

7 Building Bridges



Zonta Foundation for Women and
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And Beacons

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**U S Supreme Court
 Rebuffs Free Speech
 Challenge To Abortion
 Clinic Buffer Zones**

Reprinted From Reuters,
 February 24, 2025-By Andrew
 Chung

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The U.S. Supreme Court declined on Monday to hear a challenge to the legality of buffer zones used to protect access to abortion clinics and limit harassment of patients in a challenge brought by anti-abortion activists who have argued that their free speech rights were being violated.

The justices turned away appeals by self-described "sidewalk counselors" in New Jersey and Illinois of lower court decisions to throw out their lawsuits that had claimed that the buffer zones violate free speech protections under the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment. The activists had been asking the Supreme Court to overturn its 2000 ruling allowing a Colorado buffer zone law.

Conservative Justices Clarence
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 Thomas and Samuel Alito said they would have taken up the appeals.

The legality of so-called buffer zones that create a perimeter around abortion facilities, or "floating" zones that put distance between demonstrators and a clinic's patients or staff, has been legally contested for decades.

The issue pits free speech rights against concerns over harassment and violence by anti-abortion protesters.

The Supreme Court has a 6-3 conservative majority. In 2022, the court overturned the 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling that had legalized abortion nationwide, ending its recognition of a woman's constitutional right to terminate her pregnancy. Since that ruling, the issue of buffer zones has regained prominence.

While numerous Republican-led states have banned or severely restricted abortion, some municipalities in states where it remains legal have adopted

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U S Supreme Court Rebuffs Free Speech Challenge To Abortion Clinic Buffer Zones

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buffer zones to limit intimidation and harassment, drawing legal challenges.

In Carbondale, Illinois, a group called Coalition Life that organizes sidewalk counselors sued after the local city council passed such an ordinance in 2023. The measure established a floating 8-foot (2.4 meters) buffer that prevents people from approaching people without their permission in the vicinity of healthcare facilities, in response to increased threats and disorderly acts at abortion clinics. The ordinance has since been repealed.

It had been modeled after a nearly identical Colorado law that the Supreme Court upheld in 2000 in a case called *Hill v. Colorado*.

The Chicago-based 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed the coalition's case in March 2024, noting that the challengers cannot prevail so long as the *Hill* ruling remains in place.

Thomas, in his dissent on Monday, criticized the court's *Hill* decision and expressed regret that the justices had declined "an invitation to set the record straight on *Hill*'s defunct status."

"I would have taken this opportunity to explicitly overrule *Hill*," Thomas added.

The coalition's lawyers had asked the Supreme Court to overrule the *Hill* ruling because in places where "anti-abortion views are disfavored," buffer zones are a "ready tool to try to silence those who advance them - and to do so precisely when and where their speech may matter most."

In New Jersey, a sidewalk counselor named Jeryl Turco sued the city of Englewood for adopting a 2014 ordinance that created an 8-foot buffer zone protecting the entrances and driveways of healthcare facilities.

The buffer was set after reports of people associated with an evangelical Christian ministry engaging in aggressive and hostile protests outside Metropolitan Medical Associates, a local abortion clinic. Turco was not associated with the ministry, and said she delivered only peaceful counseling.

The Philadelphia-based 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals threw out Turco's complaint in January 2024, saying a buffer zone can help protect an individual's health, safety and access to pregnancy-related services, and "does not place a substantial burden on Turco's speech." The 3rd Circuit said its ruling was in line with the *Hill* precedent.

Alexis McGill Johnson, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, said after the Supreme Court acted on Monday that buffer zones "help to create a safer environment for patients, providers and staff."

"No patient should have to encounter threats, intimidation and attacks while seeking healthcare - and no medical provider or health center staff should be threatened because of their work to deliver abortion care to patients in need," Johnson said.

(Reporting by Andrew Chung in New York and John Kruzell in Washington; Editing by Will Dunham)

Friends And Neighbors Remember New York Civil Rights Leader Hazel 'Ma' Dukes

Reprinted From The March 1, 2025 NY Daily News.com-By Emma Seiwel and Nicholas Williams

Neighbors and friends were left shocked at the news of the passing of [civil rights icon and Harlem legend](#) on Saturday morning. She was 92.

