

THOSE FEISTY OL' GALS

History of a NOW Chapter
in a Retirement Community

Sun Cities/West Valley Chapter
NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN

by

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PREFACE

There are over 550 NOW chapters in the United States. Why would anyone be interested in one lone chapter in Arizona?

For one thing, it was one of the first, if not *the* first NOW chapters to be established in a retirement community. And it's a unique retirement community. It was the first of the Del Webb retirement communities, opened in 1960. A community of all old people was an unusual concept at the time. Many people were skeptical that such a community would really work. They thought the residents would stagnate, die of boredom, or just couldn't manage on their own

And why, one wonders, would old women be interested in pay equity, abortion rights or education? Why would they start a NOW chapter in a retirement community?

IT'S ALL PART OF HISTORY NOW! Thirty-five years later, the Del Webb retirement village of Sun City is still a thriving community. No doubt about it, the age-segregated community is a great success! So is the NOW Chapter.

Sun City was twenty years old and going strong when the NOW Chapter was formed in 1980. In fact, Sun City West had just been established. The feisty ol' gals of NOW soon became a part of the life of the Sun Cities known for their rallies, marches, letters to the editor, and other protest activities.

They became known as well for their Women's History Month productions, designed to entertain as well as educate the public about women's past history and their roles in society. Their Golden Apple Award honored a girl or woman each year for her contribution to the advancement of women. They made their opinions known in the monthly column, *Women's Watch*, in a local newspaper.

NOW's radical reputation (largely undeserved) made some people a little skeptical. NOW members were often approached with "so...you're one of those NOW women." In fact, an early member wrote a wonderful satirical piece about the invasion of Sun City by "this radical group with its outrageous gongs-on."

Chapter members soon became known in NOW circles for their get-up-and-go attitudes. When there was a rally in Oklahoma or a march on Washington to support some cause or protest some action, the ol' gals were there. There were usually cheers when they appeared. They had the time and, as it turned out, they had the enthusiasm, too!

THE N.O.W. SCRAPBOOKS AS CATALYST

Scrapbook: *A book of blank pages for mounting newspaper clippings, pictures, souvenirs, etc.*--New World Dictionary of the American Language, Second College Edition

This whole project of writing the history of the Sun Cities/West Valley National Organization for Women (NOW) chapter started with the Scrapbooks. As Chapter Herstorian, Vivian Wood had the 14 volumes of Scrapbooks in her care. At age 90, she began to worry about the disposal of the Scrapbooks.

They reflect the history of the Sun Cities as well as being an important chapter of women's history. The Sun Cities Area Historical Society with its Del Webb Sun Cities Museum seemed to be the appropriate locale for the Scrapbooks.

The Scrapbooks needed an explanation, however. In the process of describing and explaining NOW, its purpose, its programs and activities, the project turned into a full-fledged history of the Chapter. It is an interesting and important story that needs to be told and preserved..

The Scrapbooks have a history. Minutes of an early meeting of the NOW advisory board on April 3, 1980, show that publicity director, Grace Arentsen, agreed to keep a scrapbook depicting the history of the Sun City Area NOW Chapter. The first four volumes of the scrapbooks show considerable overlap. Volume 1 contains the minutes of the advisory board and of the public meetings held in 1980, 1981 and 1982—not the usual fare of scrapbooks.

It is not clear who was in charge of keeping each scrapbook up to date or how often this responsibility changed. Anna Rudner had the Scrapbook in September 1981, according to Board minutes, but a year later the Board was looking for a volunteer to take over the Scrapbook. Lucille Reis volunteered.

Volume 2 was “lost” for a time in a member's closet. It is a valuable volume as it contains the Chapter's Charter, issued Sept. 11, 1980. Miriam Cafferty is listed as the Convenor, with following officers: Ann Timmer, President; Miriam Cafferty, Vice-President; Anna Rudner, Finance Director; Catherine White, Membership Coordinator; Evelyn Phillips, Record-Keeper; Grace Arentsen, Public Relations; and Helen M. Wells, Resource Person. The National President, Eleanor Smeal, signed the Charter.

Volume 3 of the scrapbooks consists largely of newspaper clippings, showing the Chapter's efforts to secure publicity for its causes (ERA, freedom of choice on abortion, women's wages, etc.). Clippings cover a span of 20 years: 1981-2001. Included is the first “Women's Watch” column which was published in the Daily News-Sun in 1995. It also included a NOW brochure, designed by Claire Randall in 2001, believed to be the Chapter's first brochure. This volume also contains several letters-to-the-editor. These before e-mail missiles were typed, usually a page or two long, and were thoughtful support of NOW positions such as Pro-Choice.

#10 N.O.W. SCRAPBOOKS (Cont'd.)

The next several volumes of the Scrapbooks had considerable overlap with regard to the dates of the items included. Starting with Volume 6 (1999-2001), each Scrapbook encompassed items from a limited number of years, usually two to four.

As the Scrapbooks show, the number and variety of activities the Chapter engaged in, as well as the level of enthusiasm, fluctuated over the years. In 1980, when the Chapter was formed, the founding group attacked all kinds of issues with gusto.

