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Mainely NOW vol. 1, no. 1 (August 1973)

Mainely Girls Staff

Mainely Girls

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MAINELY NOW



Vol. I, no. 1

August 1973

Coalition Builds for ERA

CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER

To press for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment which lost last year in Maine by one vote in the Senate, a coalition of citizen groups is being formed. On Aug. 5 representatives from several organizations met with the Maine NOW State Steering Committee in Augusta to plan a State ERA conference in September.

Ratification details, speakers, workshops, literature, and strategy were discussed in an effort to avoid duplication.

The informal coalition presently includes contact with the following groups: Common Cause, League of Women Voters, Maine Women's Political Caucus, Business and Professional Women, Association of American University Women, Maine Civil Liberties Union, Equal Opportunity for Women, Unitarian-Universalist Ministers, Church Women United, Republican and Democratic Parties, Bath-Brunswick Women's Center, Bangor Women's Center, Human Rights Commission, and the Governor's Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

A further meeting was scheduled for Aug. 26, 12:00 a.m., Civic Center auditorium, Augusta.

Equal Rights Day

Governor again proclaims
Aug. 26 Equal Rights Day

Festivities sponsored by Maine NOW Chapters will be held at the new air-conditioned Civic Center (immediately visible when you take the Augusta-Belgrade exit on the Turnpike) from 1:00 to 5:30, Aug. 26.

Art work and crafts will be exhibited in the lobby and halls (bring "S" hooks for hanging). To reserve tables for displays (doors open at noon for exhibitors) please phone 772-8743. Participants may opt for \$5 a table or 10% of sales paid to Maine NOW ERA.

At 3:00 p.m. in the auditorium the MYTH AMERICA Contest will feature take-offs or put-ons of advertisements (Ultra-brite) and common stereotypic attitudes (women are bad drivers) depicted in costume and sign. Prizes awarded; details: 772-8743.

A DIAMOND IS A GIRL'S BEST FRIEND?

At 5:30 an all-state women's team will meet the Augusta JayCees in a seven inning softball thriller at the Mount Vernon Field (one mile towards Augusta from the Civic Center-same road). Donation: \$1 per person; kids free.

ERA DAY

COMMITTEE

Co-ordinators: Marilyn Andersen-Richard; Linda Hamelin, So. Windham.

Contest: Bobby St. Jean, Gorham
Exhibition: Rommy Brown, Stratton;

Marti Strunk, Farmington
Publicity: Alysyan Delaney, Portland.

see it NOW

The following areas of discrimination are reprinted from the New York Times, July 29, 1973.

The two-income married couple pays more in Social Security taxes than the one-worker family with the same income, but it gets less back when the husband and wife retire.

Only 48 per cent of the back pay that has been found to be owed to women because of violations of the Equal Pay Act has ever been paid, partly because courts have sometimes reduced the awards, but mostly for reasons Government officials could not explain.

On the average, women live six years longer than men. But the insurance industry charges women for life insurance as if they only live three years longer.

The office of Federal Contract Compliance, which is supposed to make sure that Government contractors do not discriminate against women or minorities, has no women in professional positions in any of its fields.

Savings and Loans and other mortgage lenders generally refuse to count even part of a married woman's income when considering a home mortgage. The theory is that the wife might get pregnant or, for other reasons, decide to quit work, leaving her husband unable to meet the monthly payments. The fear is not supported--in fact, it is contradicted--by studies of mortgage delinquencies.

Auto insurers often refuse to sell collision insurance to divorced women, not because they have higher accident rates--they don't--but because the companies believe, without any factual evidence, that juries will vote against divorcees in accident cases.

The Armed Forces require women recruits to be better educated, on the average, than men, and to score higher on various tests. But once they are in the service, women get fewer promotions and less specialized training.

The tax laws discriminate against the working couple, when compared with a one-income family with the same income, or when compared with two single persons with the same combined income.

Unemployment compensation cannot be paid to pregnant women in most states, even if they are laid off for reasons unrelated to the pregnancy, and are still willing and able to work.

