



Turn Passion into Action!

I've been thinking a lot about action after attending the See Jane Do, Passion into Action conference last weekend. The event was a complete inspiration. A sampling of speakers included local breast cancer survivors, to Chi Yvonne Leina who is working to end breast ironing in her native country of Cameroon (the controversial practice in which mothers and grandmothers attempt to iron flat their pubescent daughter's breasts with stones and hot irons so they won't be subject to rape or teen pregnancy and can instead get an education. What?!). We were introduced to Jensine Larson, a young woman who founded World Pulse, an extraordinary organization working to connect women around the world through technology. And this was just part of a day's worth of programming!

Fast-forward a few minutes later, and I've co-opted the men's room, with a few other women, chatting excitedly about the day's events. I suddenly realize I'm standing in line next to Gloria Feldt, former Planned Parenthood CEO. She says to me, "I feel like I do a lot of complaining." To which I reply, "Ditto that!" I think to myself, really? The former CEO of Planned Parenthood who opened clinics in rural areas in red states across the country thinks she complains a lot? What does that say about my intentions, my action?

I know what I'd like to accomplish. I'd like to make women's access to reproductive healthcare and choice a reality, instead of just a controversial subject. I have a desire to grow Citizens for Choice and services at the clinic. I have a vision of opening a facility that would house a public, reproductive health clinic for men and women with expanded regular hours. It would be spacious enough to have an educational center where we could hold sex education classes. We could train young women and men to lobby at the Capitol for reproductive justice. We would not only provide raw clinic services such as STI testing, mammograms, yearly reproductive health checkups and condom distribution, but we could educate and become a booming, valuable resource in the community.

That is my passion. Where I often struggle is in the action part of things. It's not enough to just think about change, and to desire it. This spark is a start. It is time to turn passion into action, and to dissolve a fear of failure that often restricts us. If you share our vision at Citizens for Choice, I would encourage you now to join us by taking action! Our vision can't happen without you. More hands make for easy work! Ask us how you can help. Join the board. Volunteer. Clean the Clinic. Help us stuff envelopes. Register voters. Help us expand our service. Donate much needed furniture to the clinic.

I hope this fall we can all be less fearful and more full of action! After all, if we don't act now, how can we ever realize our truest potential? Enjoy this issue of VOICES, and thank you for reading. Thank you for participating!

*Miranda Wensel,
Secretary*

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www.citizensforchoice.org

▶▶ Book Review ▶▶

REVIEW OF *THE HEALING* BY
JONATHAN O'DELL

Contributed by Marlene Katz, PhD

Jonathan O'Dell was formerly from Mississippi, and is now living in Minnesota. The author has many not-so-fond memories of bigotry and intolerance of blacks and their struggle for civil rights. He knew it was not just their story but his as well since bigotry was a part of his culture. Growing up in the South, O'Dell was aghast at the treatment blacks received at the hands of whites. His new book tells of the bonds between three generations of plantation slaves in the pre-Civil War era. These female slaves were healers who filled both psychological and spiritual roles and used their power to heal both body and soul.

I believe it is a book that you won't be able to put down, even though you'll read about cholera, comedy, mystical qualities, cures, and the delivering of babies by midwives on a cotton plantation.

In *The Healing* one of the healers believes that the slaves are merely soul sick and also quite starved as they are eating mostly molasses, corn bread, and fat back. The powers that be insist that the slaves are without a soul and treating them like field animals is the normal mode by the overseers and others.

Black midwives were accustomed to listening and also "catching" (birthing) babies. Their skills in midwifery were of much interest to me and how they passed their knowledge to others. These midwives practiced what was passed down from Africa and served many functions in their communities through the Jim Crow days in the South. The demise of prominence of these women started in the 1950s when the white medical establishment discredited them and required licensure for them. Often the women were portrayed by the medical doctors as dirty, ignorant, superstitious, and unable to read.

There are several books about midwives and health care practiced in the South listed in the acknowledgments which I have purchased. One that I found most interesting was *Listen to Me Good: The Story of an Alabama Midwife*.

