

The Many Names of Bonnie Conner

In the June 4, 2007 issue of the Express-News, Kathy Clay-Little wrote an article “‘Charges’ against District 8 hopeful simply mix-ups” in which she mentions that Bonnie Conner is “the doyenne of District 8 political and civic life”. This raises many significant and provocative questions, which I will seek to answer here.

Question 1. What the heck is a “doyenne”?

Answer 1. From Answers.com, *doyenne* (doi-en', dwä-yen') is a noun, derived from French (the feminine of *doyen*, senior member), meaning a woman who is the eldest or senior member of a group. (*Editor's Note - In modern, politically correct America, the term doyenne is rarely used and “woman of enhanced experience” is the preferred appellation.*)

Question 2. Who are other, famous “doyennes” in the English speaking world?

Answer 2. A quick search of Google reveals that the term is rarely used for actual women. (*See Editor's Note above.*) Notable exceptions are: Syndicated columnist Helen (“Thank you, Mr. President”) Thomas; and Martha Stewart, the “Domestic Doyenne“. Other uses of the term are *Doyenne Du Comice*, which is a pear, and *La Doyenne*, which is a single-day cycling race.

Question 3. What more common names have been used for Bonnie Conner of District 8?

Answer 3. There are numerous ones. Lady. Wife. Mother. Grandmother. Teacher. Retired Teacher. Citizen. Neighbor. Neighborhood Activist. Community Leader. Campaign Manager. Candidate. Front Runner. Winner. Councilperson. Former Councilperson. Conservationist. Environmentalist. Chairperson. “Tree Hugger”. Mentor. Role Model. Advisor. Counselor. And most recently by act of San Antonio City Council, “Bonnie Conner - The Park”.

So my research shows that Bonnie Conner has been and can be called a lot of names, but I have saved the one that I, and many of us, like the most, which is Friend.

Ted Trakas