

BROOKLYN-QUEENS NOW NEWS



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MID-TERM ELECTIONS

By Joyce Mizrachi

As I write this article, we are learning of the shooting of Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords and 20 others. I am writing about the growing fringe element of the Republican party, which has become more determined to repeal all of the changes the new administration had initiated, by whatever means, in order to implement its own agenda.

When Americans came together to celebrate the election of Barack Obama, they brought with them a determination to see his program of change implemented. What they did not bring was patience and an understanding of the degree of difficulty involved in addressing the multitude of problems our country faced after 8 years of Republican mismanagement. Perhaps the problem is the rapidity with which the American people have always been able to achieve their goals. Add the information revolution: tweeting, texting, and the Internet: instantaneous information and self gratification, and you find a population that expects immediate results.

Our new President moved forward quickly, signing the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act on January 29 and working with Congress on numerous issues including Health Care, economic recovery, job creation, ending the war in Iraq, and of course the War on Terrorism. He reached across the aisle countless times but encountered a wall of stone. Republicans had no intention of compromising.

President Obama did achieve a number of successes including the passage of a Health Care Reform Bill but it appeared no one was satisfied: the left felt it didn't go far enough and the right totally opposed it- determined to repeal the legislation. An even greater issue for many was the economy. The need to create new jobs remained a major concern. As employment figures were released each month there appeared to be no relief.

Democrats, Independents, and Progressives became despondent as the right wing of the Republican Party grew more vocal. With the birth of the Tea Party, they

now had a voice. Although a substantial majority of the American people do not support these radical right wing goals, they failed to voice their opposition on Election Day. Turn-out was low and the results were clear: Republicans now control the House and the Democrats have a smaller majority in the Senate. Democrats have lost 6 governorships and Republicans have gained 600 seats in state legislatures.

This is a wake-up call. Will the American people hear it? When reasonable people do not participate in the electoral process, extremists thrive. Where is our Churchill, who will sound the warning? Each of us must be our own sentry, our own conscience. We ask all of you to join us in the fight to save our freedom that so many have fought and died to retain. Start by joining us on January 22nd. See page 2 for details.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN and PASSAGE OF THE ERA

by Rachele Suissa

Throughout history women have been dominated in their private lives by the patriarchy. They were kept from entering the workforce, forced to bear children against their will, their work was limited to the home. Thankfully, since the two waves of feminist activism in this country, there have been many gains for women, which have enriched our lives dramatically.

However, there is one fundamental problem that is a hindrance to further progress- the fact that women are not recognized in the US Constitution as equal citizens. Since 1982, the start-over Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) has been brought to the floor at the beginning of each session. Yet it is not yet law.

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BROOKLYN-QUEENS NOW CHAPTER CALENDAR-2011



Chapter meetings take place the first Monday of the month at 7pm, unless otherwise noted. Inclement weather may force the rescheduling of a chapter meeting, so be sure to RSVP to the number provided or call 718 769-0101. Call the numbers below for exact location and directions.

- | Jan 15 NOW-NYS Council meeting in Albany. Saturday at 10am.
- | Jan 22 Demonstration at Dr Emily Women's Health Center -38th anniversary of Roe v. Wade. Details below.
- | Feb 7 Chapter meeting in Forest Hills, Queens. Call 718-896-9130 for directions.
- | Mar 7 Chapter meeting in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn with dinner celebrating International Women's Day. Call 718-769-8901 for details.
- | Apr 4 Chapter meeting in Howard Beach. Call 718-843-7978 for directions.

Check for Calendar updates on our website: www.brooklynqueensnow.org.

Celebrating 38 years since Roe v. Wade

RAISE YOUR VOICE AT A COMMUNITY SPEAK-OUT FOR REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM!

*Fight for women's right to childcare,
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*Demand healthcare with birth
control and abortion coverage.*

*Protest terrorism against abortion clinics
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The Dr. Emily Clinic provides quality affordable healthcare, including safe and legal abortion, regardless of immigration status. It is under assault by anti-woman religious zealots.

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560 Southern Blvd, South Bronx
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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN -continued from Page 1-

Do we as a country really believe that 52% of our population (that's right-women are now the majority in the US) are not entitled to the equal rights? Supreme court Justice Scalia has boldly asserted that the 14th amendment's Equal Protection Clause does not prohibit discrimination based on gender, despite the fact that the clause has been cited in many precedent cases of discrimination against women in courts around the country. Perhaps Scalia regrets the gains women have made.

The recent incident of violence in Arizona was not entirely unforeseen, and not the first of its kind. Last year, a right wing extremist murdered Dr. Tiller, a Nebraska abortion provider. Before the mid-term elections, a woman went to a Republican rally to peacefully protest her opposition. She was knocked to the ground and stomped on by male Republican campaign workers. What is happening to freedom of speech in this country? Extremists who adhere to Tea Party and other right-wing ideologies are becoming more violent - intent on eliminating those who hold different views. What do all three incidents of violence have in common? They all dealt related to women. In case it's not obvious- the Republican Party does not like women.

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

ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION

OUR CORE ISSUES:

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

Our activities focus on political, legislative and educational arenas.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN -continued from Page3-

During debates about Health Care reform, Congresswoman Debbie Stabenow spoke on behalf of reform and its importance for women. Senator Jon Kyl of Arizona made the following comment, "I don't need maternity care." Stabenow responded, "I think your mother did." She further defended the women's health resolution, and successfully challenged other male members of Congress who vehemently opposed it. Along with progress always come backlash, but violence? Stomping on a woman because she expresses different views?

2011 marks an important year for women. 10 female Democratic members of Congress have lost their seats and another has been gravely injured. Right-wing extremism of Republicans is now coming front-and-center. This is the year we must fight to get the ERA ratified. Only when women become equal citizens under the law will they be able to challenge discrimination on legal grounds. The economic inequities facing women are massive - we are unemployed and under-employed in higher numbers than men, and even though women are graduating college, law and medical schools in higher numbers we are still not earning the same as men in these professions. The glass ceiling may have some cracks, but it has not collapsed. The first step toward guaranteeing equality for women is passage of the ERA.

Contact your representatives in Congress and urge them to make this a priority. Call your friends and family in ungratified states and urge them to get their state legislators to ratify ERA. For more info, check out "ERA Once and For All" on Facebook.

National Organization for Women

Brooklyn-Queens Chapter

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