



MINNESOTA

# NOW TIMES

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[www.mnnow.org](http://www.mnnow.org)

## From the President: We've Got Issues

by Shannon Drury

When a familiar voice boomed from my answering machine announcing that he was, in fact, Al Franken and he wanted me to participate in a discussion on feminist issues and policy, you could have knocked me over with a feather. As Minnesota NOW's proud president, I'm ready and willing to pontificate on the issues of the day, provided my daughter doesn't have pinkeye (or an ear infection, or stomach flu, or worse. It's been a tough winter). But it's not often that one of my favorite authors and comedians wants my opinions.

As we're all aware, Al Franken is not gathering information for another hilarious book; he is running to represent Minnesota in the U.S. Senate. He knows the women of Minnesota deserve better than what we're getting from the Bush administration and his very woman-unfriendly Supreme Court.

Gathered at the Franken home on the evening of February 13 were women from all walks of life, representing a wide variety of expertise and experience. I'm proud that I was able to bring the campaign's attention to important federal legislation that addresses women's reproductive health issues. Listed below are the bills I discussed, along with a list of their Minnesota co-sponsors so that you, dear MN NOW member, can know where your legislators stand on these issues.

**Freedom of Choice Act (S. 1173/H.R. 1964).** This bill would essentially codify the Roe v. Wade decision into federal law. It would nullify recent Supreme

Court decisions that have, in the words of Judge Ruth Bader Ginsberg, "deprive[d] women of the right to make an autonomous choice, even at the expense of their safety. This way of thinking reflects ancient notions about women's place in the family and under the Constitution—ideas that have long since been discredited." Minnesota co-sponsors: McCollum, Ellison.

All of these bills are currently in appropriate committees, awaiting hearings and testimony from concerned citizens like you. I encourage each Minnesota NOW member to take a minute to contact their representative in Congress about each bill above, either to thank them for their co-sponsorship or to ask that they sign on as a co-sponsor. The National NOW website makes it easy at [www.now.org/issues](http://www.now.org/issues). The United States Capitol Switchboard can be reached at (202)224-3121.

**Access to Birth Control Act (S. 1555/H.R. 2596).** This bill requires that pharmacists dispense FDA-approved medications to customers with valid prescriptions. It also ensures that pharmacy employees do not take certain actions relating to a request for contraception, including intimidating, threatening, or harassing customers, interfering with or obstructing the delivery of services, intentionally

misrepresenting or deceiving customers about the availability of contraception or its mechanism of action, breaching or threatening to breach medical confidentiality, or refusing to return a valid, lawful prescription. Minnesota co-sponsors: McCollum, Ellison.

**Prevention Through Affordable Access Act (S. 2347/H.R. 4054).** For years, pharmaceutical companies have been selling birth control pills and supplies at a steep discount to college and university health centers, along with hundreds of other safety-net health care providers, so that they could pass the savings along to students and low-income clients. A provision in the 2006 Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) essentially prevented these discounts, and prices soared. Since the passage of the DRA, birth control prices have gone from \$5-\$10 to \$40-\$50 per pack. This bill will reinstate the former price reductions. Minnesota co-sponsors: Klobuchar, McCollum, Ellison, Ramstad, Walz.

**Compassionate Care for Servicewomen Act (S. 1800/H.R.2064).** This bill requires emergency contraception (EC) to be available as part of the pharmacy benefits program for women serving in the military. Currently, military bases are allowed to opt out of stocking EC, removing a safe and effective reproductive health option for military women. Minnesota co-sponsors: McCollum, Ellison.

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Photo provided

From left to right: Franni Franken, Shannon Drury, Al Franken, and Thomasin Franken.

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**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Al and his staff asked great questions about each bill and took detailed notes. Al was genuinely interested in how to best support the reproductive rights of all American women. I am very proud to have been able to speak for our membership and to have our voice be heard. While you're contacting your representatives in Congress, why not take a minute to let Al know that you appreciate that he sought Minnesota NOW's opinion? Write an e-mail to the campaign at

[www.alfranken.com/contact](http://www.alfranken.com/contact) or call their St. Paul office at (888) 908-2008.

I look forward to the opportunity to discuss more about what's important to Minnesota women with the Franken campaign, as I would with any candidate seeking to represent Minnesota in Congress (don't be shy, Norm!). And Jon Stewart, if you're reading this: CALL ME. Anytime.

## Minnesota Choice Coalition Celebrates 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* by Erin Matson, MN NOW Secretary and National NOW Board of Directors

Minnesota NOW celebrated the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the abortion-rights affirming *Roe v. Wade* decision in the company of Dr. Joycelyn Elders, Jessica Valenti and other member organizations of the Minnesota Choice Coalition at a dinner on January 17, 2008.

Dr. Joycelyn Elders served as United States Surgeon General during the first Clinton administration, and was well known for her outspoken advocacy of public health and reproductive rights. During the dinner she delivered a keynote speech praising the *Roe v. Wade* decision, abortion providers and advocacy groups including MN NOW. More than half of pregnancies are unplanned, and Dr. Elders spoke strongly to the need for comprehensive sex education and affordable, immediate access to contraception for all in order to reduce those unplanned pregnancies before they begin.

Brief gushing moment: A number of MN NOW leaders who attended the VIP reception before the dinner were able to shake hands with Dr. Elders and take photographs. I was one of them. That felt pretty cool.



Photo by Shannon Kranzler Burdsal

Cool moment—Minnesota NOW Executive Committee meets Dr. Jocelyn Elders. From left: Erin Matson, Dr. Joycelyn Elders, Kathleen Ahrens, Shannon Drury, Jessica Trites Rolle

The dinner was emceed by Jessica Valenti, editor of *feministing.com* and author of *Full Frontal Feminism*. Valenti drew loud applause from the crowd as she declared how important reproductive rights remain to young women's activism.

MN NOW is a founding member organization of the MN Choice Coalition, which also includes Midwest Health Center for Women, MN Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, NARAL Pro-Choice MN, National Council of Jewish Women, Planned Parenthood of MN, ND and SD, Pro-Choice Resources and **womenwinning**: MN Women's Campaign Fund.

