

# FEMINIST NEWS AND VIEWS

## Morris County NOW

P.O. Box 394, Morristown, New Jersey 07960  
Chapter Phone 973.285.1200



NEW FUNDRAISER: Trades of Hope (See Page 6)

March/April 2021

### MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

### CELEBRATE WITH WOMEN MAKING HISTORY

Introducing Linda Hogoboom and her fight to change the Town of Boonton's "Board of Aldermen" (addressed as Aldermen and Alderwomen) to the gender neutral "Town Council" (addressed as Council Member). Currently the only other town in New Jersey that uses "Board of Aldermen" is Dover. Coincidentally, another Morris County town.

Linda's quest began in July, 2020 when she made her first request to the Board. Much of the following is in Linda's own words. "The town attorneys responded in August stating it would require a single ordinance, no cost aside from ancillary expenses such as stationery, and the legislation considers the terms interchangeable. Common sense would say no need to spend time or resources on this. It would be a positive and affirming change for some in our town. Research shows that words matter in this regard, there is virtually no expense, this preserves tradition, this is inclusive, and town council is more self-explanatory than 'aldermen' as to its function. And it requires only two ordinance votes to accomplish." (Editor's note: Linda's research uncovered the fact that the town was founded in 1866 and incorporated in 1867 with the governing body called "Board of Trustees." This was amended in 1872 to "Common Council" invalidating the argument that they should keep the designation "Board of Aldermen" because it was historic.) "It was apparently the most divisive issue ever brought before the Board. There were supporters and there were opponents. And then there were those whose inaction became obstructive – refusing to join the discussion or abstaining from votes. I always focused my request as a demand for a VOTE. In November, the Board broke protocol and created the second pressing issue. They ignored my request for a vote – [then] they entered the only piece of official correspondence I ever sent them 'into the record' with no comment on topic or subject, no discussion and no vote. I was ostensibly silenced. The intensity of denial and the refusal to entertain a vote on something already reviewed by the town attorneys and already discussed previously was unacceptable..."

Linda reached out to the Mayor and the Board, the town attorneys, the County Clerk, District 25 State Senator and Assembly Members, NOW-NJ, Morris County NOW and the press. She attended as many virtual Board meetings as the Board members themselves. I "used every medium I can think of to reach out to those capable of making this change by voting on it, or those capable of making this change by raising awareness of the need for a vote. Speaking during meetings on the record, informal zoom presentations, private phone calls and zoom meetings, endless text messages and Facebook messages, posting on the local Facebook page and being buoyed by some and bullied by others, sifting through dusty file folders at town hall and the library until I found what I needed to possibly motivate another member of the Board. Finding allies both in the community – and on this same Board. Afraid to 'out' those on the Board that supported this common sense and inclusive move. Thanking. And thanking. And thanking those that showed even the slightest interest."

"Constantly tamping down my outrage to get it done. Constantly wavering between finding the right motivation for the individuals on the Board – talk more? Talk less and disappear? And wanting to just be able to talk more plainly and not worry that by talking I was damaging the very thing we (I became a we in this pursuit) were trying to achieve."

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“In mid-November 2020 the Board of Aldermen decided to vote – but only on whether a subcommittee would be formed to investigate the change and bring information back to the Board. This vote to simply form a subcommittee yielded a vote of 4 yes, 2 no, 3 abstain. Four to five for just a subcommittee to report back to the Board on something that was already discussed 3 ½ months earlier.”

“On February 1, 2021, ordinance 02-21 was finally presented to the Board “in title only” as is protocol. It required the first of two votes to publicly publish it. This required a minimum of 5 “yes” votes, which is exactly what it got along with 2 no, 1 abstain, and 1 not present. A tenuous majority.”

The final vote was scheduled to be held at the February 16, 2021 meeting of the Board of Aldermen. Prior to the vote, Linda made the following statement: “To all listening -- I initiated this effort, because I found I needed to research and develop a richer understanding of the power the local government can have in setting the tone for the community. I hope you’ve personally considered the importance of inclusive language, the importance of representation in local government, the importance of uplifting the marginalized, and the importance of showing all members of our town that this is indeed the Town’s Council. Aldermen is fancy, but it’s not functional. The town maybe wasn’t ready before. Uncertainty... discomfort... irritation – are all comprehensible initial reactions. But tonight, your contribution to tonight’s vote can speak volumes.”

