

WINDC



NEWSLETTER | MAY 2020



Mute



Stop Video



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From The Right To Vote... The Power To Lead
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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

"Invisible threads are the strongest ties" – Nietzsche



We belong to a community of strong and compassionate women. The resilience of the WDC is a testimony to that. We have weathered many storms before. And this plague that bears down on us after a 100-year absence, is no exception. We are witnessing the strength and resolve of our community to stand up to it, on a daily basis. The succor and strength that is being drawn from comity and sisterhood is exemplary. We revel in the fact that we are not alone. The invisible threads that bind us are stronger still. As the world burns in this COVID-19 conflagration, we hope to come out burnished, slightly scorched, but closer together.

Much has happened in the 6 weeks since we temporarily suspended our operations in the Whittemore House. Infections in the US broke the 1 million mark. Deaths are mounting—over 60,000 currently, even though there are signs of the curve flattening marginally. The future is still uncertain, and widespread testing is still elusive. And millions of people are losing their jobs every week. Resuming any kind of normalcy is a distant dream.

As we search for the silver lining on this cloudy horizon, we find many. We celebrate the fact that there are no known Coronavirus cases among our members. We still have our loyal staff employed, thanks to generous contributions to our Employee Benefit Fund. We continue to plan innovative ways of staying engaged with our members and the community. Our first virtual Happy Hour was a huge success with over 25 attending. We hope to host our first Zoom speaker program on May 5, with other speakers to follow on each subsequent Tuesday. Our online Winning Wednesday sessions are going strong as we approach the most important election of our lifetime.

The crowning glory of this period has been the WDC–Educational Foundation's kick-off of its Food*4*DC*Kids program. Serving 50 prepared meals a day to DC school children and other COVID-19–affected populations has been a rewarding and gratifying experience for both donors and recipients. The essential goodness and generosity of people is being manifested most magnificently. We thank the WDC–EF for this vital initiative that has made a difference in the lives of DC families and has served as a lifeline for our kitchen staff who otherwise might have been furloughed.

Our attempts to raise funds through various government programs have been frustrating and time-consuming. We await results as the beleaguered Small Business Administration tries to catch up with the overwhelming demand. As long as there is resolve and hope, we can withstand the daily difficulties. We will keep rolling with the punches and look forward to celebrating our centennial in 2022, building on our legacy of perseverance and success.

May 5 is Giving Tuesday! As we count our blessings for all we have, we should cast an eye on those who need our help. Our Employee Benefit Fund needs constant replenishment until we can open for business and start generating some revenue. Our staff members have been our anchor in these troubling times and they need our assistance. Please continue to donate whatever you can.

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts." – Winston Churchill

—Nuchhi Currier

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nuchhi Currier".



ELECTIONS - ELECTIONS - ELECTIONS

No, not the Presidential election though we do promise to bring you speakers on that subject!

The Club's own election of officers is upon us in this age of novel approaches to formerly routine matters. Last year, back in those simpler times, you received a paper ballot through (gasp!) the US Postal Service. This year during our March-June election season, the Club is officially closed, and the Election Committee has adjusted its procedures to allow voting electronically using a couple of different means. With the help of our dedicated staff, we have made the voting process as straightforward as possible, and with three different options to exercise your voting rights, your voice will be heard.

1. Vote online, and hit "finish" to submit your ballot.
2. Print the email ballot, scan it, and send it to: **nominations@democraticwoman.org**.
3. Vote, as Club members have for the past 98 years—with a mailed paper ballot! Print the ballot and send it to: **Elections Committee, WNDC, 1526 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington DC 20008.**

If you mail your ballot, a staff person at the Club will gather it with those received at the WNDC and, with a nod to the 21st century, scan them back to the Election Co-Chairs. (Our co-chairs are staying at home and awaiting their next shipment of random items from the grocery aisles.)

In your emailed ballot that arrived in your inbox this past Friday, you will note precise instructions. As always, the results of the election will be announced at the Annual Meeting in mid-June. We look forward to your participation in this process; any questions should be addressed to nominations@democraticwoman.org.

FOOD*4*DC*KIDS



The WNC—Educational Foundation (EF) is proud to announce our newest initiative—Food*4*DC*Kids launched on April 28th in response to COVID-19.

