

MEMBER OPINION Jeanne Larson



Both Republicans and Democrats agree that our country is in financial distress. They just cannot seem to agree upon where the cutbacks should be made. Why not at the top. Instead of our Congressional members receiving a paycheck when they are out of office, they could get social security just like the rest of us based on how much they contributed through the years. Their pay raises would be capped at three percent. They must abide by all of the laws they impose on the rest of us. Consequently, in my humble opinion, serving in Congress is an honor and not a career. Maybe term limits would be a good idea.

FUNDRAISING Lucie Johnson



My year as Event/Fundraising Chair is about to end and it was great fun and a rewarding experience working with all the great volunteers. During the year we arranged for a day trip to Bodie, a very successful garage sale, two cooking classes, and monthly Bunco and are currently planning a Victorian Tea. I am grateful for all those who help with the events and my sincere thank you to all who participated.

We are looking for a volunteer to manage the 2011-12 DCDW events. If you love organizing parties and outings this is your chance to have fun while doing good for our organization and therefore Douglas County Democrats. You will not be alone at the task; our members love to help with these things. This is an Executive Board position so in addition you will have a voice in the decision making process of DCDW.

If interested contact Ruthie Strand at 267-4182 or Lucie Johnson at 783-4073 or

luciejohnson@yahoo.com.

Mark your calendar for our next event, an elegant Victorian High Tea on June 4. We need volunteers for food donations: tea sandwiches, scones, and delicate desserts of all kind. We also need lace or embroidered tablecloths for small card tables. If interested in providing food or helping with the decorating or just helping with the event please call Lucie Johnson at 775-783-4073. This will be an event to remember!

NEWS FROM THE DCDCC

I keep thinking that I have to calm down prior to writing a piece from the DCDCC Chair. It seems almost impossible to do so. Every article I read about what is happening in our communities, our counties, states and the country involves one theme: A lack of a moral code and common sense.

My thanks to those who participated in the rallies in Carson City supporting unions across this nation. This argument is not about budgets, the unions have made the concessions asked for, and they have agreed to pay more for their benefits. The argument is political, it is to break the unions and not because of pay issues. It is to dismiss the main staple of boots on the ground and funds for the election of Democrats that come from the "Unions". Karl Rove stated that breaking the unions would make it virtually impossible to elect another Democratic President. Meanwhile the Citizens United decision by the Supreme Court Of The United States gave the major corporations carte blanche to give as much money as they want and not have to disclose where it comes from.

What can we do? Support your unions anyway you can: Be informed, write letters to the editors. This is not an issue that belongs to one group or another. It affects us all, it affects anyone who thought or wished to be part of the middle class. Attend meetings and functions that your nearby Democrat organizations support.

I thank the DCDW in giving the DCDCC an opportunity to be part of their newsletter. We want to congratulate Michelle as a new member of DCDCC and the new Secretary of DCDCC. We hope to see all members of the DCDW attend the Annual Keep Nevada Blue Dinner on April 16 with raffles, silent auction, Jon Ralston as Keynote speaker, Special Guests Guy Rocha, Kate Marshall, and Catherine Cortez Masto. Cost is \$65.00 per person but we also have in place an anonymous source to help defray costs. Tables of 10 are available for \$600 (\$60/person).

Thank you DCDW for all you do to help Douglas County reach out to the county Democrats and make those new folks feel welcome.

Together in Rural Unity <http://nvrdc.wordpress.com>

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Grassroots Lobby Days

Notes from Melanie

The Power of the “ L ” Word workshop

Unlike larger states, grassroots-lobbying effort in Nevada is not only possible but is effective. Legislators rely on people who have expertise or familiarity with an issue to provide the information they need to make sound decisions. Your personal story is very powerful. The legislators very much appreciate seeing “real people” at the hearings and giving input on the issues. Emails and letters have a role, but it is so much more important to show up and knock on their door and show up at those hearings. The pace quickens in April as most budgets start closing.

We learned that “real people” at the hearings and face-to-face visits is very powerful! The panel emphasized there needs to be more of us there!! Professional lobbyists outnumber legislators 3 to 1! We learned the keys to being effective and had the chance to practice skills in the workshop. If you email or call your legislators, they will get back to you, but what is best is for them to see you face to face. The personal visit is so easy for us in the north. The legislators’ attaché is a fancy word for secretary and is the person who manages their appointments. Be nice to the staff member and thank her for making the appointment. Be prepared to wait for the legislator, their business often runs over. Start out with thanking your legislator for meeting with you. If they are completely out of time, ask “can we walk and talk on the way?” They often do that.

