

Donna Edwards, Single Mother, Beats Incumbent Al Wynn

BY NOW POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

As exemplified throughout her life, Donna Edwards is a person of resilience, determination and commitment. In this year's heated primary race in Maryland's 4th District against incumbent Rep. Albert Wynn – a supporter of multiple Bush policies – Edwards proved to be a strong candidate with a proven record of success, and the experience, initiative and accountability that Maryland residents deserve.

Brought up with a military background, Edwards grew up traveling throughout the U.S. and in many other countries. "I had to be versatile, and I couldn't be shy," Edwards has said of the upbringing that ingrained in her a welcoming acceptance of diversity.

As a sibling to five other children and the daughter of an Air Force member, vivid memories of the tragic fates of many who served in the Vietnam War have never left her. When Edwards graduated from high school, she was offered an opportunity to join the Air Force Academy's first class to admit women. Instead, she chose to attend Wake Forest University, where she was one of only six black women in her class.

Edwards attended the Franklin Pierce Law School in New Hampshire, where she developed her love of law and public interest. While raising her son Jared and pursuing her political dreams, Edwards never forgot the values her parents passed down to her. "My parents taught me to be a person and to be a parent," she said. "I learned the importance of giving something back to your community and your country from them."

Realizing that battered women didn't have any legal or political support, she co-founded and served as the first executive director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence. Later she received national recognition for her leadership in the successful fight to pass the 1994 Violence Against Women Act, which provided comprehensive funding to shelter and services for victims of domestic violence and their children.

(see Donna Edwards, page 3)



Maryland Bills of Interest to Women – and the MC Lawmakers Who Sponsor Them

During the legislative session, bills are referred to committees. The committees hold public hearings before recommending to the Maryland General Assembly the action it should take on each bill. Information and a schedule of upcoming hearings are released weekly, which you can access at www.mlis.state.md.us.

Following are measures before the Assembly recommended by feminist organizations as of February 26, 2008. Please see if your legislators are sponsoring the bills you favor and, if not, encourage them to do so. Lawmakers' committee assignments, e-mail addresses, and other information are found in the Directory of Montgomery County Legislators in Annapolis, page 6.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland Recommends:

HB 500 and SB 516: Protect Victims of Rape. These bills provide support and protection for a woman who conceives as a result of rape and for the resulting child. In the case of a mother opting for adoption, the bills would allow the Court to determine whether the child is the result of rape and exclude the rapist from the adoption proceedings. If the mother wishes to keep the child, they would prohibit awarding custody or visitation to the rapist except in limited circumstances where supervised visitation is in the best interest of the child. Under current law, a rapist who fathers a child has the same legal rights to custody and/or visitation as does any other father. HB 500 and SB 516 not only protect the rape victim, they also require due process for the alleged rapist through an exacting legal standard to determine

(see MD Bills, page 4)

Who Said That?

"Our perspective is twisted. It was a big story when a television newsman was crude and thoughtless enough to use the term 'pimped out' in reference to Chelsea Clinton. The comment generated outrage – as it should have – and the newsman was suspended. But if someone actually pimps out a 13-year-old child, and even if that someone is alleged to be a police detective, it generates a collective yawn."

(See answer, page 5)

Montgomery County NOW
P.O. Box 2301
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WEB SITE

<http://www.mcmdnow.org>

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Sexualization of Girls

Mary Bailey

MC NOW President's Message

And the Voice of Women Shall Be Heard All Over the Land

Have you ever wondered what holds women down in a position of supposed inferiority and lessened power? Could it be, at least in large part, the refusal women have in taking the reins, holding staunchly onto the plan, and seeing it through to the finish line? Alice Paul said it quite eloquently, "When you put your hand to the plow, you can't put it down until you get to the end of the row." Yet, how often do we as women prepare ourselves in many facets of training and education and then scare ourselves into thinking that we cannot accomplish the job as it optimally would be done? Are we our own worst enemies?

Women have so often had to come to the aid of womankind, knowing intuitively and intimately what was needed to benefit others. In so many instances, it was women and not men who carried womankind onto greater and better ways of living, self-expression, and freedom. Yet, we buy into the "weak woman" mythology, and equally demoralizingly make unreal, perfectionistic demands and expectations on our women leaders. As though Big Brother were watching over us, waiting to catch us in gross errors and bring down mighty punishments on our heads, we fear displeasing him and even surpassing him at times in some leadership skills. These self-mutilating tendencies are what will prevent the natural progression of women who otherwise possess skills, talents, and intelligence to do any job and to do it well.

Despite the cutting off of such solidarity and strength in women by women, never was there a more powerful force than sisterhood, women working in harmony and unity for a common cause. Never was there a more true and accurate rallying call than "Sisterhood IS powerful!" Women can and will get the job done, and without having to dependently lean on Big Brother for tough, challenging situations.