The Coalition was formed in advance of the historic March for Women's Lives in Washington, D.C. on April 25, 2004. During that day — the largest protest in U.S. history — more than 1.15 million women, children and men flooded the National Mall in support of full reproductive rights. Due to the efforts of MN NOW and other members of the MN Choice Coalition, we sent more than 1,000 Minnesotans to that march.

Today MN NOW continues to operate with the MN Choice Coalition in the ongoing fight to ensure reproductive justice for all.

## 13th Annual International Women's Day Celebration *Women Leading for Global Justice*

Presented by The Advocates for Human Rights and  
the Human Rights Program at the University of Minnesota

Saturday, March 15, 2008, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00p.m.  
Coffman Memorial Union University of Minnesota

**Free and open to the public**

**Keynote Speaker: Robin Morgan**

Plenary panel on indigenous rights, workshops,  
performances, film, visual arts and display and  
information tables from over 65 co-sponsoring organizations

For more information, please contact:

Mary Hunt, 612-341-3302, ext. 107, mhunt@advrights.org  
[http://www.advrights.org/International\\_Women\\_s\\_Day.html](http://www.advrights.org/International_Women_s_Day.html)

## 2008 Summit on Economic Justice for Women April 11-12—Atlanta, Georgia

Join the National Organization for Women Foundation, National Council of Negro Women, and the Institute for Women's Policy Research for the summit, dedicated to "Bringing Together Research and Advocacy - from Local to Global - to Advance Economic Justice and Empowerment for Women."

Make your plans now to join with grassroots activists, researchers, and academics to address the critical economic issues facing women in the U.S. and abroad.

Goals for this unique conference include expanding the body of knowledge on critical economic issues; increasing our understanding of the global economic challenges women face; building and strengthening alliances in the economic justice movement; developing recommendations and strategies for enhancing women's economic empowerment; and informing policies globally and locally, including helping to shape the 2008 U.S. presidential election debate.

For more information and to register online go to [www.nowfoundation.org](http://www.nowfoundation.org).

## Women's Cancers 2008: Merging Science and Care September 27—Rochester, Minnesota

Beverly Kirkhart, nationally acclaimed speaker and best-selling author will be the keynote speaker for the 2008 annual public education event of the Mayo Clinic Women's Cancer Program.

Ms. Kirkhart knows what it means to make every day count. After being diagnosed with breast cancer in 1993, she experienced the loss of a business, bankruptcy and divorce. She will share the wisdom of her experience through her talk, "Cancer: Life's Unexpected Teacher," offering hopeful ideas on how to reclaim life and develop new outcomes and expectations.

Ms. Kirkhart is a co-author in the popular *Chicken Soup* series, *Chicken Soup for the Surviving Soul*. She has produced a journal, *My Healing Companion*, to be used during one's journey with cancer.

The event brochure will be mailed in May 2008. If you do not receive a copy, call the Mayo Clinic Women's Cancer Event Information Line at 507-266-4886.

*Information provided by Romaine A. Thompson, Cancer Information Coordinator.*

### MINNESOTA NOW TIMES

The Minnesota NOW Times is the official journal of the Minnesota chapter of the National Organization for Women. The purpose of the MN NOW Times is to report on Minnesota NOW policy, events, actions, chapter news, to educate, to report on issues impacting women's lives, and to provide a forum for Minnesota NOW members.

Circulation: 2500

Subscriptions:

MN NOW Members = Free

Non-members = \$20.00 year

Editor: Shannon Kranzler Burdsal

*The opinions expressed on these pages are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent those of Minnesota NOW.*

### We Welcome Your Input

Send your articles, photos, comments, news, and other interesting items to MN NOW Times, 550 Rice St. #102, St. Paul, MN 55103. Please include your name, address, and daytime phone number on all items.

Items may also be emailed to the editor at [editor@mnow.org](mailto:editor@mnow.org). We reserve the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity.

### Advertise in the MN NOW Times

Having a yard sale or selling an old car?

All active Minnesota NOW members may submit up to 35 words to be printed as space allows in the classified section for free.

For business advertising rates, contact Shannon Kranzler Burdsal at [editor@mnow.org](mailto:editor@mnow.org) or (651) 222-1605.

## Fergus Falls Area NOW Seeks Scholarship Applicants

The Fergus Falls Area Chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) is offering its fifteenth annual scholarship opportunity for women in Otter Tail County. Women who plan to attend a post-secondary institution during the summer or fall of 2008 are eligible if they graduate from an Otter Tail County high school in 2008 or earlier, if they are current residents of Otter Tail County even if they attended high school elsewhere, or if they will attend a post-secondary institution in Otter Tail County.

To receive an application contact Traci Kromenaker at 35696 160<sup>th</sup> St., Battle Lake, MN, 56515, 218-731-2123, or [fergusfallsareanow@yahoo.com](mailto:fergusfallsareanow@yahoo.com).

All information must be postmarked by April 5, 2008, to be considered. Scholarships will be announced by May 1, 2008.

## Letters to the Editor

### Trying to Eliminate Sexual Violence vs. Criminal Defendants' Rights

*Editor's note: We received the following letter in response to the Rape is Indefensible Rally held by a coalition of organizations, including Minnesota NOW, on September 18, 2007.*

The problems of sexual assault and rape are two outrageous problems facing women in the USA. The problem of fighting for the rights of criminal defendants in a short attention span, sound bite driven, media saturated society, is almost impossible. Unfortunately, feminists tend to support the victim and prosecution, and people who are fighting for the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the Constitution tend to support the defendant and defense attorneys. When rape cases happen I get torn up inside because I want to be on both sides, but the way the debate shapes-up both sides are saying the correct things, but they are speaking different languages, which means both sides do not hear where the other side is coming from.