Dukes' son Ronald Dukes [confirmed her death](#). Dukes, who was the NAACP's New York State Conference president, had been battling an illness in recent weeks, her son told the Amsterdam News.

Karen Boykin-Towns, 59, a leader of the NAACP National Board of Directors, said Dukes called her "godchild."

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Friends And Neighbors Remember New York Civil Rights Leader Hazel 'Ma' Dukes

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"I've known Hazel Dukes since 1987 when I worked for David Paterson," Boykin-Towns said. "I am the vice chair of the NAACP National Board of Directors, for which Hazel was one of our esteemed members. And it's because of her that I have risen to the highest positions in the organization. Due to her support, her leadership, her guidance and even chastisement."



Dr. Hazel N. Dukes, President of the NAACP New York State Conference attends the Inspired New York honors at Tian at the Riverbank on March 13, 2012 in New York City. (Photo by Joe Corrigan/Getty Images)

Dukes was an avid churchgoer who attended services every Sunday on Long Island and spent her time teaching Sunday school, Boykin-Towns said.

Dukes recently ran the entire NAACP Annual Meeting on Feb. 15, where she gave those that were close to her a handwritten Valentine's Day card along with chocolates in a small bag, according to Boykin-Towns.

"She was intentional with her love," she said. "She loved so many, and she made everyone feel like they were her very special one."

Daniel Paterson, who is the brother of former New York Governor David Paterson, came by Dukes' Harlem apartment Saturday afternoon and praised her loyalty, dedication and upbeat personality.

"I mean, Hazel was always somebody who was in the mix," Paterson said, "and as a Black woman working around leadership, Hazel was one of the few people, as a Black woman, to be able to rise up and engage in events and concerns that meant everything to everybody. If something happens in our community, Hazel shows up. Hazel was always on the front line."

Dukes was awarded the [Spingarn Medal](#) in 2023 during the NAACP's 114th National Convention in Boston, which was presented to her by Hillary Clinton.

"There are very few words for this kind of feeling," Paterson said. "But in one sense, we're thankful for having had Hazel, but we are brokenhearted because we miss Hazel."

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Friends And Neighbors Remember New York Civil Rights Leader Hazel 'Ma' Dukes

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Reverend Diane Lacey, 86, who lived in the same building as Dukes, shed a tear after learning of the news of the trailblazer's death. Lacey remembered Dukes as someone who was "always on the go" and a "community woman."

"SheMai was definitely a lady in every way," Lacey said. "Always very well-dressed. We admired her clothes and her style. She was also very much like a regular person. Very down-to-earth person among her neighbors. And you could see her life played out in different ways; sometimes she had to be very strong and aggressive and outspoken. She was a leader of her association she belonged to. We saw her as both powerful and as a neighbor and a friend," Lacey said.

Dukes was the first civilian in U.S. history to administer the oath of office to a governor when she swore in Gov. Hochul in 2023.

Mayor Adams on Saturday ordered all flags on city buildings to be lowered to half-staff in honor of Dukes.

One neighbor, J. Gorham, 63 simply recalled Dukes as "the sweetest lady ever."

"She's been in the building for years," he said. "She was the sweetest lady ever. Always said hi to everybody. She would always talk. Knowing her as a neighbor, yes, she was the sweetest lady."

"She was 92 years old and that says it all," Boykin-Townes said. "We should all be so lucky to live that long and live a life like hers."

Maimonides Health Opens First Menopause Center In Brooklyn

Reprinted From CMS News, March 5, 2025-By Hannah Klinger

A new center in Brooklyn is working to change the conversation surrounding menopause. Maimonides Health has officially unveiled its dedicated Menopause Center, designed to provide specialized care and support for women navigating midlife changes.

The new center, located in Maimonides Doctors Multispecialty Pavilion in Borough Park, offers a holistic approach to care, including preventive services, physical and mental wellness support, and specialized treatments.

At the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Dr. Scott Chudnoff – chair of obstetrics, gynecology and women's health at Maimonides – highlighted a long-overdue gap in women's health care.

