

Next KCDW Meeting:

February 25th, Yacht Club Broiler in Old Town Silverdale. No RSVP required. Guest Speaker Dolores Gilmore, Kitsap County Auditor (D)

THE IMPORTANCE OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

by Irene Bowling Guest editorial

The American philosopher, Hannah Arendt, wrote, "Thoughtlessness can wreak more havoc than all the evil instincts taken together." Her idea was that our thoughtlessness causes more evil in the world than that produced by people actively pursuing evil ends. This she famously christened the "banality of evil". But what did she mean by thoughtlessness? She believed that what we call an ethical conscience is a special gift stemming from our rational mind. And, if we choose not to use the special gift of rationality, become thoughtless, there is no bulwark preventing us from running ethically amok. We have a duty to use our minds to insure that our ethical principles respect the dignity of every human being. And, Arendt believes, that when we fail in the duty to use our minds, we invariably blunder into evil doing. This evil is "banal" because the evil created is not the result of some grand evil design but is the result of people refusing reflective thought. Arendt was a reporter for the New Yorker covering the Adolf Eichmann trial in Jerusalem. Eichmann was being tried for his central role in the extermination of the Jews in Europe during the Third Reich. Her special problem was how to connect this very "normal" man to the horrendous evil deeds which he participated in without qualms. Many people, including Hannah Arendt, have tried to "explain" how this unimaginable crime could occur.

Why do I bring this up? Inaction, apathy, "turning a blind eye", fear, lack of compassion, are all expressions of human thoughtlessness. We have a duty to consider our actions and how they affect others. The business of politics in a democracy is the maintaining of a just and equitable society. This is not an arrangement that happens magically. It can only result by the collective thought and vigilance of all of our citizens and dies the moment that vigilance and care wane. Our democracy and the moral principles it is founded on, require untiring attention and participation of all citizens regardless of political party. Justice is a delicate flower that does not survive thoughtlessness or carelessness. You and I are part of a long continuum of Americans that have grappled with what it is to be an American, to live in a democracy. When I think of the millions of immigrants that came to our shores, the native people that were already here, the veterans that have fought and died for us, and the parents that have raised their children in the hopes of a better life, the weight of history and responsibility feels very heavy. This is what we must fight for, this is what is at stake. As Democrats, we must fight for the prosperity and health of all Americans, but especially the majority of people, the working class. I think by this time, we are aware of the fact that less than top one percent of Americans should NOT control 50% of this country's wealth. I think we would agree that the Koch brothers and their secret cohorts are NOT going to promote candidates and policies (with their \$900 million political "donations") to better our future.

I think we have all noticed that this is one of the warmest winters in history and that we face the huge and scary challenge of climate change. Why should you be active and throw your lot in with the Democratic Party? Because we believe these issues along with many others of great importance, are FOR REAL!

This last election was an example of many people's unwillingness to engage in the political process. The extremely low voter turnout was a great disappointment. History is changed by those who do nothing just as much as by those who take action. I ran for the State Senate in the 35th LD because I couldn't stand by and see injustice, greed, and wrong-thinking prevail in our state legislature. I am honored to be the new Chair of the 35th to work for the exact same reasons. Please join me in the thoughtful fight to educate, inspire, lead, and listen through the organization of our 35th LD as well as the other Democratic Organizations in Kitsap County - 26th LD, 23rd LD, Kitsap County Democratic Central

Support

Contact site support at support@kitsapdemocraticwomen.org

Committee and of course the Kitsap County Democratic Women.

In Memorium

Yvonne Saddler, past president of the KCDW and motivated Democrat died on December 19. She "devoted her considerable intellect and energy to a variety of political, social and cultural causes." Following her retirement "she pursued and deepened her commitment to free thought, free speech and the Democratic Party." For those of us who knew Yvonne, she was an inspiration and mentor. As we work to strengthen the ideals for which Yvonne worked, let us remember her strength. (quotations from Kitsap Sun Obituary section)

Information:

You have probably noticed a change in the format for this month's Newsletter. The regular editor of this document, an immediate past President, was suddenly taken ill and a team of us have taken responsibility to make sure the document reaches you in as timely a manner as possible. We all wish Jo a speedy recovery and return to our happy group and I would like to thank Larry Burr, Bert Johnson and Sharon Brown for their assistance in this effort. See you for our next meeting! Jackie

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