

Laura Welch Bush

Age: 58

Birthday: November 4, 1946 in Midland, TX

Career: teacher at Longfellow Elementary School in the Dallas Independent School District 1968-1969; teacher at John F. Kennedy Elementary School in the Houston Independent School District until 1972; librarian at Houston Public Library, Kashmere Gardens Branch 1972-1974; librarian at Dawson Elementary School until 1977.

Education: BS in education, Southern Methodist University, 1968; Master of Library Science, University of Texas at Austin, 1973.

Family: two children, twins Jenna and Barbara (22)

Hometown: Austin, TX

Religion: Methodist

Met her husband at the home of mutual friends

Biographical Highlights

- 11/4/46** **Laura Welch is born** to Harold, a home-builder, and Jenna, a homemaker, in Midland, Texas.
- 1960-1964** Laura, considered social and popular, is an admitted bookworm.
- 11/6/63** **CAR ACCIDENT:** Laura runs a stop sign and collides with a vehicle driven by Michael Douglas, a high school friend. He breaks his neck and dies instantly. Laura and her passenger, Judy Dykes, are injured slightly. No charges are filed. To the present day, Laura is unable to discuss the accident.
- 1964-1968** Attends Southern Methodist University in Dallas. She is an Education major and a member of the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority.
- 1968-72** Works as a second grade school teacher at a predominantly African-American public school in Houston.
- 1973** Earns a Masters in Library Science at University of Texas at Austin.
- 1973-1977** Works as a librarian in a Houston public library and an Austin public school.

- July 1977** **MEETS GEORGE W. BUSH** at a barbeque hosted by mutual friends Jan and Joe O'Neill. Bush proposes two months later.
- 11/5/77** **GWB AND LAURA MARRY** and spend the honeymoon (and their first year together) on the campaign trail while GWB runs for Congress. Laura leaves her position as a teacher to campaign with her husband. Prior to marrying him, Laura had considered herself a Democrat.
- 1978-1981** After GWB loses his Congressional bid, Laura spends her time gardening, reading, and volunteering for the Junior League in Midland.
- 11/25/81** **LAURA GIVES BIRTH TO TWIN GIRLS** five weeks prematurely due to toxemia. She and GWB had tried to conceive for three years and even considered adopting. The girls, Barbara and Jenna, are named after their grandmothers. After their birth, Laura stays at home, a lifestyle she describes as a "luxury."
- 7/7/86** GWB gives up drinking, a decision he credits his wife with.
- 1987-88** GWB becomes a Senior Advisor on his father's presidential campaign; the entire family moves to Washington, DC.
- 12/1988** Moves to Dallas.
- Early 1990s** Helps in the fight against breast cancer and works with the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, the Texas Health Department, the Dallas Zoological Society, and the American Cancer Society. Additionally, she spends time at major league baseball games and volunteering at her daughters' school.
- 11/1992** President George H W. Bush loses his bid for reelection.
- 11/1994** GWB beats incumbent Governor Ann Richards, making Laura the First Lady of Texas. The family moves into the Governor's mansion in Austin in 1/1995.
- 5/1995** Laura's father, Harold Welch, dies.
- 1996** **TEXAS BOOK FESTIVAL:** Following mother-in-law Barbara Bush's lead, Laura Bush takes on reading as a pet project. She organizes the Texas Book Festival, which becomes an annual fundraiser for Texas public libraries. Between 1996 and 2000, 352 Texas public libraries receive Texas Book Festival grants totaling \$889,845.
- 12/1998** Launches the Early Childhood Development Initiative to help parents prepare their children for school.