"We've done so much as a society to recognize what happens when women go through puberty," he said. "But what is there for women when they're going through menopause? At best, maybe a trusted friend."

"We're the first comprehensive menopause center and only comprehensive medical center in Brooklyn," said Sarah Zuercher, Director of Clinical Programs at Maimonides OBGYN. "Even though there's 1.5 million women in this borough, there's actually a real lack of menopause and perimenopause specialized care."

Patients Highlight Importance Of Getting Help During "Integral Time"

The center's mission is to serve women like Victoria Pfenninghaus, who is navigating perimenopause. Dismayed at a lack of concern from doctors, she began seeking treatment at the new center.

"This attitude of like, "There's nothing to do. Like, you can't get away from this. It's coming. Just, like, you're lucky that, you know, a lot of people deal with worse... just buckle up and deal with it," she said of the responses from previous providers.

Data from the National Institutes of Health shows that 85% of women ages 40-60 experience menopause-related symptoms, and 75% of those who seek care are left untreated by doctors.

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It became a personal experience for Donna Klassen, founder of Let's Talk Menopause, a Brooklyn-based national nonprofit. Klassen found out that she had breast cancer in 2019, and while doctors were doing testing in preparation for her double mastectomy, they found two large cysts in her ovaries. After undergoing an oophorectomy, she went into surgical menopause.

"At this really integral time in a woman's life, it's really important to get health care. And that's actually when most women fall off a cliff. They don't know where to start," she said.

Klassen believes that the new Menopause Center offers a fresh approach that can transform menopause from a silent struggle into a supportive new chapter.

Ladies Who Kept Lights Burning: Women Lighthouse Keepers Celebrated At Englewood

Jim Beckerman, NorthJersey.com Wed, March 5,



Fanny Salter, the last woman lighthouse keeper in the U.S., retired in 1947

Ladies Bearing Light.

It's a familiar image — whether it's Florence Nightingale and her lamp, the Statue of Liberty and her torch, or the damsel with the beacon at the start of every Columbia Picture. When our culture wants to make a woman look heroic — which is, historically, seldom — it gives her a lantern. Maybe that's why there's always been a mystique about female lighthouse keepers.

"These were industrious women, and they worked very hard," said Mary Rasa, military and maritime historian. She'll be giving a Women's History Month presentation, "Women Lighthouse Keepers," at 7 p.m. March 11, via Zoom. The ogram — free — is being presented by the Englewood Public Library, but can only be accessed remotely; advance registration is required. Visit bccls.libcal.com/event/13797340 to get the Zoom code.

"It was a non-stop job, Rasa said. "You were up sunset to sunrise, and you had to make sure the light was on. One of the woman keepers said she had to climb up three times as night to tend the light. Depending where you were, you had a fog signal, and the fog signal had to be wound. Then there was a regular maintenance schedule. You had to paint the tower. The windows had to be cleaned regularly, because there was soot that would build up on them. They had to polish everything."

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Women To The Rescue

Back in the 19th century, lighthouse keeper was one of the very few non-clerical government jobs open to women, Rasa said. And even then it was usually by default. "Generally they took over when their husband or father died," Rasa said. "A lot of women were appointed assistant keepers, alongside their husbands."

Most of these women toiled away on remote islands and reefs, living a solitary life where the conventions of the mainland — including the proper place for women — didn't apply. But then stories began to appear in the popular press, about these heroic ladies who kept the lights burning in fog and storm, and who risked their lives to go out in the tempest and rescue the victims of shipwreck.

"But Ida, ready and prompt at need, Has rescued many before; Nor heeds the gale as o'er stone and weed. She flies to the rock-bound shore."

So Ida Lewis, of Lime Rock Lighthouse in Rhode Island, was eulogized in a 19th century poem. She was written up in Putnam's Magazine and The New York Tribune, appeared on the cover of Harper's Weekly, met President Ulysses S. Grant, and was known as "The Bravest Woman in America" for her numerous life-saving expeditions — including one, in 1869, in which she rescued two soldiers. It was said she could row better than a man. The lighthouse has since been renamed for her.