The GOOD NEWS is that the board voted 7-2 in favor of the ordinance to change to Town Council and Council Members. The ordinance immediately went into effect and, according to Linda “for the rest of the meeting they worked to get into the habit of using the new terms.”

**We congratulate Linda on her success in bringing gender neutrality to the Town of Boonton.**

As reported in the January/February edition of this newsletter, there are two bills in the NJ Legislature requiring gender neutral elected office titles on ballots, i.e. instead of “chairman” it would say “chair.” The Senate version (S1201) was introduced on February 3, 2020 and was referred to the Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism & Historic Preservation Committee. The Assembly version (A1674) was introduced on January 14, 2020 and was referred to the Assembly State and Local Government Committee. NOW-NJ President, Anjali Mehrotra, was instrumental in getting these bills introduced, and she also had a hand in getting Union County to go gender neutral in 2019.

**NEW JERSEY COALITION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING UPDATE**

By Susan J. Waldman

**NJ COALITION  
AGAINST  
HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING**

**Legislative Update**

Expanded Vacatur Bill “Provides for process to vacate and expunge certain arrests, charges, complaints, convictions, other dispositions, and DNA records, associated with violations by certain human trafficking victims.” Both the 2020 Assembly and Senate versions of these bills have been replaced for 2021. The Assembly bill was introduced on January 29, 2021 as A5322 to replace A3596 and was referred to the Assembly Judiciary Committee. The Senate version, S3433, was introduced on February 11, 2021, to replace S1750, and was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. These new bills have been revised to conform and will have all the sponsors and co-sponsors as the former bills, A3596 and S1750.

S280 and A883 “Directs the development and posting of notices containing information for victims of human trafficking.” This bill was signed into law by Governor Murphy on January 29, 2021. The Senate and Assembly bills were consolidated as A883. At this point what is needed is funding for the State Commission on Human Trafficking so they can execute their mandate to print and post these notices. The Coalition will be mounting a letter-writing and telephone campaign to achieve that goal.

**NJCAHT Scholarship Program**

The NJCAHT’s rolling scholarship program awards several scholarships to current high school seniors attending a college, university, or technical school in the Fall 2021 semester; to current college students; and to survivors of human trafficking (labor or sex trafficking) who are pursuing their GEDs or college. All must be NJ based. The scholarships are awarded quarterly.

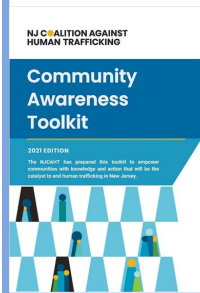
**Scholarship Program Guidelines & Priorities:**

- This program is open to NJ based trafficking survivors (male, female, sex or labor trafficked survivors); plus graduating high school seniors and current college students with a strong record of advocating for human rights and standing against human trafficking.

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- An essay is required (2 pages double spaced) reflecting upon and articulating how his/her education and future career goals will contribute to raising awareness/prevention of human trafficking, OR survivor applicants may write about their hopes for the future after experiencing trafficking.
- A letter of recommendation is required from an educator or community leader familiar with the applicant's status as a trafficking survivor or familiar with the applicant's experience in human rights and/or human trafficking advocacy and character.
- Online applications are accepted and awarded on a quarterly basis due December, March, June, and September. For more information, contact [info@safernj.org](mailto:info@safernj.org). [Apply now](#)



### Community Awareness Toolkit

The NJCAHT has prepared a toolkit to empower communities with knowledge and action that will be the catalyst to end human trafficking in New Jersey. You can access/download a copy here: <https://www.safernj.org/uploads/resource/Community-Toolkit-Jan-2021-REVISED-1.29.21.pdf>



## **REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM ACT (RFA) UPDATE AND CALL TO ACTION**

By Anjali Mehrotra

The RFA was introduced in the New Jersey Legislature on October 8, 2020. The **Senate bill (S3030)** was referred to the Senate Health Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee ; the **Assembly Bill (A4848)** was referred to the Assembly Health Committee. The leadership in the NJ Legislature needs convincing on the urgency of moving the RFA through both the Senate Health Committee and the Assembly Health Committee.

