetings. Come to chapter meetings or host one in your home!!!!

Senator Montgomery Receives Margaret Sanger Award

At the 31st Annual Conference of Family Planning Advocates of New York State, Senator Velmanette Montgomery (a BQNOW Member) was presented The 2008 Margaret Sanger Award in recognition of her leadership on women's health issues.

This distinguished award was presented by Joan Malin, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of New York City, at the Empire State Convention Center in Albany, NY.

"Senator Montgomery is a passionate advocate for New York's women and families. She exemplifies the dedication and determination that Margaret Sanger displayed in her time, and is truly deserving of this recognition."

Born in 1879 in Corning, New York, Margaret Sanger was the founder of the American Birth

-continued on page 3-

BROOKLYN-QUEENS NOW CHAPTER CALENDAR-2008

Chapter meetings take place the first Monday of the month at 7pm, unless otherwise noted.



- July 7 **Chapter Meeting** in Forest Hills, Queens. Call 718-263-7638.
- July 18-20: **National NOW Convention** - Bethesda, MD. To be a delegate, contact Julie at julierachel19@webtv.net .
- August: **Women's Suffrage Pot Luck** being planned. Look for news on the website or give us your email address and we'll send you date, place and time
- Sept 8th: **Chapter Meeting** in Sheepshead Bay. Contact: 718 769-8901
- Sept 9 NYS Primary. You must be registered by August 15th.
- Oct 6th: **Chapter Meeting** in Midwood. Contact 718 951-7441.
- Nov 3 **Chapter Meeting.** location to be determined.
- Nov 7-9. **NOW- NYS Convention.** Seneca Falls, NY Celebrate the 160th anniversary of the first Women's Rights Convention with our annual convention.

SHE'LL ALWAYS BE MY PRESIDENT

Rachelle Suissa, BQNOW Vice-President



On Saturday, June 7th, Hillary Clinton announced the end of her bid for the Presidency. Her eyes were moist, her face a little red, but her voice and spirit were unwavering. For 15 months, she campaigned against Senator Barack Obama, making history as the first woman to win the New Hampshire Primary as well as every other state primary she won. She ended her bid strong, with close to 18 million votes, more votes won by any candidate for the Democratic Nomination throughout history.

I want to thank Senator Clinton for being courageous enough to go out there and campaign for something she deserves so much. She is relentless, determined, ambitious and undoubtedly one of America's smartest, strongest women in politics. She is my idol. I hope that even those who did not vote for her have come to know what wonderful things she has done for New Yorkers as our Senator and of all the great things she will continue to do for us in the future. Our Senator is a top-notch debater, speaker, and political enthusiast. She reached millions of people with her voice and message about solutions for middle class Americans. She has redefined what it means to be a woman in the 21st Century; she has shattered glass ceilings, broken through the antiquated myths that still pervade our society about women's roles. Most of all, she has restored faith and true value in the goals of democracy, specifically the goals for women and children. She will continue to do great things no matter where she goes, whether it is as Vice-President, Senator from New York, or to a post within the President's Cabinet.

I hope you will join me in congratulating Senator Clinton for a campaign well fought, well run, and well spoken. Thank you, Hillary, for being the strong, independent woman we need in this country. Thank you for being a role model to our girls, younger and older, for enabling them to realize that they can be anything they want to. You are a role model for women of all ages, races, ethnic backgrounds and sexual orientations. Indeed, you are a role model for this country. You will always be my President.

-Senator Montgomery-

Control League (which eventually became Planned Parenthood). In 1916, Sanger opened a family planning and birth control clinic at 46 Amboy Street in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, which Montgomery represents in the State Senate.

As the Ranking Democrat on the Senate Social Services, Children and Families Committee, Senator Montgomery is recognized for co-sponsoring laws creating the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, prohibiting the ritual practice of female genital mutilation, and giving mothers the right to breast feed their babies in any public or private location.

Senator Montgomery is credited with helping frame the Women's Health and Wellness Law, which expands women's access to reproductive and other preventive health services. She is also a proponent of school-based health centers, and believes that age-appropriate, medically-accurate sex education should be taught from kindergarten through the 12th Grade.

Legislative Victory!!! Gender Identity Protection is now law!

The Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA) prohibits discrimination based on gender identity or expression; defines "gender identity or expression" as having or being perceived as having a gender identity, self image, appearance, behavior or expression whether or not that gender identity, self image, appearance, behavior or expression is different from that traditionally associated with the sex assigned to that person at birth; further includes offenses regarding gender identity or expression within the list of offenses subject to treatment as hate

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THE GENERATION AFTER

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We support women's rights which is part of the struggle against tyranny and inhumanity

ACTION ALERTS



On the legislative front, there are two bills involving **breastfeeding** that you need to watch.

In the House of Representatives, the bill is **HR 2236** - The Breastfeeding Promotion Act of 2007. Introduced in May of 2007 by lead sponsor Rep. Carolyn Maloney, it now sits in the sub-committee on Health, Employment, Labor and Pensions. The bill, as the title suggests, encourages the healthy practice of breastfeeding by amending the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to protect breastfeeding and the expressing of breast milk and to provide tax incentives to encourage breastfeeding. **There is no companion bill in the US Senate.**

In New York State, we have a bill, **A3782D**, coming out of the Assembly with a virtually unanimous positive vote. Sponsored by Assem. Gunther, the bill provides for a basic breastfeeding bill of rights. Unfortunately, its companion bill in the State Senate, **S1674D**, sponsored by Sen. Krueger, has stalled. These bills provide mothers with basic breastfeeding rights, which would then be posted conspicuously in mothers' healthcare facilities.

The NYS Legislature has still taken no action on **Reproductive Health and Privacy Protection** (S05829 no NYS Assembly companion bill). The bill has been languishing in the Senate Health Committee since January. That means if the US Supreme Court rules to overturn or more severely restrict access to abortion and family planning, there is no NYS law to protect our citizens and guarantee access to these services. Pressure every candidate asking for your vote for state office to get behind this legislation!

We will keep you posted on the progress of these bills, or lack thereof, but we also encourage you to pressure your representatives, both national and state, to get these bills out of committee and into law. Check out our website (www.brooklynqueensnow.org) for other Action Alerts. For contact info on your representative, go to www.nypirg.org (the Who Represents Me? link.)

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NOW is the time.
Keep up the good work!

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