"She was credited with saving a number of people in her rowboat," Rasa said. "But there was a debate at the time: is it OK for women to row a boat? So I guess they said, if you save a life, it's OK."

Don't Let It Go Out

Lewis is one of five women that Rasa will be profiling in her talk. Another — one of the most famous — is 16-year-old Abbie Burgess, who became legendary for tending the twin towers of the Matinicus Rock Light in Maine, while her father was away during a dire winter storm in 1856. She's been the subject of plays, children's books. A U.S. Coast Guard ship was named after her.

The remote light station had been low on food and fuel — the supply boat hadn't come — when the father went to the mainland, 25 miles away, for provisions. "Keep the lights burning, Abbie," he said before he left. Then all hell broke loose.

"This horrible storm swept the island," Rasa said. "Their house was underwater. She had to take her mother and younger siblings into one of the towers. She took the chicken, so they could eat raw eggs. That's how they survived." Most important, for 21 days she kept the lights burning. Or at least one of them. "And it was a teenage girl doing this," Rasa said.

Originally from Long Branch, Rasa became in 1992 a park ranger at Sandy Hook, the 6-mile barrier spit in Monmouth County that happens to contain America's oldest working lighthouse. Shipwrecks, and the resultant loss of revenue, were a big concern at a time when most goods moved by sea. The Sandy Hook Lighthouse, erected 1764, was paid for by public lottery. "In Sandy Hook, the lighthouse was strategically important to shipping, and later to the military," Rasa said.

Letters From The Light

While Rasa was working there, she discovered a cache of letters addressed to Sarah Patterson, assistant keeper of the light from 1864 to 1884 (her brother Charles was keeper).

"There were about 100, basically all correspondence to her, and we didn't know that she even existed," Rasa said. One letter from Charles to Sarah — she had left the light by that point — paints an especially warm picture. "There was one letter her brother wrote saying we miss you, and that one of his sons — her nephew — had said 'it was Aunt Sarah's lamp and to make it shine.'"

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Ladies Who Kept Lights Burning: Women Lighthouse Keepers Celebrated At Englewood

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The letters fired Rasa's interest in Patterson — she tracked down Sarah's descendants, and her grave — and in female lighthouse keepers in general. Sarah is recognized as part of the [New Jersey Women's Heritage Trail](#).

Others she'll talk about, in her presentation, include Fanny Salter, of Turkey Point Light in Maryland, the last female lightkeeper in the U.S. (she retired in 1947). Also Katherine "Kate" Walker, who tended Robbins Reef Lighthouse — the stubby red-and-white lighthouse near the entrance of Kill van Kull, which can be seen from the Staten Island Ferry. "The lighthouse was more difficult to care for than a family of children," she told the New York Times in 1906. "She was 4-foot-10 and also saved people in her rowboat," Rasa said.

Today, virtually all U.S. lighthouses are automated. The women are gone from the lighthouse business. So is the labor, and the danger. And, possibly, the romance.

"It was a lonely job, but also a very hardy job," Rasa said. "It was something not easy to do."

This article originally appeared on NorthJersey.com: [Women lighthouse keepers celebrated at Englewood NJ Library](#)

International Women's Day Protests Demand Equal Rights And An End To Discrimination, Sexual Violence

Reprinted From CBS New, March 8, 2025



Demonstrators cheer during a march to commemorate International Women's Day Saturday, March 8, 2025, in Los Angeles. WILLIAM LIANG / AP

Women across the world will call for equal pay, reproductive rights, education, justice and decision-making jobs during demonstrations marking International Women's Day on Saturday.

Officially recognized by the United Nations in 1977, International Women's Day is commemorated in different ways

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and to varying degrees in places around the world. Protests are often political - and at times violent - rooted in women's efforts to improve their rights as workers.

Demonstrations are planned from Tokyo to Mexico City, and this year's global theme is "Accelerate Action," coming at a moment where many activists worry that the current political environment may result in a backsliding on many of the rights they've long fought for. One in four countries reported a backlash against women's rights last year, according to U.N. data.