EF is collaborating with local farmers and FreshFarm Markets' Food Hub to provide at least 50 meals per day to low-income families affected by COVID-19. The program is working in cooperation with the Columbia Heights Educational Campus (CHEC) in northwest DC and other DC schools that will distribute the meals to families who are in need. Our very own Iris Galeas, chef of the Woman's National Democratic Club, is preparing the meals assisted by our kitchen and catering staff.

We are pleased to use our resources and our partnership with CHEC and other DC schools to stand in solidarity with members of the larger DC community who continue to struggle with many uncertainties in this difficult time.

The program was launched last week with initial donations of fresh, local produce—broccoli florets, salad, tomatoes, asparagus, cheese, eggs, and even spring ramps—from Francis in the Schools, Spring Valley, Toigo Orchards, Gardeners' Gourmet, and a variety of individual donors. In the first week, 150 meals were delivered to CHEC.

We welcome contributions and support from all of you who would like to participate in this important and timely initiative. A fund created by generous donors will match the first \$10,000 donated dollar for dollar and this means that your donation will be doubled!

EF welcomes all donations to support Food*4*DC*Kids. Our goal is to raise \$36,000 to support core costs for the next 2 months. This will cover professional (safety-certified) kitchen staff, packaging, and staple foods and will allow us to prepare at least 1,600 meals over the next 8 weeks.

Please send your checks to WNC—Educational Foundation, 1526 New Hampshire Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20036 or go to the WNC—EF's website to donate online: <https://wnceducationalfoundation.org>.



WNDC



Political Dispatch

From the Earth and Environment Task Force, PPC

Jean Stewart, Chair

PERSPECTIVES

Under the Cover of COVID-19

This administration and its corporate allies are using everyone's deep concern with the COVID-19 Pandemic as a cover for a variety of actions damaging to the environment and public health, as well as further exacerbating the climate emergency.

The fossil fuel industry is facing challenges from diminished demand because Americans are staying home and using less gasoline, and because all the buildings the pandemic-shutdown emptied are not generating emissions. Recent news reports¹ show that in Europe and in the northeastern United States, emissions of nitrogen dioxide have markedly diminished from March 2019 to March 2020 (by as much as 45 to 50% in Paris and similar cities) due largely to coronavirus closures. (Ironically, nitrogen dioxide pollution leads to or exacerbates respiratory illnesses such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder.)

The fossil fuel industry is contending with larger market forces that are lowering the cost of renewable sources of energy, and actions by environmental groups, local and regional governments, and entrepreneurs to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. Fracked gas, a much cheaper fuel than coal, was enjoying boom times from the 1990s until recently because hydraulic fracturing (fracking) was widely used to extract huge quantities of gas. Renewables are now becoming cost competitive with gas. Now that the world is combating a terrible disease that principally attacks the lungs, it makes even less sense to return to burning fossil fuels that produce lung-damaging emissions of nitrogen dioxide and other pollutants.

But under the radar, the administration and its corporate allies are busy making moves to advantage using fossil fuels: 1) the EPA is rolling back Obama administration limits on methane pollution from fracking sites; 2) the White House is loosening fuel efficiency standards for cars and trucks in favor of gas guzzlers; 3) the EPA has declared that the regulations limiting emissions of toxic mercury from coal-fired power plants are not "appropriate and necessary,"² which will allow these limits to be open to court challenges; 4) relaxation of more than 100 other EPA safety and oversight regulations, such as those governing coal ash deposits, prone to leak heavy metals like arsenic, lead, and mercury into our water supplies; 5) an EPA proposal to greatly restrict use of scientific information that can be used in EPA decisions, forcing agency experts to ignore some of the best evidence on how pollution makes people sick. The public comment period for this foolish proposal ends on May 18, when the nation is still in the midst of coping with COVID-19.³

WNDC



Political Dispatch

Under the Cover of COVID-19 (*cont'd*)

Fracked gas “has become an important feedstock for the chemical, pesticide, and plastics-manufacturing industries.”⁴ To sustain its production, the industry is repelling moves to reduce use of toxic agricultural chemicals, for example, the carcinogen glyphosate, other widely used toxic chemicals, and single-use plastics that clog the environment. Some states and cities that charge fees for use of plastic bags are seeing industry pressure to eliminate the fees.