Fine work has been done by the American Psychological Association on the Sexualization of Girls and the grassroots efforts of FROM NOW ON editor Mary Bailey and other MCNOW members to implement the opposition to this horrific treatment by society on girls and women. This is where much of our attention needs to focus. At the roots of our misconceptions about female leadership is the castration of our girls by society, an environment that says that girls and women can't achieve what needs to be done and done well. We have been brainwashed for far too long, and it has to stop. The uneven-handed, double-standard placed on girls and women is killing our psyches and demolishing our spirits. We need to take a stand to bond together in solidarity, strength, and common cause while we still have the sense to know that this leads to good mental and physical health. We need to define ourselves and never allow men to presume to say who we are or what we are capable of accomplishing. Brotherhood simply is NOT sisterhood, it never was, and it never will be.

Further, we decidedly need to be leaders in working with various governances because we have knowledge and sensitivities to carve beneficial societal structures and to help implement what over 50 per cent of society cares about. To deny such skills in leadership positions and in consulting capacities would hurt balanced and representative government. Women are not subservient, not ancillary, second-class, or inferior persons. It is time that women laid claim to all that women could be, are, and will always be.

Embrace sisterhood and feel the rush of power surging over you. Vow never to take the lower road to false ideas of powerlessness ever again. AND THE VOICE OF WOMEN IS HEARD ALL OVER THE WORLD!

In sisterhood,

Carole

Donna Edwards (continued from page 1)

Edwards also led efforts to reform the U.S. campaign finance system and lobbying laws after the House banking scandal. She aimed to improve these laws through the group Public Citizen and then as executive director of the Center for a New Democracy. In addition, Edwards spurred a national effort to force pharmaceutical companies to open markets for generic anti-arthritic medications.

Since 2000, Edwards has served as executive director for the ARCA Foundation in Washington DC, where she gained national prominence as a strategist on issues such as “living wage” campaigns, the independence of the federal judiciary, ending capital punishment, protecting Social Security and international labor and human rights.

After her son decided on a college, Edwards focused her efforts on running for the US House of Representatives.

“I want to represent Maryland’s 4th Congressional District because I believe I represent the hopes and values that are the core of the Democratic Party – for workers, for families, for our country,” she said. “I believe that we need to return the voices of ordinary people to the Democratic Party.”

On February 12, Edwards defeated Wynn in the Maryland primary by a wide margin. Wynn had been the proponent of regressive policies, which in part spurred Edwards to run against him. During his Congressional career, Wynn voted for President Bush’s bankruptcy bill, the Republican Energy Bill, the bill to drill oil in Alaska’s protected land and to give billions of dollars in tax breaks to oil and gas companies, and to weaken the Endangered Species Act. Wynn called Edwards and her supporters a “left-wing conspiracy” out to unseat him.

As a single mother who has defeated the odds her entire life, Edwards is a strong advocate of providing health care for those who can’t afford it, funding adequate school resources, and working for human rights and women’s rights. NOW’s Political Action Committee has been proud to support Donna’s campaign, and we look forward to working with her in Congress.

Seeking Submissions

Rachael Hanel is co-editing an anthology entitled “Women Writing on Family.” She is seeking submissions and hopes you will contact her with your questions and submissions.

Rachel Hanel
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Madison Lake, MN 56063
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Linda Berg Reflects On Her Years with National NOW

Sunday, March 3 – 7:45-9 pm



Linda Berg served for more than a decade as Political Director of the National Organization for Women. Her major contributions for NOW include initiating NOW’s Judicial Selection Project in which NOW challenges the appointment of federal judges who are hostile to women’s rights. In 1992 and 1994, Berg coordinated NOW’s Elect

Women for a Change projects throughout the nation. This campaign provided feminist candidates with experienced organizers to train and deploy volunteers to assist in their election campaigns. In 2000, she coordinated NOW’s Victory 2000 campaign, the goal of which was to elect 2000 candidates who support women’s rights to local, state and national office. In the 2002, 2004, and 2006 elections, she coordinated political field operators throughout the country on behalf of women’s rights supporters.

As NOW’s Political Director, Berg helped develop campaign strategy and policy for candidates for every level of political office who support women’s rights. She was instrumental in the development of NOW’s Political Institute which trains women’s rights political activists. On behalf of the State Department, Berg traveled extensively throughout Armenia advocating for women’s political participation.

In addition to her position in the National NOW Action Center, Berg served four years on the National NOW Board of Directors and has served on the Board of Montgomery County NOW, chairing its Linda Berg is now Political Director for the National Jewish Democratic Council, which represents the Jewish community within the Democratic Party and also represents the Democratic Party in the Jewish community. (For directions, see March 3 MCNOW meeting place, page 10.)

A Chance to Work on Children’s Issues

Are you interested in working on issues concerning children? If so, there are openings to serve on two Montgomery County commissions:

- Commission on Children and Youth
- Commission on Youth – Youth

The deadline is March 7, 2008. For more information and to apply, visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/apps/exec/vacancies/PR_list.asp.