A recent case in the Twin Cities highlights this problem. This case involves a former University of Minnesota football player Dominic Jones, defense attorney Earl Gray, the victim, and assistant Hennepin County attorneys Marlene Senechal and Martha Holton Dimick. The conflict between the feminists and defendant rights activists erupted when defense attorney Earl Gray stated, "I believe it's a defensible case. ...I realize it's not pretty. But, there is no alleged force, no

weapon involved and no injuries." To the trained feminist, who is trying to get the public a way from the idea that a rape requires force, weapons, and severe bruising, this statement sounds really bad. The common definition of rape that feminist and I agree on is sex without consent, but in this case Dominic Jones was charged with 3<sup>rd</sup> degree criminal sexual conduct, which has the following definition: "Engage in sexual penetration with another person and said defendant used force or coercion to accomplish the penetration." Yes, the feminists are right in that one does not need force, weapons, or bruising to be a victim of rape, but Earl Gray is right that in order for the state to prove a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree criminal sexual conduct case, it must produce some evidence of force or coercion. Earl Gray was not saying that his client did nothing wrong, he was saying that the facts laid out in the prosecution's criminal complaint did not fit the charges. The defense attorney and the feminists are addressing different parts of the larger issue of sexual assault and rape. In this instance they are almost speaking different languages. In this situation both sides say about the other side, "They don't understand." This case also highlights the problem of prosecutors trying to go for a higher level criminal charge when the facts do not warrant it because the high profile nature of the case pushes the prosecutors to go for a high sentence.

I want to eliminate rape and sexual violence just as much as any other feminist, by educating the public; stopping men from committing the

crime; encouraging victims to come forward and telling their story to police, prosecutors, and the press; having prosecutors press charges without plea bargaining. But, I also want to protect the rights of all criminal defendants including those accused of rape, sexual assault, and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree criminal sexual conduct. I don't want to make it easier for prosecutors to get convictions because too many innocent people are convicted in this country. I don't think the we feminists should jump on the statements of a defense attorney who was pointing out the holes in the prosecution's case, especially when the sexual assault charge has the archaic elements of "force or coercion."

When the Duke lacrosse case broke I was like most people believing that the players were guilty and that the wealthy, high priced lawyers working for the defendants were just playing the game of defending their clients and attacking the prosecutor, and alleged victim. Now we know that the case was fabricated and the prosecutor violated numerous rules of ethical conduct. I still do not feel sorry for the lacrosse players because they were not convicted because they had a defense team that did their jobs and got lucky when the prosecutor was sloppy with his deception. There are many prosecutors in this county that do the same thing as in that case, but are not caught, because the defendants they go after are poor racial minorities, without good lawyers.

*Gordy Gustafson  
Uptown NOW Member*

### Why does a black woman support Hillary?

Our country is close to electing a new President who will mark the end of the Bush administration. There have been lots of articles speculating about whether women, African Americans and African American women in particular will or won't be supporting a candidate. Frankly, my vote has more to do with the issues than my race or gender. I plan to cast my

presidential preference ballot for Hillary Clinton.

Our country is fortunate to have several strong, qualified, viable candidates to choose from in the Democratic Party in 2008. I love Obama's grassroots organizing efforts and his message of hope, that he has some experience in the senate and that he doesn't seem to be a product of the Democratic Party political

machine. However, his plan for economic stabilization and health care don't fit with my families needs. I also have some concern about whether he has enough experience and influence to take the hits and low blows that opponents of women's and children's rights, and those who disregard the issues faced by working class families love to dish out. That said, I am confident he has a bright future as a powerful influence on

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## Letters to the Editor

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this nation's policies and that he will only grow stronger over time.

Hillary Clinton, on the other hand, has been through fire and emerged stronger with each challenge. She can take anything opponents can dish out, and give it back double. I believe Hillary Clinton is the strongest candidate to win in November, and to set our country right. She beat Republicans in two landslide elections, despite predictions that she couldn't win in upstate and rural New York. And it will take someone with her economic and national security strength and experience to beat John McCain.

Most importantly I am confident that she can deliver on Day One - from getting our troops out of Iraq WITH the

benefits that they deserve, to fixing the shattered economy and the mortgage crisis, to winning health care that covers EVERY single person in this country. Please consider voting for Hillary Clinton, and if you haven't done it already, please email your friends and contacts tell them that:

- Early in Hillary's career she was advising battered women, helping abused children, and providing free legal services to the poor.
- She was an active advocate at the White House advocating for universal healthcare, championing the S-CHIP (State Child Health Insurance) program, and helping to pass the Violence Against Women Act.

- In her service as a U.S. Senator, she was standing strong for reproductive rights and writing legislation to expand contraceptive access, helping win approval of emergency contraception, sponsoring equal pay legislation, and speaking out on the floor against the nominations of John Roberts and Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court, specifically saying that they would damage *Roe v. Wade* if confirmed.

She's always stood up for women and children, and now it's time for those she has supported to stand up for her with our vote and say "I'm Ready for Hillary."

*Angela Montgomery Montez  
Twin Cities NOW Member*

### Elections Matter: Your Help is Needed

As you know, pro-choice women legislative candidates won dramatic victories in the 2004 and 2006 elections. They won multiple seats in suburban and Greater Minnesota districts, areas that conventional political wisdom had deemed **not winnable** by pro-choice women. Overall, women's numbers in the legislature rose to 70, the highest in our state's history. Over the past 20 years Minnesota's national ranking rose from 26<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>! No other state has achieved such remarkable progress.

**Elections matter.** The very strong infusion of bright, capable women into the legislature had a profound impact. The State Senate was majority anti-choice prior to the 2006 election; it is now pro-choice. In the Minnesota House the pro-choice ranks were increased so decisively that the chamber switched in 2006 from being overwhelmingly anti-choice to being evenly divided. Further, the DFL House members elected a pro-choice woman as Speaker of the House. As a result legislators worked to advance bills on sexuality education, increased monies for family planning, an expansion of pay

equity, stem cell research, etc. rather than having to stave off "bad" legislation as they had been forced to do previously.

