



LAKE NOW NEWS

July 2015

11TH ANNUAL PINK TEA

Lake NOW has supported the Pink Tea in the past by sponsoring a table...or two...or three!! Won't you join your NOW Sisters in supporting free mammograms for women by buying a ticket to the Pink Tea??!!



WHEN: Saturday, August 15th, 2-4 PM
WHERE: First Baptist Church of Mount Dora
 1000 2E. First Avenue, Mt Dora
THEME: "The Mad Hatter Tea" ("Alice" will be awarding Prizes for Prettiest Hat, Most Outrageous Hat, Most Fun Hat and Most Authentic Suffragist Hat
TICKETS: \$20.00 Make checks payable to: Mount Dora Community Trust (MDCT)

Purchase in person at Trust Department of 1st National Bank of Mount Dora, the Bay Street Theatre Box Office in Eustis or from Nancy Hurlbert

**100% of proceeds goes to
free mammograms to women of Lake County**

Historically, gatherings known as 'pink teas' were an essential forum for women to organize and strategize about the pursuit of women's rights. The tradition developed over a century ago when women throughout the British Empire – including Canada – used pink teas to engender solidarity among female suffragists. The *Famous 5 Foundation* confirms that these gatherings were executed in hyper-feminine guise, often featuring 'frilly decorations,' such as pink doilies, and rose-colored tea. They also explain that: *As a result, the opposition, who were usually men, felt uncomfortable about attending a tea, particularly a Pink Tea, and would generally avoid interfering in order to avoid embarrassment. But perhaps even more important, the good-hearted men, who genuinely feared for the safety of their wives at political meetings, were far more comfortable about their loved ones attending a Pink Tea.*

Furthermore, a pink tea offered the disguise of a frivolous social affair in order to accommodate women subject to reprove and resistance from their peers and relatives who often forbade them from attending political gatherings.

President's Message



The 2015 National NOW Conference is now over and it is back to business here in Florida. You can see my comments on the conference [elsewhere](#) in the newsletter, but they are woefully inadequate, as how can anyone

possibly summarize a weekend long experience without writing a book? I wish I had kept better notes, but I did thoroughly enjoy the experience. And then, after returning home it suddenly became "that was the week that was" as the SCOTUS handed down decisions that had been long anticipated and went thoroughly our way! I personally am relieved that the Affordable Care Act, while far from being perfect, was upheld for those people in states without their own health care exchanges. Since Florida is one of those states, and I am one of those people who was at potential risk for losing out on my health care, it is a tremendous relief to know that I will still be covered.

And then, to follow it up with the decision that made marriage equality the law in all 50 states and territories - it was awesome! Wanting to be a part of the celebration, I joined in with the Decision Day celebration at Lake Sumter Landing in The Villages the evening of the decision. Even though I knew no one there, it was nice to be part of a group to help celebrate this awesome advance in our country.

The work is not done, as unlike my home state of Maine, many states, including Florida, still do not have any law against discrimination against GLBTQIA in areas of housing, employment, public accommodations and credit. So, you can be married if you are GLBTQIA, but you can also be fired from your job for no cause other than your sexual orientation. You can be denied housing. Clearly, this is the next thing that needs to change nationwide, and we know it will.

We have no general membership meeting this month, so I hope you are all enjoying your summer, and will be back to join us in August as we watch the movie "Iron Jawed Angels." I will leave you with this quote from Justice Kennedy's decision, which I am sure many of you have already seen, but always bears repeating:

"No union is more profound than marriage, for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion,

sacrifice, and family. In forming a marital union, two people become something greater than once they were.

As some of the petitioners in these cases demonstrate, marriage embodies a love that may endure even past death. It would misunderstand these men and women to say they disrespect the idea of marriage. Their plea is that they do respect it, respect it so deeply that they seek to find its fulfillment for themselves.

Their hope is not to be condemned to live in loneliness, excluded from one of civilization's oldest institutions. They ask for equal dignity in the eyes of the law. The Constitution grants them that right."

