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CHOICE

New Kids On The Block

by Casey Martinson

On Saturday, October 2, more than 40 young activists, and a few activist mentors, gathered in Ithaca for the state-wide Stronger. Together. Conference focusing on reproductive health and rights, LGBT equality, comprehensive sex education, and a wide range of issues under the collective umbrella of “sexual justice.”

It was thrilling to see youth from our own region — students from Cornell University, Elmira College, Ithaca College, and Trumansburg High School — join others from around New York in a day of training and action.

After an inspiring keynote presentation from Planned Parenthood of the Rochester/Syracuse Region board member and veteran activist Abby Davidson Maffei, our conference attendees hit the streets for a demonstration that rocked downtown Ithaca. We marched in support of “sexual justice for everyone,” and in solidarity with the broader social justice agenda of the One Nation Working Together rally being held that same day in Washington, D.C.

As we made our way around the Commons at the peak of the Ithaca Apple Harvest Festival, supportive honks from passing cars and cheers from festival goers — some of whom even joined with us — was an overwhelming validation of our message. As we take time in this issue of CHOICE to examine the urgent need for a resurgence of Planned Parenthood activism, we should take heart that there are some new kids on the block, and they are fired up!



What do we want?!

Sexual justice!

Who do we want it for?!

Everyone!



LETTER FROM JOE SAMMONS, CEO

Dear Friend -

One of the many things that sets Planned Parenthood apart is our passion and commitment to the cause of reproductive freedom. This movement was started by Corning native Margaret Sanger more than 90 years ago, and it is carried on each day through the five health centers here in the Southern Finger Lakes and hundreds more across the country. We are proud to stand up every day, every year for the simple idea that women deserve the right to determine whether or when to have a child, and to make sure women have access to the information and services they need.

This is a movement that has always mattered and it matters a lot right now! This year, we fought to keep Stupak out of national health care reform, and we know that battle was simply the beginning; we must keep fighting to preserve access and funding. When we hear the candidates from the religious right, here in New York and across the country, are trying to take away fundamental freedoms, we cannot let them speak unanswered. When we see dozens of protestors trying to harass our patients and staff at our health centers, we must take action to send a clear message: our community supports choice, and we will fight tactics of intimidation and fear.

Please be sure to read Casey Martinson's article on "Why the Movement Matters." If you haven't done so already, sign up for our Action Alerts; get involved today. And I hope you'll consider supporting our "Pledge a Protestor" program to help us raise money for every protestor at our health centers. Together, I know we can take up the challenge to maintain reproductive freedom and access to vital, compassionate services in our communities, as Planned Parenthood has done so many times before with your help.

Last month, I was thrilled to meet so many of you at our Annual Celebration, and I know that our staff, board, and volunteers felt the incredible promise and power of Planned Parenthood throughout the room. Whenever times are tough, that is the well from which we draw our strength, our resolve. Thanks to each one of you for all you do to keep that strength alive — we are grateful for your spirit and support!



Fred and Tibby McLafferty, Owen Skinner, Sam McLafferty, Cecile Richards



Jamie and Maisie Houghton, Joe Sammons



All the best,

Joe Sammons
President / CEO



Carolyn Collins, Joan Burrows

PPSFL Celebrates Another Year

by Jenn Foy

PPSFL was thrilled to honor Maisie and Jamie Houghton with the Margaret Sanger/Katharine Houghton Hepburn Award, and Tibby McLafferty with the Constance E. Cook Award at our Annual Celebration on September 23, 2010 at the Corning Museum of Glass.

We are extraordinarily grateful for their incredible contributions toward making PPSFL what it is today. They have supported us in so many ways — board service, sponsoring Family Planning Advocates conferences, participating in fundraising campaigns, political advocacy at the local, state, and national levels, and generous financial support. Maisie, Jamie, and Tibby are great friends of PPSFL, and we took great pleasure in honoring their commitment to our work.

The Annual Celebration began with PPSFL Board Chair Kathleen Good welcoming the 200 attendees, which included several members of Cornell University's Vox® (*Voices for Planned Parenthood*) student group and Trumansburg High School's new feminist group, Femtastic. CEO Joe Sammons then provided a brief State of the Agency, illustrating the immediate importance of the movement to protect reproductive rights: This year, we fought the Stupak Amendment; we've seen an increase in protesters at our Ithaca health center; we've heard appalling anti-choice comments from political candidates, and soon George Winner, a staunch supporter of Planned Parenthood, will be leaving office.

