



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE DC VOTER

A Voice for Citizens - A Force for Change

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President's Message

By Billie Day—*excerpted from her remarks of August 26, 2010*

On Election Day in 1920, millions of American women exercised their right to vote for the first time. That right was signed into law on August 26, 1920. Women and men had been fighting to win that right for over seventy years. These early fighters for women's rights made speeches, signed petitions, marched in parades and argued over and over again that women, like men, deserved all of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The leaders of this campaign did not always agree with one another—in fact, sometimes their disagreements threatened to derail their movement—but each was committed to the enfranchisement of all American women. Today we continue to honor their fight and commemorate their victory and note that the fight continues for full economic and social rights for women.

But on that Election Day in 1920, women and men of the District remained totally voteless. And, although some representation was achieved with the right to choose presidential electors, and, later, to elect a non-

voting delegate to Congress, DC still remains with no vote in the Congress and no Senator elected from DC.

So we also come to honor those who have fought for the rights of District Residents. They, too, made speeches, signed petitions, marched in parades and argued over and over again that citizens of the District of Columbia, like all U.S. citizens, deserve all the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Likewise, the leaders of this campaign have not always agreed with one another on the strategy or solution—but all have been committed to the full enfranchisement of District citizens.

In the years just before women got the vote, when no action seemed to be taken, a key slogan was: "Mr. President, how long must we wait?" We take that theme for today, as we march in front of the White House, asking all of the country and its leaders: "How long must we wait" for full democracy for DC?

LWVDC Welcomes New Board Member

LWVDC is pleased to announce the appointment of Jonathan Talbot to the LWVDC Board of Directors. Jonathan has spent the last five years helping experts explain governance issues to strategically chosen audiences in government, civil society, and business communities. Presently senior communications and policy associate at The Institute for Inclusive Security based in Washington, DC, he focuses on media outreach, online communications, primary research, and publications for the leading organization promoting the participation of women to prevent and resolve armed conflict. Previ-

ously, Jonathan worked for four years at the World Resources Institute, including managing communications for its governance program and co-authoring a book on increasing civil society participation in environmental decisions. He has also worked in communications at several other nongovernmental organizations, in addition to working in marketing for a privately-held company and running a community nonprofit program. He holds an MS in journalism from Boston University. As a member of the August 26 Planning Committee, his contributions to our media coverage are already apparent.

Candidates Forum Report

by Jane Varner Malhotra and Kathryn Ray

On Wednesday, September 1, the League hosted the Candidates Forum for Mayoral and City Council Chair candidates at the Washington Ethical Society. Nearly 200 people attended the program, which was co-sponsored by DC Federation of Civic Associations, Federal Alumnae Delta Sigma Theta, and the Washington Ethical Society. The new Executive Director of the DC Board of Elections and Ethics, Rokey Suleman II, opened the program with an update on changes taking place for the 2010 Elections. Highlights included information on early voting, online electronic poll books, same day registration, and no-excuse absentee voting. Touch-screen voting now includes a paper trail to ensure a complete post-election audit as needed.

The first half of the forum, with candidates for Council Chair, featured moderator Kurt Schmoke, Dean of Howard University Law School. Dorothy Douglas was the only candidate on the ballot who was present for the first thirty minutes. She is a native Washingtonian, a graduate of UDC, and a former commissioner of ANC 7C and 7D. Vincent Orange arrived, reminding the audience of his endorsement by the *Washington Post*. Kwame Brown arrived after the conclusion of the Council Chair portion of the program. He apologized for being late. Write-in candidate Calvin Gurley was offered time for a brief statement and the opportunity to respond to Q&A as well, later explaining that his signatures for the ballot were challenged and that is why he is a write-in candidate.

Questions from the moderator and the audience included candidates' views on the principal responsibilities of the Council Chair. Ms. Douglas

emphasized hands-on communication. Regarding DCPS and Chancellor Rhee, she said citizens and teachers tell her they are not satisfied with Rhee's work and the changes in the teacher evaluation system. Gurley said Rhee is in over her head and that DCPS does not have clear objectives. Both Douglas and Gurley expressed dissatisfaction with Natwar Gandhi. They said as the CFO, he is ultimately responsible for accounting scandals in his departments. Douglas said that the police chief should be replaced because many neighborhoods are underserved by the police.