June 2015: A Good Month for Women

On June 4th, 1919, the United States Senate passed the 19th Amendment to give women the right to vote. Before the month was over, nine states had ratified it, on the way to it becoming law 14 months later.

June of 2015 also turned out to be a pretty good month on some of the issues women care about. The below is from Nancy Hurlburt and other sources.

1) The Affordable Care Act Survives the Supremes



The president's landmark health care law faced its second major test before the Supreme Court and survived. On Thursday, the Court decided to overlook what some called a drafting error in the law, upholding health insurance subsidies for over 6 million Americans in states using federal exchanges. The court ruled that it was Congress and the

administration's initial intent that matters most -- granting middle- and low-income individuals living in states that did not create their own insurance marketplaces the right to continue to receive federal taxpayer aid.

2) Court Backs Social Shift on Gay Marriage That Obama Helped Evolve

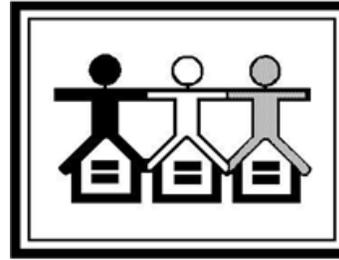


In a monumental ruling, the Supreme Court ruled Friday that civil marriage rights must be extended to same-sex couples in all 50 states. The court's decision struck down state bans on gay marriage. And

though Obama cannot take any credit for the ruling, it was a major victory for the Democratic Party and his progressive agenda. The ruling comes after a landslide shift in public opinion on gay marriage over the last decade, with the majority of Americans now supporting gay marriage. When Obama assumed office in 2009, he was not an open supporter of gay marriage, but in his words, he "evolved" on the issue, and ultimately came out in public support of

gay marriage during an interview with ABC News' Robin Roberts in 2012.

3) Uphold Fair Housing Act



A deeply divided Supreme Court delivered an unexpected reprieve to civil rights groups Thursday, ruling that housing discrimination need not be intentional in order to be illegal.

The justices said people objecting to lending, zoning, sales and rental practices can base their legal claim on the disparate impact those practices have on blacks or other minorities.

The court's 5-4 decision, written by Justice Anthony Kennedy, was an unlikely conclusion to a years-long effort by opponents of the civil rights-era law to reduce its effectiveness against housing policies and practices used by many builders, lenders and insurers. Twice before, the justices had agreed to hear a challenge to the law, only to see the cases withdrawn or settled before reaching court.

"The court acknowledges the Fair Housing Act's continuing role in moving the nation toward a more integrated society," Kennedy wrote.

4) Supreme Court Ruling Favors Abortion Access in Texas (from Feminist Majority)



In a 5-4 ruling, the Supreme Court temporarily suspended a decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit, that would have closed all but nine abortion clinics in the entire state of Texas.

This is a major win for women's health and the right to access comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion. The decision, however, means that the Supreme Court will likely decide during its next term, probably in June 2016, whether or not onerous TRAP laws, like the one in Texas, are constitutionally permissible.

Already, Texas has lost dozens of clinics after its Republican-controlled state legislature and Governor passed an onerous anti-abortion omnibus bill that forces clinics to meet the same building standards as ambulatory surgical centers. Another provision would require doctors who perform abortions to have admitting privileges at local hospitals, despite the absence of any medical reason for either regulation. These restrictions serve only one purpose: to close abortion clinics and cut off access to services for millions of Texas women.

Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Antonin Scalia,

Clarence Thomas, and Samuel Alito would have denied the application to suspend the Fifth Circuit's decision and allowed the Texas abortion clinics to close. Justice Anthony Kennedy, together with Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor, and Elena Kagan, voted to keep the clinics open. This decision shows just how critical judicial appointments are to maintaining and realizing women's constitutional rights.

The right to access abortion, and the makeup of the Supreme Court and all of the federal courts, will be an issue of paramount importance in the 2016 election. This case will keep the spotlight on women's right to abortion at this crucial time.