Ann Timmer, Miriam Cafferty, Anna Rudner and other founding members seemed to be everywhere touting reproductive rights, pay equity, voting rights and most of all, passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). A founding member, Evelyn Philips, now of advanced age, was asked recently about her involvement in the early days of the Chapter. Her biggest regret, she said, was that they had not been able to get the ERA ratified.

Toward the end of the eighties, as the early members began to develop health problems, died, or moved away to be nearer to children, the Chapter became less active. Lively ones, such as Thorpe Tucker, Emma Patterson, Anna Rudner, Miner Patton and Miriam Cafferty, were much missed when they died. Mildred Engleberg moved back East.

Around 1990, a new group of younger activists moved to the community and became active in NOW. Among them were Betty Roberts, Mary and Hank Warren, Lee Ormsbee, Vivian Wood, Claire Randall, and Jackie Lindfors. Helen Perkins and Marilyn Schulze moved to the Sun Cities and joined their sister, Ann Timmer, as active members of NOW. Carolyn Modeen had come earlier. Susan Cho and Shirley Patterson were part of this group for a while before they moved to Albuquerque.

Mary Warren took the lead in organizing and presenting the 1995 Women's History Month production of "Teacups and Triumphs: Women's Search for Peace". This was the first of several fairly elaborate productions in which this new generation of activists took part. Remembered as the highlight of these Women's History Month thespian efforts was "Voila la Femme" in 2000. This cabaret-style show was more fun than education.

This younger group was well represented in marches in Phoenix and Washington, D.C., in support of causes important to NOW. They participated in the March Against Poverty and Violence in 2,000 and the March for Women's Lives in 2004, both in Washington, as well as numerous others such as Mothers Against Guns. Several Chapter members participated in the Rainbow Rally for Affirmative Action in San Francisco in 1996.

By 2014, two members of this generation of NOW members—Claire Randall and Jackie Lindfors—had died, several had moved away from the Sun Cities, and several of the others had health problems. This is reflected in the Scrapbooks: instead of Women's History productions in which NOW members perform, the Chapter uses outside speakers or performers.

Carolyn Modeen, Kathleen Abernathy, formerly of the Phoenix Chapter, Joan Carlson, Teresa Smith and others provide continuity as we move forward in 2015. A new generation of leaders includes Jodie Lawrosky, who served as Chapter Coordinator in 2010-2012; Connie Hupperts who has served as Legislative Coordinator, and Anita Erwin, Treasurer. An active, vibrant NOW Chapter continues to be needed.

Women's History

THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN (NOW) ITS FOUNDING

The National Organization for Women (NOW) was founded in 1966. It grew out of women leaders' frustration with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which had been established to enforce Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Originally Title VII prohibited discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion or national origin. "Sex" was added as a kind of joke and to "amend the Title to death."

Although most Congressmen thought banning discrimination against women was a laughing matter, the Title VII that was passed included "sex". This was due largely to the efforts of Representative Martha Griffiths and women's organizations.

The EEOC concentrated on race discrimination cases. The Commissioners continued to ridicule the idea of sex discrimination and to ignore sex discrimination cases. One Commissioner, sympathetic to the women's cause, suggested to women leaders that they needed an organization like the NAACP .

Frustrated by the inaction of the EEOC, state leaders from the Commission on the Status of Women, who were meeting in Washington at the time, drew up plans for a new organization to be called the National Organization for Women (NOW). (The Commission on the Status of Women was appointed by President Kennedy as a sop to women leaders who complained that he had not named any women to his Cabinet.) The new mass-membership organization, known simply as NOW, marked the beginning of the second wave of the women's movement.

Betty Friedan, author of the best-seller, *The Feminine Mystique*. was elected president and Kay Clarenbach, University of Wisconsin professor and head of the Wisconsin Status of Women Commission, was named chairman of the Board.

Local Chapters were more-or-less independent and each set its own program. A vast array of task forces tackled issues of sex discrimination in the work place, in education, in financial institutions, etc Groups examined marriage and divorce laws, credit ratings, newspaper ads and so on, Eventually there were national efforts to coordinate these activities. The establishment of a Newsletter aided communication among the units.

At first NOW concentrated on sex discrimination in employment, helping the women airline stewardesses to win their case against the airlines. It soon took on the

campaign to pass the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and to repeal anti-abortion laws.

The 50th anniversary of NOW is coming up in 2016. In these 50 years, the landscape of America changed radically. It can be safely said that NOW and the women's liberation movement of which it is a part made large contributions to that change.

SUN CITIES/WEST VALLEY CHAPTER NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN

The Beginning

A small group of women met in September, 1979, with Miriam Cafferty in her Sun City (AZ) home. The result of that meeting was the decision to establish a National Organization for Women (NOW) Chapter by seeking affiliation with the national organization.

