

# BROOKLYN-QUEENS NOW NEWS



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## CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

Brooklyn-Queens NOW has been active on several fronts over the past few months: Domestic Violence, Emergency Contraception, Campus Outreach, proposed divorce reform. We've demonstrated, lobbied, been guest speakers, and we've LISTENED! Here's what's out there:

Thanks to the courage and bravery of the Women's Birth Control Liberation Project, **Emergency Contraception (EC)** has been kept in the forefront of the news. Julie Kirshner, our L&P chair, keeps us abreast of the happenings of EC coalitions. BQ NOW President, Shirley Ranz, spoke out in front of the Federal Building in lower Manhattan urging that EC become available over-the-counter. At that rally other activists defied the law and handed out EC to others without a prescription. As you know, EC is still not available over the counter, thanks to the FDA decision and in NY, Governor George Pataki's veto. *NYS Senator Carl Kruger*, who at first agreed with the governor, has changed his mind after lobbying by our chapter. He now agrees to support over-the-counter EC without parental consent. On Dec.20 we need you to come to a hearing where a lawsuit, brought by The Women's Liberation Birth Control Project, against the FDA will be challenged. Come to 225 Cadman Plaza East by 1:45 PM and support EC Over the Counter. If you'd like get more involved in the EC issue, contact Julie at [julierachel1919@hotmail.com](mailto:julierachel1919@hotmail.com).

We continue our *survey of local pharmacies* in Brooklyn and Queens to determine which ones

violate the law and which ones make EC available.

BQ NOW joined with Manhattan NOW in a *rally* protesting the confirmation of Judge Roberts in Union Square this Fall.

We've made contact on three campuses to begin the process of establishing **NOW campus chapters**. Rachelle Suissa, our former intern and now full-fledged member-activist, has formed a NOW group at Pace University. Marilyn Rogers, a student at Queens College, has begun the process there, and Shirley Ranz and others have continued to speak at Brooklyn College's women's studies classes to pique interest in NOW among the Brooklyn College students. To that end, we've also begun to advertise on campus and in the Courier Life newspapers. We have created a new Young Feminist Task Force, to be headed by Rachelle Suissa. To participate, email Rachelle at: [rs8333on@pace.edu](mailto:rs8333on@pace.edu)

Our chapter was invited to speak at the recent events honoring former Congressional Representative and Presidential Candidate Shirley Chisholm. Prof. Barbara Winslow, coordinator of the Women's Studies Program at Brooklyn College, invited Shirley Ranz to speak and BQNOW to table at the daylong event on campus on November 30th, **Shirley Chisholm Day**, a new state-wide event. As many of us know, Brooklyn College has established the Shirley Chisholm Center for Research on Women, directed by Prof. Patricia Antonello. Professor Winslow has pledged that every school child in Brooklyn will know about Shirley (*continued on page 2*)

## BROOKLYN-QUEENS NOW CHAPTER CALENDAR

Chapter meetings take place the first Monday of the month at 7pm.

Call the numbers listed for exact location and directions



- Dec. 20** Hearing on EC lawsuit. 1:45 pm, Court House, 225 Cadman Plaza East
- Jan. 9** Chapter Meeting. Sheepshead Bay. Call 718-769-8901
- Feb. 6** Chapter Meeting. Forest Hills. Call 718-263-7638
- Mar. 6** Chapter Meeting. Midwood. Call 718-951-7441
- Apr. 3** Chapter Meeting. Sheepshead Bay. Call 718-891-2490

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Chisholm and has offered to make available the film, “Chisholm, ’72: Unbought and Unbossed.” There is a spectacular mural, featuring Chisholm and many other women of accomplishment from Brooklyn, on a wall at the corner of Nostrand Avenue and Greene Avenue.

Speaking of student awareness, Shirley Ranz and BQ NOW Vice-President Sherry Rogers, were happy to discuss the rise of the Women’s Movement at *Wingate High School’s* School for Democracy and Leadership this month. The 9th graders were active, attentive and interested in learning about how social movements happen and how we plan social protests. We thank their teacher, Dan Gelbtuch for the invitation.

In October, Queens College invited BQNOW to participate in their walk to raise awareness about *Domestic Violence*. Sherry and Marilyn Rogers attended the well-publicized event and learned of multi-national outreach groups in Queens who offer help to survivors of domestic violence who are not English speaking. There are Asian and Latina groups, a legal services group (Queens Legal Services Corp), which offer counseling and practical help to women and their children. Queens Legal Services Corp has offered to conduct workshops with BQNOW. If you want more information about them, call Sherry at 718 263-7638. We hope to co-sponsor an event with them as soon as possible. Along similar lines, Women’s Rights at

Work has offered to co-sponsor workshops on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. These events are being considered for Spring, 2006.

On a statewide level, BQNOW members attended this year’s NOW-NYS Convention. The focus was on the *Equal Rights Amendment*, a topic dear to the hearts of our membership. ERACampaign coordinator, Jennifer Macleod was the guest speaker on this topic. She eloquently explained why ERA is still needed and why its ratification is still viable. State Senator Tom Duane addressed the gathering and told us of state legislative plans for a state version of the amendment. There were two workshops on ERA that day... one in favor and one opposed. The opposition seeks a revised version of the Alice Paul amendment, which means starting over. BQNOW believes this is an idea which has little chance of success given the conservative majority of the current government.

Speaking of statewide issues, BQNOW met recently with Assembly Judiciary Committee Chair, Helene Weinstein. The issue was *No-Fault Divorce*. Weinstein indicated that she’d changed her position on the issue and now supports No-Fault. As this position runs counter to the NOW position, Domestic Relations Task Force co-chairs

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Keep up the good work!

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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

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***ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION***

**OUR CORE ISSUES:**

- ◆ **Reproductive Rights**
- ◆ **Passage of the ERA**
- ◆ **Equal Economic Opportunity**
- ◆ **Stopping Violence Against Women**
- ◆ **Ending Discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation**

**Our activities focus on the political, legislative and educational arenas.**

Use NOW's Capwiz interactive political page (<http://www.capwiz.com/now/dbq/officials/>) to send messages to your elected officials.

Visit our web site: [www.brooklynnow.org](http://www.brooklynnow.org)

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Lillian Kozak and Gloria Jacobs met with us and Weinstein to discuss the issue. New York is the only remaining state to allow for divorce with grounds instead of the presumption of no-fault. Kozak and Jacobs carefully explained the NOW position to Weinstein who gave us her assurance that many of the issues of greatest concern will be in any legislation she proposes. For more detail, contact BQNOW at [bklynqnsnow@yahoo.com](mailto:bklynqnsnow@yahoo.com).

Finally, congratulations to the winners of the City Council races! BQNOW PAC endorsed Helen Sears and Melinda Katz who won their seats. Congratulations also to BQNOW members: Judge Sylvia Ash and Councilmember David Yassky. We look forward to good working relationships with you all in the coming year. For those who submitted PAC questionnaires, thank you for your interest and your candor. We know we haven't seen the last of you.

Happy holidays dear members. We hope to see you all in 2006 when much is at stake. Governor, State Legislature and Clinton's Senate seat.

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