5) President Obama's Stirring Eulogy in Charleston



In his eulogy for Rev. Clementa Pinckney and eight others killed over a week before, President Obama not only delivered an emotional

message of healing and hope, but he also addressed two long-standing issues related to the hate crime in Charleston: the divisive symbolism of the Confederate battle flag, and the long dark shadow of gun violence. In President Obama's words...

"For too long, *we were blind* to the pain that the Confederate flag stirred in too many of our citizens. (Applause.) It's true, a flag did not cause these murders. But as people from all walks of life, Republicans and Democrats, now acknowledge—including Governor Haley, whose recent eloquence on the subject is worthy of praise—(applause)—as we all have to acknowledge, the flag has always represented more than just ancestral pride. (Applause.) For many, black and white, that flag was a reminder of systemic oppression and racial subjugation. *We see that now.*"

"For too long, *we've been blind* to the unique mayhem that gun violence inflicts upon this nation. (Applause.) Sporadically, our eyes are open: When eight of our brothers and sisters are cut down in a church basement, 12 in a movie theater, 26 in an elementary school. But I hope we also see the 30 precious lives cut short by gun violence in this country every single day... The vast majority of Americans—the majority of gun owners—want to do something about this. *We see that now.*"

Program Suggestions

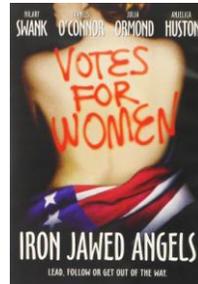
Lake NOW wants your suggestions for upcoming programs. Feel free to send ideas for things you might want to know more about to the Lake NOW vice-president, who is responsible for arranging programs.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

Upcoming Programs include:

July - No Meeting

August 19th: Viewing Iron Jawed Angels...



Iron Jawed Angels is a para-documentary of women's suffrage and the fight in the Oval Office – as well as Congress – to keep the vote from women. Hilary Swank, as suffragist Alice Paul, stages an incredible performance of a young woman singly-focused on one issue – women's right to vote. You will not want to miss this program. Popcorn, drinks, etc. available for a donation.

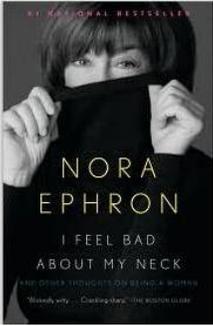
About the Movie:

Iron Jawed Angels documents well-known facts, not taught in our school systems or found in most textbooks concerning the abhorrent treatment of the 218 arrested suffragists. When they refused to eat the infested slop served as food - and called for a hunger strike - they were strapped into chairs, had their mouths clamped open and were forced-fed via tubes down their throats into their stomach. When bleeding, open cuts around their mouth prohibited the continued clamping of their mouths, tubes were forced through their noses.

September 16th: Join us for a Field Trip to Rollins' *Ideas in Residence Institute*, where the keynote speaker will be Leymah Gbowee, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011 for her work in leading a women's peace movement that brought an end to the Second Liberian Civil War in 2003.

Beforehand, we will stop and have dinner at *Ethos Vegan Kitchen*- <http://www.ethosvegankitchen.com/menu.html>





Book Review

One of the perks associated with participating in the NOW monthly book club is the food. That's right. The host brings samples of a dish mentioned in the book for that particular month and shares them with the group. In June, we enjoyed discussing Nora Ephron's book of essays, *I Feel Bad About My Neck*, while tasting her favorite New York dish, cabbage strudel.

Janet Manchon did her best to prepare this creation with the same sense of humor as our famous author. Most people are familiar with Nora Ephron's movies, i.e. "Sleepless in Seattle," "You've Got Mail" and "Heartburn." She also wrote a column for many years in the *New York Post* and was a part-time editor for *The Huffington Post*. As we discussed her thoughts & ideas about maintenance of our bodies and minds, we shared her observations and laughed at her clever witty phrases.