Bumper Sticker

"ERA for Me.!"

task forces

The National NOW Task Force on MARRIAGE, FAMILY RELATIONS & DIVORCE is urging chapters to make a survey of the marital courts in their state showing the ratio of divorces to enforcement matters. "As all unsupported divorced and separated women know, the states are forcing them onto AFDC because divorce and enforcement are going in opposite directions."

Anyone interested in participating in such a survey please contact the Bangor Chapter for a detailed plan of procedure. Natalie Smith (945-5030)

SPORTS: Greater Portland NOW has challenged the Little League's right to federal funds and has monitored the sports expenditures in Portland public schools. Further information is needed from all parts of Maine.

The chapter is also looking for students and parents willing to challenge the distribution of taxes, unequal facilities, and exclusion of women from some sports, eg. cross-country, under Title IX of the Higher Education Act of 1972.

Contact: Lois Reckitt
38 Myrtle Avenue
So. Portland 04106
799-8744

HEALTH: The Kennebunk Chapter has developed a questionnaire in order to survey the health services available, or not available, to women in York County. Anyone wishing to fill out a questionnaire or to distribute them, particularly in the western part of the county may call Audrey Isakson, 646-7431.

The survey is a first step towards the preparation of a booklet to be published on women's health services. The questionnaires are also available for anyone who might want to make a similar survey in another county.

Contact: Audrey Isakson
RFD #1 Box 164
Wells, 04090

Write-On

Why ERA died in the Senate

As everyone knows, the Maine Senate failed to pass the Equal Rights Amendment for the third time. I was present in the Senate each time it was debated, and I thought your readers might be interested in the reasoning of opponents of the bill.

The primary reason seemed to be that, although women are soft warm, gentle creatures whose only desire in life is to raise babies, they will immediately upon gaining equality, change into raging caricatures of men, throwing their children into day care centers while they make a frenzied stampede to get the almighty dollar, taking jobs away from poor helpless men who couldn't honorably fight back because women are ladies.

Another reason was that the Senate was tired of it all. Women wrote too many letters, but didn't write enough. They telephoned too much, but they should have called more. They lobbied in Augusta so little that the Senators hid when they saw the women coming. They were far too radical in their demands, but they weren't radical enough. At the same time they were much too ladylike while not acting like ladies. They were much too loud, but they should have been louder.

The fourth reason was the old standard, . . . God made woman from Adam's rib, etc.

So the Senate in its wisdom elected to protect society from the unmentionable horror of equality for women. Besides, think of all the work involved in changing the 16 odd Maine Laws (as stated by a gentleman proponent in the House) that would be affected by this Amendment! It would be too much to ask! Pennsylvania has some 300 laws to change, but they are already working on it.

I'm sure my great-grandchildren will dissolve into tears of laughter as I tell them how Maine almost gave its women the right to be a person. I hope I'll be able to laugh, too.

FRANCES CAREY-HARRIMAN

Scarborough

now & *JHEN*

1869

"At the time statehood (Wyoming) was applied for, a determined opposition was made in Congress to the admission of a territory with a woman suffrage clause in its Constitution. So violent was the feeling, that the territorial delegate in Congress, Joseph M. Carey, now Governor of the State, telegraphed the Legislature that he feared statehood would not be granted if the suffrage clause were not abandoned. The Legislature which was then in session, telegraphed back: 'We will remain out of the Union a hundred years, rather than come in without woman suffrage'."

p. 68 Woman Suffrage, published 1913. Ed. Frances M. Bjorkman.

1973

"I know it won't be necessary for me to do this today, but were it necessary for me to stand in the House entirely alone in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment, I should be proud and pleased to do so."

Ezra Briggs, Representative from Caribou, Feb. 27, Legislature.

1853

"The assemblage of rampant women which convened at the Tabernacle yesterday was an interesting phase in the comic history of the Nineteenth Century...a gathering of unsexed women, unsexed in mind, all of them publicly propounding the doctrine that they should be allowed to step out of their appropriate sphere to the neglect of those duties which both human and divine law have assigned them."

