



DRIVING WITH FDR
2012 COLLECTIBLE CALENDAR
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CELEBRATE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT'S BIRTHDAY ON OCTOBER 11TH – NEW FDR CALENDAR “AUTHOR” URGES

CROTON-ON-HUDSON, NY: October 11th is Eleanor Roosevelt's birthday, and there is no better place to celebrate than the Hudson Valley, where Eleanor grew up and where, after marrying FDR, she became a progressive political activist who profoundly changed America and the world,” Stefan Lonce, the author and designer of the **DRIVING WITH FDR 2012 COLLECTIBLE CALENDAR** said.

On August 14, 2011, Lonce, who edits *The Montauk Sun* newspaper, held the world's first-known “Calendar-Reading-& Signing,” at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library, in Hyde Park, NY, which is selling Lonce's calendar in its gift shop. The calendar begins with a 4-page story that explains how, after he was paralyzed by polio on August 10, 1921, FDR couldn't walk, but he could drive---using special hand controls that he designed!

Eleanor Roosevelt was born on October 11, 1884, the eldest of three children. Before Eleanor was 10, both her parents had died and she moved to Tivoli (in Dutchess County, NY) to live with her maternal grandmother. Franklin and Eleanor, who were fifth cousins, fell in love while he was a Harvard College student; they married on St. Patrick's Day in 1905. The Roosevelts had five surviving children who, as adults, were much-involved in their parents' personal and political lives. The National Parks Service will hold a ceremony and celebration marking Eleanor's birthday, on October 11th, at 3 PM at the gravesite of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, on the grounds of the FDR Library.

As Lonce explains in his calendar, Eleanor became a political wife on November 8, 1910, when FDR was elected, as a Democrat, to the New York State Senate, representing Columbia, Dutchess and Putnam Counties. On August 10, 1921, FDR was paralyzed by polio.

Eleanor nursed FDR back to health, became his political surrogate, and encouraged him to return to politics, which he did on October 3, 1928, when NY Democrats nominated him to run for Governor; he was elected on November 6, 1928, by a narrow margin. “If FDR had not been able to drive, then he would not have run for Governor in 1928... To dispel Republican attacks that he was a cripple, FDR campaigned vigorously; photographs of FDR driving helped prove his virility and helped him narrowly win the election,” Lonce wrote in his calendar.

After Franklin was paralyzed, Eleanor learned to speak effectively in public – she worked to overcome her innate shyness and insecurity -- and became an avid activist in Democratic politics. As New York's First Lady, Eleanor inspected State facilities so she could tell her husband, the Governor, what really went on there. She also devoted herself to her own projects... like Val-Kill Industries, a furniture manufacturer that she co-founded in Hyde Park. FDR built her a cottage in Dutchess County, which allowed her to escape from her domineering mother-in-law, Sara Delano Roosevelt, who ruled at Springwood, the Roosevelt mansion in Hyde Park.

After FDR was elected president in 1932, Eleanor Roosevelt became the first First Lady to hold regular press conferences. She continued her inspection trips, but also advocated against racism, anti-Semitism and sexism. “No one can make you feel inferior without your consent,” she famously said. After FDR died on April 12, 1945, Eleanor continued writing “My Day,” the syndicated newspaper column she started while she was First Lady. President Truman appointed her a member of the first American delegation to the UN, where she masterminded the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which helped lead to the collapse of the Soviet Union, and other tyrannical dictatorships around the world.

“Today, October 11th, which would have been her 127th birthday, we should celebrate the life and legacy of Eleanor Roosevelt, who was First Lady of New York, First Lady of the United States, and First Lady of the World,” Lonce said.

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