MD Bills (continued from page 1)

whether the conception is the result of assault and that the assault actually occurred. The standard of evidence is the same as that required by termination in parental rights cases, and is higher than that used in most family law cases. (MC Sponsors: Senators Raskin, Forehand, Garagiola, King, Kramer, Lennett, Madaleno; Delegates Dumais, Ali, Barkley, Barve, Bronrott, Feldman, Frick, Gilchrist, Gutierrez, Hixson, Hucker, Kaiser, Lee, Manno, Mizur, Montgomery, Reznik, Rice, Waldstreicher)

HB 1147: Codify Child Custody Cases. This bill would remedy the fact that there is no Maryland statute that sets out the factors a court must consider in determining custody and visitation cases. While cases decided over the years have shown an overriding concern for the best interests of the child, no law clearly articulates for the judges, lawyers and litigants all the factors to be considered. This is a particular problem for litigants who are not represented by a lawyer and are hampered by their inability to present their case without clear and accessible law. HB 1147 brings together all the standards that has been developed by Maryland judges over the years, incorporates the case law into statutory provisions, and outlines the factors the courts must and may not consider. The factors are sufficiently broad to allow judicial discretion to craft custody and visitation arrangements that are feasible, in the best interests of the child, and that maintain the safety of all parties. (MC Sponsors: Delegates Dumais, Feldman, Lee, Waldstreicher)

HB 439 and SB 563: Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2008. Last year, the Supreme Court ruled in Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire that discrimination complaints under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act must be filed within 180 days of the action that sets discriminatory pay. The 180-day time limit ignores the realities of workplaces and the difficulties employees may have knowing that they have been discriminated against. Most employers keep pay information confidential, so that even discovering disparities in pay within this narrow time frame would be difficult. Further, the need to remain employed may make employees reluctant to challenge wage disparities that are small at the outset. However, small initial disparities expand over time, and pensions and raises are calculated as a percentage of prior pay. Maryland courts often look to federal court interpretation of federal employment discrimination statutes as guidance in interpreting our state anti-discrimination law. Therefore, to protect the strength of Maryland's commitment to anti-discrimination, the legislature should answer the Ledbetter decision with legislation reaffirming the right of Maryland workers to be free of discrimination in the workplace. (MC Sponsors: Senator Raskin, Delegate Montgomery)

SB 344: Flexible Leave Act. This bill stipulates that if an employee works for an employer that provides leave with pay, the employee may use earned leave to take care of an ill member of the employee's immediate family. Unfortunately, many workers are prohibited from using their own earned sick leave to care for a sick family member because it is reserved for their own illness. This places the employee in the unten-

able position of choosing among fabricating a personal illness, taking unpaid leave, asking for leave with the risk of being punished, leaving a sick child at home alone, or forcing a sick child to attend school or daycare. SB 344 does not impose any additional leave benefit on employers. It applies only to leave with pay that is already earned by the employee under an existing personnel policy or bargaining agreement. It simply allows employees flexibility in making decisions about under what circumstances they will use their earned time-off. (MC Sponsor: Senator Garagiola)

HB 182 and SB 393: Permanent Protective Order After Conviction and Imprisonment. Requires that relief granted in a final protective order to prevent domestic abuse be made permanent if the respondent is convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for certain crimes, including first and second degree murder and assault in the first degree. The Women's Law Center supports pending amendments providing that the permanent order would result only if requested by the victim and that it apply only to the stay-away portion of the order. (MC Sponsors: Senators Forehand, Garagiola, Madaleno, Raskin; Delegates Dumais, Barve, Feldman, Frick, Gutierrez, Hixson, Lee, Mizur, Montgomery, Waldstreicher)

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence Recommends:

HB 181 and SB 394: Pretrial Release. Makes it a misdemeanor to violate a condition of pretrial release requiring the defendant to have no contact with the victim. (MC Sponsors: Senators Forehand, Garagiola, King, Madaleno, Raskin; Delegates Dumais, Barve, Feldman, Frick, Gutierrez, Hixson, Kaiser, Lee, Mizur, Montgomery, Waldstreicher)

HB183 and SB 392: Enforcement of Protective Order. Authorizes a judge to order a law enforcement officer to use all reasonable and necessary force to enforce a temporary custody provision of a final protective order. (MC Sponsors: Senators Forehand, Garagiola, King, Madaleno, Raskin; Delegates Dumais, Barve, Feldman, Frick, Gutierrez, Hixson, Kaiser, Lee, Mizur, Montgomery, Waldstreicher)

HB 1257 and SB 615: Stalking and Cruelty to Pet. Authorizes a court in an interim, temporary, or final protective order to order a respondent to remain away from a specified pet or refrain from cruelty or aggravated cruelty toward a pet or service animal. Provides for specified penalties. Changes the definition of stalking to include a course of conduct that puts a person in reasonable fear that a pet or service animal may suffer cruelty. (MC Sponsors: Senators Raskin, Forehand; Delegates – none as yet)

HB 640 and SB 42: Surrender of Firearm. Authorizes a judge in entering a temporary protective order to order a specified person to surrender to law enforcement authorities any firearm in the person's possession for a specified period of time. Under current law, this relief is available only through the final protective order. (MC Sponsors: Senator Frosh; Delegates – none as yet)

(next page)

Progressive Maryland Recommends:

HB 654: Shift Breaks. Requires employers – with certain exceptions – to provide a 15-minute shift break if an employee works up to 5 consecutive hours and a 30-minute shift break if an employee works up to 6 consecutive hours. Workers need a chance to rest, eat and relieve stress, especially when doing a single task for hours on end. (MC Sponsors: Delegates Manno, Ali, Barkley, Bronrott, Dumais, Gilchrist, Gutierrez, Heller, Hixson, Hucker, Lee, Mizur, Montgomery, Reznik, Taylor)

HB 1235: Payment of Overtime. State and Federal statute currently provides for overtime pay when employees work more than 40 hours in a week because long hours can hurt a worker's health and well-being. Some employers avoid overtime pay by requiring their employees to work several 8-plus hour days but less than 40 hours per week. This bill would require that an employee – with some exceptions, including for flextime arrangements – receive overtime pay if he or she works more than 8 hours in a day, regardless of length of workweek. (MC Sponsors: Feldman, Ali, Barkley, Barve, Bronrott, Gilchrist, Gutierrez, Heller, Hixson, Hucker, Lee, Manno, Montgomery, Rice, Taylor)

Answer to Who Said That, page 1 Bob Herbert, Op-Ed Columnist New York Times, 2-19-08

Yes, this is the same Bob Herbert who wrote the "Politics and Misogyny" article that appeared in the last issue of this newsletter. In commenting on a policeman accused of kidnapping and forcing a 13-year-old girl into prostitution, Herbert writes: "Across the country, young girls by the many thousands – children – are being drawn into the hellishly dangerous world of prostitution. They are raped, beaten and exploited in every way imaginable. As part of the staggeringly lucrative commercial sex trade, the role of these children is to satisfy the sexual demands of johns who in most cases do not fit the stereotype of a pedophile. 'Many of the guys who buy sex with children would never consider themselves pedophiles,' [said an activist helping under-age girls in the sex trade.] 'They just don't care. They feel they have the right to buy sex from someone, and they prefer it to be someone who looks younger and cleaner and less drug-addicted.' ...It is common across the country for under-age girls engaged in prostitution to be arrested, which is bizarre when you consider that it is a serious crime – statutory rape – for an adult to have sex with a minor. ... 'We often see the girls arrested and the pimps and johns go free', [said another activist]. 'One of the big problems is that there is this whole set of child sex exploiters who are not targeted as exceptionally bad guys.' What's needed is a paradigm shift. Society (and thus law enforcement) needs to view any adult who sexually exploits as a villain, and the exploited child as a victim of that villainy."

Task Force Report

AAUW Urges School Board To Counter Sexualization of Girls

We of the Sexualization of Girls Task Force are happy to reprint the following letter the Kensington-Rockville Branch of the American Association of University Women sent the Montgomery County Board of Education. The letter supports our earlier request asking the school board to counteract the negative effects of the sexualization of girls in our culture. Moreover, the AAUW letter reinforces our appeal by citing its own research on the sexual harassment of girls in schools.

Dear Montgomery County Board of Education:

The Kensington-Rockville Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) joins the Montgomery County Chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in urging the Montgomery County Board of Education to review the American Psychological Association's (APA) 2007 report titled *The Sexualization of Girls* (www.apa.org/pi/wpo) and consider taking the steps recommended by the report to reduce the impact of these disturbing trends on the children of Montgomery County Public Schools.

As the APA report notes, "important people in girls' lives – parents, teachers, peers – strongly contribute to the sexualization of girls by supporting the cultural messages delivered through the media and consumer products." Sometimes these significant people "sexually harass, abuse, or assault girls, a most destruction form of sexualization." AAUW's research on sexual harassment, *Hostile Hallways: Bullying, Teasing, and Sexual Harassment in School*, 2001, which is cited in APA's report, found that students most often experience sexual harassment for the first time during sixth to ninth grade and that girls are more likely to experience sexual harassment than boys. The most common form of harassment was being made the object of sexual jokes, comments, gestures, or looks. These findings highlight the importance of intervening in the middle schools to increase awareness of the sexualization of girls in the media and help girls and their peers resist these negative influences.

We respectfully ask you to review the report and consider incorporating the APA's recommendations into the school curriculum for the well-being of all Montgomery County Public School students.

Sincerely,

Aileen Worrell, President
Kensington-Rockville Branch
American Association of University Women

Directory of Montgomery County Legislators in Annapolis

Please Save This Page

Addresses:

Senators:

"J" after a room number indicates James Senate Office Building, 11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401-1991.

"M" after a room number indicates Miller Senate Office Building, 110 College Ave., Annapolis, MD 21401-1991.

Delegates: (Lowe) House Office Building, 6 Bladen S., Annapolis, MD 21401-1991.