Miriam Cafferty was listed on the application as the Convenor for the proposed group. The officers listed to guide the new Chapter were: Ann Timmer, President; Miriam Cafferty, Vice-President; Anna Rudner, Finance Director; Catherine White, Membership Coordinator; Evelyn Phillips, Record-Keeper; Grace Arentsen, Public Relations; and Helen M. Wells, Resource Person. Eleanor Smeal was the National NOW President at the time

Although still not official, the Chapter-to-be had a busy year attending rallies and conventions, participating in marches, holding programs, organizing study groups, and publicizing their causes in the local press. The Chapter's Charter was granted on September 17, 1980—the official beginning of a feisty Chapter of older women soon to be known nationwide in NOW circles.

The major focus of the new Chapter was the national campaign to pass the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). This Amendment had been on the national agenda since 1923 when it was introduced in Congress by the National Woman's Party. It stated simply that men and women shall have equal rights.

The United States Congress had passed the ERA but it had to be ratified by three-fourth of the States in order to be enacted. By the time the Sun Cities Chapter was formed, only three more States were needed to ratify it in order to make it the law of the land. Illinois, Oklahoma, and Nebraska were thought to be the most likely States to ratify the Amendment. There was a concerted national effort to get those states to ratify.

Like in the long, difficult struggle to secure the right to vote for women, the nation's women were dedicated to the goal of making equal rights for women a part of the United States Constitution.

In Sun City, the new Chapter elected its 1981 officers: Ann Timmer, president; Miriam Cafferty, vice-president; Evelyn Philips, records coordinator; Anna Rudner, finance coordinator; and Grace Arentsen, communicator.

Officers elected in 1983 included Anna Rudner as coordinator (the term used instead of president). Miner Patton, the first male member of the Chapter was elected associate coordinator. Other officers were: Alice Pattee, records coordinator; Aimee Schwartz, program coordinator; and Betty Kunde, financial coordinator.

Once the Chapter got going, it held monthly membership and Board meetings, except in the summers. The membership meeting usually featured an informative speaker or program.

From its beginning, Chapter members were involved in rallies and marches—local, state and national—for a variety of causes. Chief among the causes were the E.R.A., pro-choice, and abuse of women. Two Chapter members—Ann Timmer and Miriam Cafferty—attended the 1981 Rally for the E.R.A. in Oklahoma City. Kathleen Abernathy and ~~Sunny~~ Lee Richardson of the Phoenix Chapter were the leaders on the trip.

The annual Women's History Month celebration is both a fund-raiser and a means of informing the public about women's history and achievements. Funds raised are used for scholarships for young women going to college and for support of a shelter for abused women, Eve's Place. A Chapter member, Marge Clark, was instrumental in the establishment of Eve's Place.

The Chapter is proud of its annual Golden Apple Award, which recognizes persons who have contributed to the advancement of women. Established in 1993, the first award went to U.S. Representative Ed Pastor for his vote in support of family planning funds. The award has gone to such notables as Arizona Attorney-General Janet Napolitano, who was later elected Governor of Arizona. She subsequently was selected by President Obama to head U.S. Homeland Security. In 2013, she was named head of the University of California System.

A column called "Women's Watch" was started in 1995 and appears monthly in the *Daily News-Sun*. The column is written and edited by an Editorial Board made up of representatives of the local NOW, American Association of University Women (AAUW) and the League of Women Voters. Initiated by NOW, the column is still ongoing after nearly 19 years and over 225 articles.

The "Silent Witness" project was initiated by Mary Warren after she read about a similar project in Minnesota. The project was a response to the fact that 28 Arizona women were murdered in 1994 by abusive husbands or boyfriends. With the aid of the Women's Build Team of Habitat for Humanity and the Phoenix-Scottsdale NOW Chapter, our Chapter created 28 red life-sized women figures to represent the murdered women. The name and statistics of each woman appears on a red figure. The figures have appeared in many places including the United State Capitol and Mall. As one newspaper headline put it, "Silent Witness figures speak volumes for women."

RALLIES, MARCHES. PROTESTS

The Sun Cities NOW Chapter's history is filled with stories of rallies, marches, protests and other group actions. The Chapter has always been very action-oriented. Beginning early in the 21st Century, the Chapter even had an Action Chairman, a person who planned and mobilized rallies, marches and protests to support or oppose various issues. Betty Roberts held that post for several years.

The most frequent causes supported by NOW members were freedom of choice, stopping abuse of women, defeat of right-wing conservative politicians and the continuing fight for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).

Some of the early Chapter members came to Arizona fresh from battles for the ERA in their home states in the Midwest, East and Northwest. In the ERA contest, only three additional states were needed to ratify in order for the Amendment to be adopted. Illinois, Oklahoma and Nebraska were thought to be the most likely to do so. Ann Timmer, the Chapter's first president, had worked very hard for ratification in Illinois. In Arizona, she and Miriam Cafferty traveled to Oklahoma City for a rally to try to push Oklahoma's Legislature to ratify.

Arizona NOW members continued to work for ERA passage. Miriam Cafferty and Ann Timmer marched for the ERA in Phoenix, carrying a home-made banner. Some went to Utah to put pressure on that state's Legislature to ratify the ERA. Opposition by conservative right-wing groups such as the antifeminist movement led by Phyllis Schlafly resulted in a backlash against the ERA. Failure to get additional states to ratify the ERA eventually led NOW to set it aside and move on to other issues.