Here Is What To Know About The March 8 Global Event:

International Women's Day is a global celebration - and a call to action - marked by demonstrations, mostly of women, around the world, ranging from combative protests to charity runs. Some celebrate the economic, social and political achievements of women, while others urge governments to guarantee equal pay, access to health care, justice for victims of gender-based violence and education for girls.

It is an official holiday in more than 20 countries, including [Afghanistan](#), Burkina Faso, Ukraine, Russia and Cuba, the only one in the Americas.

As in other aspects of life, social media plays an important role during International Women's Day, particularly by amplifying attention to demonstrations held in countries with repressive governments toward women and dissent in general.

While the idea behind a women's day originated in the U.S. with the American Socialist Party in 1909, it was a German feminist who pushed for a global commemoration during an international conference of socialist women held in 1910 in Copenhagen. The following year, events across Europe marked the day, and during World War I, women used it to protest the armed conflict, which lasted from 1914 to 1918.

International Women's Day is observed on March 8 after a massive protest in Russia on Feb. 23, 1917, that led to the country's eventual withdrawal from the war. At the time, Russia had not adopted the Gregorian calendar and still used the Julian calendar.

"On Feb. 23 in Russia, which was March 8 in Western Europe, women went out on the streets and protested for bread and peace," said Kristen Ghodsee, professor and chair of Russian and East European studies at the University of Pennsylvania. "The authorities weren't able to stop them, and then, once the men saw that the women were out on the streets, all of the workers started coming and joining the women."

The U.N. began commemorating the holiday in 1975, which was International Women's Year, and its General Assembly officially recognized the day two years later.

Women in Eastern Europe have long received flowers on March 8 - and sometimes even gotten the day off from work. But chocolates and candy can come across as belittling gestures, showing a lack of understanding of the struggles driving women to protest, particularly in regions where protests have been combative.

In Turkey, women in 2023 braved an official ban on an International Women's Day march in Istanbul, and protested for about two hours before police used tear gas to disperse the crowd and detain dozens of people.

In Mexico, which hosts one of the region's biggest marches, celebrations this year are marked by sharp contrasts. While the country celebrates its first female president, many also mourn victims of stark violence against women - including femicide. In Mexico and Latin America, soaring rates of violence against women and persistent machismo often leave tension simmering on March 8 as protesters demand justice.

Globally, a woman or girl is killed every 10 minutes by a family member or partner, according to U.N. figures, and

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International Women's Day Protests Demand Equal Rights And An End To Discrimination,
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women being exposed to conflict has significantly jumped over the past decade.

Ghodsee said commemorating International Women's Day is now more important than ever, as women have lost gains made in the last century, chief among them the 2022 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn a nationwide right to abortion, which ended constitutional protections that had been in place nearly 50 years.

Border Patrol Agent Pleads Guilty To Telling Women To Show Their Breasts To Enter US
Reprinted from The March 10, 2025 USA Today-By Fernando Cervates., Jr.

A United States Border Patrol agent pleaded guilty in federal court to having told multiple women to expose their breasts during interviews to gain admission to the country.

Shane Millan, 53, was [charged in August 2024](#) with four misdemeanor counts of deprivation of rights under color of law, according to court records reviewed by USA TODAY. According to court records, Millan pleaded guilty to two of the charges on Friday at the [U.S. District Court for the Northern District of New York](#).

Millan admitted that he told multiple women to show him their breasts under the guise of a legitimate search during virtual processing calls before allowing them access to the country, court documents show.

His sentencing is scheduled for July 7 and Millan faces up to two years in prison and a fine of up to \$200,000. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection declined to comment, saying, "As a matter of policy, CBP doesn't comment on former employees, nor criminal cases that are ongoing."

A String Of Abuse

According to court documents, Millan's first incident occurred around Aug. 10, 2023.

Prosecutors said Millan told a woman he was interviewing to expose herself to him over webcam, "purportedly as part of a legitimate search of her person incident to her admission into the United States."

But prosecutors said the search was done purely for his satisfaction.

Prosecutors then said Millan used the same tactic with three other women on Aug. 25, 2023.