▶ Study of Contraceptive Use ▶

STUDY OF CONTRACEPTIVE USE BY ST.
LOUIS CITY WOMEN TAKES COUNTRY
BY STORM

From Voice For Choice

Newsletter of the Republican Majority
for Choice

The release of a new study on the social and economic effects of widespread use and availability of no-cost contraceptives was released earlier this month, taking the country by storm. The Contraceptive Choice Project, a four-year experiment conducted by Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, provided free contraceptives to over 9 thousand women in the St. Louis area, primarily low-income or uninsured. As a result, the rates of abortions in the area decreased dramatically, dropping 20 percent from 2008 to 2010, while the rate of abortion in the rest of Missouri remained unchanged. Repeat abortions also decreased from 47 percent in 2006 to 39 percent in 2010, while in Kansas City, Missouri during the same time period, the rate of repeat abortions increased by 8 percent. Teen pregnancy among 15-19 year old girls enrolled in the project numbered 6.3 per 1,000, compared to a national average of 34 per 1,000.

According to the researchers, the project, begun in 2007, was intended to model the potential benefits of the insurance coverage mandate of the 2010 health care law. It is generally understood that birth control can prevent unwanted pregnancy, however women who want to use contraception can face a number of obstacles, including but not limited to cost. This research showed that when cost is not a factor most women - 75 percent of study participants - will choose a long-acting method of contraception such as the increasingly popular (but often expensive) IUDs. This is the largest and most expansive study of its kind and should dramatically change the controversy surrounding use of contraceptives. Anti-choice groups have however, already come out against the reputable study, grasping for whatever opposition they can. Their unsubstantiated claims are being mostly ignored.

For the rest of the story please go to http://vitals.nbcnews.com/_news or <http://www.choiceproject.wustl.edu>.

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► THE WORD WIZARD ◄

WELCOME Frederika Zylstra

As the voice behind the Citizens for Choice blogs, I feel a strong commitment to do my part to ensure that women never have to go back to an era in which we do not control our own bodies.

Writing for Citizens for Choice has given me the ability to research issues about reproductive health and expose those who might work to take away our rights. The blogs are usually entertaining for me to write – after all, it is a crucial and interesting topic. Often it can be quite funny – people in the news (in particular politicians) are great at providing quotes that are so illogical it's impossible to resist poking fun at them.

I write for a living. I own The Written Word Professional Copywriting and am the Word Wizard for Wild Women for Business. (www.thewrittenword.biz / www.wildwomenforbusiness.com) One of the most interesting facets of my profession is that with each writing assignment comes the opportunity to learn about a subject I may not have previously explored, or to examine it from a new perspective. My days are anything but boring – I may start the day writing about small business, then move on to sex education, and end the day researching investment opportunities in rental properties.

Although most of my work days are blissfully spent in the company of my laptop and my 'helper dog' Mattie, at times I need to connect with other humans. Wild Women for Business was started because I recognized the need for a great graphic artist and web designer to provide the design and hierarchy needed for quality websites and advertisements. I began to envision a collaborative team with the client benefitting from a group who was hand-picked for their expertise.

I knew Phyllis Orzalli of Studio-9-Design, and thought her work was exemplary. (We worked together to create the new Citizens for Choice website) When I approached her, she smiled and said "I've been thinking the same thing!" It wasn't long before we realized we could use a Business Coach for our clients as well. We had heard Janice Knight of YR Coach and Knightline Consulting give a presentation and both felt she would be a perfect fit. When we met with Janice, her enthusiasm and

sparkle spoke volumes. She, also, had been thinking of a collaboration. Through Janice, we met Judy Nichols, a local Certified Public Accountant. The team was born.

It has been a year. What happens between our team members is nothing short of magic. We 'click' on so many levels. Our meetings are intense and our brainstorming sessions are amazing. Individually, each of us brings a certain facet of experience and knowledge to the group. Together, we accomplish exponentially more in a short period of time than we ever could individually. This is partly due to our choices for a team – they were based on expertise, reputation and intuition – not personal friendship, though we are good friends now.

A recent client came to us asking if we could help them with their business. They were struggling with their business 'brand', or identity, the market had changed, their client base felt less reachable, and like many small businesses, they needed some organizational assistance with their accounting. In a mere 6 weeks, the Wild Women coached, created an updated brand, new vision and purpose, implemented a new accounting system custom-designed for their business, designed and wrote content for a new meaningful website, found three new 'audiences' and marketed heavily to them, and planned and executed a festival. Whew! Separately, that simply could not have been accomplished. Together, with hard work, joy and lots of laughter, we made it happen. The festival resulted in nearly 10 times the traffic the client had the year before, and their viable markets are crystal clear.

What each of the Wild Women has is a commitment to the highest quality in everything we do. It is that commitment I gladly bring to my work with Citizens for Choice – making a difference one blog at a time – with an occasional good-natured swipe at politicians who seem to view women as a lesser species.