The Chapter's request for space at the Bell Recreation Center in Sun City to celebrate the 61st anniversary of women's right to vote was rejected. Undaunted, they rallied in Viewpoint Park, Sun City.

Locally, the NOW Chapter was a strong supporter of Planned Parenthood, especially after right-wing conservative politicians developed a vendetta against the organization, condemning its abortion services (although this was a very small portion of the services it offered). The Chapter gave its Golden Apple Award to Gloria Feldt, the director who moved on to the national directorship, and to Bryan Howard, who succeeded her.

When national NOW labeled Walmart "a merchant of shame" in 2002,

the Sun Cities NOW took on that issue. Walmart was accused of sex discrimination in compensation and promotions. The Chapter picketed local Walmarts, a practice that was continued sporadically over several years.

The NOW Chapter has taken on political candidates at times. A very early action was a Walkathon from Metro Center to Viewpoint Park in Sun City in support of political candidates endorsed by Arizona NOW political Action Committee.

There were protests against Gov. Fife Symington, who was later impeached, against Trent Franks for a severely restrictive abortion bill, and many others whose significance has faded into history.

Two notable protests were against Republican Presidential hopeful Steve Forbes in 1999 and against Arizona Senator Scott Bundgaard in 2011. Millionaire Forbes was a staunch pro-life candidate, who went to great lengths to avoid NOW protests. A NOW Board resolution said Bundgaard should resign after he was involved in a scandal of alleged abuse of his girl friend. He did resign eventually.

Probably the most memorable march in which Chapter members were involved was the March for Women's Lives on April 25, 2004. The March was said to be "the largest in history" but there was no official count. Many thousands marched in Washington, D.C., and thousands more marched in state capitals.

The March Against Poverty and Violence on October 15, 2000, in Washington, D.C., was large but no estimates of size was recorded. Chapter members who attended were: Ann Timmer, Betty Roberts, Helen Perkins, Lee Ormsbee, Vivian Wood, Shirley Patterson and Susan Cho.

Betty Roberts and Ann Timmer attended the Silent Witness National Initiative in Washington, D.C., in October, 1997, which dealt with domestic violence. Several Chapter members participated in the Rainbow Rally for Affirmative Action in San Francisco on April 14, 1996: Carolyn Modeen, Betty Roberts, Vivian Wood, Leona Gilman, Miriam Neiman, and Ann Timmer.

Among the many rallies, marches and demonstrations in the Phoenix area were:

- 1990: pro-choice/pro-life face-off at the capitol**
- 1992: Hands-Around –the-Capitol Rally in support of MLK Day**
- 2003: Anti-Iraq War Rally**
- 2006: March on AZ Legislature in support of End-of-Life Choices**
- 2011: Demonstration against Tea Party**
- 2012: Rally to Support Choice on Roe v. Wade Anniversary**

Truly Sun Cities NOW has earned the slogan: "Have banner. Will demonstrate for good causes."

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

The Chapter got its start in the 1980s when momentum for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was in full swing. The U.S. Congress had passed the ERA but it had to be ratified by three-fourth of the State Legislatures before it could be enacted into law. Ratification by only three more states was needed at this time. All eyes were on Oklahoma, Illinois and Nebraska. These states were thought to be the most likely to ratify.

Miriam Cafferty, the Chapter founder, and Ann Timmer, its first president, traveled to Oklahoma to participate in a huge rally to put pressure on the State Legislature to ratify. They also fashioned a home-made banner from old tablecloths touting the ERA and marched in a Phoenix parade. They never faltered in their efforts for the ERA but by the end of the 1980s, the backlash against women, so aptly described by Susan Faludi in *Backlash* (1991), had taken effect. (Indeed, the backlash began immediately after World War II when women were expected to retreat to their pre-war position of being “only housewives” or taking low-paying jobs, usually part-time, with no benefits.)

Early on, Chapter members went to the Arizona State Legislature and sat in the gallery to watch the legislators in action. They got to know the legislators from their district and made their views known. There's a newspaper clipping in one of the Scrapbooks of “pro-choice advocates Alice Dockrell, Carolyn Modeen, Mildred Karp, and Ann Timmer in the Arizona House of Representatives gallery to keep up with bills before the legislature.”

As Chapter leaders became familiar with the process and trained interested members, they made their positions known by speaking for or against bills under consideration. Eventually the annual election of new officers included a Legislative Coordinator. Over time “those feisty ol' gals from NOW” became well known at the State Legislature. Ann Timmer was a familiar figure there for many years. Marge Mead, who served as Legislative Coordinator from 2000 to 2007, was especially well known and considered by some legislators to be a “thorn in their side.”

For several years NOW members, in tandem with members from the League of Women Voters and AAUW, participated in Legislative Day at the State Legislature. State legislators would have lunch with members of their districts and discuss upcoming legislation. Fewer and fewer legislators showed up for these occasions. The idea for Legislative Day, as originally conceptualized, has been abandoned.