- 1/14/99** Laura states, at a press conference, that she is “reluctant” about GWB running for the presidency and propelling the family onto the national stage.
- 10/28/99** Named 1999 Southern Methodist University Distinguished Alumna for her early achievements in advancing libraries, literacy, and childhood education. GWB misses the first New Hampshire debate for the event and is criticized for doing so.
- 1/20/01** **BUSH INAUGURATED:** George Walker Bush is inaugurated as the 43rd President of the United States.
- 3/20/01** Mrs. Bush hosts her first event at the White House, for Women CEOs.
- 3/23/01** Mrs. Bush makes remarks at the first of several Troops to Teachers events.
- 5/14/01** **REACH OUT AND READ:** Continuing the reading theme, Mrs. Bush makes remarks at the first of several Reach Out and Read events.
- 6/16/01** President and Mrs. Bush give radio address on Father’s Day.
- 8/29/01** Receives Woman of the Year award from the American Legion Women’s Auxiliary.
- 9/8/01** Mrs. Bush launches the first National Book Festival, which features authors from across the nation. 30,000 people attend the event.
- 11/17/01** **RADIO FIRST:** Mrs. Bush becomes the first First Lady in history to record a full presidential radio address. She speaks out on the plight of women and children under the oppressive Taliban regime in Afghanistan.
- 1/20/02** Mrs. Bush donates her inaugural gown to the Smithsonian.
- 1/24/02** Mrs. Bush sits before the Senate Education Committee to discuss the development and education of young children.
- 3/5/02** Mrs. Bush hosts White House Conference on Preparing Tomorrow’s Teachers, where she outlines plans of President Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act.
- 3/14/02** Mrs. Bush sits before House Education and Workforce Committee to discuss the importance of strong teachers in our nation’s schools.
- 4/9/02** Mrs. Bush leads presidential delegation to the ceremonial funeral of the Queen Mother of England.

- 5/02** Mrs. Bush visits France, Hungary and the Czech Republic.
- 5/21/02** Gives radio address to the people of Afghanistan through Radio Liberty in Prague, Czech Republic.
- 10/12/02** Mrs. Bush hosts the second annual National Book Festival. Seventy award-winning authors, illustrators and storytellers participate in the event which is attended by 45,000 people. Honorary guests include Mrs. Ludmila Putina, wife of Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation.
- 1/8/03** **NCLB:** Mrs. Bush introduces President Bush at the anniversary of the signing of the No Child Left Behind Act, and speaks about progress she has seen in the nation's schools over the past year.
- 1/31/03** Mrs. Bush attends the "American Heart Association Lunch and Fashion Show" where she speaks about her commitment to educating women on the risks of heart disease and promoting exercise to keep the heart healthy.
- 4/7/03** Mrs. Bush kicks off National Library week announcing the theme, "At Your Library," encouraging library use.
- 9/4/03** At the National First Ladies Library dedication of the Education and Research Center, Mrs. Bush speaks about the role of the First Lady.
- 10/3/03** Opening remarks made by Mrs. Bush at the National Book Festival. She speaks about the first book festival in Russia organized by Mrs. Putin.
- 11/20/03** President and Mrs. Bush visit the United Kingdom where Mrs. Bush participates in Q & A with the British press.
- 12/03** Mrs. Bush announces the theme of the White House Christmas, "A Season of Stories". She participates in several interviews and press tours of the White House.
- 1/15/04** **PRESERVE AMERICA:** Mrs. Bush announces "Preserve America" grants budget, which is part of the President's 2005 budget and includes a proposal for \$10 million in grants to assist communities in preserving their cultural and natural resources.
- 2/2/04** Mrs. Bush launches American Heart Month at the White House where she announces she will join the Heart Truth campaign. The symbol of Heart Truth is the red dress, and women are asked to wear a red dress on Friday, February 6 in support of the fight against heart disease.

- 2/5/04** **MONEY HONEY:** The First lady attends health-care events in Georgia and in Miami, Florida, as well as a luncheon that raises \$230,000 for the re-election campaign. In all, her solo fund-raising events bring in more than \$5 million in 2004.
- LAURA RAISES MONEY:** Over the next several months, Laura hits the campaign trail and helps raise money for members of the GOP running for statewide offices.
- 5/12/04** **INTERNET DEBUT:** Laura stars in an Internet ad blitz for her husband's re-election campaign. "The No Child Left Behind Act combines more federal education spending than ever before with high standards and accountability, so that we know the money is being put to good use," she says in the ad. The picture occasionally fades from the first lady to a chalkboard outlining the president's points.
- Meanwhile, in an interview with the AP, she dismissed critics of Bush's education policies, saying much of the carping "sounds like excuses to me."
- 5/16/04** **LENO:** Laura makes her second appearance on "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno" since her husband is elected president. President Bush has twice appeared on Leno's show; the second time was just days before the election. Leno asks about her recent trip with President Bush to Las Vegas and she responds, "Jay, what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas."
- 7/15/04** **WEIGHS IN ON SOCIAL ISSUES:** Laura Bush veers from the administration's official line (perhaps unintentionally) with respect to the amendment to ban gay marriage or the president's statement in which he said he is deeply disappointed by the senate's failure to pass it.
- Q: Mrs. Bush, was the administration disappointed with the Senate's failure to pass the gay marriage amendment?
- MRS. BUSH: Well, I don't know. I think it actually opened up the chance for debate, which is what I think we want to do, I think that's what the American people want to do about this issue, because of -- rather than have a judge in Massachusetts or a mayor in San Francisco make the decision for them. I think the American people would like to talk about that.
- STEM CELLS:** Laura also responds to Ron Regan's comments about stem cell research at the Democratic National Convention. "The fact is the President is the one who actually authorized federal spending for embryonic research, **stem** cell research," she said. "But I do think it's one of those issues that we do have to be very, careful about. There's a moral implication in it, do we want to create life for research purposes, to destroy for research purposes? And I think that's an implication," she continues.

