

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF VIRGINIA CELEBRATES THE LIFE OF THELMA VIRGINIA DODSON

Whereas, The Democratic Party of Virginia celebrates the talents, wisdom and dedication of Thelma Virginia Dodson and recognizes the loss to all with her passing on June 29, 2018.

Thelma was a lifelong Democratic voter and, in her later years, a dedicated campaign activist.

Thelma, who was born to Robert Wiley and Alberta Pinkett Simms on January 8, 1936, spent her life providing service to many. After fifteen years with the Department of Defense and at age 47, Thelma became a licensed Practical Nurse, devoting herself to home care and hospice work.

Thelma engaged in many community projects, including marches, protests, and voter registration drives, to give voice to the underserved and support to the many different causes about which she felt passionately. Her volunteer work included the Loudoun County Mental Health Center, NAACP (Life Member), MLK March, Douglass Alumni Association, and the Bluemont Concert Series.

When Thelma's son, Poonie, died from HIV/AIDS in 1993, Thelma spoke out at a time when HIV/AIDS was regarded with suspicion by some communities. She designed and made a panel in honor of her son for the AIDS Quilt Project. Thelma never did things by halves. She and her husband, Alvin Dodson, were lead volunteers and spent long hours and days coordinating and unfolding the Memorial Quilt that contained 40,000 panels and 70,000 names. Thelma was one of many distinguished readers selected to proudly announce those names on the steps of our Nation's Capitol.

When Thelma joined the 2012 Obama Campaign, she demonstrated her commitment by helping to launch the Virginia Women for Obama organization. Between 2012 and the end of 2017 when she became ill, Thelma worked in Loudoun on every campaign - local, state and federal. She spent many hours at campaign offices: canvassing, phone banking, training other volunteers, running staging locations, and providing food for the volunteers and staffers. Thelma was a presence among Loudoun Democrats, as evidenced by those who attended her memorial, including Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring, Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Chair Phyllis Randall, and Loudoun County Supervisor (Sterling District) Koran Saines.

Somehow, Thelma also found time to help with repairs to the Ashburn Colored School after it was vandalized.

In 2013, Thelma marched in the July 4th Leesburg Parade with a group dressed in historical garb. Thelma was dressed as Harriet Tubman. Harriet Tubman would have been proud.

In short, Thelma was anything and everything one could ask for in a volunteer. She was efficient, energetic, organized, always kind-hearted, and always THERE. She is missed greatly by the Democratic community in Loudoun.

Therefore, be it Resolved, the Democratic Party of Virginia notes with great sadness the loss of Thelma Virginia Dodson; celebrates her life, and, requests that the Loudoun County Democratic Committee prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Thelma Virginia Dodson, as an expression of respect and affection for Thelma and appreciation for her service to the Democratic Party, the Committee, and the County of Loudoun.