Citizens for Choice thanks the following donors whose generous donations were received between June 29, 2012 to Oct. 20, 2012

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PRESIDENTIAL TICKETS: STARK CONTRASTS ON REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE ISSUES

By Elaine Sierra, Public Policy Director

The social media universe is atwitter with spin-masters and fact-checkers getting out their messages on where the presidential and vice-presidential candidates stand on issues affecting women. The most contentious issues – those affecting women’s reproductive rights and health – also offer the starkest contrasts. Let’s look at where Obama-Biden and Romney-Ryan stand, based on their actual words and positions they’ve actually taken.

Roe v. Wade and safe abortions

The U.S. Supreme Court decided in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973 that women have the qualified Constitutional right to decide whether to terminate their pregnancies. It found that a Texas law making abortions illegal except to save the life of the mother violated women’s constitutionally protected right to privacy under the 14th Amendment. However, the Court also decided, and has affirmed since, that states have interests regarding the pregnant woman and her fetus that may justify regulating abortion. The scope of the government’s power to do so remains the subject of intense debate and controversy, both in the courts and in national and state legislatures.

The first question we must ask is where the candidates for President stand on *Roe v. Wade*. What philosophies might they look for in their nominees the Supreme Court and other federal courts? What are their positions on keeping abortion safe and legal?

Many states have anti-abortion laws that would automatically take effect if *Roe* were to be overturned, and many more stand ready to adopt similar laws. According to a 2004 report by the Center for Reproductive Rights, women in 30 states risk losing access to safe and legal abortions in their states.

President Barack Obama released a statement on the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* this year, reaffirming his commitment to protect a woman’s right to choose. He stated that, [T]his Supreme Court decision not only protects a woman’s health and reproductive freedom, but also affirms a broader principle:

that government should not intrude on private family matters.” As an Illinois state senator, as a U.S. senator, and as a candidate for president in 2007-2008, Obama has opposed limitations on government funding of abortion. He has opposed the Hyde Amendment, first enacted in 1976, to bar federal funding of abortion except in limited circumstances -- rape, incest, or where the life of the mother is in jeopardy. Hyde’s major effect is to prevent low-income women from having abortions paid by Medicaid. However, it’s language has been adopted for many other federal programs.

Vice-President Joe Biden’s positions have changed somewhat over time. He long supported the Hyde Amendment as a U.S. Senator. In 1982, he supported a resolution for a Constitutional amendment that would have effectively nullified *Roe V. Wade*. However, in his recent vice-presidential debate with his opponent Ryan, Biden stated strongly that, while he is personally against abortion for religious reasons, he believes that neither he nor anyone else has the right to inflict those beliefs on women.

Obama has shown what sort of judicial nominees he favors, by appointing two liberal-leaning women to the Supreme Court – Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor. Most court observers believe that neither would vote to overturn the Constitutional protections enunciated in *Roe*.

Both Mitt Romney and his running mate Paul Ryan have long opposed abortion rights (although Romney switched his position from being pro-choice, when running against the late Sen. Ted Kennedy for the Senate). Ryan has stated, “I am as pro-life as a person gets,” consistently voting in Congress against a woman’s right to choose, and opposing abortion even for women who have been raped.

Romney has stated that he would nominate judges to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, and allow each state to make its own laws making abortion illegal, as Texas had done in the *Roe* case. A Romney statement quoted on his website is that, “I would expect every one of my appointees

Baskets!

The following businesses and offices have graciously allowed us space in their store to display our informational baskets. We thank them!

Behind Closed Doors
Big Diamond Tattoo
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WIC (Women, Infants,
and Children Services)
Judi Wright MD
Yabobo
Yuba Docs



cont. from page 4

to carry out my policies on abortion...” Ryan telegraphed his agreement with Romney when asked, “If the Romney-Ryan ticket is elected, should those who believe that abortion should remain legal be worried?” His response was, “We don’t think that unelected judges should make this decision...”

Romney has officially made a “pro-life pledge,” not only reiterating his opposition to Roe, but also pledging:

- (1) his opposition to abortion in all circumstances except rape, incest and when necessary to save the life of a mother;
- (2) his support for the Hyde Amendment ban on the use of federal funds for abortion;
- (3) his support for a ban on federal funding for Planned Parenthood and any other domestic organization that performs abortions; and
- (4) his support for the Mexico City Policy, which bars U.S. funding for non-governmental organizations that provide family planning services overseas if they perform, promote or advise women about abortion.