It would have been even more fun if Nora Ephron could have joined us. Alas, she died before her time in 2012 at the age of 71. Thankfully, she left her brilliant work to us all.

Lake NOW Book Club

These books will be discussed by the Lake NOW Book Club.

Month	Book
Tuesday, July 14	"Breath, Eyes, Memory" by Edwidge Danticat
Tuesday, August 11	"Stolen Lives" by Malika Oufkir
Tuesday, Sept. 8	"Midwives" by Chris Bohjalian
Tuesday, October 13	"Blanche Cleans Up" by Barbara Neely
Tuesday, Nov. 10	"All the Light We Cannot See" by Anthony Doerr
Tuesday, December 8	"Men Explain Things to Me" by Rebecca Solnit
Tuesday, January 12, 2016	"The Girl on the Train" by Paula Hawkins
Tuesday, February 9, 2016	"A Fighting Chance" by Elizabeth Warren

The Lake NOW Book Club meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 3:30 p.m. at the W. T. Bland Library in Mount Dora. All Lake NOW members are welcome to participate.

Lake NOW Calendar

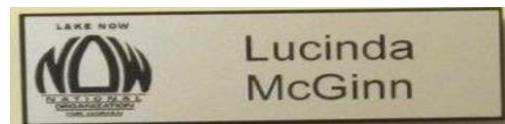
Wednesday, July 15	Relax! There is no Lake NOW General Membership Meeting this month. See you at the Social in August (See below)
Wednesday, August 5 5:00 p.m.	Lake NOW Social 5:00 p.m. - 1884 Restaurant and Bar 12 E. Magnolia Ave., Eustis
Wednesday, August 19 7:00 p.m.	Lake NOW Monthly Meeting W.T. Bland Library, 1995 N. Donnelly St., Mt. Dora Topic: Celebrating Women's Equality Day with the film <i>Iron Jawed Angels</i>

Chapter Scheduling Notice

The Lake NOW Board will not be meeting in August. Our meetings will resume in September as we are moving to a bi-monthly basis or as needed for our meetings. You can always find the information on when, where and what time our meetings will be in this newsletter under the calendar section, and on our website calendar. Lake NOW members are always welcome to attend our board meetings. Please note that we will continue to have our socials on the first Wednesday of each month. The social for August will be held August 5th at 1884 Restaurant and Bar on Magnolia Street in Eustis. Our board meeting will be held September 23rd at 4:00. The location is currently unconfirmed.

Lake NOW Badges

Lake NOW is selling Lake NOW badges to its members. The badges look like the one shown below with the Lake NOW logo and the member's name. The badges can be purchased through Lake NOW for \$12 each. See Kelda Senior for more information.



ARE YOU BEING NOTIFIED when something happens? Do we have your current email address? Phone number? There may be messages that you might interest you but are not in the newsletter or on the web site and an email is sent to all members to keep them informed. If you have changed your address or just want to check to make sure, please contact us at contactlakenow@yahoo.com.

Lake NOW's Mission Statement

Lake NOW is a chapter of the non-partisan Florida and National Organization for Women (NOW) devoted to the continuing improvement of women's rights and freedom from discrimination. Consistent with the foregoing, it is Lake NOW's purpose to embrace members of all races, ages, gender and sexual orientation. Lake NOW will focus on activities that advocate and advance the equal status of women and girls in all aspects of their lives through educational, legislative and political work, while adhering to the bylaws, policies and resolutions of the Florida and National Organization for Women.

Our priority goals, include, but are not limited to:

- Addressing women's health issues and reproductive rights
- Stemming violence against women
- Improving and promoting diversity/ending racism
- Encouraging economic justice and labor rights.

Committees

The following standing committees are being formed. Please review this information and determine how you can participate in Lake NOW.

MEMBERSHIP: The Membership committee is chaired by the Membership Director with the purpose of building, retaining and engaging Lake NOW membership in support of the principles of National NOW.