Telephone Numbers: 301-858 + extension Email: first name.last name@house(or senate).md.state.us

For information on bills, legislators, budget, etc., dial 301-970-5200 or visit <http://mlis.state.md.us>

District	Committee	Room	Phone	Email
District 14				
Sen. Rona E. Kramer	Budget & Taxation	214J	3625	Rona.Kramer@senate.md.state.us
Del. Anne R. Kaiser	Ways & Means	405	3036	Anne.Kaiser@house.md.state.us
Del. Karen S. Montgomery	Health & Gov't. Operations	222	3110	Karen.Montgomery@house.md.state.us
Del. Herman L. Taylor, Jr.	Economic Matters	224	3380	Herman.Taylor@house.md.state.us
District 15				
Sen. Robert J. Garagiola	Finance	104J	3169	Rob.Garagiola@senate.md.state.us
Del. Kathleen M. Dumais	Judiciary	350	3052	Kathleen.Dumais@house.md.state.us
Del. Brian J. Feldman	Economic Matters	223	3186	Brian.Feldman@house.md.state.us
Del. Craig L. Rice	Ways & Means	223	3090	Craig.Rice@house.md.state.us
District 16				
Sen. Brian E. Frosh	Judicial Proceedings, Chr.	2E M	3124	Brian.Frosh@senate.md.state.us
Del. William A. Bronrott	Appropriations	411	3642	William.Bronrott@house.md.state.us
Del. C. William Frick	Ways & Means	225	3454	Bill.Frick@house.md.state.us
Del. Susan C. Lee	Judiciary	414	3649	Susan.Lee@house.md.state.us
District 17				
Sen. Jennie M. Forehand	Judicial Proceedings	223J	3134	Jennie.Forehand@senate.md.state.us
Del. Kumar P. Barve	Ways & Means	361	3464	Kumar.Barve@house.md.state.us
Del. James Gilchrist	Ways & Means	221	3744	Jim.Gilchrist@house.md.state.us
Del. Luiz R. S. Simmons	Judiciary	225	3037	Luiz.Simmons@house.md.state.us
District 18				
Sen. Richard S. Madaleno, Jr.	Budget & Taxation	203J	3137	Richard.Madaleno@senate.md.state.us
Del. Alfred C. Carr, Jr.	Environmental Matters	222	3638	Alfred.Carr@house.md.state.us
Del. Ana Sol Gutierrez	Appropriations	220	3181	Ana.Gutierrez@house.md.state.us
Del. Jeffrey D. Waldstreicher	Judiciary	221	3130	Jeff.Waldstreicher@house.md.state.us
District 19				
Sen. Mike Lennett	Ed., Health & Environment	202J	3151	Mike.Lennett@senate.md.state.us
Del. Henry B. Heller	Appropriations	429	3528	Henry.Heller@house.md.state.us
Del. Benjamin F. Kramer	Judiciary	226	3485	Benjamin.Kramer@house.md.state.us
Del. Roger P. Manno	Economic Matters	226	3883	Roger.Manno@house.md.state.us
District 20				
Sen. Jamie Raskin	Judicial Proceedings	122J	3634	Jamie.Raskin@senate.md.state.us
Del. Sheila E. Hixson	Ways & Means, Chr.	131	3469	Sheila.Hixson@house.md.state.us
Del. Tom Hucker	Environmental Matters	220	3474	Tom.Hucker@house.md.state.us
Del. Heather Mizeur	Health & Gov't. Operations	219	3493	Heather.Mizeur@house.md.state.us
District 39				
Sen. Nancy J. King	Budget & Taxation	222J	3686	Nancy.King@senate.md.state.us
Del. Saqib Ali	Environmental Matters	224	3021	Saqib.Ali@house.md.state.us
Del. Charles Barkley	Appropriations	413	3001	Charles.Barkley@house.md.state.us
Del. Kirill Reznik	Health & Gov't. Operations	225	3039	Kirill.Reznik@house.md.state.us

BAD (Sexist) ADS in Montgomery County

BY JEANNETTE FELDNER

On February 18, I sent this letter to the contact on the web site of GYM SOURCE:

On Saturday, February 9, 2008, a GYM SOURCE ad ran in the Washington Post advertising a "Valentine Special," which included an image of half a woman in nylons and garter belt. Sexy, yes. Appropriate, NO! This objectification of women is very offensive to me. I exercise for fitness and health, not to be a sex toy. As a Valentine sales pitch, I would much rather see a man and woman running the treadmill side by side, both physically fit, happy about it, loving being together. That might make me want to come to your store to check out specials. This ad made me want to tell everyone I know to stay away from GYM SOURCE. Please hire a new ad agency!

GYM SOURCE
VALENTINE'S DAY
SALE

10-40% OFF
On Select Fitness Equipment

KICK UP
your "Private" exercise program
Take 25% Off the True ES Series Treadmills

Extraordinary Fitness Equipment

800.GYMSOURCE GYMSOURCE.COM

FALLS CHURCH 7501 G Leesburg Pike 703-790-0444	ROCKVILLE 11636 Rockville Pike 301-984-1744	COLUMBIA 6781 Oak Center Ln 410-290-0084	GAINESVILLE 1200 Mills Way, Ste 571-222-8080
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Sale ends 2/18/08. Not to be combined w/other offers. In stock residential items only.