This year, the entire Minnesota House is up for election. The wonderful women who won elections in 2004 and 2006 must stand for re-election. **These first and second termers are especially vulnerable.** Many won in very tough districts, several winning by extremely slim margins. For example, one suburban legislator won her 2006 race by 55 votes. Another in the Rochester area, won by 99 votes! These stellar women legislators need and deserve our help.

Those of us who choose not to run for office must help the courageous women who do run. If you and I and all the other Minnesota NOW members took advantage of the campaign contribution rebate program, **a total of \$100,000** could be donated this year to pro-choice women legislative candidates! Any person who files a tax return as a single filer may contribute a total of \$50 per year (\$100 if a joint filer) to a legislative candidate (or, \$25 to two candidates). You will receive a receipt from the candidate's campaign committee and a

form to apply for a rebate. It takes about 30 seconds to complete the application. Within four to six weeks you will receive a check from the Minnesota Revenue Department for \$50. **In effect, your contribution of \$50 costs you nothing, but is of immense help to the woman candidate(s) you choose to support.**

A second way **you** can have a major impact on a woman's campaign is to donate one night a week or every couple of weeks to her campaign. It costs you nothing but time and it's fun. One volunteer making a regular contribution of time can make the difference between a candidate's winning or losing. Many pro-choice, pro Gay and Lesbian rights women are running in Greater Minnesota districts as well as in the Metropolitan area. For candidate information, contact MN NOW or call or e-mail me at the Coalition at 612-724-6348 or [wocandevcoal@yahoo.com](mailto:wocandevcoal@yahoo.com).

*Shirley Nelson, Executive Director  
Women Candidate Development  
Coalition, Minnesota NOW Member*

# Immigrant Women: Then and NOW

Minnesota NOW Annual State Conference  
 Saturday, April 19, 2008  
 AmericInn, 526 Western Avenue, Fergus Falls



## Conference Schedule

<p><b>8:30 am</b> Registration</p> <p><b>8:30 am</b> Silent Auction Bidding Begins</p> <p><b>9:00 am</b> Welcome and Opening Plenary</p> <p><b>10:00 am</b> <b>Keynote Address: A History of Immigration in Otter Tail County</b>        Melissa Hermes, Otter Tail County Historical Society Education Coordinator, will present the history of immigration into the Otter Tail County area, with a special emphasis on women immigrants, including Native Americans who were pushed out of lands further east by Europeans and other tribes. The current exhibit at OTCHS is "We Chose Otter Tail County." This year's annual writing contest for Women's History Month is "She Chose Otter Tail County," in which the writers will research, or interview someone with direct knowledge of, a woman who immigrated to Otter Tail County.</p> <p><b>11:15 am</b> Break / Silent Auction Bidding</p> <p><b>11:30 am</b> Presentation of Awards</p> <p><b>12:00 pm</b> Lunch</p> <p><b>12:30 pm</b> Legislative Update (<i>during lunch</i>)        What's Happening at the Capitol?</p>	<p><b>1:00 pm</b> <b>Keynote Address: Immigrants in a Small Community</b>        Joan Jarvis Ellison is a freelance writer, holds a graduate degree in biophysical sciences, and works with the immigrant community in Pelican Rapids. A local immigrant woman will accompany her for a presentation based on her book, "Faces of Change," which documents the changes in a small rural Minnesota community, the people who have come there from all around the world to live and work, and where the student population speaks eleven languages. A photo exhibit of the same title will be on display. Her book will be available for purchase and signing.</p> <p><b>2:00 pm</b> <b>Break / Silent Auction Bidding</b>  <b>At-large Delegate Meeting</b> (At-large members meet to elect State Board delegates/alternates)</p> <p><b>2:15 pm</b> <b>Last chance for Silent Auction Bidding!</b></p> <p><b>2:30 pm</b> <b>Afternoon Plenary</b></p> <p><b>3:45 pm</b> <b>Announcements / Silent Auction Winners</b></p> <p><b>4:00 pm</b> <b>Adjourn</b></p>
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## Minnesota NOW 2008 State Conference Registration Form

<p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____ Zip _____</p> <p>Email _____ Phone _____</p> <p>Member Status (check one):  <input type="checkbox"/> Member of _____ Chapter  <input type="checkbox"/> At-large member    <input type="checkbox"/> Non-member</p> <p>Do not mail your registration after April 3. If you cannot pre-register, please come anyway and register at the door. Please note that you can still reserve a lunch by contacting Nancy at 218-736-5121 (evenings) or email nalsop@viking.lib.mn.us by April 14. After April 14, lunch cannot be guaranteed. Call MN NOW at (651) 222-1605 by April 11 if you need special arrangements due to hearing, sight, or mobility, have special dietary needs, need a conference scholarship, or need transportation to the conference.</p>	<p><b>Conference Registration Fees:</b></p> <p>\$ _____ Current NOW members, \$35</p> <p>\$ _____ Non-member (or lapsed) registration, \$50 (includes 1-year membership)</p> <p>\$ _____ Pre-registered non-member students &amp; senior citizens, \$15</p> <p>\$ _____ Current NOW members—limited income (pay what you can)</p> <p>\$ _____ Speakers only program (10 am–2 pm), \$25 (bring your lunch or order a box lunch below for \$10)</p> <p>\$ _____ Donation to help sponsor another participant</p> <p>\$ _____ Box lunch, \$10  <input type="checkbox"/> Check here if you prefer Vegetarian option</p> <p>\$ _____ <b>Total Enclosed.</b>        (Make checks payable to Minnesota NOW)</p>
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**DUE TO ALLERGIES, WE REQUEST THAT YOU REFRAIN FROM WEARING PERFUME OR SCENTED LOTION AT THE CONFERENCE.**

**Mail completed registration form and payment to:  
 MN NOW, 550 Rice St. #102, St. Paul, MN 55103**

Check here if you are willing to provide transportation for others in your area.

### Minnesota NOW Elections

Elections for the officers of Minnesota NOW will be held during the conference. All positions are up for election, including President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Legislative Coordinator.

All officers are elected to one-year terms. Only members in good standing in National NOW for not less than one year and in Minnesota NOW for not less than three months prior to the conference are eligible to hold these offices.