**Background:** The Reproductive Freedom Act - RFA (S3030/A4848) is ground-breaking legislation that will codify the right to abortion for everyone in New Jersey and expand access to reproductive healthcare, including pregnancy-related care, birth control and abortion care, especially for historically marginalized communities. With the new conservative majority on our Supreme Court, Roe v. Wade is in jeopardy. Further, the pandemic has highlighted existing health disparities, and therefore increasing access to all health care, especially time-sensitive care like reproductive healthcare, is critical. The primary sponsors are State Senators Loretta Weinberg, Linda Greenstein and Vin Gopal and Assembly Members Valerie Vainieri Huttle, Mila Jasey, Raj Mukherji, Annette Chaparro, Joann Downey, Angela McKnight, Verlina Reynolds-Jackson and Annette Quijano. The bill has 14 co-sponsors in the Assembly and 3 co-sponsors in the Senate and enjoys the support of the Governor.

### **TAKE ACTION—CALL THE LEGISLATIVE LEADERS**

#### **Phone Call Targets:**

Senate President Stephen Sweeney (856) 251-9801

Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin (732) 855-7441

Senator Joe Vitale, Senate Health Committee Chair (609) 847-3700

Assembly Member Herb Conaway, Assembly Health Committee Chair (856) 461-3997

#### **Phone Scripts:**

##### **Senate President Sweeney & Senator Vitale:**

Hi my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I live in \_\_\_\_\_.

I am calling today to urge \_\_\_\_\_ to move the Reproductive Freedom Act - Bill number S3030 - and ensure it is heard in the Senate Health Committee as soon as possible. It is critical now more than ever that we protect and expand access to reproductive health care including abortion in NJ.

##### **Assembly Speaker Coughlin and Assembly Member Conaway:**

Hi my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I live in \_\_\_\_\_.

I am calling today to urge \_\_\_\_\_ to move the Reproductive Freedom Act - Bill number A4848 - and ensure it is posted and heard in the Assembly Health Committee as soon as possible. It is critical now more than ever that we protect and expand access to reproductive health care including abortion in NJ.

We appreciate your leadership and support for reproductive rights.

### **VIRTUAL RALLY ON WEDNESDAY MARCH 3, 2021**

Join us on Wednesday March 3, 2021 from noon to about 1:00 pm, when the Thrive Coalition will hold a virtual rally in support of the Reproductive Freedom Act. NOW (Jennifer Groves) will speak, along with a host of others. You can register right here on the link if you would like to attend: [bit.ly/RFARally-Mar03](https://bit.ly/RFARally-Mar03)

**The Edna Mahan Prison  
History in the Making**  
by Kayleigh Lavornia

This Women’s History Month it is important to also remember the history which we are living through now. This history is different, because it is not yet history – it is within our control. And history will not remember kindly the treatment of the inmates at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women in Clinton, New Jersey.

On January 21, 2021, it was announced that an investigation was underway into allegations of assault on a number of the facility’s female-only inmates, of which there are over 600. The violent assault left one woman with a concussion and another with a broken bone near her eye. According to the criminal complaints, one woman was pepper-sprayed before five officers entered her cell and struck 28 times near her face.

About 30 corrections officers were placed on paid – *yes, paid* – administrative leave in light of the allegations. In the time since, four guards have been criminally charged in the scandal, and all 25 Senate Democrats have signed a letter which calls for the resignation of corrections Commissioner Marcus Hicks. In addition to facing charges for their abuse, efforts to conceal the abuse by omitting details relating to the incident and the injuries sustained by the women involved were called into question.

The Edna Mahan prison has already been the subject of a federal investigation. In April 2020, the Assistant Attorney General for the Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division and the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of New Jersey issued a notice to Governor Murphy which concluded that the investigation found conditions at the prison were in violation of the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution. Specifically, the investigation revealed “reasonable cause to believe that New Jersey fails to keep women prisoners at Edna Mahan reasonably safe from staff sexual abuse. These violations are exacerbated by systemic deficiencies that discourage prisoners from reporting sexual abuse and allow sexual abuse at Edna Mahan to occur undetected and undeterred.”

The report revealed that this culture of sexual abuse acceptance at the prison stretches back decades. Between October 2016 and April 2019, seven correction officers and one employee were arrested on sexual abuse charges, with numerous others being suspended or fired in the face of allegations since 2010.

A statement made by Sen. Mike Testa, R-Cumberland, sums up the situation at Edna – and with Commissioner Hicks’ leadership over New Jersey’s correctional facilities more generally – quite well:

"We have federal reports of constitutional rights violations, unnecessary COVID deaths, evidence of widespread sexual and physical abuse, and now criminal charges related to the ongoing mismanagement of our prisons. How much evidence does Governor Murphy need that Commissioner Hicks is unfit to lead the New Jersey Department of Corrections?"

