

Voice for Choice

Newsletter of the Kentucky Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Summer 2019

Equal Rights Amendment in 2020?

by the Rev. Dr. Cari Jackson,
Clergy-in-Residence, RCRC



Dr. Cari Jackson

Dr. Cari Jackson, who serves the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC) as Executive for Religious Leadership and Advocacy, recently visited the KRCRC chapter in order to help us plan our new three-year collaboration with RCRC. Dr. Jackson graduated from Oberlin College, holds three advanced degrees, and is an ordained pastor in the United Church of Christ. She has founded and led two community organizations, has taught at several academic institutions, and is the author of five books.

Soon after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, which prohibited sex discrimination in voting, the first version of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was proposed by Alice Paul and the National Woman's Party in 1923 to provide for the legal equality of the sexes and prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in all aspects of citizens' and human rights. At that time, it gained no traction.

Under the leadership of U.S. Representative Bella Abzug (D-NY, known for her tireless work for justice and her distinctive hats), the proposal for an ERA was revitalized

in the late 1960s, and won a two-thirds vote from the U.S. Congress in 1971. It was then approved by the U.S. Senate in 1972 and sent to the states for ratification. Thirty-eight states were needed in order for the ERA to become part of the U.S. constitution.

In the first year, twenty-two states ratified the ERA. Then the pace slowed as opposition organized. Low numbers of ratifications trickled in during subsequent years: eight in 1973, three in 1974, one in 1975, none in 1976, and one in 1977. For forty years, the number of ratifications remained

Cont. on page 7

Reproductive Freedom Update

from the ACLU of Kentucky
Amber Duke, ACLU-KY Communications Director

First, here's the good news. On June 27 the Kentucky Pregnant Workers Act (KY PWA) became law in Kentucky. That means Kentuckians who are working while pregnant, recovering from childbirth, or need to express breast milk at work are protected under the law from discrimination.

The KY PWA requires businesses with fifteen or more employees to allow workers with a limitation related to pregnancy to make changes or "reasonable accommodations" to their duties or schedule so that they can stay healthy and on the job. These reasonable accommodations could include more frequent or longer breaks, light duty, a modified work schedule, and access to a private, non-bathroom space to express breast milk.

Here's some more good news. Just a few weeks ago, the ACLU of Kentucky added a new field organizer to our advocacy team. Jackie McGranahan is our new field organizer

for reproductive rights. Jackie is an Eastern Kentucky native who comes to us from the Healing Place. Jackie is excited to put her organizing skills to work in the fight for reproductive freedom in Kentucky and looks forward to working alongside KRCRC and other allies.



Jackie McGranahan

Now, some tough news. Several anti-abortion laws went into effect June 27, including a "Trigger Law" that would ban abortion in Kentucky outright if SCOTUS overturned *Roe v. Wade*. The law has no immediate impact. Also, new medication abortion reporting and informed consent requirements

Cont. on page 4

Wayne's Words

by the Rev. Wayne A. Gnatuk,
Chair of Kentucky Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice

The Guttmacher Institute (guttmaner.org) is an organization committed to providing “a factual basis for the development of sound governmental policies and for public consideration of the sensitive issues involved in the promotion of reproductive health and rights.” Their website provides a wealth of information and is well worth bookmarking.

Guttmacher currently has a helpful map and article posted, “State Abortion Policy Landscape: From Hostile to Supportive.” They analyze the state abortion policy landscape for each state and assign it a value on the continuum “Very Hostile – Hostile – Leans Hostile – Middle Ground – Leans Supportive – Supportive – Very Supportive.” Their conclusion, most recently updated June 15: “In 2019, 30 states demonstrate hostility to abortion rights, while 14 states demonstrate support.”

In 2000, FYI, Guttmacher found that twenty-six states demonstrated hostility, while twelve were supportive. For 2019, Guttmacher lists Kentucky as “Hostile.” In 2000, Kentucky was listed as “Leans Hostile.”