Victory, published 1940, H.W.Wilson Co.

1973

"Not every woman wants to make a career outside of the home but every woman ought to have an opportunity to make up her own mind. I would like to call to your attention before I sit down an editorial in the Portland Press Herald of February 13, 1973, which I have changed a bit but the gist of it is the same. 'A woman is not going to be made a lady or a tramp by constitutional amendment. Dignity, respect, common decency are not regulated by statutes. Human relationships are what humans make them. This isn't just another gimmick of Women's Lib. A constitutional amendment is serious business. Equality is a very simple state of being equal. Either we believe in it as a nation or we don't...'"

Brooks Brown, Representative, Kennebec, Feb. 27, Legislature.

Myth America

"Women Work Only for Pin Money"

Throughout the years this common but untrue assumption has permeated laws, public policies, and business practices.

In recent testimony before the Joint Economic Committee of Congress statistics from the Census Bureau reveal three-fourths of all women who work have no husband or a husband whose income is less than \$7,000 a year.

NY Times, July 29, 1973

"Good God, the women are running the country now."

Lowell D. Henley, Representative from Norway, Mar. 7, 1973, on the floor of the House, Augusta.

sanity

Workshops on women and madness in Maine are being held at the Brunswick Women's Center. Information and/or surveys welcomed. Contact: Miriam Palmer (725-2512)

madison Avenue

A billboard in Portland reads: "A country needs love, too. See your Army Representative"

bibliography

In addition to Simon de Beauvoir's The Second Sex, Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique, and Kate Millett's Sexual Politics, the following books are important to an understanding of feminism.

Sisterhood is Powerful, ed. Robin Morgan. Vantage. \$2.45.

Women and the Law, Leo Kano-witz, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, paperback, 1968.

The First Sex, (history of women) Elizabeth Gould Davis, Penguin, \$1.45.

The Descent of Woman (evolution) Elayne Morgan.

Women and Madness, Phyllis Chesler (what is madness and who defines it)

Free and Female, Barbara Seaman (the truth about contraceptives)

"Together" Black Women, Inez Smith Reid.

Born Female, Caroline Bird, pocketbook, 1969. (the movement)

Man's World, Woman's Place, Elizabeth Janeway, Delta.

Rebirth of Feminism, Judith Hole & Ellen Levine, Quadrangle, 1971. (recent herstory)

Adam's Rib, Ruth Herschberger (one of the first and best: 1947)

Rising Tides: 20th Cent. Amer. Women Poets, Ed. Laura Chester & Sharon Barba. paperback.

1973

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- Aug. 16. Greater Portland NOW monthly meeting. Presentation of slate of officers. Susan and Richard Clark will talk on Alternate Life Styles, 7:30, 97 Danforth St.
- Aug. 20 Governor proclaims Aug. 26 Equal Rights Day. 11:00 a.m. ceremony at his office.
- Aug. 26 Pre-conference coalition meeting, auditorium, Civic Center, noon, bring your own lunch.
- Aug. 26 ERA Festivities, Civic Center, Augusta. Doors open at noon; 1:00 open to public; 3:00: Myth America Contest; 5:30 softball game at Mount Vernon Field.
- Sept 4 Bangor Chapter meeting, 7:00, Bangor Public Library
- Sept 12 Kennebunk Chapter meeting; 7:30, Unitarian Church.
- Sept 13 Annual meeting Greater Portland NOW; 7:30, 97 Danforth St. Election of officers.
- Sept 16 ERA CONFERENCE, Holiday Inn, Augusta
- Sept 20 Tennis Match: Billie Jean King vs. Bobby Riggs ABC-TV, 8:00 p.m.
- Sept.28 Maine Women's Political Caucus Fund Raising Event new Sheraton Inn; \$12.50 per person.
South Portland

