



Gainesville NOW letter

Fighting for Women's Rights Since 1982

Gainesville Area NOW

President -Lori Tinney

Fall 2005

Editor -Lisa Labbe

NOW is a multi-issue political organization. Our self-defined role has been to initiate change for the benefit of the greatest number of people, to affect the legal and institutional structures of the society in a way that systematically expands the choices and possibilities available to all women. In this way, NOW takes action to bring women, as a class, into the mainstream of society, (rather than offering aid to individual women) in achieving personal solutions or temporary relief from oppression, exercising all privileges and responsibilities thereof in true partnership with men.

Chapter News:

Bylaws: At the May General Meeting, members voted to adopt revised bylaws. These bylaw changes reflect typographical corrections, formal language corrections, and a few alterations in time management. Any member wishing to view the new bylaws, can see them at our website gainesvillenow.org/bylaws.html, or contact Lisa@gainesvillenow.org for a paper copy.

Elections: Chapter Elections will be held at the November 17 meeting. Positions available are: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Legislative Director. Anyone wishing to make a nomination, please contact the chapter secretary. (337-0903, bjaddison@msn.com) All nominations must be in by Tuesday, November 1st.

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as women (see inserted flyer for CR questions). The testimonies and conclusions from the CR were then made into a flyer that we could use for tabling or hand-billing. In June, the Committee hosted a Universal Health Care House Party. The presentation at the House Party drew on the ideas in the Redstockings organizing packet *Women's Liberation and National Health Care: Confronting the Myth of America*. After a presentation and skit, we discussed how guests could get involved by joining Gainesville Area NOW, hosting their own House Party (with help from the committee), and pitching in funds to the chapter. Several guests became members of NOW and we raised over \$100 from passing-the-hat. Several guests also volunteered to host UHC House Parties in the fall for their friends and co-workers. The Committee also discussed the statewide Just Health Care campaign and passed out petitions for signatures. (For more information about the universal health-care campaign, see www.justhealthcare.org.) If you would like more information on how to get involved, please contact co-chair Candi (candichurchill@juno.com; 352-377-9935) or Jessica (jalivingston88@yahoo.com). For information on ordering the Redstockings Organizing Packet, *Universal Health Care & Women's Liberation: Confronting the Myth of America*, please check out www.redstockings.org.

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Gainesville Area NOW Calendar

Sept 22 **General Meeting**
Oct 27 **General Meeting**
Nov 2 **Election Day**
Nov 17 **Chapter Elections/Meeting**
Dec 10 **NOW Holiday Pot-Luck**

General meetings are at 7:00 PM, at the Pride Community Center, 1107 NW 6 Street.

Universal Health Care Committee:

Gainesville Area NOW's Universal Health Care (UHC) Committee organized a consciousness-raising (CR) session for our April General Meeting, asking members how the current healthcare system (in the U.S.) affects their lives

NOW Holiday Pot-Luck
 Saturday, December
 10th - 7:00 pm
 6825 NW 43 Place
All Member's Welcome!


Pride Community Center
 of North Central Florida
 PO Box 5383
 Gainesville, FL 32627
 (352) 377-8915
pridecommunitycenter.org



Betty J. Addison
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

Tax Planning & Preparation
Complete Accounting Service
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Phone 352-337-0903 Fax: 352-336-8118
bjaddison@msn.com

Save the Court: Save Women's Rights

The nomination of John G. Roberts to the U.S. Supreme Court is just another example of the Bush Administration's larger campaign to restrict women's reproductive options. This ongoing war on women has included blocking women's access to the Morning-After Pill (MAP), chipping away at abortion rights, attempts to roll back federal employees' health coverage of birth control, pushing abstinence-only education in schools, discouraging condom use, and supporting medical professionals who refuse to dispense birth control pills to women.

Gainesville Area NOW vigorously opposes the nomination of John Roberts. Among our many concerns, Roberts actively opposes *Roe v. Wade* and wrote several amicus briefs while a Deputy Solicitor General. In one case where *Roe* was not even at issue, his brief gratuitously offered "*Roe* was wrongly decided and should be overruled." He also wrote a brief in the case NOW brought against Operation Rescue in an effort to stop violent blockades at abortion clinics. His brief and oral argument supported Operation Rescue, and argued that the blockades were merely an expression of opposition to abortion.

As the potential replacement for Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Roberts could cast the deciding vote on countless matters of individual rights for decades to come. Justice O'Connor has been a key vote, often in a 5 to 4 split, on issues like abortion and birth control, affirmative action, privacy rights, disability rights, Title IX equal educational opportunity, family and medical leave, health care, environmental protection and dozens of other crucial issues. A confirmation of Roberts could affect women's access to birth control and abortion for their entire reproductive lives.

Women will not go back to the days before *Roe v. Wade* of illegal coat-hanger abortions or tolerate further restrictions on our access to birth control. NOW will continue to fight against the reproductive war on women and work for more advances for women, like MAP over-the-counter, paid parental leave, unrestricted access to abortion, and universal

child care - no matter who's in office. Contact your Senators today and urge them to reject nominee Roberts.