As the Arizona Legislature became more conservative and right-wing (as did Legislatures in other Red states), it tried to pass legislation that would restrict abortion and family services. The Chapter opposed these efforts and were kept up to date by the Legislative Coordinator who urged them to contact their legislators and protest.

National politicians attacked Planned Parenthood and tried to shut it down as part of its campaign to stop abortions—even the use of contraceptives. The NOW Chapter was closely allied with the Arizona Planned Parenthood and opposed restrictive efforts in Arizona. There were many Letters to the Editor protesting the treatment of Planned Parenthood. The Arizona Planned Parenthood has been able to stave off restrictions better than the organization in other conservative states.

Another major thrust of the Chapter's efforts has been legislation to help domestic violence victims. As stated elsewhere, the Chapter has helped call attention to the problem with its Silent Witness figures and helped deal with the problem by supporting Eve's Place and New Life for the

victims of abuse.

A NOW member, working with the League of Women Voters, was able to get legislation in Arizona establishing Clean Elections, which enables candidates without major resources to run for public office. Despite efforts by the legislature to weaken the law regarding Clean Elections, so far they have failed to destroy it.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Women's History Week was first celebrated nationally in 1981 and changed to Women's History Month in 1987. The idea for the celebration of women's history was initiated by the Sonoma County (CA) Commission on the Status of Women. The Sonoma Commission celebrated Women's History Week in March and proclaimed March 8 International Women's Day. The idea quickly spread.

Senators Barbara Mikulski and Orin Hatch co-sponsored the bill establishing Women's History Week (later expanded to the whole month of March).

Informing the public about women's history and accomplishments has been a focus of the Sun Cities NOW Chapter since its beginning.

An early effort in this regard was the Susan B. Anthony luncheon in November 1981 at which the actress, Barbara Rowe, portrayed Susan B. An ardent feminist, Mrs. Rowe hoped her portrayal of the icon from the early days of the women's movement in Seneca Falls, N.Y., would show women that their actions matter. In a return performance in November 1983, Rowe portrayed Jeannette Rankin, the first woman elected to the U.S. Congress in 1916.

On August 26, 1982, the NOW Chapter brought together representatives of eighteen organizations in an Equality Day celebration of the 62nd anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Over 100 attendees heard the speaker, Dr. Joyce Foster, Academic Vice-President of Arizona State University, remind them that the effective use of the right to vote can eventually achieve all the other rights that women seek.

By 1991, the Sun Cities NOW Chapter was celebrating Women's History Month in the designated month of March. In fact, the Chapter has celebrated Women's History Month every March since that time.

The Storytelling Project of 1990-91 was designed to train selected NOW members in the art of storytelling. Each of the storytellers then arranged to go to a class in one of the four elementary schools selected for the Project to tell a story. Each storyteller had chosen a famous woman of history and developed a story about her. This was a popular project but the logistics proved difficult to manage.

The 1991 Women History Month performance was "Women in Concert," featuring women composers and women performers. Women writers were featured in 1992, with Carol Secord of Rio Salada Community College moderating a program of local women writers.

Running out of steam and ideas, the Chapter asked a local acting group, the Mayfair Players, to present two plays to celebrate Women's History Month in 1993.

Madeline Hansen of the St. Paul (MN) League of Women Voters came to the Chapter in 1994 with a proposition: that NOW members perform the play, "The Cabinet Meeting," which Hansen had written and performed in. The play's premise is that Susan B. Anthony is elected President of the U.S. and appoints a diverse group of notable women to her Cabinet. The NOW Chapter accepted the challenge and performed the play for Women's History Month 1994. It was a success.

NOW members immodestly decided they could write their own plays—and did so for many of the ensuing years. In 1995, "Teacups and Triumphs: Women's Search for Peace" honored women peacemakers of history.

The next big production was "How the West Was Two" for Women's History Month in 1997. It depicted women's roles in settling the West.

Women's History Month programs over the years include:

1998: "Living the Legacy" (150th anniversary of the Women's Rights Movement)

1999: "Celebrating Women of the Twentieth Century: Focusing Our Energy for the New Millennium"

2000: "Voila La Femme: (This cabaret-style show was more fun than education)

2001: "The Women's Radio Hour: Station K-NOW"

2002: "R-O-A-R—Remembering Our Arizona Relatives" (Pioneer Arizona women)

2003: Steve Benson and Dan Barker, "Toons and Tunes" (Benson and Barker came to the rescue when NOW ideas were scarce)

2004: "Women in Politics" Speaker: Janet Napolitano, Governor of Arizona

2005: "Leave It to the Women" (Skits of inspirational women)

2006: "Women's Performance and Art"

2007: Women's History Month picnic

2008: "Laughter and Life" by Carol Secord

2009: "Women Who Changed America"

2010: "Men—Their Rights and Nothing More; Women—Their Rights and Nothing Less"

2011: "Women to the Rescue"

2012: "Sisterhood of Spies" (about famous women spies)

2013: "What's My Line?" (a take-off on the TV show with famous women as guests)

THE GOLDEN APPLE AWARD

The Sun Cities/West Valley Chapter began, in 1993, the annual Golden Apple Award to a person who has contributed to the advancement of women. The first award went to U.S. Representative Ed Pastor for his vote in support of family planning funds.

