Petition Delivery Day at the Hill

Pictured Above: League members turned out Oct. 19th to deliver statehood petition packets to Senators.

For the record, the Washington, DC (Douglass Commonwealth) Admission Act has now passed the House twice. The bill is now in the Senate as S. 51 and 45 Senators have co-sponsored it. It remains to be seen if it will pass during this session along with the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Act as part of the effort to protect the right of voters to vote freely regardless of skin color, gender, or zip code. LWVDC and the national League have been working on all these voter protection measures with a large coalition of national and local organizations, showing up for many demonstrations in DC and elsewhere.

The Full Rights Committee has been extremely busy in the past several months. Our activities culminated with our Petition Delivery Day on Tuesday, October 19, 2021, when, in cooperation with DC Vote and ACLU-DC, we reported that we have gathered over 36,500 signatures. Monica Hopkins of ACLU-DC, Patrice Snow of DC Vote, and Anne Anderson of LWVDC each presented the results of their organizations' petition drives. The League's share of this collection was 12,874 signatures and counting. We were able to deliver petition packets to 4 Senate offices in person and mailed the rest. Many thanks go to national staff members, Jeanette Senecal, who was our Emcee, and the organizing and communications staff who pitched in to make our day a success. A special shout out also goes to Karen Hibdon, our Technology expert, who provided the decorations for the 54 boxes, and to all the volunteers who showed up to decorate and then make our boxes on Petition Delivery Day. We were so pleased to welcome our Congressional champions, Senator Carper (D-DE) and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC Delegate) and Beverly Perry, Senior Advisor to the Mayor, and appreciated their remarks in support of DC Statehood.

~Anne Anderson, Chair, Committee on Full Rights for DC Citizens
President’s Message

As you probably have seen in our newsletters and the notices from LWVUS, we’ve been busy! And here I thought things might slow down a tad with it not being an election year - who was I kidding?

There’s something for each of you in our League. There’s something each of you can contribute that will make a difference - to our League and to our community. Here’s how you might figure that out: Draw three circles. In one, write something you’re really good at. In another, write one thing that motivates you to get up in the morning (this one is the hardest for me - I’m more likely these days to think about something that keeps me up at night) and in the third, write one issue that you care about. Where these overlap, that’s it - that’s what you can do!

Need inspiration?

➢ Our Restore the Vote team has started training for anyone who wants a shift hosting our Voter Info Phone Line that will be operational in the DC Jail and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. (This can be done from your home computer.)

➢ Our Rank Choice Voting team has been planning get-togethers for us to learn more about how RCV might be implemented in our District.

➢ The Quilts4DC exhibit is now on our website (lwvdc.org/quilts) and will become an in-person live exhibit in 2022 at Arena Stage during the run of American Prophet.

➢ In a couple of months, the pace will build up for our Voter Services team. Who knows with Covid, but maybe in-person voter registration around the community will become possible and we’ll be back to working with our public, charter and private high schools and universities and Naturalization Ceremonies will start to rev up. Even before this happens, we need someone to build the team of ready volunteers and take care of communicating opportunities as well as tracking progress and results. So, if you’re good with communication with members and community partners and keeping track of who is doing what when, this may be right up your alley!

➢ As we plan for in-person and hybrid events as well as continue virtual programs during an election cycle, we need help with planning and executing Candidate Forums. We already have two events in the early planning stage and that’s in partnership with George Washington University Law School for the DC AG and mayoral races. Would love a team leader for these forums.

➢ GOTV (get out the vote) efforts need planning and a crew of folks ready to hit the streets. VOTE411 will jump into gear once candidates are signed up with our Board of Election and we’ll need folks to reach out to all the candidates.

Here’s to a year of health, well-being, and fulfillment for us all!

Kathy

Statement from LWVDC on January 6, 2022:

The League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia recognizes this day as a stark reminder of why we advocate and work toward the strengthening of our democracy and informed and active participation in government. Our democracy and electoral system are sacred, and LWVDC works to empower voters with the knowledge and tools to participate in the electoral process. As we reflect on the events of January 6, 2021, we are reminded why this work is so important and, in reflecting on the experience of the 700,000 residents of the District of Columbia on that day, urge Congress to recognize DC’s authority and autonomy by supporting DC statehood.
Quilts4DC Statehood

In July 2021, quilters nationwide were invited to celebrate the opportunity for Washington, DC to become the 51st state. To date, there are 54 entries from 44 makers in 14 different states and the District of Columbia. These small quilts celebrate the natural, historic, visual, and ethnic richness of the future Washington, Douglass Commonwealth, and speak to the challenge that DC residents continue to face to achieve full representation and the full rights of US citizenship. Generations of American quilters have used the needle arts to be their voice to speak to their passions and positions, and so too Quilts4DC Statehood makers have been inspired to express their ideas through fabric.

See the online gallery at www.lwvdc.org/quilts4dcgallery and look for details on the public exhibits at the Dumbarton United Methodist Church on January 30th and March 13th, 12:30 – 3 pm.


Pictured Above: “Map of DC” by Sheryl Whitmore, Auburn, ME.