Vincent Orange arrived during the question of what qualifies the candidates to serve as Council Chair. He noted his prior eight years on the Council from 1999-2007 when DC went through fiscal crisis to a balanced budget. He supports education reform in DC and wants to give back to the teachers and the system that educated him. He spoke of the District's structural imbalance, the need for a commuter tax and the push for statehood. He promised to improve relations between the Council and the Mayor based on his good working relationships with present and past city officials including Anthony Williams, Natwar Gandhi and Linda Cropp.

For the Mayoral candidates, write-ins who were present were allowed a four-minute statement. These included Michael Green (emphasized inclusive debate), Lyndon Paul Walker (emphasized fighting the DMV and booted cars, high subway fares, and supporting more jobs), and Patrick Joseph Tayman (supporting better representation of the people, lower taxes for seniors and more jobs in health care).

Continued on page 6

August 26—LWVDC Rally for Womens' Suffrage

by Billie Day

LWVDC members participated in an all-day rally in front of the White House to commemorate enactment of the XIX Amendment when women gained the right to vote. The opportunity was also taken to call attention to the fact that citizens of DC still lack full Congressional representation.

LWVDC was joined by DC Vote, the Organization of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia, UNA-NCA, and the Young Suffragists, and supported by fellow League members from Maryland and Virginia. More than 150 people participated over the course of the day.



League members Alexandra Dickson and Kathryn Ray carry the banner as the LWVDC begins its celebration and protest in front of the White House.



LWVDC President, Billie Day (front right), opens the presentation featuring Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (left) while LWVDC member, Geraldine Whitley looks on (right).



The Oldest Inhabitants of DC join the LWVDC in celebrating women's suffrage and protesting DC's continuing lack of Congressional representation.

Still Waiting for the Vote in DC



Councilmember Muriel Bowser and staff being greeted by League member E. Patricia Hallman (under umbrella).



Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton stops to talk with LWVDC member Natalie Howard.



LWVDC Young Leader, Melody Webb (left), introduces Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton.

Mayor Adrian Fenty sent greetings and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton brought remarks to the group: “We are grateful that women celebrate their triumph 90 years ago today by embracing the residents of the nation’s capital who still struggle for their vote. Women did not give up, nor will we, especially not now, when the vote is within our grasp.”

Thank you to the 8/26 Committee. Chairperson: **Geraldine Whitley***, Co-Chair: **Jane Malhotra** and members: **Alex Dickson***, **Kathryn Ray***, **Kathy Schmidt***, **Jonathan Talbot**, **Liz DeBagara** and **Billie Day***. Those starred spent the entire day, as did Chris Matthews and Ken Nesper (photographer).

View all the event photos at:
www.flickr.com/photos/53275550@N08

Candidates Forum continued from page 3

League members **Melody Webb** and **Jack Mathison** moderated debate among the on-ballot Mayor candidates, including **Faith** (Statehood Green Party), **Ernest Johnson** (worked for four mayors before Fenty, graduated from Cardozo HS and American University), **Leo Alexander** (of Brightwood Civic Association, worked unsuccessfully to get DC General Hospital rebuilt; proponent of real economic change and no more acceptance of violence and ignorance), and **Sulaimon Brown** (a graduate of Duke Ellington HS and UDC, and the first candidate to turn in his 2000 signatures to be on the ballot for mayor). Invited but not in attendance were Mayor Adrian Fenty and Council Chair Vincent Gray. Sulaimon Brown left after his initial statement because he did not believe write-in candidates should be given time at the forum.

On libraries: Alexander would fund them better by raising the business tax and having libraries occupy only DC government-owned buildings. Faith suggested teaching languages in libraries, and that more people should use the libraries. On Rhee/DCPS, Johnson would hold an educational summit. He also expressed concern about school violence. Alexander cited philosophical differences between himself and Rhee, and would want to address broken families and get to the root cause of the problems. Faith would call an educational summit with all stakeholders. She wants to create more jobs in DC with a New New Deal stressing the arts. Alexander would target illiteracy and emphasize vocational education in DCPS. Johnson would require contract money to stay in DC to help put the community back to work.

Regarding DC Chief Financial Officer Gandhi's suggestion to abolish the tax assessment appeals board, Faith said she would need to study the issue more. Johnson said he would not support it. Alexander said he would fire Gandhi, who needs to get rid of the leased space.

On the final question, why should voters select you: Johnson said he has institutional knowledge and would be ready to begin day one. He referred to his humble beginnings and loyal supporters in his own community. Faith believes ANCs are very important and that the revolution begins with the ANCs. Leo Alexander expressed concern that the *Washington Post* concentrated all their coverage on just two candidates. He said this city suffers from unemployment by design. As mayor, he would work to correct this.