Sammons also took a moment to acknowledge Carolyn Collins, a former staff member who very recently fought for her life after suffering severe surgical complications. The crowd stood to applaud Collins for her courage as Sammons expressed how honored we were to have her join us for the Celebration.

Our special guest Cecile Richards, President of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, followed Sammons at the podium and commended the work being done by PPSFL under his leadership. She shared some lesser known facts about the rich history of Planned Parenthood and its roots in the Corning area. Richards then introduced Marcia Weber to present the Margaret Sanger-Katherine Houghton Hepburn Award to the Houghtons, and Katie Thompson to present the Constance E. Cook Award to Tibby McLafferty.

We were delighted to welcome Michelle Goldberg, author of *The Means of Reproduction: Sex, Power, and the Future of the World*, as our keynote speaker. Goldberg



Michelle Goldberg



Guests mix and mingle over wine and hors d'oeuvres



Cornell University Vox students

explained how fundamentalist forces everywhere use an anti-choice agenda as a key leverage point in their fight to keep women under the oppression of "traditional" gender roles. Goldberg's observations exemplified the need for renewed commitment to our movement.

As the event wrapped up, we announced the winners of our two raffles, a La Tourelle Spa & Resort package and a Corning Music and Wine package. Goldberg signed books for attendees and even purchased one to sign as a gift to the young women of Femtastic.

The event was everything we could have hoped for, and there was an air of excitement and inspiration as our supporters and staff mingled before saying goodbye at the end of the night. We extend our gratitude to everyone who attended this year's Celebration and to all of the staff, volunteers, donors, and sponsors who helped make the event possible.

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NEED TO CONTACT US?

Health Centers

Corning	962-4686
Elmira	734-3313
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Ithaca	273-1526
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Corning	962-4686
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Ithaca	216-0021

Rape Crisis of the Southern Tier

888-810-0093

PPSFL REMEMBERS MARIAN BROWN

Marian M. Brown, longtime supporter and devoted advocate of sexuality education, played many roles in the very early years of Planned Parenthood of the Southern Tier (PPST), and influenced her friends and family with her teaching and passion.

Marian was born on a farm near Cochranton, PA in 1922 and died on April 9, 2010 in Horseheads, NY. Marian had many accomplishments in those 88 years. She graduated magna cum laude from Allegheny College and received a master's degree in government management from the University of Denver. She had an engaging career in policy activism and academics before coming to Planned Parenthood in 1968.

Marian served first as PPST's volunteer vice president and treasurer. In 1972, after earning a state teaching certificate, she began her decade-long role as a sexuality educator.

Marian's family remembers her great enthusiasm for her work. Her involvement with PPST was a lifestyle for her, not just a job. She immersed herself, working full-time during the school year, and developing fresh educational presentations and materials throughout the summer. Her daughters recall how, growing up, their home was always full of sexuality education materials. Marian frequently included her daughters, and often their friends, in her programs to ensure that she was presenting to a balanced mix of male and female students.

Marian is survived by her three daughters, Stephanie Mumford Brown, Jennifer A. M. Brown, and Pamela M. Brown, and their families. Her granddaughter, Sharla Lefkowitz-Brown, currently serves on PPSFL's Board of Directors. We are grateful for Sharla's assistance in writing this piece in memory of her grandmother.

PPSFL DATES & EVENTS

- » October is Let's Talk! Month: This is a great opportunity to encourage parent/child communication about sexuality. Contact us for helpful resources for parents and youth.
- » October 28 - Lunch & Learn, Once Bitten Twice Shy: Using Twilight to talk about sex and relationships.
- » December 1- World AIDS Day: Campaigners from around the world will be coming together on this day to commemorate the theme of universal access and human rights.
- » December 10 - Human Rights Day: This day is observed internationally every year to commemorate the day that the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.
- » January 22 - Anniversary of Roe v. Wade: In this ruling, the court recognized for the first time that the constitutional right to privacy "is broad enough to encompass a woman's decision whether or not to terminate her pregnancy." (Roe v. Wade, 1973)

Meeting the Needs OF OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES

by Maureen Kelly

One-fourth of America's population lives in rural areas. Compared with urban Americans, rural residents have higher poverty rates, tend to be in poorer health, have fewer doctors, hospitals, and other health resources, and face more difficulty getting to health services. (The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2009)

At PPSFL, we are very familiar with the unique health care challenges facing people living in rural areas. We know that clients living in rural communities throughout Tompkins, Steuben, Schuyler, and Chemung counties have a harder time getting to our health centers, logging onto the internet to get information about sexual health, and worry more about confidentiality and privacy as they seek health care in small towns.