Those interested in running for any of the positions may contact President Shannon Drury at the MN NOW office at 550 Rice St., #102, St. Paul, MN 55103, by calling 651-222-1605, or sending an email to [mnnow@mnnow.org](mailto:mnnow@mnnow.org).

### Nominating Committee

Three members are elected for one-year terms. The committee shall not endorse candidates, but instead accepts nominations. Officers and the members of the nominating committee are to be elected by the entire State Conference. Nominations shall be made from the floor.

### Voting/Credentials

Any NOW member who lives in Minnesota and who has been a member for at least 30 days before the conference is allowed to vote at the State Conference. To vote, a NOW member must be credentialed, which requires either a NOW membership card, listing of your name and membership expiration date on a National NOW membership record, a canceled check payable to NOW, or written verification by a chapter or state treasurer.

### Silent Auction

Minnesota NOW wants your products, services, or any other items—large or small—for its annual silent auction fund raiser! Silent Auction Item Forms are available on the state web site at [www.mnnow.org](http://www.mnnow.org). Please download and fill out a form for each item you are donating to bring or send to the conference with the item. Please contact our Silent Auction Coordinator, Ellen Eastby, at 218-998-2957 or [eastofellen@hotmail.com](mailto:eastofellen@hotmail.com) with information about your donations or if you have any questions.

### Resolutions

Resolutions are requested to be submitted in advance to the MN NOW office by **April 1**. They should be typed and include the name and telephone number of the author. Resolutions may also be submitted from the floor during the Plenary session. (Please bring copies for everyone present to read.)

### At-Large State Board Members

In addition to the election of officers voted on by all Minnesota NOW members, the State Conference is also the time when at-large members (those members of MN NOW not affiliated with a chapter) elect their representatives. The following at-large elections will be held:

1. At-large state board members.
2. At-large delegates and alternates to the National Conference.

Members may be nominated and/or elected as a delegate representing the at-large members of MN NOW. The number of delegates is determined by the number of at-large members attending this election.

### Conference Book

Minnesota NOW is selling advertising in the Conference Book. Submissions can be made as a camera-ready PDF (preferred) or JPG to [janegeisinger@charter.net](mailto:janegeisinger@charter.net); or mailed in hard-copy form to: Jane Geisinger, 602 W Cavour Ave, Fergus Falls, MN 56537. Rates are as follows:

- \$20—Business Card (3.5" x 2")
- \$35—1/4 Page (3.5" x 4.375")
- \$65—1/2 Page (3.5" x 9.375" or 7.5" x 4.375")
- \$125—Full Page (7.5" x 10")

Ad deadline is **April 1**. For questions, call Jane at 218-739-5201.

### Awards Nominations

Minnesota NOW is seeking nominations for our annual awards. The Feminist of the Year Award recognizes an outstanding NOW member. The Charlotte Streibel Long Distance Runner Award honors a lifetime of work for women's equality. Nominations should be sent before **April 1** to MN NOW President Shannon Drury at the MN NOW office at 550 Rice St. #102, St. Paul, MN 55103, or by email to [mnnow@mnnow.org](mailto:mnnow@mnnow.org).

## Hotel Information and Directions

### AmericInn

526 Western Avenue  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537  
218-739-3900 or 866-736-5452 (toll-free)  
[www.americinnfergusfalls.com](http://www.americinnfergusfalls.com)  
Weekend rate: \$94.90 for 2 queen beds, 1 or 2 people.

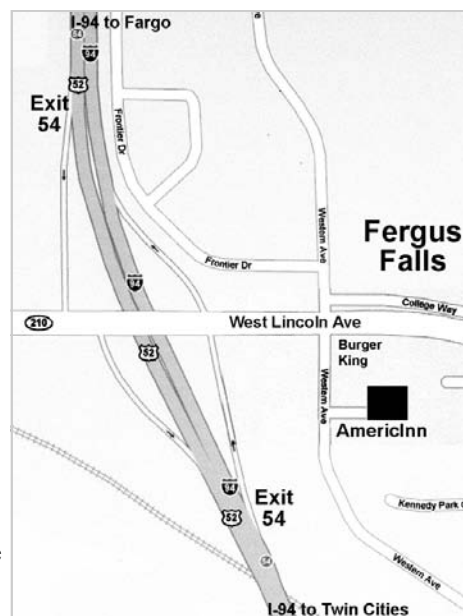
### BE SURE TO MENTION YOU'RE ATTENDING THE NOW CONFERENCE!

**Homes:** Many Fergus Falls members have spare rooms and would love to host NOW members who will be attending the Conference but cannot or do not want to stay at the hotel. If you would like to stay at a member's home instead of at the hotel, contact Tanya Sundberg at 218-736-2606 or [tdsundberg@yahoo.com](mailto:tdsundberg@yahoo.com)

**From the Twin Cities**, take I-94 west about 160 miles. There are 5 Fergus exits (although the highway sign says 4 — it's wrong). Take the **4th** exit. It is **Exit 54** for Hwy 210 **WEST** and Lincoln Avenue. (Do **NOT** take the exit 57 for Hwy 210 East.). At the top of the ramp, turn right. Go one short block to the light at Western Avenue.

**From Fargo/Moorhead**, take I-94 east about 55 miles. Take the **2nd** Fergus exit. It is **Exit 54** by Wal-Mart for Hwy 210 West and Lincoln Avenue. At the top of the ramp, turn left, go over the freeway and one short block to the light at Western Avenue.

Turn right onto Western Avenue. AmericInn is on the left just past Burger King. Call Jane at 218-205-1151 if you get lost.



## Young Feminist in Action: Anti-War Protesting in Olympia

by Kaite Mark, Minnesota Valley NOW Member

For as long as I can remember I have been a feminist. My mother has always instilled in me that equality is crucial in the world and that feminism is one way to promote it. Being a self-proclaimed feminist, I have always tried to be active in my community by promoting equality and peace.