FINANCE: The Finance committee is chaired by the Treasurer with the purpose of managing the finances and budget of Lake NOW.

NOMINATING: The Nominating Committee is chaired by a non-Board member of Lake NOW as approved by Board. The committee's purpose is to find, encourage and recommend members of Lake NOW to be Board candidates.

BYLAWS: The Bylaws committee is chaired by a non-Board member of Lake NOW as approved by the general membership. The committee's purpose is to:

- Review and manage any requested changes to the Lake NOW Bylaws or Operating Rules per the requirements established in the Operating Rules.
- Be knowledgeable in the area of the National Bylaws and Policies; the State Bylaws, Operating Rules and Policies; and the Lake NOW Bylaws, Operating Rules and Policies.
- Serve in an advisory role to the Board of Directors and general membership regarding the interpretation and any discrepancies between the National, State and Lake NOW organizations.

COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC VISIBILITY:

- Technology: Examine all technological opportunities, such as internet, e-mail, websites, social media and more, to ensure Lake NOW is capitalizing on all available technologies.
- Writers' Committee: Draft letters to newspapers, legislators, local governmental entities, etc. Create a scrapbook to record Lake NOW activities, press releases and other historical documents.
- Public Visibility: Develop information such as tri-fold pamphlets, advertising, etc., for distribution in the community to ensure public awareness of Lake NOW and

its Mission Statement. Join with other agencies or organizations to develop networking opportunities, as well as contact local colleges, places of worship and non-profits.

- Telephone Outreach: Aid other committees and officers when networking by telephone is requested.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: Track legislative issues, bills and amendments and report to the membership.

ACTION COMMITTEE: Organize rallies, protests, and other activities in order to publicize NOW's support or opposition to current issues.

STRATEGIC PLANNING: Organize, develop, implement, and monitor the Strategic Plan of Lake NOW. This committee shall coordinate to ensure proper training and education on Strategic Planning and the philosophy of it. This committee shall report to the President of Lake NOW. At the President's request, the Strategic Planning Committee shall report to the membership on the status of the Plan (accomplishments, amendments, etc).

Lake NOW Board

President:	Lucinda McGinn
labrys57@icloud.com	(352) 602-7057
Vice-President:	Nancy Hurlbert
tnhurlbert@aol.com	(352) 483-4962
Secretary:	Linda Jo Pfeiffer
lindajo_pfeiffer@yahoo.com	(352)406-1520
Treasurer:	Kelda Senior
keldasenior@gmail.com	(352) 552-1761
Membership Director:	Carol King
carolflam@aol.com	(352) 483-2011
Immediate Past President:	Sandra Paradise
mssgcp@yahoo.com	(352) 343-2064

Lake County

National Organization for Women
P.O. Box 1134, Mt. Dora, Florida 32756

E-mail address: contactLakeNOW@yahoo.com

lakenow.weebly.com

Facebook: Lake-NOW

Twitter: lake_now

Lake NOW is a chapter of the non-partisan Florida and National Organization for Women (NOW).

Monthly meetings

Third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m.
(Exceptions will be announced on the web page and in the newsletter)

Meetings held at W. T. Bland Library
1995 N. Donnelly St., Mt Dora, Florida 32757
Organized 2012

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

We encourage members to submit articles for our monthly newsletter. Submissions submitted after the first day of the month may need to be placed in the next month's issue. Please send to contactLakeNOW@yahoo.com. Please type your newsletter submissions directly into the body of your text formatted email and do not use HTML or RTF format or special fonts. Submissions may be vetoed by the NOW board and/or edited for clarity and brevity.

You Are There: Reports from the NOW 2015 National Conference in New Orleans

Still Hooked, by Mary Flanagan

Let's be clear... I am a lover of NOW Conferences. From my first attendance at the Tampa National Conference in 2011 to this year's in New Orleans. No, I have not made it to every National, but I think I have attended all the Florida Conferences. They bring together a group of people, primarily women, who are highly energized, embracing, and hoping to make the world better for women and therefore all people. I always leave with new understandings, enthused, and exhausted.