It's clear that those of us working for reproductive justice here in Kentucky have our work cut out for us. We're clearly sliding in the wrong direction, and if the current administration has its way, it's going to get worse!

The Kentucky Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (KRCRC) is fully engaged in the struggle to protect the bodily autonomy of women. During the state's legislative sessions, we work to defeat any legislation intended to abridge abortion rights. Throughout the year, we appear at venues like the Flea Off Markets and the State Fair, providing educational materials and encouraging the general public to support reproductive justice.

We have now embarked on a three-year collaboration with the national offices of Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC) to accomplish five goals: (1) to increase the state-wide viability, visibility and impact of KRCRC; (2) to provide direct support for abortion care services across Kentucky; (3) to engage in diversified networking, outreach and collaboration; (4) to enhance legislative activism; (5) to increase faith community involvement.

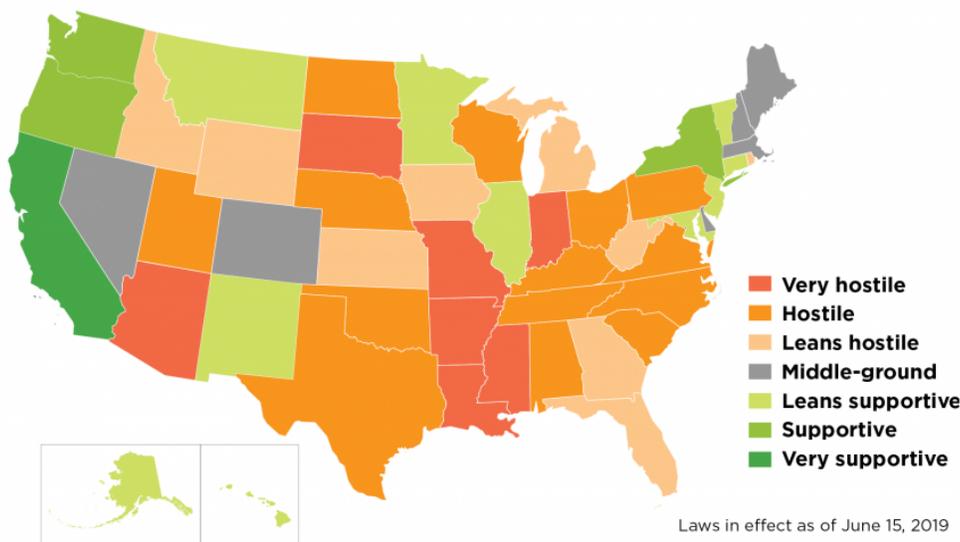
We're grateful to be collaborating with RCRC. They'll be bringing support to our work here in Kentucky in a variety of ways. You'll be hearing more about that as the collaboration proceeds.



Rev. Wayne A. Gnatuk

GUTTMACHER INSTITUTE

In 2019, 30 states demonstrate hostility to abortion rights, while 14 states demonstrate support



We're very close to having a half-time Field Organizer consultant working with us. This person will work to develop two new KRCRC chapters here in our state (we currently have two chapters, Lexington and Louisville). The consultant also will be working to develop relationships with faith communities who are supportive of reproductive justice.

If you'd like to be more involved in KRCRC's work, please let me know. You can email me at wagnatuk@outlook.com.

“Chef’s Choice Cook-Off” Served Up Food, Fun, Recognition

by Carol Savkovich, KRCRC Board Member

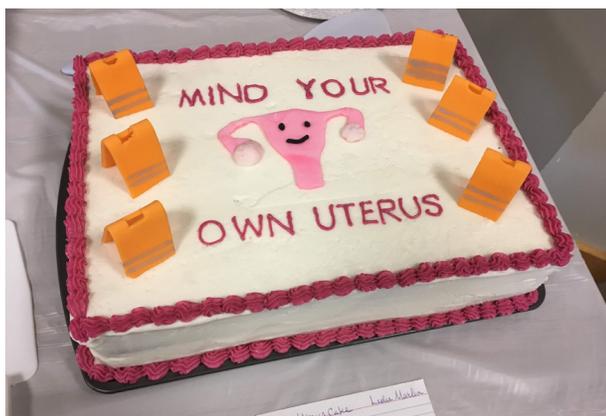
KRCRC’s May fundraiser, held at First Unitarian Church in Louisville, served up equal portions of great food (with some judging drama), a fun silent auction, and well-deserved recognition for a pro-choice activist, Meg Sasse Stern.