I have lived in Prior Lake, Minnesota for most of my life and am currently a first year student at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. I have found that my college is a place that promotes the critical thinking and social action that is needed to create change for the better in the immediately surrounding community as well as the world community. In late October 2007, I had the opportunity to participate in activism that would truly create change in my new community as well as expand my knowledge and views on the world and its many problems.

Olympia, Washington is home to the Olympia Port. This port has been primarily used to import and export goods. But since the war in Iraq began, the port has also been used to import and export weapons used in the war as well as send troops to Iraq and bring (what's left of them) home. The nearby military base, Fort Lewis, has had a lot to do with this change in cargo. Every year since the war has begun there have been protests at the Port of Olympia as to the incoming and outgoing military supplies and troops. This year was no exception.

This past October the Port of Olympia was being used to import tanks that had been in Iraq to be repaired at Fort Lewis. When I first heard this, my immediate response was that I didn't want my community to have to directly perpetuate the horrors of war. Many people, especially students at my college, felt this way and we started to organize a protest of the incoming tanks. Port Military Resistance (PMR)

was the main organization that helped us create a plan for the port protest.

The protest lasted for about two weeks. I participated in the first week. Many of the protesters, including myself, stayed overnight at the gates of the port to make sure that the tanks could not be transported by semi trucks to Fort Lewis. One of the first days I was at the port was when semi trucks were trying to get into the port loading area in order to pick up the tanks. We created a human barricade that succeeded in stopping the semi trucks from getting into the port.

I was conflicted by this because the semi truck drivers were just trying to do their job and not all of them understood that we were protesting their cargo (the tanks) and the war, not them. One of the other mornings that I was at the port we created a human barricade again for the same reasons. The Olympia Police Department had previously monitored what we were doing and could not do much to stop the protest because there were too many protesters and not enough of the police force. This particular morning the riot police were brought in. The human barricade we created was in all ways peaceful and we were all dedicated to this peacefulness, by vowing not to become violent when the riot police came in.

When I saw the riot police with their gear on, and the pepper spray and tear gas I became very afraid but knew that I was trying to advocate peace in my community and that many people of the world, including innocent people in Iraq and US soldiers have to endure much worse every day. The riot police asked us to move once or twice and then started to pepper spray us "point blank" in the face. To my knowledge it is illegal to use pepper spray on an individual if that individual is less than two feet away. After we all remained in the human barricade the police started

to try to physically remove us from our positions. They could have carried us out of the way but instead they proceeded to beat many of us. I remember being thrown to the ground, having my hair pulled, and the police man screaming at me to "take my f...ing goggles off" so he could pepper spray me in the face. Keep in mind this was a peaceful protest. There had been no violence involved in the protest until the riot police came and used extensive brutality against us. Many of the acts that the riot police engaged in are illegal, but have been overlooked because they are "the law".

This is just an example of one day of the protest that I experienced. Many other horrific events happened to peaceful protesters just because we were exercising our right to protest and to free speech. Unfortunately, the tanks eventually got to Fort Lewis, but some good things were accomplished because of the protest. The protest cost The Port of Olympia over \$200,000, making the port reconsider letting the military use it because of the expense of the protests. It is too bad that one of the only ways that we can create change is to cause a large loss of money rather than open people's eyes to the wrongfulness of war and the need for peace throughout the world. Nonetheless, we have to start somewhere.

Along with making the port reconsider its relationship with the military, we brought publicity to the strong opposition that most of America has towards the war in Iraq. I believe that the government should be "for the people and by the people" and protests are a way to create change in a day and age where oppression and apathy towards this is rampant in society. As a feminist I believe that I gained a lot from this experience and that if people truly want to create change they must be pro active in advocating for what they believe in.

## *State of the Union* to Help State of Minnesota NOW

by Beth Anderson, Fundraising Committee Member

“‘State of the Union’, it’s an award winning play, it’s a huge fundraising opportunity for Minnesota NOW, and it comes in the nick of time,” said April Guillaume of Minnesota NOW’s fundraising committee. Sweet Charities Theatre Company is partnering with Lex-Ham Community Theater and Minnesota NOW to put on benefit performances of “State of the Union” this summer. “The production will have some expenses,” continued Guillaume, “but once those are covered all additional proceeds will go to Minnesota NOW.”

Minnesota NOW has been facing declining membership and declining donations for several years. “We have cut back our budget to the bone,” said Kathy Ahrens, Minnesota NOW Vice President. “We no longer have a paid lobbyist, we have cut back on mailings to our membership, and we have cut back on actions,” continued Ahrens. “If we can’t hold on to the office in the Women’s Building, we may as well fold up the tent and go home!”

The production will take place in June 2008. Sweet Charities and Lex-Ham handle the production end of the performance and Minnesota NOW handles the publicity and is responsible for filling the seats. Lex-Ham is currently negotiating for space at the Wellstone Center in St. Paul. The theater holds 280 seats and Lex-Ham is trying to rent the space for 6 nights.

“There are three ways to make money on a Sweet Charities theater production,” said Mark Margolis, board member of Sweet Charities. “Direct ticket sales, advertising sales for the program book, and special events held in conjunction with the production such as a silent auction or a reception.” Margolis indicated that Sweet Charities has been doing this type of fundraising for several years for such charities as Courage Center. “The difference between a production that breaks even and a production that fills the coffers, is the effort put into the sales and marketing end of the production.”

This type of event is new to Minnesota NOW. In the past, Minnesota NOW has fundraised through mailings and small one-time events. Those methods just haven’t kept up a sufficient revenue stream to keep the organization in the black. “This year we’re taking on a new challenge to see if we can attract not only our own members, but members of the community as well,” explained Beth Anderson.

“I’m very excited about this opportunity,” stressed Guillaume. “We will need a top-notch sales and marketing team to pull it off,” agreed Anderson. Amongst Minnesota NOW members there must be some volunteers with direct sales experience, marketing experience, desktop publishing experience, advertising experience, public relations experience etc., who could help make this venture a success.

“I’m a bit out of my element,” said Anderson. “I’m an electrical engineer in my work life – we’re not exactly known for our communication skills!”