The next award was to Arizona Representative Cathy Eden who sponsored the NOW bill on clemency for battered women. Gloria Feldt, Director of Arizona Planned Parenthood, received the 1995 award. She advanced to being the U.S. Director of Planned Parenthood.

The next award went to a nine-year-old girl, Arlys Angelique Endres. This young lady led the fight to bring statues of suffragists from the basement of the U.S. Capitol to the rotunda, an effort that was eventually successful.

The Golden Apple Award in 2000 was given to Arizona Attorney General Janet Napolitano for her leadership on women's issues. She was later elected Arizona Governor. Before completing her term, she was selected as head of U.S. Homeland Security. In 2013, she was named head of the University of California System.

Krysten Sinema received the award in 2004 for organizing the local chapters of Women in Black and Code Pink. She was elected to the Arizona House of Representatives, and later, the Arizona Senate. In 2012, she was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Our own NOW member, Marge Clark, earned the Golden Apple in 2006 for founding Eve's Place, a refuge for battered women and their families.

Other Golden Apple recipients are:

Kit Prestwood (1998)

Developed Women's Resource Center at Arizona State University-West

Tanya Griffith (1999)

For her dramatic portrayal of women of history

Nella and Marty Martinez (2001)

For leadership of youth through programs at Dysart Community Center, El Mirage, AZ

Roselyn O'Connell (2005)

President of the National Women's Political Caucus and spokesperson for women

Joe Rodrigues (2008)

Counselor at Dysart High School who went "above and beyond" to help female students achieve their goals

Shirley McAllister (2009)

Democratic political leader who champions women's equality and the right to choose

Diane Post (2011)

For resourceful support of women in the United States and globally

The "Women's Watch" Column

The "Women's Watch" column has appeared monthly in the *Daily News-Sun* for almost 20 years. This column—written by representatives of NOW, AAUW and the League of Women Voters—was initiated by a group of NOW members discussing how NOW and what the organization did could be made better known in the community.

When the suggestion of a special newspaper column for women arose, Ann Timmer and Mildred Engleberg took the idea to Associate Editor Maryanne Leyshon at the *Daily News-Sun*. A plan evolved for a monthly column to be entitled "Women's Watch". Two local branches of AAUW and the League were asked to join and an Editorial Board with representatives from each organization was set up. The initial column in March, 1995, described the participating organizations with a membership of over 600 women.

The intent of the column was to "express our stands on issues. We believe that it is our responsibility to educate and involve the public, as well as our members, in the quest for equality and justice for all. Good citizens are informed, committed, and active. Our organizations epitomize that description."

At first, the Editorial Board enlisted community members with particular expertise to write columns. This became difficult because of deadlines and other problems. Board members gradually took over the writing of columns drawing on their own experiences, academic resources, books and literature, and eventually, the Internet. One Board member would write an article and the Editorial Board would meet to go over and improve it. Over the years, each Board member wrote dozens of articles—well over 200 in 20 years.

The topics covered varied greatly but always, they were written from a woman's point of view. Women's suffrage, political participation, women's organizations and achievements, teen-age pregnancy, famous women and little-known women of history were a few of the topics which were written about. The women never seemed to run out of ideas.

The membership of the Editorial Board changed gradually over the years as members developed ill health, died or moved away. Mary Wylie is our longest serving member with Ann Timmer a close second. Ill health forced Ann to retire from the Board recently but she is considered an honorasry member to be consulted when needed. Vivian Wood was invited to join the Editorial Board a few months after it was formed, and still serves. Joyce Barrett and Bonnie Saunders are also long-serving Board members.

In addition to Mary, Vivian, Joyce and Bonnie, current Editorial Board members are: Marge Clark (NOW), Arlene Schindler (Sun City AAUW), Lois Brechner (Northwest Branch AAUW), and Valerie Ellien (League). Board members who served for a number of years are Virginia McElroy, Claire Randall, Lila Schwartz and Marge Mead.

The "Women's Watch" writers, who find this writing rewarding, are ready to continue into the twenty-first year, with hopes that the public will continue to read their column.

NEWSLETTERS

Anna Rudnes volunteered to produce the first Chapter newsletter in late 1980. Anna did a monthly cut-and-paste newsletter (except only one in the summer) for several years. Vivian Wood started assisting Anna in the early 1990s. Eventually Vivian took over and continued the cut-and-paste operation for a short time.

Vivian turned the Newsletter over to Betty Roberts, who was a more competent computer nerd. She produced the Newsletter for several years. Angela Sergio became Newsletter Editor in December, 2002, and produced the Newsletter all of 2003. She became ill with cancer and Teresa Smith volunteered to do the Newsletter temporarily. Unfortunately, Angela's cancer claimed her life.