Twenty-two amateur chefs brought their creative talents to the event. Judging the five food categories were the state legislators and local heroes Rep. Mary Lou Marzian and Rep. Attica Scott, as well as a well-known Louisville restaurant chef. And the winning chefs (who each received a \$20 Lotsa Pasta gift card and bragging rights) were:

Salad with Beans: Trish Ramey, “Mexican Bean Salad”

Bread: Michael Ginsberg, “Beautiful Bread”

Soup/Stew, Carnivore: KRCRC Board Chair Wayne A. Gnatuk, “Spicy Chicken and Corn Stew”



Award-winning cake by Leslie Marlin

Soup/Stew, Vegetarian: Jane Martin Buckley, “Chilled Cucumber & Avocado Soup”

Dessert in a 9x13 Pan: Leslie Marlin, “Cake, Mind Your Own Uterus”

A silent auction with over twenty items kept attendees busy, and brought in over \$1,000 for KRCRC. A late, surprise addition was a ticket to the hottest show in town, *Hamilton*, donated that evening by an attendee. KRCRC board members provided volunteer labor and also assembled several auction baskets (chocolates, wines, and more). Our thanks to all the auction item donors!

Board member Carol Savkovich recognized Meg Sasse Stern (profiled in our last newsletter) with KRCRC’s Rev. Gil Schroerlucke Reproductive Justice Award for her many years as an activist with clinic escorts, Louisville Safety Zone, and for her work with the Kentucky Health Justice Network (KHJN), where she is now Support Fund Director. Carol presented Meg with a leather satchel (with a leather luggage tag laser-engraved with her name and the award).

All in all, a fine evening and a successful fundraiser for KRCRC’s reproductive justice work!

A BIG
Thank You to
SIGNARAMA DOWNTOWN
for donating a new
Banner and Tablecloth
to KRCRC!

Mexican Bean Salad

Cooked by Trish Ramey

3 15-oz cans black beans, rinsed and drained

3 15-oz cans kidney beans, drained

3 15-oz cans cannellini beans, drained and rinsed

3 green bell peppers, chopped

3 red bell peppers, chopped

3 red onions, chopped

1-1/2 C olive oil

1-1/2 C red wine vinegar

1/4 C + 2 T fresh lime juice

3 T lemon juice

1/4 C + 2 T sugar

3 T salt

3 cloves garlic, crushed

3/4 C chopped fresh cilantro

4-1/2 tsp ground cumin

4-1/2 tsp ground black pepper

3 dashes hot pepper sauce

1-1/2 tsp chili powder

In a large bowl, combine beans, bell peppers and red onion.

In a small bowl, whisk together remaining ingredients. Pour dressing over salad, mix well. Chill thoroughly, and serve cold.

The Lexington Chapter Continues to Grow

by Melissa Sevier, LKRCRC Member

The Lexington Chapter of KRCRC continues to make strides in activity and membership.

A prominent social media presence has become a realized goal for the group. Member Karen Conley created a Facebook page that already has hundreds of followers and thousands of reads. Please like the page at <http://facebook.com/lexkrccr>.

Samantha Ratcliffe and Wayne A. Gnatuk have been hard at work creating a printed brochure to hand out at events. After a final review, it will be ready for publication. Additionally, Wayne, Linda Lawrence, and Doug Slaymaker have formed a taskforce to create the content for an additional handout—a facts page about the group and its purpose.