Keys to an effective conversation are: First, it’s very important to **stay on message**. If the legislator’s response leads away, say “Yes, but I am here to talk about.....” Second, **humanize or localize**. For example, “In your district you have the highest rate of teen pregnancy” or tell your personal story; “I volunteer in a classroom of 36 children and I see that many come to school hungry.” Third, **listen and respond**. For example, “I know you are against abortion but let’s talk about prevention” Fourth, keep friendly and **avoid party politics**. Fifth, most important, don’t leave without making the all-important “ASK.” **Ask your legislator for what you want**. “Will you support Assembly Bill XYZ which calls for comprehensive sex education in our schools?” When you email or write always give the bill number and what it is about in the subject line. Start out with, “I live in your district. I am asking you to vote yes on _____.” If meeting or testifying feels scary, we were reminded to practice our points in front of the mirror. We were also reminded that reaching out to the media with letters to the editor and joining rallies bolster your issue.

Monday Nights keynote speaker

Shelby Knox was the speaker at the Grassroots Lobby Days dinner. This 24-year-old woman is absolutely amazing. She became the subject of the Sundance award-winning film, “*The Education of Shelby Knox*, a 2003 documentary when, at the age of 15 she challenged her Lubbock, Texas school board to adopt comprehensive sex education instead of the misinformation and shaming of abstinence only programs. Organizing her high school’s Straight, Gay and Lesbian Alliance was the next step. She was 17 when the film was released and it changed her life. Raised a strict Southern Baptist, Ms. Knox describes herself as a professional radical feminist and activist because it has become her life work to travel, organizing women, doing trainings, workshops and civil disobedience in the name of reproductive justice and sexual health. She abides no compromise on feminist issues and meant to inspire us all, as indeed she did. There were about 10 legislators at the dinner and a full table of young women high school students hearing her message. There was ample time for questions. It was wonderful to know the baton has not been dropped. Earlier in the day, Ms. Knox testified in support of Nevada’s Comprehensive Sex Ed bill. Google Shelby Knox to learn more about her. It’s worth knowing.

Scholarship

Our next scholarship fund-raiser is now on as we need to raise \$2,000.00 for this Spring's High School graduates. We are fortunate to have a very generous donation from Mr. William Earnhardt . William has given us a Thomas Kinkade lithograph (with a certificate of authenticity) valued at \$800.00 to \$900.00. See side bar for details. Drawing will be at the Democratic Picnic in July. Tickets @ \$10.00 each or 3 for \$25.00 can be purchased at our various events, online at <http://www.dcdwomen.net>, or by emailing or calling Lucie Johnson at luciejohnson@yahoo.com – 775-783-4074.

Students at Douglas and Whittell High Schools Thank you for your support!!



Thomas Kinkade
"Everett's Cottage 1998
24" x 30"

Registration No. 126872

Offset lithograph in color on premium paper
Signed with the artist's DNA matrix signature
authentication system and numbered.

Women In History Fundraiser

Women's History - Go Nowhere Fundraiser Quiz – go to www.dcdwomen.org and take the quiz

No More "The Check Is In The Mail"

By March 1, 2013, everyone getting Federal benefits payment by paper check will need to switch to electronic payments.

Social Security Railroad Retirement Veterans Affairs
DOL-Black Lung Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Payment options:

Direct Deposit to a bank or credit union or **Direct Express Debit MasterCard** (a Treasury Department-recommended prepaid debit card)

Individuals who apply for federal benefits on or after May 1, 2011 will need to choose **Direct Deposit** or **Direct Express**.

A **Direct Deposits** goes to your bank or credit union or a **Direct Express** gives you immediate access to your funds from virtually anywhere. All electronic federal benefit payments will save the American taxpayers \$120 million -- the price tag associated with paper checks.

Learn more about benefit payment changes; call toll-free (800) 333-1795, Visit www.GoDirect.org, or contact the local office of the agency providing your federal benefits, such as the Social Security Administration.



Donkey pins are available for \$20
Contact Ruthie Strand