Thanks to **Natalie Howard** and all the League members who organized or assisted with this well-attended, informative, and lively event.

This program depended on the assistance of League members: **Joe Barbiero, June Bashkin, Dennis Beaufort, Madlyn Calbert, Billie Day, Naomi Glass, Patricia Hallman, Donna G. Harris, Paula Hirschhoff, Kate Laguarda, Jane Malhotra, Ken Nesper, Lee Etta Powell, Kathryn Ray, Kathy Schmidt, Joan McKinley-Shelton, Linda Softli, Judy Smith, Constance Tate, Geraldine Whitley, Joan Wilson, E. Reggie Yancey, and Barbara Yeomans.**

Thank you to all who were part of the engaged responsive audience.

Kathy Schmidt Recognized as *Champion of Democracy*

DC League member, **Kathy Schmidt**, will be one of three awardees who “exemplify what it means to fight for democracy” at the annual DC Vote Champions of Democracy dinner, Thursday, October 12, 2010, at the Mayflower Hotel.

As a representative of LWVDC, Kathy Schmidt, along with the president of LWVUS, was involved in the founding of DC Vote over ten years ago. Kathy visited almost 100 civic and citizen associations, local organizations and ANC's to acquaint them with the recently formed group which was working to gain voting rights for the citizens of the District of Columbia. Over the past decade she served as the liaison between the LWVDC Board and DC Vote and maintained contact with the LWVUS representative responsible for the issue. Her selection to receive the award of a "Champion of Democracy" is recognition of the dedicated support of the League of Women Voters to the vot-

ing rights cause and DC Vote.

Congratulations to Kathy. *Members interested in attending this event with LWVDC should contact the office immediately.*

Kathy is an active member of LWVDC and this summer we were fortunate to have her participation in all of our summer programs: Voter Guide preparation, voter forum, and the August 26 celebration of women's suffrage. Kathy, right, is shown here with Christine Matthews, launching the White House Rally on August 26.



Member News

Ruth Nadel

Congratulations to long time League Member, Ruth Nadel, who this year celebrated her 96th birthday. She was honored with celebrations celebrating her many achievements.

June Bashkin

June has recently had a fall and is currently in rehab. The DC League sends best wishes to June for a speedy recovery. Friends may wish to send her a card.

Grace Malakoff

Congratulations to Grace on her move to Hawaii! We wish her well and thank her for her years of dedicated service to LWVDC.

Coming Soon!

You won't want to miss this! Mark your calendar now for the next LWVDC fundraiser:

**Thursday, November 10th
8pm at Ingleside Community
Donation \$12**

Back by popular request is Candace Riddington, who we saw last spring as Emily Dickinson. This time she appears as Clara Schumann. Come and enjoy meeting her. Checks or cash acceptable at the door.

Questions? Contact organizer, Joan Wilson at 237-6264 or contact the LWVDC office.

LWVDC Library Committee News

by Kathryn Ray

The new Watha T. Daniel/Shaw Library at 1630 7th St. N.W. opened Monday, Aug. 2, 2010.

New libraries have recently opened in Deanwood, Northwest One, Benning, and Anacostia and the DC Public Libraries are planning Grand Openings in the coming months for the Georgetown, Petworth, and Tenley branches as well.

The new Watha T. Daniel/Shaw Library three-story library is approximately 22,000 square-feet and features separate reading areas for adults, teens and children, a children's programming room, space for 80,000 books, DVDs, CDs and other library materials, 32 public access computers with free Wi-Fi Internet access, comfortable seating for 200 customers,

a large programming room for up to 100 people, two conference rooms and a vending area.

The \$15 million library is expected to receive a LEED Silver certification for using environmentally responsible features including: energy efficient lighting, low-flow faucets and toilets, recycled materials in flooring, countertops and wood finishes, and natural light that helps conserve energy and decreases utility costs. In addition, the library boasts a vegetative "green" roof that absorbs and slowly releases water into the city's sewage system, decreasing the amount of raw sewage that can flow into rivers and decreasing the likelihood of flooding during heavy rainfall. Funded by the EPA with an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant of \$330,000, the roof also controls utility costs by reducing the amount of ultraviolet radiation in the building.