**ELECTION NEWS FOR NOVEMBER 2021**

Anjali Mehrotra, President of NOW-NJ, is seeking the Democratic nomination for State Assembly from Legislative District 21. The district consists of sixteen municipalities from Union, Somerset, and Morris counties. Referring to her candidacy, Anjali states, “I believe that this is a moment that calls for courageous leaders who are willing to take bold steps to ensure that even while we meet the daily needs of our residents, we aspire to higher ideals of growth and equity for all. It calls for leaders who have the conviction to stand up for the truth and deliver results for their constituents. Leaders who are willing to look beyond partisanship, to put country, people, and humanity first.”

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**NOW-NJ’s Political Action Committee (NOW NJ PAC) is endorsing Valerie Vainieri Huttle for election to the New Jersey Senate in Legislative District 37.** The PAC thanks Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg, who is retiring at the end of her term, for her lifetime of championing women’s rights. To ensure that her legacy of advancing women’s issues continues, we must elect a replacement who is vocal about empowering women and has a proven record of supporting women’s rights. For fifteen years, Assembly Member Huttle has advocated for reproductive rights and justice, economic justice, and ending violence against women—all part of NOW’s core mission. She is a prime sponsor of the Reproductive Freedom Act, a legislative priority for NOW-NJ, as women’s rights to health care, including birth control and abortion, are under attack across the nation (see Page 3).

Per candidate Huttle, “We need more women’s voices in politics, not fewer. At a time where the number of women in New Jersey’s legislature is decreasing, I am so grateful to NOW-NJ for their work to empower and uplift women. I am humbled to have earned the support of NOW NJ PAC and look forward to our continued work together to elevate women in politics and government, and most importantly, to fight for laws that empower and defend women in the workplace, as caregivers and at home.”



## LOOKING FOR AN EASY WAY TO WORK TOWARDS ENDING POVERTY AND EXPLOITATION IN THE WORLD?

Join Morris County NOW's Trades of Hope fundraiser and let your shopping dollars support women artisans and Morris County NOW! It's the perfect time to shop for Mother's Day and Graduation Gifts.



Shop anytime between March 1, 2021 and April 24, 2021 at <https://bit.ly/3daA2Ho>

You can also attend our Zoom Event on Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 7:00 PM

Register for the Zoom Event at: <http://bit.ly/2N8U7E>

**Trades of Hope** was created by a mother-daughter team after they learned about the atrocities women face around the world. The lack of jobs for women forces mothers to give up their kids to orphanages, increase women's risk of being trafficked, and keeps them in a cycle of poverty and social oppression. For this reason they created a platform for women to show the world their capabilities. Women don't want charity, they want an opportunity. At Trades of Hope, every purchase supports a woman leading her family out of poverty. She is proud to be providing for her kids and being the hero of her own story. These products are physical representations of women using their skills and rising around the world.

**Need more info?** Contact Judi Worgess at [ejworgess@hotmail.com](mailto:ejworgess@hotmail.com) or by phone or text at 856-316-9013

### Be A Newsletter Contributor

Wouldn't you like to see your name in print? How about submitting an article to the Morris County NOW newsletter? Maybe you have an idea or an issue that you would like to publicize? Please send any articles to our email address, [morriscountynow@gmail.com](mailto:morriscountynow@gmail.com). Since our newsletter is published bi-monthly at the beginning of the "odd" months (July, September, November, etc.), the deadline for submitting articles is the third Monday of the "even" months (June, August, October). This would apply for advertisements also.

#### SUBMIT AN ARTICLE FOR OUR MEMBER'S CORNER

Please note that all articles and advertisements submitted for printing are subject to the discretion of the editor.

### Email Alerts

Morris County NOW wants your email address so we can keep you aware of important up-to-the-minute chapter news. Perhaps there is an upcoming event or action on an issue important to you that came up after the newsletter was published.

Since our newsletter is bi-monthly, this can easily occur. In this day and age of instant communication we want to keep in touch with our members.

Please write to us at [morriscountynow@gmail.com](mailto:morriscountynow@gmail.com) with your email address and you won't be left out again.