Teresa Smith took over as Newsletter Editor in 2004 and is still doing so in 2014. Beginning in 2007, the Newsletter, which included the monthly minutes of the Board and of the general meeting, was included in the current Scrapbook. The History of the NOW Chapter (written by Vivian Wood) was published, in segments, in the Newsletter starting in January, 2014.

Unfortunately, there is no known file of all past Newsletters.

OTHER SPECIAL PROJECTS

Chapter members—always very active—engaged in numerous other projects throughout the years. A few of them are described below:

NOW Parade Float—Thanks to the work of Alice Dockrell and her husband, NOW had a float in Sun City's 25th Anniversary Parade in 1985. It was appropriately dubbed the NOW Equality Float. Chapter members were proud to be represented in the community parade.

Silent Witness Figures—Life-sized wooden figures, representing the 28 Arizona women murdered by abusive husbands or boy friends in 1994, were the brain child of NOW member Mary Warren. When she heard about the Silent Witness Project in Minneapolis, she spearheaded the effort for a similar Arizona project.

NOW had help in creating and displaying the figures. The Women's Build Team of the local Habitat for Humanity used their jigsaws, sanders, and other tools to carve the figures from plywood. A sister Chapter painted the figures bright red. A plaque was attached to each figure identifying her and her killer. A meaningful silence always greeted the figures when their significance was realized.

The Silent Witness figures have been displayed in numerous locations including the Arizona State Capitol and the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C.

Martin Luther King Day as a National Holiday—Arizona did not join most other states in designating Martin Luther King Day an official national holiday. Responding to a story in the *Phoenix Gazette* depicting anti-King sentiment in the Sun Cities, NOW member Miriam Cafferty maintained there was support for a King National Holiday in the Sun Cities.

Mary Warren picked up the ball. Mead Realty provided one of its offices with phone banks and Mary rallied a huge band of volunteers. Many NOW members and others worked the phone banks in the successful effort to change public opinion. Arizona declared Martin Luther King Day a national holiday. This effort was a community-wide effort.

Eve's Place—The idea for a refuge on the West Side for women and children who are victims of domestic abuse grew out of a justice committee at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Surprise. A member of the committee, NOW member Masrge Clark, took the lead in establishing Eve's Place in a neighborhood on the West Side.

Letters to the Editor—From its very beginning, NOW leaders urged members to write letters to the editors of local newspapers on behalf of the issues they supported. Sometimes parts of a regular membership meeting would be devoted to members all writing on behalf of a current issue. Some of the earliest efforts were for the ERA.

The Scrapbooks contain many of the Letters to the Editor written over the years. There are letters against domestic abuse, for a woman's right to choose, against particular political leaders and for others, for particular legislation and against others.

Letter writing is sporadic. When members feel strongly about an issue, they write letters. Over the years, NOW members wrote hundreds of letters to the editors of the *Daily News-Sun* and the *Independent*.

LOSSES

Most of the loss of membership in the Chapter results from deaths. Other members develop health and family problems which prevent them from keeping up an active membership. This is not surprising since the Chapter is located in a retirement community.

Most of the residents lived in other parts of the country before retiring here. Consequently, they don't have strong community ties initially. But the residents, being similarly situated, tend to develop stronger ties than those who move into regular residential communities. NOW members have the additional bond of sisterhood. Losses can be difficult.

Below we list the names of those lost through death in the Chapter's 35-year history.

Helen Macgowan Wells, a Charter member of the NOW Chapter, died in 1983, losing her fight against breast cancer. She was an active ERA supporter and was honored for her work and dedication to AAUW.

Margot Reis, an early member of the Chapter, died in 1985 in an automobile accident. A retired U.S. Army major and former teacher, she was born in Germany.

Marguerite L. Alstrom, a native of Kansas, was renown in the NOW Chapter for her tongue-in-cheek history of the Chapter in 1985. She died in 1987.

Thorpe Tucker, philanthropist and world traveler, was born in Georgia in 1898. She was one of the league of women voters who cast their first vote in 1920. Her financial support enabled some Chapter members to attend national NOW conventions.

Emma Patterson was an early NOW member. She and her husband George opened their home for many meetings and gatherings. Emma was a strong feminist and an active community member. She was also a founding member of the local League of Women Voters and the Unitarian Universalist Church.

Anna Rudner, founding member, held several offices during the Chapter's early years. She was publisher and editor of its first Newsletter, a position she continued for many years. She died in May, 2000.

Miner Patton was an early member who said it was a study of the ERA that led him to join. He served in several Chapter offices and was an active and erudite writer of Letters to the Editor regarding NOW issues.

Catherine (Kay) White, a founding member, was active in the Chapter for two decades.

Miriam Cafferty, founder of the Chapter, died in 2000. She was an early Chapter president and served in many different positions during her 20-year membership. She also served on the State NOW Board and was the spark for the movement to have Martin Luther King's birthday recognized as a national holiday in Arizona.

Angelo Sergio was editor of the Newsletter all of 2003. She was unable to continue after she developed breast cancer. She died in 2004.