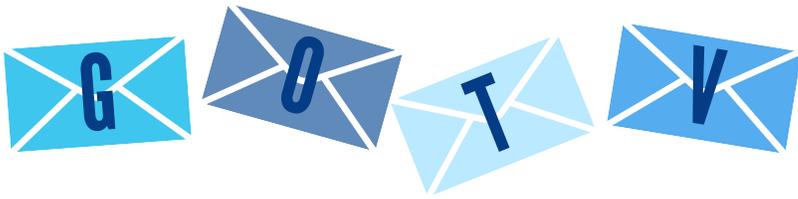
As our country struggles to fight this dangerous virus, the administration and its allies in Congress and industry are using the crisis as cover to undermine our public health with increased air pollution—a complete outrage in the face of a disease that attacks the respiratory system—added carcinogens and neurotoxins in water and soil, and even more plastic pile-up in the oceans and on land. This is an urgent call for all of us to vote out this disastrous presidency and all its enablers in elective office. It is a call to elect candidates who support a clean environment and continued serious action to decarbonize our economy.

1. Washington Post, April 15, 2020; NBC channel 4 report, April 16, 2020.

2. Washington Post, April 17, 2020.

3. Union of Concerned Scientists, April 15, 2020.

4. New England Journal of Medicine, January 9, 2020.



GOTV COMMITTEE UPDATE

WNDC has a century's rich legacy of progressive women's activism. In March, the Get Out the Vote Task Force created a new milestone—our first **virtual** Winning Wednesday. About 30 people tuned in first to hear the DNC's Senior Data Analyst, Tim Durigan, update us on disinformation campaigns and what citizens can do to counter them. Then Task Force members led activists in virtual activism—texting and writing letters to voters in key states. Activists reported being happy to connect with each other and to do something positive, and the Task Force is continuing that momentum with Winning Wednesdays every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month.

The GOTV Task Force also helped the Sister District Action Network and Voter Participation Center with a voter contact experiment. The experiment compares the efficacy of handwritten “chaser” letters vs postcards that were follow-ups to mailed voter registration forms. WNDC's activists wrote 1,000 postcards and 650 letters to unregistered citizens in the rising American electorate, as identified by Sister District, all of which were mailed on April 27 as part of this experiment. Stay tuned for the results of this effort!

Finally, it is with mixed emotions that we say good-bye to our strategic, hard-working staff member, Marisha Kirtane. She's advised, supported, and led us well the past two years. We're delighted about her new opportunity, sorry that we lose her staffing skills, but happy she'll be part of our work in different ways in the future.

**THANK YOU,
MARISHA!**



WVUB
NEWS

BUILDING SUPPORT AND CONNECTION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

A WNDC Community Conversation



The rupture of everyday life is a troubling event. The Coronavirus Pandemic is affecting all of us in every aspect of life, as we have known it. We are feeling frightened, isolated from our loved ones, and overwhelmed by losses and sickness. We fear the future and the present. We feel unprotected and helpless in many ways. The WNDC wants to create a sharing experience with its members so that they do not feel alone in this experience. WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.

For Wednesday, May 20 at 12:00–1:00 pm EST, we have invited two mental health specialists to facilitate our group and provide guidance in the type of mental health support we need to get through this experience together: Maria Ross, LICSW, has been co-leading a seminar for the last 6 years, training psychotherapists on the theory and technique of Transforming Trauma in psychodynamic psychotherapy. She has been a member of WNDC and has served on the Board. She has 30 years of experience practicing in Washington, DC, specializing in trauma-focused psychodynamic psychotherapy, especially with female patients who have suffered complex developmental trauma.

Michael Kaufman, LPC, has 50 years of clinical, teaching, and group-facilitating experience. He has co-led the Transforming Trauma seminar with Maria Ross for the past 6 years. He has taught at the Washington School of Psychiatry and the International Psychotherapy Institute and has been conducting an ongoing seminar in theory and technique for psychotherapists in Charlottesville, VA, for 30 years. He maintains a private practice in Washington, DC and Charlottesville.