Guillaume and Anderson are looking for 10 to 20 volunteers to make a three-month commitment to the success of “State of the Union.” The goal is to break the tasks down to manageable pieces so each volunteer need only commit to 2 or 3 hours of volunteer time a week. “For example, early on we need a volunteer to design marketing materials such as a flyer, a poster, and possibly a sponsorship form,” said Anderson. “That might be one set of tasks for one volunteer.” Other volunteers can sell advertising for the program, sell tickets to the show, write press releases for the media, and get the event on local community calendars. “We’re hoping to get volunteers to sell advertising and actually take home a small commission on each sale,” explained Guillaume.

Minnesota NOW members should contact the state office to sign up for the “State of the Union Team.” Team meetings will begin in early March 2008 and run through June. “This would be a good internship project for a marketing or business class,” said Anderson. “If anyone knows of a student in need of a project, we have a project in need of nurturing.” Student supervision and oversight is available.

## Affirmative Action Taskforce Report – by Rev. Dr. Nadean Bishop, Chair

The Affirmative Action Taskforce spent time this fall devising a campaign to close down a racist operation in southern Minnesota which used young women singers to promote their allegiance to the KKK. This group is now out of business (largely due to the efforts of others), but we are sure similar outrageous things will continue to spring up. We need your help in alerting us where our efforts are needed, and we need your energy to work for justice for all.

We interpret “Affirmative Action” to include making sure that our board and the boards of other feminist non-profits are fully inclusive of women of color, lesbian and transgender women, otherly-abled women, women of many ethnicities, and any other group which has formerly been subject to oppression. The YWCA, which has long worked to put minority women on boards, has passed that work along. We would like to help fulfill their mission. So let us know if your group would like recommendations for board members,

and we will work with you.

On a personal note, on January 5<sup>th</sup> of this year, I again flunked retirement (at 75) and became National Coordinator of CLOUT, Christian Lesbians Out. If you are a Christian lesbian or have a friend who is, please let me know and I will include that person to receive our newsletter and supportive services. You can look for us at [www.CLOUTsisters.org](http://www.CLOUTsisters.org).

## Chapter News

### Fergus Falls Area NOW Chapter Update

by Tanya D. Sundberg, Fergus Falls Area NOW President

We have been quite busy here in Fergus Falls despite the cold weather!

As you've probably read elsewhere in this publication, the Fergus Falls Area NOW Chapter is hosting the State Conference in Fergus Falls this year and we have been busy preparing!

In March, Maryjane Westra will give a public presentation on gender cleansing in Guatemala. She will be speaking and showing the video "Killer's Paradise" during our regular meeting on March 11

at 7:00 p.m. at the Fergus Falls Public Library.

We have recently elected two new officers: Rebecca Svingen – Vice President, and Ellen Eastby – Secretary. Jane Geisinger and Tanya Sundberg continue as Treasurer and President respectively.

We are in our fifteenth year of offering scholarships to women in need who are pursuing higher education, and the application deadline is April 5 this year.

Our Scholarship Awards dinner will be held on Tuesday June 10.

Fergus Falls Area NOW recently sponsored a table at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Someplace Safe Tea & Silent Auction. Proceeds went to Someplace Safe, an area women's shelter.

We are very excited about hosting the State Conference in Fergus Falls this year and hope many of you will join us here in April!

### Cervical Cancer Prevention: Uptown NOW Continues Efforts to Educate

by Trisha Hasbargen, Uptown NOW Co-Coordinator

The Uptown NOW chapter is continuing work on educating young women about the HPV vaccine, a vaccine that protects women against cervical cancer. On December 18, members from the Uptown NOW chapter of Minnesota NOW met with Representative Phyllis Kahn to discuss HPV prevention efforts. Last session, Representative Kahn coauthored a bill that would develop educational materials about the risks of HPV and the availability of the HPV vaccine to be presented at schools. The bill would also implement a plan to design and implement media campaigns and provide information to women about cervical cancer screenings.

Uptown NOW members will be moving forward by promoting these efforts in the upcoming legislative session and spreading the word in the Uptown community—we need your help! If you are interested in helping Uptown NOW get the word out about cervical cancer prevention and this legislation, please contact us at [nowuptown@yahoo.com](mailto:nowuptown@yahoo.com) or visit [www.myspace.com/uptownnow](http://www.myspace.com/uptownnow).

#### Uptown NOW Girl Power Happy Hours

Uptown NOW is also continuing to host our monthly Girl Power Happy Hour.

Upcoming dates for happy hours include: Tuesday March 25, Tuesday April 29, and Tuesday May 27.

All happy hours take place from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at Aura in Calhoun Square on Hennepin Ave. in Minneapolis. For more information please contact us at [nowuptown@yahoo.com](mailto:nowuptown@yahoo.com) or visit [www.myspace.com/uptownnow](http://www.myspace.com/uptownnow).

#### You're Worth It! Uptown NOW Salary Negotiation Event

The pay gap between men and women continues to be an issue in the front of many NOW member's minds. Women still make only \$.70 for every \$1.00 that men make!

Join us for some wine and a lively, interactive discussion and workshop in the area of salary negotiation. Tricia Schulte, a certified life coach, will be leading us through a great 4-step process to successful salary negotiation. Topics will include: *changing your thinking about money, doing your homework, practicing asking for what you want, and asking for real*. The evening will be interactive so please bring your own ideas and experiences to share. Her methods will include traditional and non-traditional approaches, so be prepared to change

your thinking and your assumptions—especially about yourself!

**When:** Wednesday, March 19, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

**Details:** Open to members and non-members. Come and meet your neighbors in Uptown! There will be wine and appetizers.

**To Register:** The event is **FREE**, but you must RSVP at <http://uptownnowsalary.eventbrite.com>.

**Facilitator:** Tricia Schulte, Life and Leadership Coach, 651-226-2910, [tricia@cultivatingleaders.com](mailto:tricia@cultivatingleaders.com).  
Website: [www.cultivatingleaders.com](http://www.cultivatingleaders.com).