This year was no disappointment.

Yes, we could have skipped the 2 sets of workshops. Nothing grabbed my attention or fancy. Plus we had agreed last year that 2015 would be focused only on restructuring. We truly needed every minute of meeting time to deal with the bylaws and admin changes.

YEAH, for us Hillary Supporters. NOW PAC's endorsement was announced on Saturday to roaring cheers.

Now, combine lover of NOW Conference and bylaws junkie, I was kinda' in heaven... the heaven where you are overwhelmed with the reasoning of others, and their emotional attachments to their own perspective. So maybe it was purgatory... Lots of wishing you can get through the talk, finalize the process, and come out with some great changes. I think we did. A few key items:

1. The mission/ purpose statement has been greatly reduced in length. Primarily removing the long list of discrimination issues, and using terms such as grassroots, activism, societal change, full potential, having a voice, etc.
2. The National Board has been reduced from the current 42 members. It also removed a very onerous calculation of board members from the bylaws. This was accomplished by:
 - Reducing the districts from 9 to 6. These will be organized geographically by states, with each district having the same membership counts. Redistricting will occur every 10 years
 - Each district will have 2 to 3 elected board members; to qualify for 3 one of the officers will be a person of color.
 - No more than one officer from each state within the district.
3. National Officers have been reduced from 3 to 2. This is with the intention to have more staffing at the National level. If the organization grows → therefore its budget, the National Board may recommend adding a 3rd officer to an election period.
4. Moved to all member voting away from delegate voting.
5. Of course many more....

So what cool social things happened? Well...First travelling with Lucinda was great. We talked almost all the way on Thursday's drive – 10 hours, had a great meal, a non-smoking room – with a nasty smelling hallway. She loved her dinner, I wasn't crazy about mine. On the return Sunday we first wandered via car around NOLA, walked the Garden District and then headed back home. Again, lots of conversation; with an overnight stay near Mobile.

On Friday evening, I had decided to stay in the hotel with Terry Sanders, friend and FL NOW President. We were helping Janet Canterbury – “well known Florida and National NOW activist”; unexpectedly Janet invited us to the Terry O'Neill social. We were able to interact with many of the NOW biggies. Terry S gravitated quickly to Terry O and they had quite the long chat. My moment was on Sunday when we were gathering for pictures and Terry O spotted my name tag/ face and gave me a hug to thank me for contributing to the pre-conference strategy discussions.

On Saturday night I joined Lucinda et al – in the French District --- mmmm loved that chocolate martini.

I'm still hooked.



"A female face on the currency that everyone uses will send a signal that inclusion is a fundamental value that should permeate everything we do." Terry O'Neill, NOW President, on the news that the \$10 bill will be redesigned to feature a female face.





A Wonderful Experience! By Lucinda McGinn

Mary Flanagan and I attended the NOW 2015 Conference in New Orleans, LA, which was held June 19th to the 21st. We headed out on Thursday, staying overnight in AL in order to arrive early on Friday morning. We arrived in time to register and pick up our voting credentials and attend the Welcome Plenary. After that brief opening, we moved to the

Keynote Plenary, which focused on the theme of the conference "From the Grassroots, Up! Organizing at the Intersections of Gender, Race, Sexuality, Class and Ability." This was my introduction to the term "intersectionality" which is a new frame for thinking about how people are affected by multiple issues.

We are not just impacted by our gender, but by gender and race, gender and class, etc. Our speakers included Kimberle Crenshaw, who is cofounder of the African American Policy Forum, which produced a report on the subject "Black Girls Matter." The report is available online, or a booklet can be purchased from the AAPF for \$10.

Once the plenary was done, it was time to move into the first of many sessions involved in the restructure process for NOW. Terry O'Neill, NOW President, led the sessions and started with setting the rules for the proceedings. Also included were the chairs of the committees who had been working on various aspects of the restructure. Southeast Regional Director Meredith Ockman, of Florida NOW, chaired the committee on Money and Members.