MENTAL HEALTH IS HEALTH IT'S OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP YOU'RE NOT ALONE MENTAL HEALTH IS HEALTH IT'S OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP

MAY 2020 EVENTS

First our Winning Wednesdays went online, then the member happy hour.... now our programs!

We're excited to announce our new program format—online programs **every Tuesday starting May 5** with great speakers, important topics, and all from the comfort of your own home.

For the month of May, we are asking for a **contribution of \$10 per program**. This contribution will go directly to our Employee Benefit Fund. (Feel free to give more!)

Tuesday, May 5

Joseph Cirincione
President, Ploughshares Fund

Redefining National Security in the Time of Pandemics

TIME: 1:00– 2:00 pm EST



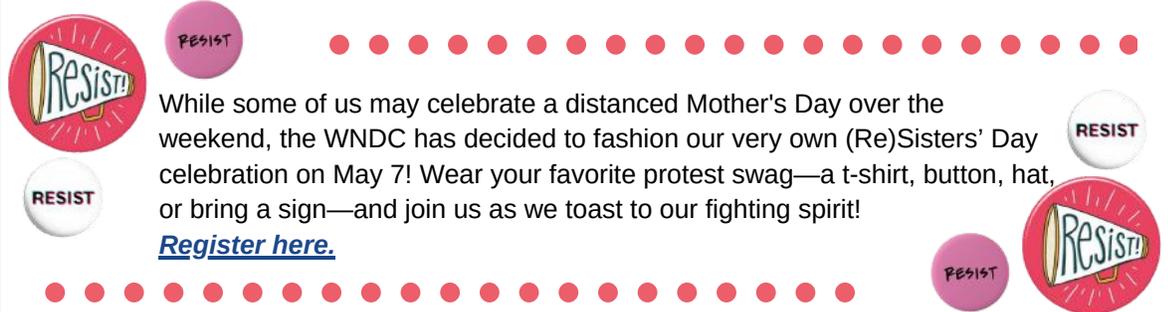
The spread of COVID-19 has resulted in a truly global crisis, and has us reevaluating what national preparedness and international cooperation mean. What has the current crisis taught us about the shifts we must make in national security policy? National security expert **Joseph Cirincione** examines the growing calls for *Redefining National Security in the Time of Pandemics*.

[Register here.](#)

Thursday, May 7

Members' Virtual Happy Hour: (Re)Sisters' Day

TIME: 5:30–7:00 pm EST



While some of us may celebrate a distanced Mother's Day over the weekend, the WNDC has decided to fashion our very own (Re)Sisters' Day celebration on May 7! Wear your favorite protest swag—a t-shirt, button, hat, or bring a sign—and join us as we toast to our fighting spirit!

[Register here.](#)

Tuesday, May 12

Tim Durigan
Senior Data Security Analyst, DNC

Identifying and Countering Disinformation Online

TIME: 10:45–11:45 am EST



As online disinformation tactics get more and more sophisticated, it's getting harder and harder for all of us to know what's accurate and what's not. Equipping ourselves to tackle this is even more urgent in this critical election year. **Tim Durigan**, DNC Data Security Analyst, will talk us through the common online tactics being used against voters, as well as best practices for addressing them.

[Register here.](#)

Wednesday, May 13

Winning Wednesday on the Web

TIME: 6:00–8:00 pm EST



You know the routine! Turn up, work to turn out the vote, and help turn our country in a new direction!

[Register here.](#)



MAY 2020 EVENTS

Tuesday, May 19

Max Richtman
National Committee to
Preserve Social Security &
Medicare



If you care about your Social Security and Medicare benefits, you will want to hear this talk. **Max Richtman**, President/CEO of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security & Medicare, will discuss attacks on these essential programs and legislation that could lead to long-term solvency. He will talk about efforts to expand Medicare coverage to include dental, hearing, and vision services.

[Register here](#)

**Fixing the Conservative
Addiction to Benefit
Cuts**

TIME: 10:30–11:30 am EST

Wednesday, May 20

**Building support and
connection during the
COVID-19 Pandemic**



The rupture of everyday life is a troubling event. The Coronavirus Pandemic is affecting all of us. The WNDC wants to create a sharing experience with its members so that they are not alone in this experience.