Romney has also said that that he would “eliminate Title X family planning programs,” which provide federal funding for birth control and cancer screenings. He flatly takes the position that life begins at conception; as Massachusetts governor, he vetoed a bill that would have allowed stem cell research using embryos and a bill giving rape survivors information about and timely access to emergency contraception.

Further, Romney and Ryan have also staunchly supported barriers to women exercising their Constitutional rights, so as to restrict access to abortion. Ryan has actively supported federal legislation that would require mandatory waiting periods and intrusive intra-vaginal ultrasounds before a woman can terminate her pregnancy, even against her will.

Access to affordable birth control Obama’s signature administrative action on behalf of women’s access to affordable birth control was issuing regulations under the Affordable Care Act that -- with the exception of churches and other places of worship -- will require all U.S. employers to fully cover the cost of contraception in health insurance coverage for the women they employ. His

administration rejected the religious community’s call to broaden the exemption to include all faith-affiliated organizations, such as Catholic hospitals and universities. The rule was modified to accommodate continuing objections, to allow an exemption for religious organizations so that they do not directly pay for contraception, while requiring that their employee health plans offer and themselves pay for contraceptive coverage.

Romney and Ryan take the opposing position -- that the ACA regulations on employer-provided contraceptive coverage should not be allowed to stand, because they violate the religious liberties of faith-affiliated organizations. (In fact, Romney opposes the entire health reform law, and has vowed to repeal it were he to become President. He has made somewhat conflicting statements suggesting that he might support certain consumer protections contained in the ACA, without giving details as how he might do that.)

So, the contrasts are clear. The candidates for President have divergent views on Roe, on abortion and abortion regulation, and on access to contraception. Whichever one is elected will help shape our nation’s laws far into the future. Citizens for Choice is a nonpartisan organization and does not endorse or oppose any party or any candidate for public office. This is intended only to help inform readers about policy questions and issues, as they may affect reproductive justice.

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STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

By Shelby Mosel, President

When it comes to Fall two big things come to mind this year. First is everywhere on TV, the internet, and everyone's minds...the election. The second is a lot less critical but still important in my life and many student's lives- the new Fall semester. I wasn't sure how to connect the two until I realized that the connection is activism- people taking a stand and getting involved in their community and nation.

In one of my classes we have to do a group advocacy project. Each group picks a national or local organization to which to donate their finished project. It really worried me when I saw that many people didn't seem to understand what it meant to be an advocate and that so many wanted to take the simplest, easy way out rather than get involved. I wanted to urge them to act locally instead of just talking about broad issues and controversial politicians which are most likely beyond everyday reach.

Our community and country works because people care and are so passionate that they want to get involved. One example is those who take the time to make sure people are registered to vote in this year's elections. Another is the volunteers working on the presidential campaign, and those like me who give their time on the Sierra College campus to keep the clubs like C.H.O.I.C.E.S. running.

There are many good reasons to get involved besides helping out your community and nation. It can help you discover your interests and realize skills and abilities you didn't even know you possessed. It can also help you develop leadership skills, independence, and self-confidence which can be beneficial in employment and life.

I would urge high school and college students to volunteer-this kind of work looks fantastic on college applications and on your resume. It is so easy to get involved in our community; whether it is seasonal at election time, club work during the school year, volunteering once in a while with the homeless or feeding the hungry. It sounds cliché but anyone and everyone can make a difference in the lives of others, their community, and their nation. The United States was built on people who cared and gave their time to make a difference.

▶▶WOMEN USE CONTRACEPTION TO BETTER ACHIEVE THEIR LIFE GOALS▶▶

New evidence confirms what most people already believe: Women use contraception because it allows them to better care for themselves and their families, complete their education and achieve economic security, according to "Reasons for Using Contraception: Perspectives of U.S. Women Seeking Care at Specialized Family Planning Clinics," by Jennifer Frost and Laura Lindberg of the Guttmacher Institute. "Women value the ability to plan their childbearing, and view doing so as critical to being able to achieve their life goals. They need continued access to a wide range of contraceptives so they can plan their families and determine when they are ready to have children."

The majority of participants reported that contraception has had a significant impact on their lives, allowing them to take better care of themselves or their families (63%), support themselves financially (56%), complete their education (51%), or keep or get a job (50%). View the report online.



