

Caucus Update

Metropolitan Louisville Women's Political Caucus

Fall '09



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2009-2010 MLWPC Schedule

All meetings are held from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the City Café located at 505 West Broadway (at the corner of Fifth and Broadway adjacent to The Courier-Journal. Assorted hors d'oeuvres are available for \$10 per person, and a cash bar will be available. Please RSVP by contacting Angie Wallace at akwallace0818@yahoo.com.

2009 Events

September 17

"Rumors, Rumors: Who would be Metro Mayor?"
The possible and filed mayoral candidates will be invited for lively a roundtable discussion led by Shively Mayor Sherry Conner.

October 15

Annual Meeting and Election of Officers
Special guest speaker to be announced

November

No meeting

December — Date to be announced

Installation of Officers and Annual Reception

2010 Events

In 2010 we will kick off a year of recognizing groundbreaking women. Each month we will host women who are making a difference in their community or profession.

January 14

February 18

March 18

April 15

Legislative Forum: The 2010 General Assembly session featuring members of the House and Senate

May 20

June, July and August
No meetings

September 16

October 21

Annual Meeting and Election of Officers

November — No meeting

December — Date to be announced

Installation of Officers and Annual Reception

Support community programs at upcoming meetings

For 2009, the MLWPC has made the **Family Scholar House** (formerly Project Women) its special service project. We have and will through the end of the year collect college and school supplies as well as new and unused personal items such as shampoo, soap, and diapers. Items can be donated at each MLWPC meeting. Visit www.familyscholarhouse.org to learn more about the organization. In 2010 our service project will be the **Louisville Free Public Library**, which sustained immeasurable damages in the recent floods. To

ensure the full replacement or enhancement of books by, for, and about women we will be collecting new books to donate to the library. Books authored by and about women — historical, contemporary, and fiction — will be collected at monthly meetings starting in January 2010.

Welcome Madame Justice

Sonia Sotomayor's appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court is a fitting time to remember why the Metropolitan Louisville Women's Political Caucus exists, and also renew our commitment to helping women succeed both locally and throughout the world.

Since the inception of the MLWPC in 1972 only two other women have served on the Supreme Court — hardly a cause for celebration.

Reflective of today's population, until we have 51 percent women representation in the Kentucky General Assembly, half the Kentucky Supreme Court instead of just two seats, and another woman in the governor's office, we have not arrived.

There are small glimmers of hope on the horizon, such as former State Rep. Robin Webb's victory in the special election for Senate District 18.

As I mentioned in my last article noting the events illustrated in the movie *Iron Jawed Angels* concerning the quest for a woman's right to vote, today we do not suffer

in the same way those courageous women did. We have witnessed progress: We can own property; vote; live single, marry or divorce; choose whether or not to have children; and borrow money from a bank.

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The last vast frontier is equality within the halls of political power. Secretary Hillary Clinton came closer than any woman to the White House, but still much is to be done.

MLWPC exists today for the same reason our founding mothers established the group: to identify, recruit and train pro-

gressive women (and men) to be appointed or run for elective office.

It is your continuing support through your membership dues that keeps that movement alive.

This organization, your organization, was at the forefront in endorsing John Yarmuth in his first race to unseat a regressive member of Congress, demonstrating clearly that together we can make a difference.

In the past year, your dues supported the MLWPC Campaign School, through which we reached out to the next generation that will run for office, manage a campaign, or contribute time and money to worthy candidates.

Join or rejoin the Metropolitan Louisville Women's Political Caucus for 2010 so that we can continue the critical work of achieving equality for all in the political process.

— Virginia L. Woodward,
Membership Chair

The Metropolitan Louisville Women's Political Caucus works to increase women's participation in the political process and to identify, recruit, train and support feminist women for election and appointment to public office.

MLWPC Principles

- ◆ To strive for equality for all women
- ◆ To ensure reproductive freedom
- ◆ To achieve quality dependent care
- ◆ To eradicate sexism, racism, anti-Semitism, ageism, ableism, violence, poverty and discrimination on the basis of religion or sexual orientation

MLWPC Goals

- ◆ Encourage women to be active and effective in all aspects of the political process
- ◆ Support the efforts of Caucus-endorsed candidates who run for or are appointed to office
- ◆ Organize women around the state for political action on women's issues
- ◆ Initiate, lobby and monitor legislation which guarantees women equal protection under the law and for programs and measures which benefit women

The Metropolitan Louisville Women's Political Caucus uses the Greek symbol for women to form five circles, representing the five races, intertwined to symbolize unity of purpose and that together we can achieve anything.