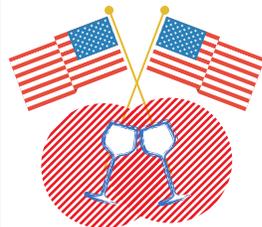
Join us for a community conversation with **Maria Ross** and **Michael Kaufman**, mental health specialists who will provide guidance on the type of support we need to get through this experience together.

[Register here.](#)

TIME: 12:00–1:00 pm EST

Thursday, May 21

**Members' Virtual
Happy Hour:**



Let's have an early celebration of Memorial Day, and raise a glass to the heroes who sacrifice so much to keep us safe! Participants are invited to dress in red, white, and blue.

[Register here.](#)

TIME: 5:30–7:00 pm EST

Tuesday, May 26

Congressman Jamie Raskin
**The Unimpeachable
Values of the US
Constitution**



Rep. Jamie Raskin will discuss both the essential time-proven values of the Constitution under attack by the present administration and the structural weaknesses in the Constitution which helped give rise to the Trumpian reign of error and corruption in the first place. He argues for an expansive reconstruction of democratic institutions—by replacing the electoral college with popular-vote presidential elections, by overthrowing the Citizens United decision and instituting small donor-driven public campaign finance, and passing statehood for Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico and continuing the trajectory of democratic progress in America.

[Register here.](#)

TIME: 10:45–11:45 am EST

Wednesday, May 27

**Winning Wednesday on
the Web**



You know the routine! Turn up, work to turn out the vote, and help turn our country in a new direction!

[Register here.](#)



TIME: 6:00–8:00 pm EST

NOTES FROM THE STAFF

Before all else, thank you. The support, concern, and love we have received in the last 6 weeks has been overwhelming, and to know we can continue to serve the members of the WNDC while being able to run our lives is an immense privilege. We are so touched by your generous contributions, texts, phone calls, and emails. We look forward to being together again at the Club soon. Here are little notes to let you know what we have been up to!

PATRICIA FITZGERALD

I'm well and thankful for each day of health. I'm answering the calls to the Club from home and completing tasks online. I do find myself reading and watching a lot of worldwide news and commentary regarding COVID-19. Interestingly, I'm hoping to hear more about the effectiveness of the polio vaccine as studied by Dr. Robert Gallo, co-founder of the Global Virus Network at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. I mean, it's certainly more plausible than ingesting bleach. I'll be so glad when November 2020 brings us a time to celebrate, move on, and restore order to the current chaos. Wishing you all good health and looking forward to seeing you at the Club!

WALTER SPRINGMAN

I hope that all of you and your families are doing well. I have been making frequent trips to the Club to check on the building and facilitate usual maintenance and upkeep needs. I usually make the trip on foot either by walking or jogging both ways. Regardless of the method, I am able to make the journey while practicing social distancing and with little to no risk. I have also been working closely with Nuchhi and the accounting team. Recently we have been back in the kitchen providing meals for the WNDC—Educational Foundation's new Food*4*DC*Kids Program. In my personal time, I have been spending quality time with Ric and my dog Mazzy, and also catching up with family and old friends on the phone.

JOSÉ EFRAÍN VILLEGAS

During this hard time I have been focused on housework, I have been working in my garden planting tomato, peppers, and zucchini plants. I've also been taking cooking classes with my mom, she's teaching me new recipes. I hope that everything will return to normal soon. I hope to see all the members again. God bless and protect them from this pandemic. Miss you all and see you soon hopefully.

ORANE WINT

Hi everyone! I have just been trying to stay busy during this COVID-19 lockdown. I've been working on my different websites and trying to keep myself busy looking into new drink recipes. After all, those martini glasses have been empty for so long as they await our return! I've also been spending some much needed time with my little dog Chappo. He hasn't had this much time with me in a very long time. I look forward to coming back to work soon!

IRIS GALEAS

While I've been home by myself I took out my sewing machine and fixed my clothes. I've made some masks for me, my family, and some friends. In the evening, I have been going for walks and watching old movies and also the news.