If you'd like to send your comments, here is the contact information for the location in Montgomery County:

Gym Source
White Flint Station Shopping Ctr
11636/11638A Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852
T: (301) 984-1744 • F: (301) 984-3512

Business Contact: Clyde Duncan
www.GYMSOURCE.COM

**BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR BAD (SEXIST)
ADS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY.
WE MUST STOP THEM BEFORE THEY MULTIPLY!**

(If you find any, please send a copy to info@mcmdnow.org or MCNOW, PO Box 2301, Rockville, MD 20847-2301 with a copy of any letter you send. Together we can stop BAD ADS!)

REMEMBRANCE

Marilyn Praisner County Leader

BY JOY NURMI

Marilyn Praisner was the longest serving woman ever on the Montgomery County Council. She was in her fifth term representing District 4 when she died on February 1st from complications from surgery to replace a heart valve.



Marilyn Praisner
1941-2008

In her long tenure on the Council, Praisner spearheaded initiatives on a wide variety of issues, including child care, technology, the environment, private-public partnerships and fiscal policy. She sponsored the County's Rainy Day fund, which has garnered high marks from the bond-rating agencies, co-sponsored the Economic Development Fund which has helped attract quality employers to the County, spearheaded special protection areas (SPA) to protect stream valleys in the County, including the Upper Paint Branch, and established the County's Technology Innovation Fund to modernize County government technology to serve citizens better. As a member of the Board of Education (1982-90), Praisner led efforts to reduce class size, expand counseling to elementary schools and add dedicated space in schools for day care and health services. She was especially proud of initiating the Baby Steps Program, which screens at-risk newborns and links families to County services.

Few local leaders could match her expertise on national issues. Praisner was renowned for her national leadership on technology and telecommunications issues, and had represented local government across this country at numerous technology conferences and public safety communications, cable television, the siting of cellular towers, and rights-of-way management.

As a past president of the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo), she developed a reputation for outstanding leadership on local as well as state issues, and had been named by Washingtonian Magazine as one of this area's "Most Powerful Women." The Montgomery County National Organization for Women awarded her its 2004 Leadership award. She was included in the Daily Record's "Maryland's Top 100 Women" three times. Montgomery County Business and Professional Women's Club chose her as its 2000 "Woman of the Year." She also received the Charles Willis Award for outstanding school board service from the Maryland Association of Boards of Education. Praisner served as Council president in 1993, 1997, and 2007, and as vice president in 1992, 1996, and 2006. She chaired the Council's Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee and served on its Management and Fiscal Policy Committee.

As I See It

BY HOLLY JOSEPH (joseph.holly@gmail.com)



If you could pass one piece of legislation what would it be? If you can't think of one, don't worry! Were you a legislator, your constituents might well suggest some legislation that they wanted you to see passed, or you

can look for suggestions at the list of bills in this newsletter which NOW supports for suggestions.

As the quest for more women to run for office is frequently discussed, I sometimes wonder what it would be like to hold public office and realize I can't even imagine a day in the life of a legislator, much less the nearly 100 days in the frantic session of the Maryland General Assembly. I, like so many of us, would be just as happy leaving the job of public service to others. It does increasingly make me wonder, however, how much others are up to the job. And, as Carole Rayburn pointed out, in her letter to the Gazette not long ago*, with Madeleine Greenwald of NARAL, "Female politicians are more likely to concentrate on issues that matter more to women such as day care, gender equality, reproductive rights, education, health care, elderly care and children's welfare." It would follow that greater numbers of women elected to office translates to the passage of legislation on these subjects.

Living by committee as I do so much enjoy doing, I have started asking women wherever I encounter them if they would consider running for office. My small pool of acquaintances wouldn't produce many women to run for office. Yet many women must run before many women can succeed in getting into office.

*http://www.gazette.net/stories/010208/montlet154143_32366.shtml

A Particular Outrage

President Bush's proposed cuts in the federal budget now before Congress would inflict great damage on victim service organizations. Targets include victim assistance programs funded under the Violence Against Women Act. Another outrage is the "cap" the Bush administration is proposing on the release of funds from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), a fund set up by Congress to support victims from fines and penalties on federal offenders. Most of these resources go to the states to fund their crime victim compensation fund, victim assistance programs, rape crisis centers, domestic violence shelters, and other such programs. Get more information from www.nnedv.org and then — contact your lawmakers!



Women's eNews 2/4/08

Field Trip The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

720 Rutland Avenue, Baltimore, Md.



With the stroke of her pen in 1892, Baltimore's Mary Elizabeth Garrett forever changed medical training and practice in the United States. Garrett gave a gift of \$354,000 to start a new medical school at Johns Hopkins University, but she insisted on four unprecedented conditions: 1) that women be admitted "on the same terms as men"; 2) that medical students have an undergraduate degree; 3) that students have a background in science; and 4) that students be fluent in French and German. These requirements made Hopkins the first coeducational, graduate-level medical school in the country. Garrett was a leader of the National Women's Medical School Fund that included well-known American women. They worked together to increase awareness about training for women doctors and to raise money to open a new medical school at John Hopkins. At the time, it was not acceptable for women to be educated with men. One commentator at the time called the Hopkins victory "the crowning achievement of feminism in the nineteenth century." The women graduates of the Hopkins Medical School went on to become some of the most well-known women physicians and scientists of the twentieth century and helped to open careers for later generations of women in many other male-dominated professions. (*Maryland Women's Heritage Trail*)