The chapter continues to add members. Through word of mouth and at every event, new people express an interest in joining our work, or at least in finding a way to be supportive.

Most recently, LKRCRC had a table at the Lexington Pride Festival, June 28-29. This year's festival was a significant marker in a couple of ways. First, it celebrated twenty years of a fairness ordinance in Lexington, and a historical marker

was erected to commemorate that anniversary. The second milestone, and one LKRCRC is proud to be a part of, was a record number of vendors, and also a record number of religious organizations. Out of 200 vendors, twenty of those were religiously affiliated. It's another reminder that a growing number of faith-based groups are supportive of reproductive choice.

Future plans include participating in the KRCRC booth at the state fair in Louisville, as well as contributing to other festivals in or near Lexington. With nearly half the year yet to come, the group is leaning forward toward making a difference.



Nebe N. at the Lexington Pride Festival

Update *Cont. from page 1*

came into effect. The law requires doctors to share unproven information about so-called “abortion reversal” with patients. Interestingly, the fact sheet that the state requires the clinic to give to patients includes this line: “ACOG [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists] reported there is not sufficient scientific evidence to conclude that progesterone resulted in the continuation of those pregnancies. (ACOG Publication: Facts Are Important: Medication Abortion “Reversal” is Not Supported by Science).”

Kentucky's two latest abortion bans (the six-week abortion ban and the ban on abortion if the reason is the race, gender, disability status, color, or national origin of the fetus) are still blocked from enforcement while we litigate. Kentucky's narrated ultrasound law is now in effect after a divided federal appeals court overturned a lower court's ruling. The 2017 Kentucky law requires the physicians who perform ultrasound examinations before an abortion to narrate the results and to make the fetal heartbeat audible to patients, even to those who are closing their eyes or asking the doctor to stop, or even to those who doctors believe might be harmed. Our attorneys asked a larger panel of Sixth Circuit judges to re-hear the case, but our

request was denied. The law went into effect on July 5. As of this writing, our attorneys are working to decide whether to file a cert petition with the Supreme Court of the United States.

At the same time, our attorneys continue to defend our court wins in the transfer/transport agreement case as well as the D&E abortion ban case on appeal at the Sixth Circuit.

The national ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project is a close partner in our fight to maintain access to abortion in Kentucky. In addition to the battles here, the New York-based team is also supporting work on the ground in Georgia, Alabama, Ohio, and in other places where access is under direct threat. The ACLU is totally committed to ensuring that everyone seeking abortion can do so without stigma or judgment. Thank you for supporting and standing with us in this work.



Planned Parenthood Action Kentucky: *If they come for our rights, we are coming for their seats!*

by Heather Bruner, Donor Engagement Officer
Planned Parenthood of Indiana and Kentucky

It's been a banner year for Planned Parenthood in Kentucky. As many of you have heard, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Indiana and Kentucky (PPAIK) has entered into a strategic alliance with Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii (PPVNH). This alliance will strengthen Planned Parenthood's mission in the fight for access to reproductive health and rights.

The alliance is now coordinating health care services, advocacy efforts, legal advocacy, and education. We are working together to address the needs of people in a diverse mix of states from Hawaii to Kentucky. We are moving to put our money where our megaphone is and protect and advance access to reproductive health care for all people in the commonwealth.