MARISHA KIRTANE

What a month April has been! Seems hard to imagine that it was only a few weeks ago that we were all going to the WNDC every day! Many changes are afoot—a large part of our operations has now successfully moved online—communications, planning, staff coordination (and laughter and disagreement!), Winning Wednesday, virtual member happy hours, and now speaker programs.

Speaking of changes, in mid-May I will be moving on from my position at the WNDC to start a new chapter at the Analyst Institute. I have cherished my time as a staff member of the Club, and I thank all of you for giving me the opportunity to learn from you. A special shout-out to Nuchhi, the Executive Committee, Directors of the Board, and committee and task force chairs who put in so much time and passion to make the WNDC what it is. It's been an honor to work alongside you. I hope to remain a part of the community, and see you all in person again some day soon!

ON THE RADAR: Annual meeting June 17, 10:30 am–12:00 pm EST

| MONDAY | 04 | TUESDAY | 05 | WEDNESDAY | 06 | THURSDAY | 07 | FRIDAY | 08 |
|--------|----|---------|----|-----------|----|----------|----|--------|----|
|--------|----|---------|----|-----------|----|----------|----|--------|----|

Redefining National Security in the Time of Pandemics
1:00–2:00 pm EST

Members' Virtual Happy Hour: (Re)Sisters' Day
5:30–7:00 pm EST

| MONDAY | 11 | TUESDAY | 12 | WEDNESDAY | 13 | THURSDAY | 14 | FRIDAY | 15 |
|--------|----|---------|----|-----------|----|----------|----|--------|----|
|--------|----|---------|----|-----------|----|----------|----|--------|----|

Identifying and Countering Disinformation Online
10:45–11:45 am EST

Board Meeting
10:30 am EST

Educational Foundation Meeting
3:30 pm EST

Winning Wednesday on the Web
6:00–8:00 pm EST

| MONDAY | 18 | TUESDAY | 19 | WEDNESDAY | 20 | THURSDAY | 21 | FRIDAY | 22 |
|--------|----|---------|----|-----------|----|----------|----|--------|----|
|--------|----|---------|----|-----------|----|----------|----|--------|----|

Fixing the Conservative Addiction to Benefit Cuts
10:30–11:30 am EST

Building Support & Connection During the COVID-19 Pandemic
12:00–1:00 pm EST

Members' Virtual Happy Hour
5:30–7:00 pm EST

| MONDAY | 25 | TUESDAY | 26 | WEDNESDAY | 27 | THURSDAY | 28 | FRIDAY | 29 |
|--------|----|---------|----|-----------|----|----------|----|--------|----|
|--------|----|---------|----|-----------|----|----------|----|--------|----|

The Unimpeachable Values of the US Constitution
10:45–11:45 am EST

Winning Wednesday on the Web
6:00–8:00 pm EST

WNDC OFFICERS

President: Nuchhi Currier
Vice President: Bonnie Heather McCabe
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Co-Secretaries: Cheryl Gannon & Pege Gilgannon

Directors:

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Communications: Winfield Swanson
Development: Cliftine Jones
Human Resources: Winfield Swanson
Public Policy: Karen Pataky
Programs: Molly McCartney
Membership:
Linda Wiessler-Hughes & Michael Hughes
Visual Arts & Museum Affairs: Nuzhat Sultan
Public Liaison: Patricia Bitondo

June Newsletter Deadline: Wednesday, May 27

We gladly post late entries on the website, but we cannot print any items submitted after the deadline. You may send your event write-up or article to winfieldswanson@gmail.com.

Publisher Information:

Anna Fierst, Newsletter Editor
Winfield Swanson, Director of Communications

On the Radar:

Annual Meeting
Wednesday, June 17
10:30 am–12:00 pm EST

PUBLIC POLICY & POLITICAL ACTION

Chair

Karen Pataky

Secretary

Jean Stewart

Communications

Elizabeth Vasquez

DC Metro

Pat Bitondo

Earth and Environment

Jean Stewart

Education and Children's Issues

Dianna Washington

Foreign Policy

Tracy Weiss

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Gun Violence Prevention

Ellen McGovern

Health Policy

Karen Pataky

Human Rights & Democracy

Elizabeth Clark

War Fever

Molly McCartney

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YOUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Woman's National Democratic Club

1526 New Hampshire Ave NW Washington, D.C. 20036