### Join Us On Facebook

Morris County NOW can now be found on Facebook, a social utility site that keeps people connected. If you are not already a member of Facebook, it is free and easy to join. You can use the link [www.facebook.com/mcnownj](http://www.facebook.com/mcnownj)



FOLLOW US ON **twitter**

<http://twitter.com/mcnownj>

### National NOW's Top Six Priority Issues

Abortion and Reproductive Rights

Economic Justice

Ending Sex Discrimination

LGBTQ Rights

Promoting Diversity & Ending Racism

Stopping Violence Against Women

### Chapter Calendar

#### Monday, March 1—Saturday April 24, 2021 Trades of Hope Fundraiser

Zoom Event Thursday, April 15, 2021  
(See Article Page 6)

#### Tuesday, March 2, 2021

Morris County NOW Chapter Meeting  
Virtual Zoom Meeting\*

7:30 PM

#### Wednesday, March 3, 2021

Virtual March & Rally for the RFA  
(See Article Page 3)

#### Monday, March 8, 2021

International Women's Day

#### Tuesday, April 6, 2021

Morris County NOW Chapter Meeting  
Virtual Zoom Meeting\*  
7:30 PM

#### Tuesday, May 4, 2021

Morris County NOW Chapter Meeting  
Virtual Zoom Meeting\*

#### Saturday, May 8, 2021

NOW-NJ State Board Meeting  
Virtual Zoom Meeting

State Board Meetings: May 8, August 7, November 13

\*Register in advance for these meetings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/>

### EQUAL PAY DAY 2021\*

This date symbolizes how far into the year women must work to earn what men earned in the previous year.

For Asian Women the date is March 9, 2021 (85cents) \*\*  
(Figures vary widely by ethnicity)

For White Women it is March 24, 2021 (82 cents) \*\*

For Black Women it is August 3, 2021 (63 cents) \*\*

For Native Women it is September 8, 2021 (60 cents) \*\*

For Latina Women it is October 21, 2021 (55 cents) \*\*

\*[www.equalpaytoday.org](http://www.equalpaytoday.org) \*\*To a man's dollar.

**EARTH DAY**  
**THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2021**  
**GO GREEN!!**  
**RESTORE OUR EARTH**

Thank you to all our members who have chosen to "Go Green" by receiving this newsletter by email only. If you would like to join the "Go Green" crowd, just email your request to the chapter email: [morriscountynow@gmail.com](mailto:morriscountynow@gmail.com)

## Membership Application

Morris County NOW (NJ0200)  
P.O. Box 394  
Morristown, New Jersey 07960

I wish to join NOW and commit myself to take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

National, State, and Local Dues:

- \$35. Regular Dues
- \$15-\$34. Reduced Dues
- Additional support
- \$5. Newsletter Only

Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please return form with your check to the address above.

## Our TV show "New Directions for Women" is available on YouTube

Most of the shows from 2007 to September 22, 2016, and some from as far back as 1994 are now available for on-demand viewing. More recent shows are in one 29 minute presentation. Because of limitations previously imposed by YouTube, older shows are presented as three separate ten minute segments. To help improve continuity, each subsequent segment begins by replaying approximately the last 20 seconds of the previous part. As time permits, the archives will expand to include all previous shows (to date we have produced 285 programs). To access "New Directions for Women," go to [www.YouTube.com/menownj](http://www.YouTube.com/menownj).

## Come to Our Morris County NOW Monthly ZOOM Meetings

And now for something completely different. Join us at our monthly ZOOM meetings. We meet on the first Tuesday of the month, unless otherwise noted on the chapter calendar ([www.morriscountynow.org](http://www.morriscountynow.org)). You can register to attend at <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAocO6trzooGdBrfHkpRVaoUez6hyYh98US>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

**Morris County NOW**  
**P.O. Box 394**  
**Morristown, NJ 07960**

## Going Green

Thank you to all the members who replied to our "Going Green" campaign. You can still let us know if you want to receive your newsletter by email only. Contact us by phone, 973 285 1200, or by email, [morriscountynow@gmail.com](mailto:morriscountynow@gmail.com).

## Feminist News and Views

News and Views is published six times a year by Morris County NOW as a means of informing the membership of current activities and issues.

## Chapter Officers

Karen Lontka, President - 973.584.0612  
Rosemary Lontka, Executive V.P.  
Shirley Henderson, Treasurer  
Nancy Critchley, Secretary  
Stacey Gregg, Action V.P. - 973.477.7574  
Susan J. Waldman, Fundraising VP- 973.895.2218  
Rosemary Lontka, Shirley Henderson, Susan J. Waldman - State Board Delegates  
Margaret Davey, Alternate State Board Delegate  
Susan J. Waldman, Newsletter Editor - 973.895.2218

*Advertising Rates (business card size)*  
Members: \$15/issue; Non-members: \$25/issue

## For Information

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