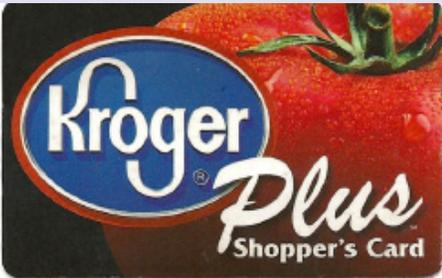
These vital services will be threatened, however, until we have the strength we need to change Kentucky's political climate. Planned Parenthood has already begun the process of surveying Kentuckians for the first time on Planned Parenthood and local issues in the area of reproductive health care. In addition, we have surveyed and interviewed candidates up and down this year's ballot. From there, we will endorse candidates whose values align with ours and provide messaging where it is needed to shape the conversation around reproductive health care, sex education, and abortion access in these elections. Printed materials will flood mailboxes, ads will run across social media, and texts will be

sent out reminding Kentuckians what we truly stand for and what these elections will mean. If our elected officials continue to take away our rights, we will take away their seats. However, the most exciting resource Planned Parenthood will provide will be through our field work. We are committed to one-on-one conversations at the doors and on the phones. Our community organizers and volunteers will communicate directly with voters about the real impact of reproductive care and sexual education in both urban and rural Kentucky.



We can't do this without you. Please donate online at <http://bit.ly/PPActionKY> or via mail to Planned Parenthood Action Kentucky PAC, 842 S. 7th St., Louisville, KY 40203. Now is the time to stand with Planned Parenthood, speak out to end these bans, and support an organization committed to ensuring bodily autonomy for all Kentuckians. Your support of Planned Parenthood Action Kentucky is crucial. Contributions to the PAC are not tax-deductible

.....



Do you shop at Kroger, with a Kroger Plus card? You can be giving KRCRC a financial boost, at no cost to you! Two simple steps:
1. Go to www.kroger.com/communityrewards. Create an account or sign in.
2. Follow the instructions to select an organization. KRCRC is #SU106.

Now you're ready to help KRCRC every time you shop! Just use your Kroger card (including at the gas pump), and KRCRC will receive a small percent of your purchases. Thank you!

State, Church, and Reproductive Rights in Switzerland

by Muriel Schmid, KRCRC Board Member

Muriel Schmid was born in Geneva, Switzerland and grew up in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. She is trained as a minister and served the Swiss Reformed church for ten years before leaving Switzerland. She then pursued an academic career and taught religious studies for ten years at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. She is currently the Administrative Director for Christian Peacemaker Teams (www.cpt.org).

Switzerland, my home country, doesn't have a state religion, but the state recognizes a few official churches (the Roman Catholic Church, the Swiss Reformed Church, and in some places the Old Catholic Church and Jewish congregations as well). These churches are funded by the taxpayers' money. Church and state often engage in controversies on issues such as LGBTQ rights, euthanasia, women's rights, and reproductive rights. But their positions are not always what we would expect!

I grew up in a rural part of Switzerland where my father was a minister in the Swiss Reformed Church (the equivalent of the Presbyterian Church in the USA). At a very young age, I decided to become a minister, and was ordained in the Swiss Reformed Church in 1990. During my years of study, the ratio of women to men was almost 50/50, and in ministry women represented approximately thirty percent of my colleagues. By contrast, Switzerland did not give women the right to vote at the federal level until 1971! I grew up with that reality: a mother, a godmother, aunts, and grandmothers who could not vote! Strangely, the church was ahead of the state in recognizing women's rights.

This same tension between church and state has informed the Swiss conversation about abortion. In 1942, Switzerland passed a law that allowed for the termination of pregnancies that resulted from rape or posed a risk to the woman's health; abortion in other instances was illegal. In practice,



however, this law was not strictly enforced and abortions took place without much scrutiny. More restrictive laws were defeated in the 1970s and the 1980s by a large majority of voters. In 2002, despite opposition from the conservative Christian "pro-life" movement, seventy-two percent of Swiss voters approved a new law that allowed abortion during the first twelve weeks of pregnancy.

In 2014, conservative groups submitted a proposal that would have prevented public health insurance companies from covering abortion procedures. The Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches publicly rejected this proposal, stating that "abortion is not a private matter, but an issue that concerns society as a whole." In 2012, ten years after the new law was introduced, the abortion rate in Switzerland was one of the lowest in the world. This low rate can be attributed to widely available contraception and sex education. Additionally, the morning-after pill was made available without prescription in 2002.