The Watchful Eye

BY MARY BAILEY



Sens. Jamie Raskin (D-Dist. 20) and **Richard Madaleno** (D-Dist. 18) introduced in the Maryland General Assembly SB 689, a bill that would replace the term “marriage” with “valid domestic partnership” in the state’s family law code. While the bill would make gay and heterosexual unions equal in secular ceremonies, religious marriages would not be affected. Del. Todd Shuler (D-Baltimore Co.) sponsored the

companion HB848 in the House. The lawmakers’ “argument for turning [marriage] into a solely religious institution is sound,” American University law professor Nancy Polikoff wrote the Washington Post. She cited as precedents the many states that have substituted less contentious, less gender-ridden legal terms, such as, “divorce” for “dissolution,” “support” for “alimony,” and “visitation” for “custody.” Choosing “‘partnerships’ to signify the commitment that two people make to each other is consistent with the modern trend, she said.” Polikoff is also author of *Beyond (Straight and Gay) Marriage: Valuing All Families under the Law.* (Wash Post 2-24-08)

Change of mind. Some years back, I don’t remember exactly when, parental-advice columnist Marguerite Kelly in effect gave this advice to the mother of a teenage boy: If you find pornography under his mattress, honor his privacy and say nothing. Last month, Kelly had this to say to the mother of an 11-year-old boy: “Your son needs to know that sex – not pornography – is the ultimate intimacy, but only if it’s based on friendship and respect.” Further, that “MRI studies show that the brain of a child changes as he grows, and this changes the way he thinks and acts. Preteens and younger teens make decisions based on impulse and instinct – especially if they’re using alcohol or drugs – but they use reason and judgment when the prefrontal cortex has fully developed, which happens in their late teens or early 20s.” (Wash Post, 2-15-08) There’s more to understand about how pornography gets branded on the young brain. See “Pornography and the Teen Brain,” www.mcmandnow.org.

Leah the Magnificent. Scientists have released the first known photographs of the Republic of Congo’s western lowland gorilla performing face-to-face copulation in the wild. According to Thomas Breuer, lead author of the Wildlife Conservation Society and Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology study, “Understanding the behavior of our cousins the great apes sheds light on the evolution of behavioral traits in our own species. ...It is also interesting that this same adult female has been noted for innovative behaviors before.” Named “Leah” by the researchers, this female made history in 2005 when observed using a stick as a tool to test the depth of water before wading into it – another “never-seen-before behavior for her kind in the wild.” (www.medicalnewstoday.com, 2-16-08)

Why do they keep doing this? Maryland Delegate Robert McKee (R-Washington Co.) resigned after being arrested for possessing child pornography. The man recently sponsored bills dealing with minors, including one to increase penalties for those convicted of possessing child pornography and another to collect DNA samples from sexual predators. In past years, McKee, 58, has sponsored bills covering sexual offenders and child abduction. He also has a long history of involvement with children’s groups and youth athletics in the Hagerstown area, is a trustee at the First Christian Church, and a former chaplain for the Hagerstown Jaycees. McKee has now resigned from his office and from his position as executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Washington County, where he worked for 29 years. (Wash Post, 2-16-08)

Robin Givhan is the Washington Post fashion columnist who pointed out Hillary Clinton’s supposed “cleavage.” Shortly after, she seemed to be taking a different tack. Take these two examples, the first from her January 6 column: “Women, after all, don’t want to be objectified. That diminishes their power and takes away their individuality. And that will only make life more difficult in a world that still does not always treat them as equals.” Or this from her January 20 column: Robert Johnson, the founder of BET, “became wealthy by building and then selling a network known for a steady stream of rump-shaking and thug videos.” [I subscribed to Johnson’s JET magazine in the early 1970s when he introduced “center folds” of young African American women. Even then, there were letters to the magazine charging it with “brutalizing” the readership and culture.] Are Givhan’s days of stiletto sophistication waning?

A Maryland State court ruled in favor of Montgomery County’s new sex-ed lessons for middle- and high school health classes. Opposition lawyers had argued that the new lessons were not factual when presenting homosexuality as innate, and that the reference to anal intercourse violated a prohibition against teaching “erotic techniques” in the classroom. But Circuit Court Judge William Rowan III stressed the role of “contemporary community standards” in considering the gay lifestyle innate, said that the lessons provided a broader definition of sexual orientation than the opposition’s focus suggested, and ruled that the Montgomery County Public Schools’ lessons are “within the legal purview of the school to include or not include.” In the past, teachers could discuss homosexuality only in response to a student’s question. Now, lessons will address sexual orientation and provide a video for 10th graders on the correct use of a condom. Parents must sign a permission form to attend the sessions, which more than 95 percent already have done. According to the Washington Post, MCPS is “at the leading edge of a trend toward more candor in discussing homosexuality in the nation’s public schools.” (Wash Post (2-2-08).