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Note: Chapter Elections will be held at the November 17 meeting!

NOW is funded solely by its members' fund-raising and the contributions of supporters. In order to bring women's rights to the forefront of the minds in Washington, we need your support. Please be generous.

I would like to donate:

___ \$15 ___ \$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ other

Send contributions to: NOW

P.O. Box 2235

Gainesville, FL 32602-2235

Would you like to advertise in the Gainesville Area NOWletter? Let the community know that you support women's issues and that your business is progressive!

We are now accepting business-card sized ads. Please contact Lisa@gainesvillenow.org for information.

Members: \$15.00

Non-members: \$25.00

Contact Info

Gainesville Area NOW

www.gainesvillenow.org

Ga_now@juno.com

377-2301

President Lori Tinney
Vice-President Stephanie Seguin
Secretary Betty Addison
Treasurer Pam Ellis
Legislative Director Lynn Hurtak
Universal Healthcare Co-chair
..... Candi Churchill
Universal Healthcare Co-chair
..... Jessica Livingston
Communications Chair Lisa Labbe

Gainesville Area NOW operates exclusively through members' contributions and fund-raising. Every time we put out a newsletter, it costs us hundreds of dollars, due to printing and postage costs. This comes out of our limited treasury. In keeping with the times, we would like to send as many newsletters as possible via email. There are added benefits this way. You will receive your newsletter faster, it will be in color, with better graphics, and you can either print it out, or save it on your computer. Don't worry, those of you who do not have a computer, or cannot receive attachments, will still be able to get your NOWletter sent snail-mail. We don't want anyone to miss out, we're just trying to keep our overhead to a minimum. If you know that you would like to receive your newsletter through email, please send a note to Lisa@gainesvillenow.org. Thank you.

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Reproductive Rights Committee:

After more than three years of stalling, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Lester Crawford claims the FDA needs more time to gather public comment on the decision to make the Morning-After Pill (MAP) over-the-counter. This delay is a sexist insult to women and another excuse to deny women access to birth control.

Lester Crawford has all the public comment he needs. If he were listening, he would have heard the 70 public health and women's rights organizations that filed a citizen's petition in 2001, asking the FDA to put the MAP over-the-counter. He would have acted on the advice of the FDA's own expert advisory committee, which overwhelmingly recommended that the FDA grant the MAP over-the-counter status in December of 2003. He would have heard the 3,000 women who have signed our Pledge of civil disobedience to give the MAP to a friend whenever she needs it, defying the prescription requirement. (www.mapconspiracy.org) Instead, Lester Crawford is bowing to political pressure from anti-birth control extremists in the White House. For more than two years we have held their feet to the fire. It is crucial now that we turn up the heat and demand over-the-counter access to the Morning-After Pill for ALL women!

We are asking for your help funding an urgent push to keep up the pressure. Your financial contribution will help us pay for cell phone minutes so women at tables on campus and on the street can call the FDA on the spot in our "Feminist Phone Booth." It will help us organize women across the country to call the FDA, go to the FDA's public hearing in Miami and even go to Washington DC if necessary. In addition to contributing financially, please take the time to call FDA commissioner Lester Crawford (301.827.2410). Tell him you want the Morning-After Pill over-the-counter now!

The MAP Conspiracy, a coalition of feminist groups, is leading the grassroots movement to make MAP over-the-counter. The name is a tongue-in-cheek reference to women having to conspire to get a perfectly safe

form of birth control. We started passing out the pills publicly on February 15, 2004. Our campaign has used speak-outs, the Pledge, and civil disobedience to highlight the injustice of the prescription requirement. In January of this year more than fifty women converged on the steps of the FDA headquarters in Rockville, MD demanding over-the-counter access to the Morning-After Pill. Nine women were arrested, blocking access to the FDA just as the FDA is blocking women's access to birth control.



(Photo Brandon Schulman)

Candi Churchill, Stephanie Seguin and Jenny Brown sit-in at FDA headquarters to demand MAP over-the-counter.

Efforts such as these have put enormous amounts of pressure on the FDA and commissioner Lester Crawford. This pressure led to senators Murray and Clinton blocking Crawford's confirmation for months over his effective denial of over-the-counter access.

The attempts by the Bush Administration to block women's access to the Morning-After Pill are part of a larger campaign to restrict our reproductive rights by chipping away at abortion, pushing abstinence-only education in schools, cutting funding to reproductive healthcare and childcare programs, and supporting medical professionals who refuse to dispense birth control pills. Bush's Supreme Court nomination of John Roberts also places women's self-determination, our right to decide when and if we have children, in serious peril.

Your help is needed to keep up the fight for the Morning-After Pill. We will move forward to win MAP over-the-counter, and many more advances for women's reproductive freedom.

The MAP Conspiracy includes the Women's Liberation Birth Control Project, NYC; Redstockings Allies and Veterans, NYC; Gainesville Area (FL) National Organization for Women (NOW); Florida NOW Young Feminist Task Force; Utah Young Feminist Task Force and Campus Action Network, and Gainesville (FL) Women's Liberation.