- 8/31/04** **CAN WE WIN?** After President Bush suggests (but later retracts) that the US cannot win the war on terror, Laura tells the Today show "“I think we've made great success in winning the war on terror...But it's not a war that you're going to have a surrender at the end. It's not anything like we've ever faced before in our country. And it will last a long time. I think that's what the president meant.”"
- SPEECH TO CONVENTION:** In her speech to the Republican National Convention, Laura says about George Bush, "He's still the same person I met at a backyard barbecue in Midland, Tex., and married three months later...He'll always tell you what he really thinks. You can count on him, especially in a crisis. His friends don't change -- and neither do his values."
- 9/16/04** **PROTESTER INTERRUPTS SPEECH:** The mother of a soldier killed in Iraq interrupts a campaign speech being delivered by Laura Bush in Hamilton, New Jersey. The woman attempted to yell questions at Laura, but the crowd drowned her out by chanting, "Four more years." The protester wore a shirt that read, "President Bush, you killed my son."
- 10/21/04** **REACTION TO TERESA HEINZ KERRY'S REMARKS:** Laura brushes off Teresa Heinz Kerry's apology after the remark that she didn't know whether Laura had ever held a "real job." Laura said, "She didn't have to apologize. I know how tough it is. And actually I know those trick questions."
- 10/28/04** **LAST CAMPAIGN SOLO:** Campaigning alone for the last time in their last race, Laura delivers mild rebukes to Kerry saying, "The president looks forward to medical breakthroughs that may arrive through stem cell research. You might not realize that, because people try to distort his record." And "Voters will face a choice between an America that is uncertain in the face of danger, or an America that takes decisive action to defeat terror and to spread liberty."
- 11/8/04** **FOCUS ON DRUGS:** Newsweek reports that Laura will spend time during Bush's second term focusing on drug and alcohol abuse among juveniles. An aide describes this interest as "something fairly new."
- 1/11/05** **INAUGURAL DRESS:** Laura selects the dress she will wear at the inaugural balls: a silver and blue V-neck evening gown with an ice blue satin coat. For events that take place during the day, she will wear a light green, long-sleeve column dress and matching coat in boucle wool.
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Barbara and Jenna Bush

Barbara Bush

Barbara Bush, 22, is the elder of the two twins by one minute. She is named after her paternal grandmother and attended Yale University like her father and grandfather. She graduated in May of 2004, majoring in humanities. Barbara is said to be the more studious of the two and she is more like her mother both in personality and physical appearance. She is a brunette. Although her “party-girl” image is not that of her sister, Jenna, Barbara was charged with being a minor in possession of alcohol on May 29, 2001. She pled no contest to the charges. Both Barbara and Jenna took an active role on the campaign trail in 2004. In July 2004, she made a two-day campaign trip with her father through the mid-western states of Michigan and Minnesota and also spoke at the Republican National Convention. She is interested in art therapy and has plans to work with AIDS patients in Eastern Europe and Africa. However, she decided to put her career plans on hold until after the election and, at the moment, it is unclear when she will make further announcements.

