



Democratic Women's Caucus Monday Morning News on July 7, 2008

*Take a minute to look at some events of special interest to the women's political sphere this week.
Monday Morning News will be sent irregularly during June and July*

- **LESH CITIZEN BREAKFAST –Thursday**
- **REGULAR Caucus BREAKFAST on FRIDAY**
- **REPORT ON JUNE'S BREAKFAST MEETING**
- **AND NOW YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED**
- **SAVE THESE DATES**
 - **Women's Equality Day Dinner on AUGUST 22**
- **CITIZENS ACADEMY APPLICATIONS BEING TAKEN**

LESH CITIZEN BREAKFAST -- Thursday morning

Lesh Citizens' Breakfast -- Thursday, July 10

Jill Lesh, District 4 County Councilwoman, will hold a monthly Citizens' Breakfast on Thursday, July 10, from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. at the Village Deli, 409 E. Kirkwood. This month's informal discussion topic is "County Prosecutor's New Efforts in Victims' Assistance, Elder Crimes, and Truancy." Monroe County Prosecuting Attorney Chris Gaal will attend.

Lesh encourages residents to share their insights and concerns about county government issues at the monthly breakfasts. For more information, contact Lesh, jill@jilllesh.com or 812-355-1365

CAUCUS BREAKFAST MEETING TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY

We're waiting to hear back from our invited speaker, and will send out a note as soon as we've heard from her, but until then please make sure your calendar is clear to have a great breakfast meeting with women (and the men who support them) who are trying to make a difference in the way women are perceived and supported in the political sphere! 7:30 at the Village Deli! See you there.

REPORT ON JUNE'S BREAKFAST MEETING

As a follow up to the Caucus primary activities and as a prelude to looking at the Democratic Women's Caucus organization and operations, the June meeting was a listening and feedback session from DWC members and attendees.

We first considered the mission of the caucus, and then asked the following questions:

- How well have we accomplished our mission?
- What can we do to continue to grow and accomplish things?

The responses were noted by member and note-taker extraordinaire Isabel Piedmont. The discussion was led by member Sue Wanzer. The following are the notes taken from this meeting... but many members and regular attendees were not at the June meeting to participate.

So.....

NOW YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED

Please read the notes from the meeting... it won't take long. Please consider this a personal invitation to give some feedback about those two questions, or anything else you wish to bring up about the organization, the mission, the activities, the fundraising, the breakfasts, anything that points to how well we accomplish our mission, and how we may differently approach that mission. **Send your responses to the questions to dwcaucus@gmail.com . This is a general email account that Lu Cregar, our website and communications expert monitors. If you prefer to send it to regina.moore@gmail.com that's okay, too.. or any other steering committee member. If you wish for your comments to be kept confidential, please note that and we won't attach your name to it in any way. These responses will be gathered and considered as we move forward into the fall election and into the next wave of actions of this caucus.**

Thanks in advance for your response. It is valued!!!.

THE REPORT:

Mission: The purpose of the organization is to fund, inspire, recruit, support, and train progressive women to increase the number of women in the electoral process and in elected and appointed positions.

How well have we accomplished our mission? What can we do to continue to grow and accomplish things?

Discussion leader: Sue Wanzer

Scribe: Isabel Piedmont

FUND

- We have contributed \$24,000 to female candidates in 4 years
- We are a funding source which enables women to decide to run, because they know they may get our monetary support
- We provide a way to organize resources
- It's difficult for women to ask for money, so the DWC plays an important role in teaching women how to do it.

INSPIRE

- We have set an example of women leaders sticking with their principles, which inspires young women
- We inform women on issues that inspire them to action
- We encourage women to stretch themselves (time, comfort zone, etc.)

RECRUIT

- We need to do more recruitment of young women at IU
- We engage women in the political process
- We offer a way for new people in the community to get involved
- We educate women on the issues, which gets them involved as candidates, and also recruit existing experts on the issues
- Incubate women and enable them to fly.
- We need to involve the membership more, so it's not just a once a month breakfast meeting.

SUPPORT

- DWC endorsement has become an important factor in elections and as an outreach tool
- Our meetings and events provide forums for engagement and support
- We support women, who for generations have been disadvantaged.
- We support women for LOCAL office
- We help bring women into the political system.

TRAIN

- We offer a good way to learn about political process
- We teach the history of women's involvement in politics
- We inform people about community issues, enabling them to get involved (confident in their knowledge of the issues) – we need to do more of this!
- We teach people organizational skills to be effective

OTHER

- We need to avoid splintering into different groups with different opinions on specific issues, we need to be inclusive
- We need to work with and for not just women, and not just the women in our group
- But then why doesn't this group just fold into the Monroe County Democratic Party? Response: The county party was not addressing the issues that were important to us, and women needed a leg up.
- Have we grown to a point where we need to reevaluate our organization in recognition of how much we've grown?
- We should include a spiritual aspect to this organization, to bring people of both genders together. Not religion, but spirituality. Talk to the heart of a person, not to their gender. Connectedness among people.
- We must always support the Democratic party and cooperate with the MCDP.
- Our mission to support women is still important and we need to continue to support women specifically.
- "Democratic Women and Partners"
- We need to make sure that people don't feel like they have to only support DWC endorsed candidates if they join the DWC.
- Our role should not include endorsing national candidates.
- Perhaps endorse only women candidates who are not incumbents. But others think we should offer continual support to our candidates, throughout their time in office.
- We need to spread the message that women still don't have equal rights or equal representation in government, and that we deserve them!
- We need to look at how we communicate with the wider community

SAVE THESE DATES

- **WEDD on AUGUST 22**

Our annual Women's Equality Day Dinner that celebrates the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment giving women the right to vote will be held on August 22nd this year. This year's speaker will be Ann Delaney, former Indiana Democratic Party Chair, former candidate for Attorney General, and author of "Politics for Dummies." Put the date on your calendar NOW!!! AND If you'd like to help on the committee to work out the details, please contact Mary Norman at: mary@jeannewalters.com.

CITIZENS ACADEMY APPLICATIONS BEING TAKEN

Several of our members interested in the workings of city government have enrolled in the City of Bloomington's Citizen Academy in recent years. The city is again taking applications for the fall class:

The City of Bloomington Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) Department announced today that applications are once again available for its Citizens' Academy program, an annual nine-week course that gives the public insight into how local government works. Now in its tenth year, the program has enjoyed tremendous popularity among those hoping to get further involved in government as well as those simply interested in learning more about Bloomington.

This year's academy will meet each Thursday evening from 6-8pm beginning August 14 and running through October 9, and the course will be limited to a total of 30 individuals to ensure a quality experience for all participants.

"We have received such positive feedback over the years from people who feel they have gained so much from their participation in this very important program," said Vickie Provine, Program Manager for HAND. "So many of our participants have been inspired to become more active in government, and others have just enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing first-hand their government at work. This is one of our most popular programs because it is so thorough and engaging."

City residents interested in civic participation or increasing their knowledge about local government operation can apply online at bloomington.in.gov/hand.

The deadline for 2008 Citizens' Academy applications is Monday, July 14. For an application and further information, call Vickie Provine at 349-3505.