

# Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association

By Patricia Wirth

## Business Women – Why you should care!

**R**atification of the 19th Amendment in 1920 was the true genesis of women's rights in our country! But do you know the names of these women? Eleanor Clift – author and political analyst, puts it succinctly...

"They engineered the greatest expansion of democracy on a single day the world had ever seen, and yet suffrage faded from public memory almost as soon as it happened. The leaders built no monuments to themselves, and too many of their names have been lost to history."

It's a rewarding undertaking to finally commemorate and tell the sweeping story of the thousands of women who fought tirelessly for 72 years not just to gain the right to vote with the ratification of the 19th Amendment, but as the moment when all American women secured full citizenship and entry into the Constitution! The "story" will emphasize the suffragists imprisoned at the Occoquan Workhouse for picketing the White House. When word leaked out about the deplorable conditions and violent treatment, it became a significant turning point in the struggle for suffrage.

We envision this national memorial as the third stop on our region's "Constitutional Trail," beginning at Mt. Vernon, home of George Washington, we recognize Washington's contribution as chair of the Constitutional Convention where he advocated for a democratic electoral process – no monarchs – and became our first elected President. Next stop is Gunston Hall, home of George Mason, author of the Bill of Rights. Last stop, the **Turning Point Suffragist Memorial**, which celebrates the American women's full franchise into the Constitution!

The garden-style memorial will be located within Occoquan Regional Park which was originally part of the prison property where the suffragists were incarcerated. The park is being redeveloped into a magnificent cultural center that has been funded by the sale of bonds by NOVA Parks. The Association must raise private funds for construction of the two-acre memorial, a cost of \$7 million. NOVA Parks will maintain the memorial in perpetuity upon completion. Our target is to be operational for the centennial celebration of ratification of the 19th Amendment, August, 2020.

Our mission to educate, inspire and empower visitors will far exceed the historical. Upon completion of the memorial, we will scrutinize the skills and characteristics these suffragist women successfully employed which will form the foundation of our ongoing programs to include topics such as leadership, public speaking, political candidacy, social responsibility, fiscal acumen, equal rights, etc. as they apply to the present and future. Our students will be diverse, from all socioeconomic quarters and hail from all parts of the country – just like the suffragists!



**How can you help?** Check out our website, [www.suffragistmemorial.org](http://www.suffragistmemorial.org). Please join our association and/or make a donation. Contact us with your questions and join a committee. We are working toward raising \$1 million by November 30, 2015 to meet the terms of our MOU with NOVA Parks. Our current campaign, A **"Grand" Thank You, Memorialize the Suffragists**, is seeking 1,000 donors (individuals or groups) who will give \$1,000. The goal is to have the \$7 million memorial built no later than the hundred year anniversary of the 19th Amendment, 2020, but completion by 2017 to commemorate the incarcerations at the Occoquan Workhouse is preferred. Please spread the word about the TPSM and about what these women endured. Like us on Facebook and get on our distribution list.

### **The Turning Point Suffragist Memorial. Opportunity is Knocking!**

*The centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment giving all women the right to vote is just 5 years away. You now have the unique opportunity to become a part of this historic anniversary by contributing to the construction of a national, garden style memorial that will acknowledge the suffrage struggle that covered more than seven decades. Women were willing to endure harsh imprisonment and even death while advocating for the right to have a voice in their government.*

*Contribute today! Sponsorships WITH naming rights are available.*

*For more information: email Patricia Wirth at [pawirth@cox.net](mailto:pawirth@cox.net)*

### **The Mission:**

*To memorialize the suffragists whose harsh imprisonment at the Occoquan Workhouse served as a turning point for recognition of a woman's right to vote and to educate, inspire and empower present and future generations to remain vigilant in the quest for equal rights.*

*For further information and to make a tax-deductible donation, find us on the web at [www.suffragistmemorial.org](http://www.suffragistmemorial.org).*



### **Patricia D. Wirth, Executive Director Turning Point Suffragist Memorial**

Pat Wirth will tell you that her career has been one of circumstance, timing and opportunity. She never had a job she didn't like, loves learning and applying the new-found knowledge to move up and on. Pat began her career by providing administrative, management and paralegal services to government contractor employers first in Pennsylvania and then in Virginia. After 30 years in car care and with numerous awards and recognitions to her credit, she closed the doors of her environmental award-winning business in September 2013. Pat has worked and volunteers continuously in the non-profit sector for over three decades in executive, management, and fundraising positions for professional, trade and charity organizations; she recently earned her certification as a non-profit consultant. She expects to use her expertise to help others as the next career chapter unfolds.



educate. empower. *inspire*. inform.