Jenna Bush

Jenna Bush, 22, is named after her maternal grandmother and attended the University of Texas at Austin. She graduated in May of 2004 with a degree in English. She is close with sister, Barbara, and both girls enjoy the same foods, namely, Mexican dishes, Starbucks soy lattes and sushi. Jenna has more of a “party-girl” image and has had more run-ins with the law than Barbara. Jenna was charged with being a minor in possession of alcohol on April 27, 2001. A little more than one month later, on May 29, 2001, she was charged with trying to use a third party’s identification to purchase alcohol. For this charge, Jenna was ordered to pay \$100 and perform 36 hours of community service. Now that the twins have graduated from college, their attention has turned to hitting the campaign trail with their father. Recently, while in St. Louis with the Bush Campaign, Jenna playfully stuck her tongue out at reporters. Her mother later gently admonished her, saying, "Maybe you should work on your issues of impulsiveness or something." *She plans to start teaching at a public school in the Mount Pleasant/Columbia Heights neighborhood of D.C.*

Lynne Vincent Cheney

Age: 63

Born: August 14, 1941 in Casper, WY

Career: chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities from 1986 to 1993; author and columnist; Co-host of Crossfire Sunday, Senior Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, 1993 to present.

Education: BA in English from Colorado College in 1963; MA in English Literature University of Colorado in 1964; Ph.D. with a specialization in 19th century British literature from University of Wisconsin in 1970.

Family: two children, Elizabeth (37) and Mary (34)

Hometown: Jackson, WY

Religion: Methodist

Met her husband in high school

Biographical Highlights

Born and raised in Casper, Wyoming, Lynne's father was an engineer; her mother was the Deputy Sheriff.

High School: At Natrona County High School, Cheney was chief of the baton squad and Homecoming Queen.

College: Colorado College, graduates Phi Beta Kappa.

8/29/1964 **Marries Dick Cheney**, her high school sweetheart.

7/28/1966 **Daughter Elizabeth is born.**

1967 **The Cheney's move to Wisconsin** and enroll in doctorate programs at University of Wisconsin - Madison. Though Dick moves to DC before completing his degree, Lynne earns a Ph.D. in 19th Century British Literature.

3/14/1969 Daughter Mary Claire is born.

1970 Lynne lectures at The George Washington University.

1976 **RETURNS TO WYOMING:** after Ford loses, Dick Cheney and his family move back to Casper, where Cheney briefly works in banking.

- 1977** While Dick campaigns for Congress, Lynne teaches at the University of Wyoming. When Dick has a heart attack, Lynne stumps in his place for six weeks.
- 11/1978** **CHENEY ELECTED TO CONGRESS:** After winning a three-way Republican primary, Cheney wins the general with 59% of the vote. In Congress, he is one of President Reagan's most ardent supporters, with a solidly conservative voting record.
- 1979** Publishes her first novel *Executive Privilege*.
- 1981** Publishes *Sisters*, an Old West romance novel replete with whorehouses, lesbian affairs and attempted rapes. The book is only printed in a Signet Canadian paperback and is extremely difficult to find. On 9/27/00 the *New York Times* publishes a piece on the little-known book.
- 1986** Becomes Chairman of the National Endowment of the Humanities under Presidents Reagan and Bush. Under her direction, the NEH rejects grants for projects dealing with feminism, multiculturalism, and social history. She also orders tougher standards for students in the fourth, eighth and 12th grades.
- 1988** Co-authors *The Body Politic* with Victor Gold. The book concerns the life of a dead vice president.
- 1993** Stanley Katz, president of the American Council of Learned Societies, tells Chronicle of Higher Education that Cheney had surrounded herself with a “narrow” group of people mirroring her point of view. Katz is responding to Cheney’s decision to turn down a \$650,000 grant for film productions. Cheney rejected the films because, in one, Christopher Columbus is accused of genocide against Native Americans. Cheney disagreed.
- 1995** Authors *Telling the Truth*.
- 1995-1998** Co-hosts CNN’s *Crossfire Sunday*.
- 1996** Lynne and Dick coauthor *Kings of the Hill: How Nine Powerful Men Changed the Course of American History*.
- 9/13/00** Testifies Before Senate Hearings on Entertainment Industry.
- 9/22/00** Campaigns in Pennsylvania: speaks at Berks County Fall Fest in Mohnton, and then at a Republican State Committee Fall Dinner in Harrisburg.