How It Was

March 1970

- 7 At the first statewide AFL-CIO women’s conference, in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis., 200 women endorse the Equal Rights Amendment ahead of the national union.

(The only entry for the month found in our two sources, The Liberated Woman’s Appointment Book 1972-74 and the National Women’s History Project newsletter.)

MC NOW Calendar of Events

Chapter Meetings generally take place on the first or second Monday of each month. All members are welcome.

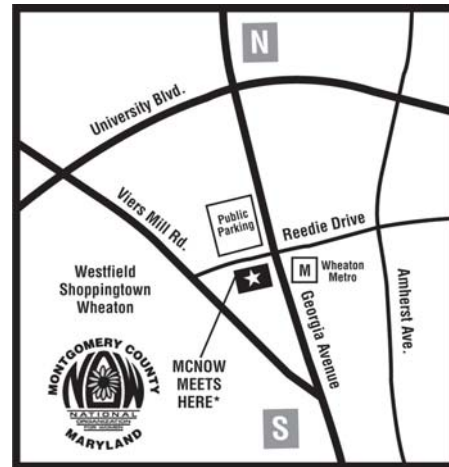
MARCH

- 3 (Mon) 7:45 – 9 pm. MONTGOMERY COUNTY NOW MEETING. 7 pm Board Meeting. 7:45: Guest speaker: Linda Berg, "Reflections on My Years with National NOW." See article page 3. Mid-County Regional Center, 2424 Reedie Drive, Wheaton (See map the page).
- 5 (Wed) Third Annual Legislative Shadow Day, downtown Annapolis. Young Democrats of MD Women's Caucus lets young women experience a day in the life of a successful Democratic legislator. Info and register: democraticdivas@gmail.com or 410-917-4930.
- 7 (Fri) 5:30 hors d'oeuvres, 6:30-7:30 program. Women's National Democratic Club, 1526 N.H. Ave., DC. Gov. Howard Dean, chair of the National Democratic Committee, and Democratic women leaders. Register: democrats.org/page/event/detail/4vmdl.
- 8&9 (Sa-Su) National Young Women's Leadership Conference, National Education Asso. Hdqtrs. Info: www.feministcampus.org/leadership or 703-522-6401.
- 9 (Sun) 3-5 pm. Montgomery Women Power Tea. Keynote speaker: Ambassador Connie Morella. Free to Montgomery Women members or \$25. Rsvp: merlejteiner@aol.com or 301-652-0895.
- 12 (Wed) 5:30 pm. MD Women's Hall of Fame 2008. Sponsored by MD Comm. For Women and Women Legislators of MD. Honorees: Billie Holiday and six others. Kjikhonso7@dhr.state.md.us or 410-260-6047.
- 19 (Wed) 7-9 pm. Forum #1: In the Shadows: Single Mothers, Young Children and Poverty. MC Commission for Women, 401 N. Washington St, Suite 100, Rockville. Info and rsvp: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cjw or 240-777-8330

- 21 (Wed) 7-9 pm. Forum #2: Why Are So Many Single Mothers Poor? See info at March 19.
- 25 6:30-8:30. Changing Faces of Power: Women as Voters and Activists. Sewall-Belmont House, 144 Constitution Ave. SE, DC. Part of series of free forums. RSVP yes only: forums@sewall-belmont.org or 202-546-1210 x 23.

APRIL

- 3 (Thu) 6 pm. "Domestic Violence Impacts the Entire Community" panel discussion. Hood College, Whitaker Campus Commons. Free. Info: Webster@hood.edu. Directions: www.hood.edu.welcome.
- 7 (Mon) 7-9 pm. MONTGOMERY COUNTY NOW MEETING. See March 3 for location and map, below.



* Mid-County Regional Center, 2424 Reedie Drive, Wheaton, MD 20902
First Floor Conference Room
For directions, call 240-777-8100 or contact info@mcmdnow.org



Give a gift of membership to your Friends, Family, and Yourself.



MCNOW NEW OR RENEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- Yes**, sign me up for _____ years of NOW membership @ \$35/1 yr, \$65/2 yrs, \$95/3 yrs
 - I am a New Member
 - I am a Renewing Member
 - Member # _____
(Please fill in if you know your number. If not, MCNOW Membership Chair can find and fill in.)
- Yes**, I would like to join/renew, but have limited resources. I am enclosing \$ _____
(\$15-\$34/year sliding scale: what you can afford)
- Yes**, I would like to affiliate with MCNOW (chapter # MD0200)
- I am enclosing an additional contribution to MCNOW in the amount of \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email* _____

* By giving us your email address, you will receive our excellent newsletter *From NOW On* and a periodic MCNOW Feminist Calendar, keeping you up to date on local news and events of interest to women.

Please make your check payable to **Montgomery County NOW** and mail along with this application to: **MCNOW**, P.O. Box 2301, Rockville, MD 20847-2301 (To renew online with credit card, visit www.mcmdnow.org)