On this and other so-called "moral" issues, the dialogue between state and church maintains a healthy balance in law-making processes. When the church is too conservative, the state often swings the pendulum in the other direction and vice versa. This may be a strange advantage of the *non-separation* between church and state.



Choice = Life

by K. B. Johnson

K.B. Johnson, a Louisville wife, mother, grandmother, and feminist, wrote the basic structure of this poem after hearing on the news about 15 years ago of a young girl who had been impregnated by her father. Then, in order to keep her from having an abortion, he shot her while she slept. It has evolved over the years to the form it takes today.

Oh Sister

You died for me
on sweat soaked sheets
while empty stomachs watched with vacant stares,
another mouth to feed
How many times you labored and lost
Because you had no choice.

Oh Sister

You died for me
all the while pleading for escape
knowing that the scarlet letter of sin
would haunt you forever
So you felt you had no choice.

Oh Sister

You died for me
on a coat hanger cross, alone and afraid
Now you reside in the company of saints
But then you had no choice.

Oh Sister

You died for me
in back alley stench
even knowing the risk
You felt you had no choice.

Oh Sister

You died for me
in your bed, while you slept
your father stole your innocence
then put a bullet in your head

Time ran out

And still you had no choice.

Oh Sister

Don't die for me
even if flowing black robes play an executioner's song
I must fight for your life
By fighting for your choice.

Oh Sister

May you always have a choice.
May we always have a choice.

Equal Rights *Cont. from page 1.*

at thirty-five – just three shy of the required thirty-eight.

When the extension Congress had granted until June 30, 1982 had run out, the ERA was reintroduced in July 1982 and has been reintroduced every session of Congress since then. In 2017, the forty years of inactivity was were broken when Nevada became the thirty-sixth state to ratify. In 2018, Illinois became the thirty-seventh state.

There are current efforts to advocate ratification in states that never ratified: North Carolina, Tennessee, Florida and Arizona.

Of the thirty-seven states that have ratified, five want to rescind — Kentucky, Tennessee, Nebraska, Idaho and South Dakota. Even though Congress has never before accepted such rescissions, in this exceptional time when so many precedents are overturned, it would not be beyond imagination that conservatives might fight to have these rescissions recognized.

Without this amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the current legislative onslaught on women's rights, particularly their right to reproductive care, will continue. It is imperative that women have equal protection under the law.

People of faith can play a major role in helping realize the ERA as a U.S. Constitutional amendment in a few

ways. One, mobilize fellow Kentuckians to push against any efforts to affirm the state's rescission of the ERA. Two, connect with friends and colleagues who live in the states where efforts for ratification are underway to make sure they know about efforts in their states and become involved. Three, donate to national organizations such as the ERA Coalition leading this final push for ratification. Four, of course, pray.

Despite the number of years already elapsed since this legislation was initially introduced, the time is ripe now. With the collective efforts of people across the country, the upcoming 2020 election season can bring the realization of the Equal Rights Amendment. If ever we needed it, we need this constitutional amendment now.





**Kentucky Religious Coalition
for Reproductive Choice**
PO Box 4065
Louisville, KY 40204

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

The Religious Community in Support of an Individual's Right to Choose!



Newsletter Editor:
Ann T. Allen
Design & Layout:
Jennifer Shank

Voice for Choice is a publication of the Kentucky Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.

Tel: 1.866.606.0988
Email: info@krcrc.org
Web: www.krcrc.org
Twitter: @Ky_RCRC

KRCRC
PO Box 4065
Louisville, KY 40204

KENTUCKY STATE FAIR

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

KRCRC needs YOUR help for our fair booth!
Free admission & parking for volunteers.

Fair dates: August 15-25.

Back by popular demand:
our fun **Spinning Wheel of Reproductive Health!**

For details and to volunteer, contact KRCRC at info@krcrc.org.

*For details and to
volunteer,
contact KRCRC at
info@krcrc.org*