Kentucky Women Remembered: Nelle Pitcock Horlander

The late Nelle Horlander paved the way for women to lead in the labor movement. At Southern Bell, as a member of the Communications Workers of America Local 3310, she was elected first female president of her union in 1969. She was a founding member of the the National Women's Political Caucus, Kentucky Women Advocates, the PRO-ERA Alliance, Jefferson County National Organization for Women, the Women's Network, and the Coalition of Labor Union Women. She was inducted into the Kentucky Women Remembered exhibit posthumously in March 2009 by Gov. Steve Beshear and the Kentucky Commission on Women. The exhibit recognizes outstanding Kentucky women and their lifetime achievements.

Report shows gains for Kentucky women, but more needed

According to a report issued last month by Secretary of State Trey Grayson, Kentucky women continue to increase their numbers in elected office, although the Commonwealth still trails the rest of the country. The report is an update of the 2005 and 2007 editions of *Opening Doors of Opportunity: Empowering and Inspiring Kentucky Women to Public Service*, following the 2008 election.

The report documented that women experienced gains in their representation in the state Senate, state House of Representatives, Kentucky Court of Appeals, district court judges, county judge/executives, county clerks, and county

property valuation administrator positions.

Kentucky women saw a decrease in their numbers in only circuit judges and circuit clerks. Kentucky also rose to 45th in the nation for the number of women holding office in the state legislature, according to the Center for American Women in Politics. In 2007, Kentucky was 49th. Kentucky's House and Senate are comprised of 15 percent and 15.8 percent women, respectively.

The report also provides a number of resources to help women position themselves to be effective leaders in their communities. It includes a database of female elected officials from across the

Commonwealth.

The report can be accessed at www.sos.ky.gov/secdesk/initiatives/women.htm.

Partly in response to the report, Kentucky Women's Political Caucus member and former state Senate candidate Kathy Groob founded ElectWomen Magazine (www.electwomen.com), a non-partisan online media site that provides campaign tips, stories, and resources to women running for political office. Candidates and elected officials provide the blog posts and women candidates can ask questions, offer advice, and share information.

Sounding off on the importance of choice

I am a 53-year-old woman and I have proudly supported no less than a half dozen women organizations in my adult life. I have marched in Washington, written letters, ran for public office, donated to campaigns, attended two Democratic conventions, walked my precinct and worked at the polls. I have signed petitions, made phone calls, volunteered time and registered new voters. I plan to continue, but I have a new "litmus test."

It's choice! I will no longer support any candidate, male or female, who cannot, or will not openly and clearly support a woman's right to choose. Don't ask me for money, don't assume I am willing to share my knowledge and experience, and do not ask for my vote unless you can completely support this most basic right.

I don't want to hear that openly supporting choice makes it harder for women to run for public office. I refuse to accept that supporting choice makes it harder to raise campaign funds. It was, and is, the lack of choice and the continuous attacks on choice that makes it so difficult for women in this country.

We are spinning our proverbial wheels if we have to guess how a candidate stands on this issue. I don't want to support efforts to teach women how to run a suc-

cessful campaign unless I know where she stands. I won't waste a second of my time, money, or talent for a woman who doesn't support other women.

Former Secretary of State, Madeline

"I refuse to accept that supporting choice makes it harder to raise campaign funds. It was, and is, the lack of choice and the continuous attacks on choice that makes it so difficult for women in this country."

Albright once said, "There is a special place in Hell for women who don't support other women." I wholeheartedly agree. The argument is not about abortion. It is about basic respect and dignity for women. I have no patience for those willing to be cryptic or compromising.

— *Bobbijo Weber,*
Treasurer

Other community events for progressive women

- 100 Wise Women Breakfast featuring MLWPC member Dr. Judith Green, a practicing dentist, District 1 Metro Councilwoman, and mother of 13. Wednesday, Sept. 23, 8-10 a.m. at The Gillespie, 421 W. Market Street. Cost is \$25. Register at www.leadershiplouisville.org.
- Family Scholar House Annual Luncheon, Wednesday, October 21, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Galt House Grand Ballroom, Fourth and Main Streets. Contact Virginia Woodward at virginiawoodward04@yahoo.com to purchase a seat at the MLWPC-sponsored table.
- MLWPC Executive Committee meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at City Café at noon.
- The Kentucky Women's Political Caucus Annual Conference is coming up in February 2010.
- Business and Professional Women-BPW River City meets at the Jefferson Club at noon on the second Wednesday of each month. Lunch is \$20. To RSVP, contact Mary Lewis at lewism@msdlouky.org or 499-4420.