## Chapter News

### MN Valley NOW Stops the Violence with V-Day Prior Lake 2008

by Beth Anderson, Minnesota Valley NOW Co-President

“Welcome to V-Day Prior Lake!” (And the crowd goes wild!) After a special dedication from playwright and V-Day founder, Eve Ensler, in memory of Katherine Ann Olson, “The Vagina Monologues” begins. It’s a different way to spend Valentine’s Day weekend, but as Ensler discovered every woman has a vagina story.

Minnesota Valley NOW partnered with The Chameleon Theatre Circle (TC2) to participate in V-Day 2008. V-Day is an anti-violence campaign that takes place all over the world on and around Valentine’s Day. Benefit performances of “The Vagina Monologues” raise money for anti-violence groups. “V-Day is such a great way for communities to take action against violence, it seemed like the perfect fit for Minnesota Valley NOW,” said co-president Shannon Kranzler Burdsal. “Our chapter has worked with Southern Valley Alliance for Battered Women (SVABW) for years, but we have never attempted anything on this scale.”

In the small conservative suburb of Prior Lake, some 350 people attended performances of “The Vagina Monologues” on February 14 and 16, resulting in nearly \$5,000 in proceeds. Ten percent of the proceeds go to V-Day’s 2008 Spotlight Campaign, the Katrina Warriors of New Orleans, with the remainder going to SVABW. “Southern Valley is the only organization providing services to battered women in Scott and Carver counties,” said Minnesota Valley NOW co-president Beth Anderson. “I have always been a believer in taking action in our own back yard. The recent murder of Katherine Ann



Olson in Savage really brought the issue home for me. Savage is my back yard!”

One in three women worldwide are touched by violence in their lives. “The Vagina Monologues” contains stories about these women, stories of rape and assault. But it also contains stories of self-discovery, self-declaration, good sex and the miracle of birth.

Each year V-Day focuses on an area of the world for particular attention. This year, the spotlight is on New Orleans as she recovers from Hurricane Katrina. Ensler wrote a new monologue for the women of New Orleans in which she calls New Orleans the “Vagina of America,” beloved for her hot music and spicy food, yet neglected and battered by those with no further use for her. “The analogy was so apt and really brought home the message of the play,” commented TC2 board chair Nigel Linden.

In addition to the production, a reception was held both evenings of the performance. A variety of vendors set up booths to peruse while coffee, cider and cookies were being served to participants. Valley Natural Foods of Burnsville, Canterbury Inn of Shakopee, and Village Market of Prior Lake were VIP sponsors and donated items for the reception. On display were nearly all 30 of the red, life-

sized figures from the Silent Witness Project, representing women killed by domestic violence in Minnesota.

Resource tables staffed by SVABW advocates and local law enforcement offered information helpful to audience members who might find themselves in abusive or violent situations. “The play tends to bring out feelings and memories in the audience members. We wanted to make sure that if anyone needed services, there was a place to go for information,” said Anderson. “The program also includes pages of information regarding services for battered women and children,” said Kranzler Burdsal. “In the end, it’s about stopping the violence.”

TC2 board member, Lysa Clayburn, directed the play. Six women presented the monologues, including Kranzler Burdsal and another Minnesota Valley NOW member, Cindy Mark, along with actresses Alexis Clarksean, Clare Jodzio McDermott, Mandy Morgan, and Kecia Rehkamp. “Okay, I’ll admit I’m a little sad now that it’s all done,” said Clayburn. “It has been a truly rewarding experience. Maybe we can do this again sometime!” she said smiling.

“The response, the energy, the emotions at both shows were overwhelming,” said Kranzler Burdsal. “It was one of the most amazing experiences of my life.”

And the crowd goes wild.

### Join Minnesota Activists in New Orleans for V to the 10th

Join a grassroots group of Minnesota participants and volunteers who care about women and violence issues and the adverse effects on the survivors of Katrina in a caravan to New Orleans to take part in V-Day’s 10th Anniversary.

New Orleans needs our economic dollars as well as knowing that

Minnesotans care about their recovery efforts. The caravan will be leaving Minnesota on Thursday, April 10, and departing New Orleans on Monday, April 14. V to the 10th events take place in New Orleans on April 11 and 12.

For more information about volunteering or joining the caravan,

contact Diana Knobel at 651-208-0362 or [diana@dianaknobel.com](mailto:diana@dianaknobel.com).

For more information about V-Day’s 2008 events in New Orleans, go to <http://v10.vday.org/>.



## Minnesota NOW Membership Application

(please print clearly)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_  Please sign me up for Email Action Alerts

I wish to become a member of the following chapter\* (please check one):  
For more information about Minnesota NOW's chapters, go to:  
[www.mnnow.org/chapters.htm](http://www.mnnow.org/chapters.htm).

<input type="checkbox"/> MN0000, At-large (no local affiliation)	<input type="checkbox"/> MN0160, St. Cloud/Great River Area NOW
<input type="checkbox"/> MN0025, Sherburne-Wright NOW	<input type="checkbox"/> MN0165, North Central NOW
<input type="checkbox"/> MN0040, Minnesota Valley NOW	<input type="checkbox"/> MN0225, Twin Cities NOW
<input type="checkbox"/> MN0062, Fergus Falls Area NOW	<input type="checkbox"/> MN0500, Uptown NOW

\*Your annual dues include membership in National NOW, Minnesota NOW, and a local chapter if you choose one.

Dues:  \$35 regular annual dues  \$15-\$34 sliding scale is available to any person for any reason. If you cannot afford the minimum requested dues, please contact Minnesota NOW to ask about opportunities to earn a "Membership by Volunteering" for 10 hours of service.

\$1000 lifetime membership

I would like to add an additional contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ at this time.

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Total amount enclosed (make check payable to Minnesota NOW) or authorized to charge (continue below).

With my signature below I am authorizing a charge for the total amount indicated above:

Visa Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Mastercard Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this form with your payment to Minnesota NOW, 550 Rice St., #102, St. Paul, MN 55103.

MN National Organization for Women, Inc.  
550 Rice Street, Suite 102  
St. Paul, MN. 55103-2116

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