Court records also say Millan used his government computer to look for phrases in Spanish that he could use for his actions, some of which include:

- "I will also need you to lift your bra, please"
- "Your file says you have tattoos across your chest"
- "To verify, I will need you to lift your shirt, please"
- "I will indeed you to lift your shirt and bra also, please"
- "Can you lift it higher please"

Millan's attorney was not immediately available to comment on the guilty plea.

Fernando Cervantes Jr. is a trending news reporter for USA TODAY. Reach him at fernando.cervantes@gannett.com and follow him on X @fern_cerv_.

This article originally appeared on USA TODAY: [Border Patrol agent admits telling women to show breasts to enter US](#)

Birthdays
April And May

None

Common Medical Scan 'Routinely' Delivers Excess Radiation, May Cause 36,000 Cases Of Cancer a Year

Reprinted From People, March 13, 2025-By Cara Lynn Shultz

CT scans 'routinely' deliver up to three times the radiation they should, which can lead to 36,000 cases of [cancer](#) a year.

"In the ninety million CT scans performed annually in the U.S., many patients still routinely receive radiation doses two or three times what they should," Dr. Rebecca Smith-Bindman, a University of California San Francisco professor in residence of epidemiology, biostatistics, obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive medicine, said in a release from [UCSF](#).

CT (short for computed tomography, and often pronounced as "cat") scans use a mix of X-ray and computer technology to provide detailed images of the body, [John Hopkins Medicine](#) explains, adding that "the amount of radiation dose used in a CT scan is small."

But as Smith-Bindman says, radiologists are defaulting to using higher radiation doses when a lower dose would suffice; while the higher doses generally mean more detailed scans, they're not always required for the specific diagnosis.

When testing approximately 48,000 CT machines in 17 hospitals, Smith-Bindman's research found that 30% of the scanners emitted too high a radiation dose — and image quality was never a concern.

As she says, this excess radiation, "will lead to cancer in a small percentage of patients, approximately 36,000 [cancers](#) every year. This means that CT causes two percent of annual [cancer](#), and we can reduce that risk substantially without reducing the value of the scans."

She is working with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to better regulate the radiation used by these machines. "Historically, it was thought that each radiologist could decide on their own what they felt was the appropriate radiation dose and image quality for each scan, as opposed to having standards that everyone follows. This led to unacceptable variation among providers," Smith-Bindman said.

Her team has created software that will be provided, [free of charge](#), to hospitals to help them ensure they are using the appropriate radiation dose without sacrificing image quality.

"No one intentionally harms their patients; they just haven't been paying attention to radiation dose."

Dates To Remember

April

April 12th: Passover begins at sundown
April 13th: Palm Sunday
April 18th: Good Friday
April 20th: Easter
April 20th: Greek Orthodox Easter
April 22nd^d: Earth Day
April 24th: Holocaust Remembrance Day

May

May 1st: May Day
May 1st: National Day of Prayer
May 11th: Mother's Day
May 17th: Armed Forces Day
May 26th: Memorial Day

Former Texas Megachurch Pastor Indicted On Five Counts Of Child Sexual Abuse In Oklahoma
Reprinted From The March 13, 2025 NY Daily News-By Theresa Braine



Pastor Robert Morris is pictured at Gateway Church Dallas in 2020. (AP)

A former Texas megachurch founding pastor and onetime Trump spiritual adviser was indicted Wednesday on five child [sexual abuse charges](#) dating back to the 1980s.

Robert Preston Morris, 63, had resigned from Gateway megachurch last June after [admitting he had acted inappropriately](#) with “a young lady” in the 1980s, when he was 21 and married with a child, before Gateway was founded. Morris was a member of President Trump’s [Evangelical Executive Advisory Board](#) in June 2016 and [hosted a roundtable](#) for him at Gateway’s Dallas campus in 2020.

While a traveling evangelist in the 1980s, Morris would stay with the family of Cindy Clemishire in Oklahoma, where he started abusing her on Christmas Day 1982. The abuse continued during his visits through at least 1985, according to the indictment, which charges him with [five felony counts of lewd or indecent acts to a child](#).

“There can be [no tolerance for those who sexually prey on children](#),” Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond said in a statement. “This case is all the more despicable because the alleged perpetrator was a pastor who exploited his position. The victim in this case has waited far too many years for justice to be done.”