Women seeking abortion in our region may face daunting travel times, childcare and insurance coverage challenges, not to mention difficulty managing time away from work to access medical services that may involve over an hour drive.

We work hard to address these challenges in several ways. We print detailed information about what bus routes to take into town to get to a health center (for those areas fortunate enough to have rural bus service). We offer to call a taxi to pick up a client and bring them home after an appointment. We make sure that a variety of our health education materials are available in print for people to take home and read if they do not have reliable internet access. Our medical staff work together to assure that rural women have equal and unfettered access to reproductive health care and abortion services by arranging for transportation or financial support for the neediest women.

And we also get involved! Our education staff is on the road in all corners of our region providing programming, attending community coalition meetings, meeting one-on-one with local organizations, and sharing sexual health information. From new outreach in the western edge of our region at Alfred College and Alfred University to offering programs in Groton High School, we build relationships and work to make connections in the rural communities we serve.

How can you help? If you are from a rural community in our region, you might be able to make an introduction; let a local teacher know Planned Parenthood educators will come to them with information and programming!



Do you know where a great community bulletin board is in your town, that place where everyone stops to take a look? Let us know and when we have events coming up or a great new poster, we'll make sure to let your community know! And you can be our best marketing tool by simply letting friends and neighbors know that Planned Parenthood is here to serve people in our smallest towns and the largest of our cities.

PPSFL is committed to doing both big and small things to make sure education, advocacy, and reproductive health services are available to people throughout our region. When faced with higher poverty rates, poorer health, fewer doctors, hospitals, and more difficulty getting to health services, we have a lot of work to do.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

» If you want to bring a PPSFL sexuality education program to your area, or if you know of a great place to post information about PPSFL, please e-mail us at education@ppsfl.org or call 607.216.0021.

TRIBUTE GIFTS

Jun. 23, 2010 - Sept. 17, 2010

IN HONOR OF

Margot Bliven

Susan and Jeffrey Cadel

Penny Chick

Catheryn Obern and Rich Robinson

Maisie and Jamie Houghton

Lynn Bradley Leopold, Mary and George Doss, James D. Houghton, Nina B. Houghton, Jerry and Virginia Wright

Joyce Leslie, M.D.

Rosalind Kenworthy

Naomi and Eliot McDonald (twins)

Margaret and Dick Culver

Tibby McLafferty

Rose Bethe, Lynn Bradley Leopold, Barbara DiSalvo, Mary and George Doss Milton and Janice Esman, Jean and Carl Gortzig, Brad and Mary Grainger, Sylvia and Lee Miller, Kate D. Potteiger and Stephen E. Goggin, Wendy Robertson and Doug Antczak, Susan Robinson, Katie and Bruce Thompson, Sylvia and Leonard Weinstein, Kathleen Woodcock, Anonymous

Mother

Herbert Hartwig, Jr.

Leia Raphaelidis

Anna Raphaelidis

Sue Robinson

Barbara Warland and Helen Gibson, Susanne Morgan

Sandy True

Patti Jacobson

IN MEMORY OF

Sarah Pollack

Jennifer Bokaer-Smith

Betty Kassman

Elizabeth B. Gordon

Janet Richardson

May K. and James R. Houghton

Carl Leopold

Lynn Bradley Leopold

Peter M. Rinaldo

Mrs. Peter Rinaldo

Edie Devereaux and Margaret Feldman

Anonymous

Why the Movement Matters *RIGHT NOW*

by Casey Martinson

Roughly one-third of American women have had an abortion. Often, we don't realize that these women are our mothers, sisters, friends, and neighbors.

We never find out because today, the vast majority of abortions are done in a safe, legal manner resulting in healthy outcomes. Such outcomes are always less conspicuous than obituaries. But of course, things were much different 40 years ago.

Before the Supreme Court decided *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, illegal abortions accounted for nearly 50% of all maternal mortality. Like many large hospitals, Chicago's Cook County Hospital had a whole ward set aside for women who came in bleeding, infected, near death from a botched abortion, and this ward had nearly 5,000 patients per year. In 1962, Harlem Hospital treated nearly 1,600 such patients. Unfortunately, these tragedies are not remembered by those born in 1970, let alone those born in 1990, and it shows. According to data collected by the Pew Research Center, today's youngest voters (ages 18 – 29) are more “pro-life” than any generation since the Great Depression.

From the moment that women stopped suffering and dying in large numbers, our country has increasingly taken safe, legal abortion for granted. There are still victims, like Becky Bell, who died in 1988 from an illegal abortion because she was too embarrassed to comply with Indiana's misguided parental consent law. But still, few teens and twenty-somethings today know a girl who ended up in the emergency room with a coat hanger perforating her uterus.