Miscellaneous

sister-in-law

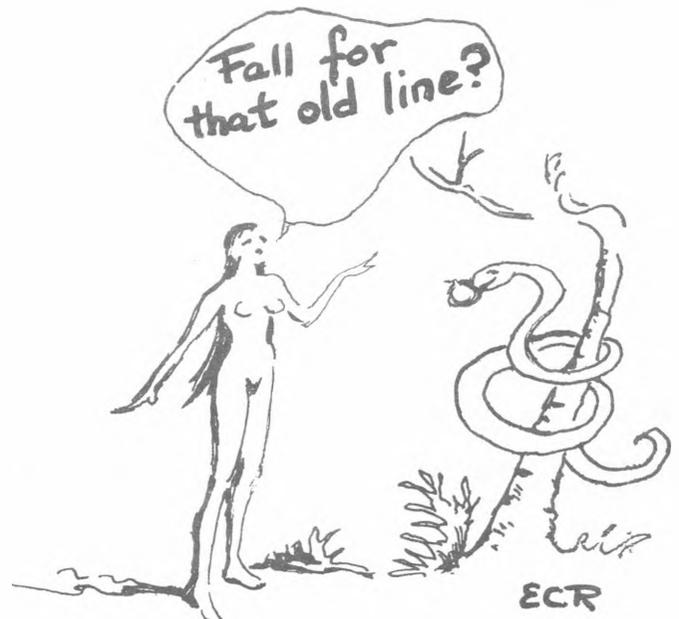
"Women: Life Span Challenges" is the theme of the Institute of Gerontology's 26th Annual Conference on Aging at the University of Michigan on Sept. 10-12. The conference will emphasize life situations of the American women who is "45 years plus" and her varied responses to an evolving society. Discussion will cover the present and developing social, economic, emotional, and legal status of older women. (Aging Conference, Institute of Gerontology, 543 Church St., Ann Arbor, Mich. 48104)

Jean Chalmers, attorney with the firm Knight & Cohen, Rockland, was the only woman on any panel during the week's conference of the Association of American Trial Lawyers in Miami, Florida, this July. F. Lee Bailey, on the same panel, was, she said, "a hard act to follow".

Women Today: vol III, no. 15

OWL (Older Women's Liberation)
Task Force Coordinator:
Eleanor Robbins
64 Oakhurst Rd.
Cape Elizabeth 04107
(799-0826)

An anthology of Maine women poets is being assembled. The first edition will be limited and hand printed. Submit 5 to 10 poems, preferably not light verse, to Miriam Palmer and Deborah Boe, Women's Center, 136 Main St., Brunswick 04011.



open admission

The purpose of this newsletter is to establish and maintain the free flow of information among feminists as individuals or as members of organizations within the state of Maine. While it is primarily NOW oriented, we do not intend to limit our material to NOW projects either locally or nationally. We welcome differences of opinion, news of activities, consciousness-raising explorations, personal accomplishments and grievances.

Regular features will include Bumper Sticker of the Month, Open Admission (letters to the editor and first-hand experiences), See It NOW (documented accounts of discrimination), Myth America (What is your favorite myth? e.g. "Women only work for pin money.") and MScellaneous.

JOIN US

Our first mailing is a complimentary issue. Mainely NOW is free to Maine NOW members.

___ I would like to receive the next 12 monthly issues.
I enclose \$3.

___ I want to join NOW. ___ I enclose \$10. national dues.

___ \$5. special membership may be chosen by those who cannot pay more, such as some retirees, some students.
Please indicate reason if choosing this membership.

___ Please send me the name of the nearest NOW chapter or chapter convenor.

Name _____ Address _____

State _____ Zip _____ Date _____

If joining NOW, please fill in the following:

Home phone _____ Business phone _____

Occupation _____

Make checks payable to National Organization for Women.
and send to treasurer Maggi McLaughlin
16 Fairmont Street
Portland 04103

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- At large members.....Rommy Brown, Stratton; Audrey Isakson, Wells

Newsletter editors:

Nancy Cushman Dibner
94 Park Street
Portland 04101
772-8743

Anne Hazlewood Brady
Box 534
Kennebunkport 04046
772-8743 (temporary)

National Organization for Women
Box 773
Portland, Maine 04104

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