The allegations against Morris came to light last summer when Clemishire, now a 55-year-old grandmother, [detailed the four years of abuse](#) to The Wartburg Watch, an evangelical Christian watchdog blog. Morris told the church he had engaged in [“inappropriate sexual behavior with a young lady](#) in a home where I was staying,” according to the Christian.

He said he attended church counseling and had repented. In November, church leaders [removed four elders](#) they said knew of the abuse and its circumstances.

Clemishire has urged a deeper investigation to find more victims. On Wednesday she expressed gratitude amid hopes that “justice will ultimately prevail” in the case.

“After almost 43 years, [the law has finally caught up with Robert Morris](#) for the horrific crimes he committed against me as a child,” Clemishire said in a statement. “Now, it is time for the legal system to hold him accountable.”

2 NYC Teens Rescued In CT Sex Trafficking Raid, 5 Men Arrested
Reprinted From The March 13, 2025 NY Daily News-By Joseph
Wilkinson | jwilkinson@nydailynews.com



A sex trafficking operation where men paid to have sex with 15-year-old girls in Danbury, Conn., was busted Tuesday night. (Shutterstock)

Five men were arrested in the raid at what authorities described as a brothel, the Danbury News-Times reported. One man, Oswaldo Ordoñez-Ortega was charged with sex trafficking, while four others were accused of paying to have sex with the underage girls.

Two 15-year-olds, who have not been publicly identified, were found in the residence, according to the News-Times. One of the girls had been [reported missing out of Manhattan](#), and the other was from Queens.

Cops said Ordoñez-Ortega, 39, used an unidentified intermediary to contact the two teenagers and convinced them to travel to the Danbury residence, the News-Times reported. The girls were then advertised as underage prostitutes, police said.

The girl from Queens told police she had sex with seven different men between the time she arrived in Connecticut on Monday and when cops burst in on Tuesday. She said the men paid Ordoñez-Ortega, who was found with more than \$1,300 in cash on him when he was arrested.

Marco Robles, Edwin Quilli-Tacuri and Bryan Vasquez-Salinas are [accused of having sex with the girls](#) and charged with sexual assault, risk of injury to a child and commercial sex abuse of a minor, local ABC affiliate WTNH reported. Another man, Stalin Vasquez, was charged with conspiracy to commit commercial sex abuse of a minor.

Arlington Cemetery Website Removes Links To Information On Minority, Female Veterans

Reprinted From The March 14, 2025 NY Daily News By Muri Assuncao | massuncao@nydailynews.com

The Arlington National Cemetery website has [removed links to information](#) on prominent Black, Hispanic and female service members as part of President Trump's ongoing efforts to [eliminate references to diversity, equity and inclusion](#).

Among the internal links that no longer appear on the website are those directing users to pages related to dozens of Links to three lists of Black, Hispanic and female service members buried at Arlington Cemetery no longer appear on the

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Arlington Cemetery Website Removes Links To Information On Minority, Female Veterans

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Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Va. (AP

website, according to the military news site Task & Purpose. “Notable Graves” of minority service members buried in the cemetery, as well as educational materials on modules including the Civil War and African American history.

Officials for the cemetery, the final resting place of approximately 400,000 veterans and their dependents, have confirmed that some pages have been “unpublished” to comply with an executive order signed by Trump on his first day in office, designed to end [“radical and wasteful government DEI programs and preferencing.”](#)

It’s unclear exactly when the scrubbing began, though Civil War historian Kevin M. Levin first reported on the “erasure of history” and deletion of certain lesson plans from the cemetery’s website last week.

On Friday, in an update to [his Substack “Civil War Memory.”](#) Levin wrote that the situation was [“so much worse than \[he\] had initially thought.”](#)

According to a screenshot provided by Task & Purpose, six themes of academic lesson plans can no longer be accessed from the website’s [“Education Program” section](#) — including those on African American history, the Civil War and women’s history.

A cemetery spokesperson confirmed those pages have been “unpublished,” but said they would be back on the site after they were “reviewed and updated.” They did not provide a timeframe.

