



Center Correspondent

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Illinois Project Citizen Students Lobby for Adoption of Jane Addams Day

If a group of Dongola Junior High School eighth graders have their way, Illinois will designate Jane Addams Day as its first holiday honoring a woman. Using **We the People: Project Citizen**, Cindy Vines's students chose to focus on the problem that, although there have been many great and accomplished women throughout Illinois's history, none have been celebrated with a holiday. The students' solution: select a worthy woman and have her honored with a holiday.

The eighth-graders chose Jane Addams, the first president of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, a founder of the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the first woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

On May 11, 2005—Youth Democracy Day—all 49 seventh- and eighth-graders from Dongola Junior High went to the Illinois capitol in Springfield to rally support for the proposed state holiday.

The students gained the support of State Representative Brandon Phelps, who said that a holiday honoring a woman is "long overdue." Phelps plans to introduce legislation honoring Addams.

Lieutenant Governor Pat Quinn also took an interest in the students and their efforts and is pushing for a commemorative



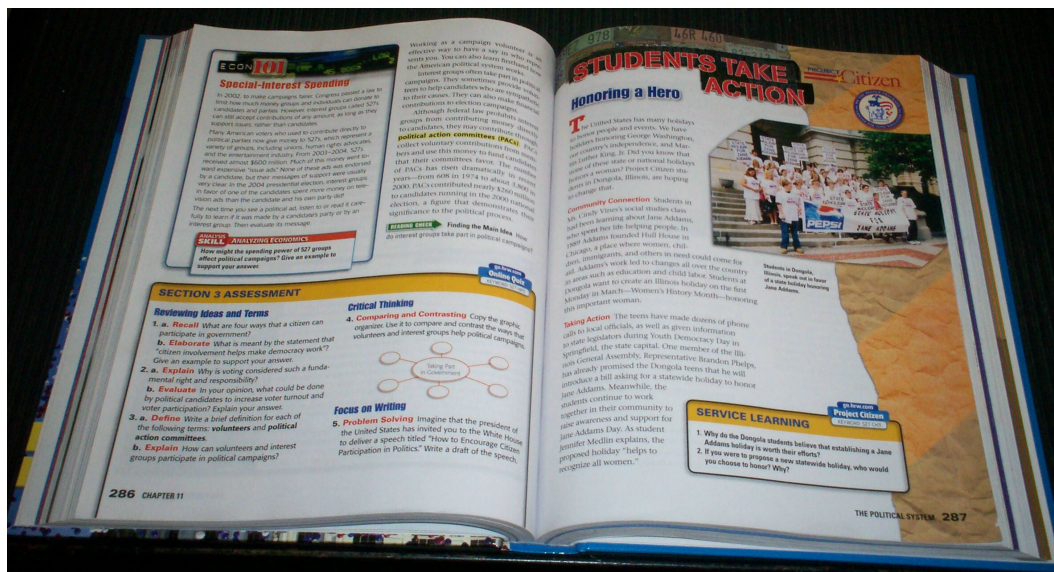
Teacher Cindy Vines with five of her students from Dongola Junior High School. The students are lobbying for legislation establishing Jane Addams Day as an Illinois state holiday—the state's first holiday to honor a woman.

holiday in Addams's name in December. Addams was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on December 10, 1931. Quinn is making arrangements for the Illinois State Board of Education to add to their website a place for students to sign a petition to have Addams honored.

Although excited about the possibility of seeing their proposal become Illinois law, Vines and her students are still hoping to go beyond a commemorative holiday to one that closes banks, schools, and

government offices for 24 hours. The students proposed that the school year should be lengthened by one day to accommodate the new holiday. "Having a full-fledged holiday honoring a woman sends a message to women and girls that their accomplishments will be recognized in the same manner as those of men," said Vines. ■

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WE WANT A HOLIDAY
Students hope to honor Jane Addams with special day

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THE SOUTHERN DONGOLA - Illinois could be the first state in the nation to designate a holiday named for a woman. If it happens it will be thanks to the efforts of five Dongola eighth-graders and their teacher.

For several years Dongola Unit School social studies teacher Cindy Vines has wanted a state holiday specifically honoring a woman, but the idea did not take shape until a group of her eighth-grade students took the initiative in a program called "Project Citizen...

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