

International Women's Day Centenary Celebration

To Members and Friends of the Women's Interfaith Institute,

Today March 8th we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day (IWD).

Activities honoring the accomplishments of women are taking place the world over. Here in Seneca Falls, proud birthplace of women's rights, I greeted a busload of students, staff and faculty from the University of Rochester this morning, and took the visitors on a walking tour. We went to the National Park, the Hall of Fame, the Seneca Falls Museum, and the Women's Interfaith Institute, too. At the Hall, Director Christine Mouton announced to us the eleven new, 2011 inductees-- made public in a news release just hours earlier. Between site visits we enjoyed a delicious lunch, provided by the Downtown Deli, and a remarkable program. It was an unscripted dialogue between Mayor Diana Smith and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, played by Dr. Melinda Grube. (For detailed information about our day see the poster below.) The entire experience got rave reviews as the bus pulled out at 3:30 this afternoon.

When I showed visitors the Institute, I felt extremely proud of the progress the Institute has made since the fire just two years ago (March 5, 2009). With the labor of countless volunteers, the financial contributions of others, and the well wishes of all, the back section of our building is now fully usable, and we are able to resume programming that has necessarily been suspended.

One news note: our upstairs community room is soon to be renamed and dedicated The Evelyn Copeland Room. Miss Copeland, a retired high school English teacher in Fairfield, Connecticut was 94 years old on January 18th. In celebration of her birthday and her deep and abiding influence on them, former students have honored her by contributions to refurbish the room. The plan is to have Internet access and high tech capability there, which will enhance meetings, seminars, and programs.

Since the fire, the Institute has made no membership appeal; however, as we reclaim use of our building and resume activities, we invite former members to renew their Institute membership, and others to become members. Membership dues of \$35 (with reduced rate for students) help us to cover our relatively modest, annual operating costs-- chiefly electric and insurance bills. For now, the primary return for your dues will be knowing that you are helping the Institute get back on its feet. Your contribution represents a vote of support, confidence, and appreciation for all who have labored to keep our doors open. It's also an investment in our future.

This International Women's Day seems the perfect occasion to launch our membership renewal appeal. Won't you consider writing a check in celebration? Our address is: P.O. Box 131, Seneca Falls, NY 13148—0131

Thank you!

Allison Stokes, Founding Director