Later in the afternoon there was an awards plenary and two awards were presented. The first award was the Mastrobuono Award and was given to Deon Haywood, Executive Director of Women With a Vision (WWAV) in New Orleans. The Mastrobuono Award is given in the arena of women's health. It is funded from a bequest from Victoria J. Mastrobuono, a longtime NOW member and supporter who passed away in 2009. WWAV is a women's health organization created by and for women of color to provide both health care and advocacy. The other award presented was the Olga Vives Award, dedicated to recognizing a woman who has shown leadership in areas specifically related to women of color, immigrant women, women with disabilities, or LBGQTQIA. Olga Vives was a long term activist who spent eight years in various roles in our national NOW leadership. Olga passed away in 2012. This award was given to Kathleen Gasparian, an attorney in New Orleans who founded a group called PB&J (no, not that!) Pro Bono and Juveniles. The group works to match pro bono representation with immigrant juveniles who have crossed the border from Mexico and cannot afford legal services. The program was founded in 2014 and has already assisted over 69 children.

Following a break was the first bank of workshops and since I was not strongly drawn to any of them, I stepped off the whirlwind that is being at the conference and went up to our room. As soon as I walked in the door, I had a FaceTime call from my daughter. I stayed on with her for awhile and arranged for her to be able to also call her dad back in Florida a bit later in the evening. It was quite lucky that I received that call as my wifi connection did not work in the conference area, only in the room.

That evening, I joined a group mainly from Brevard NOW, but also including women from a couple of other chapters, and headed off on the Trolley to Bourbon Street to look around and have dinner. It was a fun evening and we ate at a seafood restaurant. I indulged in a Hurricane for a drink, and then just had some eggplant sticks as I love eggplant. Afterwards, I wandered on my own into a store nearby and picked up a small volume of New Orleans cookery. The Brevard women were planning to remain in the area longer, so along with a couple of the women from other chapters, I returned to the trolley stop to await heading back to the hotel. We had lots of time and learned that we needed to wait for the RIGHT trolley. It was going to come second after the one that first came. Sure enough, it finally did come along and we happily headed back to the hotel.

Saturday morning started with a bank of workshops and I attended one on "The Cradle to Prison Pipeline." This workshop, while meant to be a panel discussion, was taken up with the remarks of the individual panelists. They were all interesting and very experienced in working with this issue. Nancy

Campbell Mead, a National NOW Board Member, is a retired judge from Oregon; Deon Haywood, the recipient of the Mastrobuono Award, was the second panelist and the final panelist was Desiree Jordan, founder and CEO of Unite Women New York. The panel was moderated by MonaLisa Wallace, a member of NOW's Task Force to End Racism. This session was recorded and can be watched on YouTube with this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=92&v=iGCTvdhhJ9w>

After our break, it was time to work on the restructuring again. Another break for obtaining our box lunches was provided before we moved to a Plenary on "From the Grassroots Up: Organizing for 2016 with the NOW PAC." Speakers in this session included Patricia Ireland, former NOW President, Ambassador Carol Moseley Braun, who is also a lifetime NOW member, and Eleanor Smeal, President of Feminist Majority Foundation and also one of our former NOW Presidents. This plenary is available on NOW's YouTube channel at this location: <https://www.youtube.com/user/NOWvideos>. It is the third video shown under the 2015 conference. The plenary in the afternoon, which included actress Catherine Dent as a speaker, is also on the site. If you want a sense of the conference, viewing these videos can provide an idea of what it is like to be there. It turns out that my husband, new Lake NOW member and newsletter editor Peter McGinn, watched some of the video of the conference as it was underway. It was nice that he was able to see what I was experiencing live. He particularly was paying attention to the words of Ms. Dent, who works with the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, and had some interesting insights into the representation of women in film and television. That one is well worth watching.