Environment Committee Report

By Geraldine Whitley

The first of our monthly lunchtime series was held September 1, 2010, with **Alex Moore**, Dirty Fuels Campaigner, who told the audience about the Friends of the Earth campaign to halt destruction of the Boreal Forest of Canada, one of the world's last large ecosystems of hundreds of unique species and many indigenous communities. We learned that producing oil from tar sands emits more global warming pollution and results in polluted water leaching in local groundwater. There are oil industry plans to strip mine and drill in order to extract tar sands oil. Part of these plans call for construction of a Keystone XL pipeline crossing the United States from Montana to the Gulf Coast; permit for this construction is under consideration by the Administration with various

agencies reviewing information. To learn more, go to: www.foe.org/energy/tar-sands

This series will continue monthly on the 1st **Wednesday** of each month at 12:30pm at 1100 15th Street, 11th floor. This month, at the October 6th meeting, our speaker will be **Eric Hoffman** whose topic will be "Genetic Intervention."

The Environmental team appeals to you to bring your lunch for these informative environmental discussions, which take place after the regular League of Women Voters board meeting each month, to discuss, learn, and to be informed about ways that each of us can help maintain a healthy and viable environment.

Voters Service

by Eleanor Hart

Don't forget to check out our website for the updated Voters Guide.



Thanks to **Alex Dickson**, **Em Tamlyn**, and **Melody Webb**, who joined President, **Billie Day**, for LWVDC's voter registration information booth at the September World Wrestling Entertainment program.

Volunteer Opportunity!

The League needs someone willing to spend about a half-day a week keeping our membership records up-to-date. Your schedule is pretty much up-to-you; pick your own day and time of the week, including evening. You will need to be familiar with computers and working on-line since the task involves working with two membership data bases—ours and one belonging to LWVUS. The work will have to be done in the League office at 1100 15th St. NW (11th and L Sts.) since the League's membership data is stored on the office computer. Please contact President Billie Day 202-222-0710, if you have an interest in helping the

Fairfax League Invitation

Sunday October 10, 2010, or 10/10/10, has been designated a "Global Work Party" day by environmental activists. LWVFA will host: "Re-discovering the Past: Native American Perspectives on the Survival and Prosperity of the Planet." A Native American panel will discuss relationships with the natural world and present Indigenous Concepts and Models of Sustainability.

Location: Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax, Virginia
Time: 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Gun Control Committee Update

by John T. Mathison

The Gun Control Committee presented the keynote speaker for LWVDC opening Fall program session at the September 25 brunch. Mr. **Chad Ramsay**, Director of Federal Legislation, of the Brady Committee to Prevent Gun Violence, updated us on current and pending information. October unit meetings will follow up with discussions on this important topic.

We're Selling Pecans!

They're great for baking, snacking and make great gifts (especially with the *Family Favorites* cookbook)

At \$9 for a one-pound bag, these pecans are a great deal and a great way to support LWVDC.

To place an order, please contact your unit Chair or contact the LWVDC office.

Family Favorites:

Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

Don't forget to plan ahead for your December holidays and get copies of the cookbook celebrating LWVDC's 90th anniversary with healthy recipes from around the country.

Copies are \$15, including postage. Order forms may be downloaded from the website www.lwvdc.org Proceeds go to the LWVDC General Fund.

Only \$12 if purchased at LWVDC events!

Thank you



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

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(fax) 202 783-0444 (email) lwvdc@aol.com

DATED MATERIAL

CALENDAR

October 2010

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|---|--|---|--|--------|---|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 9:40am Board Meeting ¹ 12:30pm Environmental Speaker Series ¹ | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 10:30am Unit Council Meeting ² | 12 10:00am Naturalization Ceremony ³ 6:00pm Champions of Democracy dinner | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 9:45am SW Unit ⁴ 12:45pm NW Day Unit ⁵ | 20 9:45am Upper 16th Unit ⁶ | 21 9:45am CC/ Ingleside Unit ⁷ | 22 | 23 Call for time Evening/ Saturday Unit ⁸ |
| 24/31 | 25 | 26 7-9pm UN Program at Howard University Hospital | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

¹LWVDC offices, 1100 15th Street NW, 11th Floor. ²Naomi Glass, 5533 33rd St. NW, 686-0124.
³Judy Smith, 882-3021. ⁴Leona Rumsey, 863-7484. ⁵Barbara Yeomans, 363-8940. ⁶Vivianne Mozon, 722-0480. ⁷Ruth Allen, 362-8953. ⁸Call Naomi Glass, 686-0124.