It might do young Americans good to look at other countries where abortion is still illegal. According to the Guttmacher Institute, roughly 800,000 women are hospitalized every year in Latin America as a result of abortion complications. Women in those countries are still living with the consequences of a prohibition that we left behind in 1973. And yet, bit by bit, state by state, we are circling back toward that tragic history.

Despite the many positive changes enacted with health care reform, we must recognize that it opened the door for the greatest surge of anti-choice legislation in over 30 years. The odious Stupak Amendment — which would have banned any insurance provider participating in state exchanges from offering abortion care — was defeated at the federal level. But nothing in the reform prohibits states from enacting their own Stupak bans. Five states have already done that, and more are expected to follow suit. Many states have passed other restrictions as well, imposing waiting periods, parental consent rules, mandatory ultrasounds, “mental health counseling,” and other burdens on women seeking to terminate their pregnancies.

The Supreme Court balance on *Roe v. Wade* has never been more precarious. But anti-choice extremists have also realized that overturning *Roe v. Wade* is not strictly necessary. With

continued on **next page**

Support Health Care WITHOUT HARASSMENT

by Alicia Kenaley

It's that time of year again: Anti-choice protesters are engaged in the "40 Days for Life" campaign, which began on Saturday, September 25 with 22 protesters standing in front of PPSFL's Ithaca health center, with signs and pamphlets in hand.

The "40 Days for Life" campaign targets Planned Parenthood health centers and forces patients to endure strong anti-choice messaging as they enter our buildings. These protesters have been known to point a video camera at patients entering and leaving the building. While the protests are "peaceful," many of our patients report feeling uncomfortable and harassed by the 40 Days crowd.

In response to the increased protest activity at the Ithaca health center, we have activated our volunteer patient escort network. PPSFL is extremely grateful for this network of board members, volunteers, and staff who monitor the activities of the protesters and escort patients past them as needed.

Community volunteers say the experience is fulfilling, and they are pleased to be helping patients and receiving positive feedback from passersby. Staff who volunteer have said they find escorting patients to be one of the most rewarding experiences they have had working at Planned Parenthood, expressing how refreshing it is to have passersby give them the thumbs up and say what great work Planned Parenthood is doing. Complete strangers have unexpectedly stopped at the center to make donations in response to the protesters, showing us how truly



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one restriction after another, they can effectively destroy abortion access without ever touching *Roe v. Wade*.

It is with grave concern that we at Planned Parenthood confront these disturbing trends. From the local level to the national, we know exactly what is at stake. Today more than ever, we are committed to fighting for reproductive rights. Particularly at Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes, we have renewed our focus on reproductive rights advocacy. We are doing more than ever before to recruit and train the next generation of activists. We are reaching out to our allies in the community. We are reaching out to you. If you are ready to take an active role in standing up for choice, we want to hear from you! Please e-mail action@ppsfl.org for more information on how you can get involved.

GET INVOLVED

» Visit PPSFL.ORG to learn about the many different ways that you can take action to protect reproductive rights.



Volunteer patient escorts help our patients feel safe and supported.

valuable Planned Parenthood is to the community.

In addition to recruiting patient escort volunteers, PPSFL has initiated a Pledge-a-Protester campaign in which people pledge a certain amount of money for each protester who shows up. We will broadcast how much "extra" money we receive due to the protesters' presence on a sign on the front of the building. This campaign will provide financial support to our annual fund (which means more help for the women, men, and teens in our communities), and will have the added benefit of irking the protesters.

Help us send a strong message to anti-choice protesters today! Volunteer as a patient escort and visit PPSFL.ORG to download a Pledge-a-Protester form.

WHY I SUPPORT PLANNED PARENTHOOD



Maisie Houghton

Supporting Planned Parenthood is a fact of life for us (pun intended). To contribute financially is as important to Jamie and me as any kind of giving that we do. We are proud to live in Corning, the home of Margaret Sanger and Katherine Houghton Hepburn.



Tibby McLafferty

Planned Parenthood helps families, as well as individuals, in so many ways. Many parents aren't comfortable or aren't able to teach about sex and reproductive health, so they really need the help of professional sexuality educators. PPSFL provides that help to teachers and parents, and to teenagers who are becoming aware of that aspect of their lives.

Clinical services, and the accompanying critical counseling component, are so vital to many women and men facing reproductive choices. And although abortion services are a very small part of PPSFL's work, it is very necessary to continue to allow women that choice. Let's not let it slip away. Keep up the good work PPSFL!



314 West State Street
Ithaca, NY 14850

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