Pictured Above: “From Chains to 51 Stars” by Mittie Theobald Quinn, McLean, VA.

Pictured Below: “DC – We are America” by Sandy Hassan, Washington DC.
Pictured Above: “Blossoming of DC Statehood” by Donna Fitzgerald, Kristin Sliwicki, Pam Nelson, Patricia Young, Diane Bailey, Theresa Yakes, Sharon Colliaus (North Shore Chapter DAR, American Heritage Committee), Lake Forest, IL.

Pictured Below: “Justice = DC Statehood” by Ruth Smith, Aptos, CA.

Pictured Above: “Generations and Cherry Blossoms for the 51st State” by Ann Fielder, Newport, RI.

Pictured at Right: “51-52” by Aynex Mercado, Frederick, MD.
Ranked Choice Voting & Beer Tasting

League members met at Other Half Brewery on Saturday, Nov. 6, 2021 to socialize with other members, enjoy a special flight of 5 beers, and participate in a discussion on Ranked Choice Voting.

Thank You to Our Members!

Instead of a new outfit, the money for the gala or the dinner, why don’t we just put that money where our heart is? Supporting the League of Women Voters of DC will enable us to continue to Empower Voters and Defend Democracy. Each of our votes, the votes of those we help register, and those we help with our award-winning voter guide Vote411.org shape our country’s future. Each vote of a returnee from incarceration, currently incarcerated DC citizen now fully enfranchised, newly naturalized citizen, and high schooler newly eligible to vote, will impact the democracy our children and grandchildren will experience.

How to Participate In...

…January: Attend the 2022-24 LWV Program Planning Session
The membership meeting on Thursday, January 27th will lay out the proposed programs for the national league over the next two years. The input of Local and State Leagues will help shape the proposed program of study and action that will be voted on by LWV-US convention delegates in June. RSVP through lwvdc.org to attend.

…February: Train for the DC Insider Voter Info Hotline
LWVDC is looking for volunteers to staff a non-partisan voter registration and election information hotline for incarcerated DC residents. Sign up for 1-hour training session to work a 3-hour shift twice a month. This work supports DC’s Restore the Vote Act, passed in 2020, which extends the right to vote to all DC residents.

…March: Quilts4DC Statehood Exhibit
Some of the collection will be open to the public at Dumbarton United Methodist Church, March 13, 12:30 - 3:00 pm. The public is also invited to join the congregation at their worship service at 11 am, as they celebrate their 250th Anniversary. Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton will be speaking during the service as part of this historic anniversary.

…Sign up for all these events at lwvdc.org

And Coming Up: Annual Meeting, April 23rd! Renew your membership and register to attend.

Are you on Twitter? If you have a Twitter account, please follow @lwvdc. Look for #picture51 and #DCStatehood because those are the labels we are using for our social media campaign to highlight artists of all ages. Our table at the Monroe St. Market in Brookland has been enthusiastically received. We have invited our neighbors to make art to support DC Statehood...by focusing on the various state symbols that DC already has. We invited people to draw our state bird, the Wood Thrush, our state fish, the American Shad, our state tree, the Scarlet Oak, our state dinosaur, Capitsaurus, and our state mammal, the Little Brown Bat (for Halloween!). We have taken pictures of the artwork and the artists and posted them on Twitter with #picture51 to remind people that there are real people who live in real neighborhoods in Washington, DC.
Calendar of Events

JANUARY
6 Jan: Candlelight Vigil with Declaration for American Democracy Coalition, 4:30 – 5:45 pm, Signup for address
10 Jan: Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting, 6:30 - 8 pm, LWVDC Offices & Online
10 Jan: Not a Book Club Meeting, on the history of redistricting, 7 – 8 pm, Online
27 Jan: Members Meeting – LWV Program Planning, 7 – 8 pm, Online
30 Jan: Quilts4DC Statehood Exhibit, 12:30 - 3 pm, Dumbarton United Methodist Church, 3133 Dumbarton St. NW

FEBRUARY
9 & 23 Feb: DC Insider Voter Information Phone Line Volunteer Training, 7 -8 pm, Online
10 Feb: Members Meeting, Vote411 Voter Guide, 7 -8 pm, Online
14 Feb: Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting, 6:30 - 8 pm, LWVDC Offices & Online
16 Feb: DC Insider Voter Information Phone Line Volunteer Training, 12 - 1 pm, Online

MARCH
13 March: Quilts4DC Statehood Exhibit, 12:30 - 3 pm, Dumbarton United Methodist Church, 3133 Dumbarton St. NW
14 March: Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting, 6:30 - 8 pm, LWVDC Offices & Online

Keep An Eye On…

LWVUS Day of Action celebrating 102nd birthday on February 14th. View The Last Battlefront, an historical film about how and why DC has lacked full voting rights and statehood for more than 220 years. The film will be available from Saturday, Feb. 12th – Tuesday, Feb. 15th, with a Conversation about the film and next steps for statehood on Monday, Feb. 14th at 7 pm.

Remember that the DC Voter will now be available on www.lwvdc.org. If you would like to continue getting a paper copy mailed to you, please let us know at: DCVoter@lwvdc.org.