At the end of Saturday, Mary Flanagan and I, along with Joanne Sterner and Aida Zuniga, went to Bourbon Street. We wandered around and decided to eat at Oceana, a seafood restaurant just off Bourbon Street that had been recommended. When we got sat down and looked at the menu, it looked pretty much the same as the restaurant I had been in the previous night. This night, I decided to try a Tropical Storm as I wanted the taste of the pineapple that is part of that drink. And I ordered some crab cakes because I was in New Orleans after all, and needed to eat some local specialty. I had my iPad with me and took pics of my drink (and Mary's chocolate martini). I've not posted to Facebook, but I may yet put them there or on the website! It was another fun evening in NOLA.

Sunday at the Conference was all about the restructure and it was touch and go on whether we would get through the Bylaws before the end of the day in order to vote on accepting or declining all the work we had been doing on the changes. I have to say that being involved in this type of meeting is not a favorite for me. I tend to sit and observe, and offer my vote where I feel it is most appropriate. If you have ever been to (or watched) a political convention, it is a very similar process. The meeting is ruled by Roberts Rules of Order and information on the parliamentary process was included in the program for people to refer to. I still don't really know what a red card is for, but the parliamentarian does and that's what counts! Even though it wasn't really my favorite milieu, the body accomplished a lot over the course of the weekend. The two main takeaways that I strongly recall from the revised Bylaws are that we now have six regions going forward rather than the nine that we previously had and that we no longer will have the delegate system at National Conferences. That system led to many attendees having to search around for a delegate slot in order to be part of the voting at conferences. Voting is important in the resolution process, and it is resolutions that set National NOW policy for each upcoming year. So instead of having to find a delegate slot if one's own chapter or state has run out of delegate slots, each member who attends a conference, as long as they are a qualified NOW member at the conference, will automatically be a voting member. In NOW's history, this had been a process, and Eleanor Smeal spoke to how much more well attended conferences were under those rules. That does not mean an increase in attendance is automatic, but it certainly will be easier for people who want to attend to feel they are included if they have the right to vote without going through any rigmarole to do it.

We just barely squeaked by the Bylaws changes and the vote to accept them occurred at about 3:30 Sunday afternoon. Then, we had the Administrative Procedures to look at. These were the resolutions that came out of the restructure process. The conference was to adjourn at 4:00, so there was not enough time to really address these properly. There was some haggling over the issue of what to do with them, whether they were referred to the board or to the 2016 conference. This pushed the conference a little over time until a resolution was reached, but shortly after 4:00 the 2015 conference was over and we were free to go. I have not been to a National Conference since I went to the 40th anniversary conference in Albany in 2006. I think I will not wait so long until I return. Actually, I plan to go in 2016, and I don't even know where it will be held yet. It was a wonderful experience!





The Florida delegation (at least those of us that hadn't already left the hall) after the close of the conference, posing with Terry O'Neill and Ellie Smeal. Mary Flanagan is on the left in the hat. I am right next to the "N" in NOW. Terry O'Neill is to the front and right of the picture and Ellie Smeal is right in front of her (aligned with the "W").

JUST A FEW OF THE
FEDERAL BENEFITS

LEGALLY MARRIED GAY COUPLES
 WILL NOW HAVE ACCESS TO.

THEY WILL BE ABLE TO:

- sponsor their husband/wife for immigration benefits
- file income taxes jointly
- have joint parenting rights, such as access to children's school records
- have next-of-kin status for emergency medical decisions
- have family visitation rights, such as a visit to a spouse in a hospital or prison
- receive custodial rights to children, shared property, child support and alimony after divorce
- qualify for domestic violence intervention
- receive spousal funeral and bereavement leave
- inherit property
- receive spousal benefits when an officer is killed in the line of duty
- receive spousal Social Security payments
- have immunity from testifying against spouse
- apply for housing assistance if in a low-income family
- apply for copyright renewal for works created by their deceased spouse
- receive spousal recognition for policies governing burial at Arlington National Cemetery

PBS NEWSHOUR