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▶▶ Girl Scouts & Planned Parenthood ▶▶

PUBLISHED IN OUR SLANT BPW'S NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2012

By Rosemary Metrailler, President BPW Nevada County

Many of you were probably Girl Scouts as children, as I was. Some of you might even have served as Girl Scout leaders, sold or bought cookies, or supported them in other ways. This month one of our local sister groups, SeeJaneDo (SJD), had a tentative plan with the Girl Scouts Heart of California Council (GSHCC), based in Sacramento, to let them have a booth at SJD's Passion into Action Conference where they could broadcast their message, show videos, and recruit young girls into the Scouts.

But when the "adults" at GSHCC saw the conference program materials, they saw that one of the 30-some speakers listed was a former Executive Director of Planned Parenthood. They immediately wrote SJD and cancelled their participation, saying "We will not share a platform with the former CEO of Planned Parenthood and will not be able to promote the conference." Efforts by SJD and local supporters to ask the GSHCC Board of Directors to reconsider or at least further discuss this decision were stonewalled, even though the speaker in question hasn't been with Planned Parenthood for seven years!

The point is, here we have yet another example of what happens when fear stops everything, paralyzes otherwise competent people and keeps them from doing something that would benefit those they claim to serve. GSHCC's fear of possible criticism from extremist voices on the right, who might allege a false affiliation between the Scouts and Planned Parenthood, has stolen an opportunity for more of our local young girls to learn, grow, and thrive as Girl Scouts. The mere threat posed by the fact that a long-ago former director of a group espousing women's right to choose is one of 30-some speakers at a conference means GSHCC can't participate. Isn't this a sad state of affairs? What can we do to keep this modern-day McCarthyism from stealing opportunities from future generations? Let's think about this....

▶▶▶ See Jane Do ▶▶▶

SHARING AND ACCOMPLISHING WITH 'SEE JANE DO'

By Margot Mantle, NUHS Senior

The morning begins with string music. The String Sisters guide participants into the Grass Valley Veterans Hall with their music, bringing a peaceful start to the day. Once inside I put my name and email down with every booth I find. These women are my people and I want everything to do with them. My mother lives by the ageless Gandhi quote, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." At the 2012 Passion Into Action conference, put on by SeeJaneDo, I was surrounded by women who had soaked these words in just as much as my mother.

It was a morning of strength where women were embracing, enjoying each other and loving. Throughout the last day of the conference people were dancing and clapping and standing together in support for all women everywhere. This passionate community of women creates a positive energy and gives others the courage to speak out and tell their stories.

"There is hope for the world" says Chi Yvonne Leina an active member in WORLD PULSE. Leina's story about the horrors of breast ironing in her home country of Cameroon is able to be heard through the website worldpulse.com where thousands of women across the globe can share and discuss what is going on around them. Leina and the creator, Jensine Larsen of WORLD PULSE were only a few of the fantastic speakers that were heard on Sunday, October 14th.

Dr. Chris Newsom educated us on the importance of breast health and how we can influence our risk of developing breast cancer. Survivors of breast cancer came up onto the stage and discussed their struggles and how vital something like getting mammograms can be. The lyrics and rhythms of Emma's Revolution immediately caused an outbreak of dance and heart warming chants. The closing speaker was none other than Gloria Feldt, bestselling author of No Excuses: 9 Ways Women Can Change How We Think About Power. Feldt instructed her listeners on changing the definition of power and then stepping into and owning that power.

Passion Into Action has been an awakening experience that must have all its attendees eagerly expecting next year. I am certain that I will be back for the whole conference next time because even this one day has helped me build my voice as not only a young activist but as a woman as well.

Suing Over Sex Ed

Ms. Ghimenti, on whose behalf the ACLU is suing Clovis USD for teaching abstinence only sex ed, is an instructor of health education as well as a parent of three children. She has the credentials to speak with authority on the matter: "I want there to be medically accurate, scientifically based education for all youth in Clovis USD... If we don't give them the information, they won't be able to make good, healthy decisions."

▶▶▶ **ONLINE** ▶▶▶

Here are some interesting sites you may want to look at:

Factcheck.org “Consumer advocate” for voters

Votesmart.org Non-partisan org. providing unbiased facts

Vote411.org League of Women Voters informational site

Alternet.org Another view of the news

Rockthevote.com Engaging young people in voting

NameitChangeit.org Fighting sexism in the media

Politifact.com Tracking and rating the presidential campaign promises

On Facebook: We Stand Against The War on Women group page

Please share this newsletter-an easy way to double our circulation and exposure!

▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶ **www.citizensforchoice.org**