“We are proud of our educational content and programming and [working diligently to return removed content](#) to ensure alignment with Department of Defense instruction 5400.17 and Executive Orders issued by the president,” an ANC spokesperson told The Washington Post.

“We remain committed to sharing the stories of military service and sacrifice to the nation with transparency and professionalism, while continuing to engage with our community in a manner that reflects our core values,” the spokesperson said.

Joan Merriam Smith

Article Reprinted From The March 14, 2025 Flygirls



Joan Merriam Smith

In March of 1964, Joan Merriam Smith departed Oakland International Airport on what would be the first leg of an around-the-world flight. She is credited with having made the first solo circumnavigation of the Earth by the Equatorial route, and the longest solo flight.

Smith's interest in aviation was sparked at a young age. She began taking lessons at the age of 15, and first soloed an airplane at the age of 16 years. On November 7, 1953, shortly after her 17th birthday, she was issued private pilot certificate. Special permission was obtained from the FAA for her to take the written exams for commercial pilot before she turned 18.

On Smith's solo flight that began this day, she flew a Piper PA-23-160 Apache E. She aimed to follow Amelia Earhart's eastbound route, but by leaving in mid-March, Smith put herself at a disadvantage with the weather. Her route followed Earhart's eastward across the US, south over the Caribbean Sea, across the South Atlantic Ocean, Africa, Asia, and finally, to the Pacific Ocean, where Smith's route diverged from Earhart's.

Unlike Earhart, who had two of the world's foremost navigators in her flight crew, Smith flew alone. Her only companion was a small teddy bear.

A detailed story of Joan Merriam Smith's flight is told in *Fate on a Folded Wing*, written by Tiffany Ann Brown. Story Credits: This Day in Aviation

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Joan Merriam Smith

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We are honored to tell the story of so many accomplished women aviators like Joan in our forthcoming feature length documentary, “Coming Home: Fight For A Legacy”, and thrilled our film has been selected by the National Endowment for the Humanities for a post-production grant! The award brings us close to completing our budget for post production, but we still have a gap we need to meet to release the full NEH award. Help us close the gap and ensure we can create the highest quality film by donating to our 501(c)(3) and share the important forgotten history of the WASP and early female aviators who’s legacy we celebrate:

bit.ly/WASPLegacyCampaign

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[Women in Aviation International](#)

Texas Midwife Arrested For Violating State’s Near-Total Abortion Ban

Reprinted From The March 18, 2025 NY Daily News-By Jessica Schiladbeck

A [Texas midwife has been arrested](#) on accusations of providing illegal abortions, becoming the first person to be criminally charged under the state’s [near-total abortion ban](#).

Maria Margarita Rojas, 48, [is accused of operating at least three clinics](#) in the Houston area, where she provided medical care, including abortions, in direct violation of the Lone Star State’s restrictive and controversial laws.

Rojas was arrested on March 6 and released on bond the next day, according to Waller County District Attorney Sean Whittmore, who has since referred the case to the state attorney general’s office.

Rojas is facing a pair of counts in connection with the allegations, including the illegal performance of an abortion and practicing medicine without a license, the former of which is a second-degree felony, the office of [Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton](#) announced.

If convicted, Rojas will serve between two and 20 years in prison and be subject to a fine of \$10,000, per state law.

However, Paxton’s office noted that he has the authority to seek a fine of at least \$100,000 “per violation” under the [Texas Human Life Protection Act of 2021](#).

Paxton’s office said it had also [filed a temporary restraining](#) order to close Rojas’ clinics.

“In Texas, life is sacred,” Paxton said in a statement. “I will always [do everything in my power to protect the unborn](#), defend our state’s pro-life laws, and work to ensure that unlicensed individuals endangering the lives of women by performing illegal abortions are fully prosecuted.”

In 2022, the Supreme Court’s conservative majority [voted to overturn Roe v. Wade](#), clearing the way for state-by-state bans and the erasure of a guaranteed reproductive right that had been in place for decades. Since then, there have been few criminal charges issued in connection with the more restrictive regulations, making Rojas one of the first in the nation.

Earlier this year, a [New York doctor was indicted](#) on charges that she illegally prescribed abortion pills online to a patient in Louisiana.

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