Ballots for Belva: The True Story of a Womans Race for the Presidency by Sudipta Bardhan-Quallen

What An Upbeat Historical Book!!

A timely true tale for the 2008 presidential election

In 1884, when men were the only people allowed to vote in national elections, Belva Lockwood took a bold but legal step: She ran for president! Women did not have the same rights as men, but Belva went on undeterred—and she got votes! Her run for office was based on experience and merit: Unlike many women of the time, she went to college, then to law school, and even argued cases before the Supreme Court.

Though her campaign was difficult, Belva never wavered in her commitment to equality, earning the respect of many fellow citizens. A little-known but richly deserving American historical figure, Belva is an inspiration for modern-day readers. Despite all the changes in society since Belva’s time, there is still a lot to fight for, and Belva shows the way. The book also includes a glossary and a timeline of women’s suffrage events.

My Personal Review:
A charming and beautifully illustrated book about an incredibly brave no-nonsense, "NEVER take No for an Answer" woman who ran for president in the late 19th century (even though women could not vote at the time) and received a surprising amount of votes.
As a child, Belva believed she could move mountains. As an adult, she met and conquered equally formidable obstacles.

She was not the FIRST woman to run for the presidency -- Victoria Woodhull was, in 1872 -- but unlike Victoria, who dropped out of the race, Belva made it all the way to the ballot box garnering more than 4,000 votes (remember these were MEN voting, as women still did not have the vote back then).

Belva received support as well as censure, but she never let anything discourage her! She proved to be as formidable as those mountains (literal and figurative) that she faced all through her life and her career.

The beautifully rendered illustrations are lively, colorful, and tell a story of their own. (And I LOVE the way that cute little cat keeps popping up through the pages and through the ages.)

This is a book that should be required reading in all elementary schools.

Well done!!!

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