Betty Alpert was a faithful member of NOW while she lived in Sun City West. Because of ill health in later life, she moved out of the community but tried to keep in touch.

Alice Pattee was a professor at Oklahoma U. She remained a literate and sharp observer of world happenings until she was in her mid-nineties. She was generous in giving money to needy causes including State NOW which was in dire straits at one time. She served as Records Coordinator (a.k.a. Secretary) and in other Chapter offices. Her gentle humor was appreciated by all.

Alice Dockrell, an early and devoted member of NOW, served as Treasurer and Coordinator of the Chapter. Born and raised on a farm on the banks of the Hudson River in New York, Alice earned bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing education and worked in that field for many years. She and her husband Gratton had two children. Their daughter, Liz Swan, lives in Sun City. Alice and Gratton are remembered for the NOW float in Sun City's 25th Anniversary Parade in 1985. Alice died in 2006.

Miriam Neiman, president of Arizona State NOW when the Sun City chapter was formed, was a friend and mentor of the new organization. She had moved to Phoenix in 1950 and was active in theatre. She joined the Sun Cities Chapter and was active in Women's History Month productions. She died in 2006.

Claire Randall, born a Texan, became an avid New Yorker. There she served as General Secretary of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA and later as president of Church Women United. She received many honors including several honorary doctorates and the medal of the Order of St. Vladimir, awarded by the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow for strengthening relationships between the churches of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. When she moved to Sun City, she lent her talents to NOW's Women's History Month productions.

Charlotte Parker joined NOW, quit over NOW policy, then came back because she missed her NOW friends. She also rebelled against the Episcopal Church by joining the Unitarian Universalist Church.

Jean Borst Brown was from Middlebury College. She hosted NOW meetings at her home in Ventana Lakes and again when she moved in with her physician daughter whose home had a magnificent view of the valley.

Barbara Walls, a Rosie the Riveter, was active in NOW and is remembered for her performances in Women's History Month productions. She and Lillian Hentel traveled to China in 2002 to attend the conference, "Holding Up Half the Sky," in Beijing. She died in 2008.

Bunny Goldfarb, who moved from the Bronx to Sun City in 1989, was a frequent hostess for NOW meetings and parties. She ran as a Democrat for the Arizona House but was defeated. She became a real estate agent in later life. She died in 2009.

Opal Saxton, a Peace Corps volunteer in Africa, loved the theatre and performed in many Women's History Month productions. She died in 2010.

Lillian Hentel, women's rights activist and traveler, went to China (with Barbara Walls) in

2002 to attend a conference in Beijing sponsored by the All-China Women's Federation. She participated in several Women's History Month productions. She died in 2013.

Lola Boan, a native Iowan, taught school in Alaska and retired to Sun City. She moved several times in the last year of her life and died in Iowa.

Leona Gilman was known as the Chapter's "social secretary". For several years, she made arrangements for members to attend concerts, plays, museums and other cultural events. She performed in several Women's History Month plays.

George Timmer, husband of charter member Ann Timmer, was a staunch supporter of Ann and the Chapter. He served as the Chapter treasurer for many years. He died in 2014.

Jacklin Lindfors, one of our younger members, made many contributions to the Chapter, including serving as Co-Coordinator. She performed in several Women's History Month productions. Despite struggling with cancer, she and her husband Nils sometimes attended rallies. Earlier she had participated in Washington marches. She died in 2014.

CHAPTER RELATIONSHIPS WITH STATE AND NATIONAL N.O.W.

The Chapter had a close relationship with the Arizona State N.O.W. from its beginning. The State provided support in its founding and helped the Chapter get off to a good start. Miriam Neiman was the State N.O.W. president; she later became a member of the Sun Cities Chapter.

Ann Timmer, the first Chapter president, also served as State N.O.W. president in the early 1980s. Other Chapter members have served as president (later called coordinator) and many have served on the State Board. The Chapter has hosted the State Conference several times over the years. It provided leadership, most notably in the “lean” years when the Board was at a low point.

National N.O.W. issued the Chapter's Charter on September 17, 1980. It was signed by “Ellie” Smeal, a popular National President. The Chapter heeded calls for national rallies and marches and participated in several over the years.

The Chapter had a close relationship with Kim Gandy, who was National President from 2001 to 2009. She had been National Executive Vice-President in the preceding eight years. She was the keynote speaker at several Arizona State Conference.

Gandy served during the George Bush Administration. NOW opposed two nominations for the U.S. Supreme Court made by Bush. NOW considered both John Roberts and Alito unsympathetic to NOW's viewpoint and fought vigorously, though unsuccessfully, to block their nominations.

Most National NOW Conferences had a representative or two from the Sun Cities Chapter—sometimes more, especially in the 1980s and 1990s. For example, Ann Timmer, Lee Ormsbee, Lillian Hentel, Miriam Neiman, Helen Perkins, and Sharon Robertson attended the 1999 National NOW Conference in Beverly Hills, CA. The 2004 Conference was held in Las Vegas at which the Sun Cities Chapter was well represented.