- 10/2000** Cheney's 1988 *The Body Politic* is re-released.
- 10/5/2001** Addresses attendees of the 20th Anniversary of the Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture, where Dr. Louise Cowan is honored. Speech titled "Teaching Our Children About America".
- 11/2/2001** Addresses attendees of event to commemorate Gloria Tennison at National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame in Fort Worth, Texas. Speech titled "Women and the West".
- 11/29/2001** Participates as guest speaker at Princeton University's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions. Speech titled "Teaching for Freedom".
- 5/2002** Authors first children's book, *America: A Patriotic Primer*.
- 7/2/2002** Speaks at The National Press Club on "Why History Shouldn't Be a Mystery".
- 11/17/2002** Addresses the Fairfax County Public Library Association. Speech titled "Constitution Day".
- 4/2003** Creates the James Madison Book Award Fund that presents a yearly award of \$10,000 to the book that best represents excellence in bringing knowledge and understanding of American history to young people.
- 5/5/2003** Presents speech titled "Family Stories" at the White House Forum on American History, Civics and Service.
- 5/16/2003** Attends United Way Summit on Women in Philanthropy and delivers speech titled "Service: An Enduring American Strength".
- 6/18/2003** Hosts "Ask the White House" -- an online interactive forum where one can submit questions to Administration Officials and friends of the White House.
- 9/16/2003** Authors second children's book, *A is for Abigail: An Almanac of Amazing American Women*.
- 3/2004** Plans to re-release *Sisters* are shelved after Mrs. Cheney said the book did not represent her "best work".
- 7/7/04** Appears on CBS Early Show. She discusses the book *An American Plague* and responds to her husband's vulgar outburst to Sen. Leahy.
- 7/12/04** Comments that the issue of same-sex marriages should be left to the states.

- 7/29/04** After a C-Span interview, Lynne chastises the interviewer for questioning her husband's place on the ticket, according to a source who had spoken to the Cheney's. The interviewer asked what would have to happen for Cheney to be removed from the ticket.
- 9/1/04** **ADDRESSES RNC:** Lynne gives very brief address at the Republican convention and introduces her husband. "When practically everybody in Casper, Wyoming started doing the twist, I can tell you, Dick did not," Lynne says.
- 10/14/04** **REACTS TO KERRY'S REMARK:** After John Kerry mentions in a debate that Lynne and Dick Cheney's daughter is gay, Lynne describes Kerry as "not a good man" and accuses him of a "cheap and tawdry political trick."

Elizabeth and Mary Cheney

Elizabeth Cheney, 37, is Vice President Richard Cheney's oldest daughter. Elizabeth, or Liz, Cheney, was until recently a deputy assistant secretary at the State Department. She led a democratic reform project that became the centerpiece of a Bush effort to remake the Middle East. She has also signed on as a visiting fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, the conservative think tank where her mother, Lynne is a senior fellow. Liz says the Middle East has long been an area of interest to her. After college, she worked for the U.S. Agency for International Development in the bureau that handled Asia and the Middle East. Eventually, she shifted her focus to Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, working as an agency officer in Poland and Hungary and later for Richard Armitage, then a State Department coordinator for aid to the former Soviet republics and now deputy secretary of state. She received her B.A. from Colorado College and J.D. from University of Chicago Law School.

On the issue of gay marriage, Liz Cheney says she agrees with the stance her father articulated as a vice presidential candidate in 2000 when he said he thought the issue should be left to the states. Cheney has not backed away from his earlier position - words that gave comfort to many gays, especially gay Republicans. Yet he also said recently that he backs the president in his call for a constitutional ban.

Liz Cheney had a visible role in this campaign. She is married to Phil Perry and has four children (Kate, Elizabeth, Grace, and Philip).

Mary Cheney

Mary Cheney, 35, also works on her father's campaign team. Mary, a lesbian, has taken heat for her involvement with the campaign from gay and lesbian groups, namely the "Dear Mary" group which sponsors a website through which participants can send

electronic postcards to Mary Cheney, urging her to openly oppose the administration's views on gay rights. Mary Cheney graduated from Colorado College and went on to work as a gay community liaison for the Coors Brewing Company. There, she worked to end the 20-year boycott of the company by the gay community. In 2000, Mary left Coors to work for her father's campaign. Since this time, she has continued to reach out to the gay and lesbian community through her work with the Republican Unity Coalition. This coalition, which Mary has been a part of since 2002, is a gay-straight alliance formed within the Republican Party to increase tolerance for the gay community. She resides in Colorado with her long-term partner Heather Poe and has plans to pursue her MBA.