



June 2010 Stillwater Voter

Kirsten Tautfest, President

**A Publication of Stillwater, Oklahoma,
League of Women Voters**

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SLWV Calendar

*This newsletter is supported by member dues. Complimentary copies are provided to interested parties. If you are interested in joining the League, please contact **Gladeen Allred-Struthers** at 372-7238.*

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Date/Time	Place	Description
June 8 (Tues.) 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Freddie Paul's Restaurant, 1707 E. 6th NOTE CHANGE OF PLACE	SLWV Noon Meeting: "Buy Fresh, Buy Local" Speaker: Cheryl Baker (Contact Person: Nancy Andrews, 918-533-1228)
June 11 to 15 (Fri. to Tues.)	Atlanta, Ga.	LWV National Convention "90 Years of Making Democracy Work" Registration Deadline: May 11 For more information see LWVUS website
June 14 (Mon.) 7 to 9 p.m.	Home of Deanna Homer, 2105 E. Marcus Ave.	SLWV Book Discussion: <i>Olive Kitteridge</i> by Elizabeth Strout (Contact Person: Gerry Nelson)
June 17 (Thurs.) 7 to 9 p.m.	TBA	SLWV Board Meeting (Contact Person: Kirsten Tautfest)
June 19 (Sat.) 10 a.m. to ?	Park at 12th and Washington	Voter Registration at Juneteenth celebration Call Nelda Sander to volunteer to help (624-8452)
June 26 (Sat.) 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.	Territory Cellars, Stroud, OK Check with Board members for car pooling.	LWVOK Mini-Conference: <i>State Questions on the November Ballot</i> Speaker: Wayne Green, <i>Tulsa World</i> and Dr. Bob Darcy, OSU Professor of Political Science. Registration by June 18. Cost: \$20 in advance; \$25 at the door (includes lunch). For more information and registration form, see inside this Voter. (Contact Person: Board Members)
July 12 (Mon.) 7 to 9 p.m.	Home of Judy Clay, 423 Oak Knoll Ct.	SLWV Book Discussion: <i>Saturday</i> by Ian McEwan (Contact Person: Pat Jaynes)

State Council



By Kirsten Tautfest (adapted from minutes draft by Cheri Spears)

The League of Women Voters of Oklahoma held their state council meeting on May 22, 2010 in Tulsa. Three Stillwater League members attended as voting delegates: Alice Richardson, Paul Richardson, and Kirsten Tautfest. Karen Melcher was also there as a member of the state board.

Alice served on the state League budget committee, but did not give the report. After some minor adjustments, the amended budget was adopted. One of the changes included an increase in the monthly cost of the web site.

The scheduled speaker did not show up, but Jim Hill, co-president of the Tulsa League, spoke to us about some of the major issues that the LWV faces: funding and declining membership. He stated that we need to embrace technology in order to attract a younger membership and work on bringing diversity into our League. On a national level, a major issue due to the recent Supreme Court ruling is campaign finance reform. He stated that our elected officials "represent the corporations that paid for their campaign" rather than the people who actually cast a ballot.

We learned about fundraising strategies from Ruth Richards. Worksheets and a set of guidelines to follow were provided. A key point when applying for grants from foundations and corporations was to be sure to follow the instructions provided by that organization to the letter. A list of previous donors should be maintained for future committee members to work from. Debbie Zanovich, who co-led the workshop, reminded us to "Have the League in your heart before you ask for money."

Karen Melcher reported on the status of the Instant Runoff Voting study. Local Leagues should schedule a meeting in the Fall for initial local membership level of interest and thoughts to generate a consensus to be delivered to state early in 2011.

Mary Jo Neal reminded us of, and provided membership forms for, the State Question Mini-conference on June 26th at Territory Cellars in Stroud. Early registration is \$20, at the door, \$25. This form is included in the newsletter. All League members are strongly encouraged to attend. This is a meeting for League members only and not open to the public.

Afternoon workshops included Gloria Caldwell's advocacy against the Voter ID state question and the Voter Service workshop led by Karen Melcher and Kathy Hinkle. Stillwater delegates split up to hear information on both. Kirsten attended the voter service, while the Richardsons heard about Voter ID.

The final workshop was given by Marjorie Webster of the LWV Colorado, Pike's Peak Region. She spoke about the new leadership structure that their local League adopted. It is made up of administrative teams rather than the traditional board and committee structure. It was designed to address burnout in board members. She advised us that they did have to amend their Bylaws in order to accommodate this change.

Upcoming state programs were announced. The LWV Oklahoma County will have Mike Fogerty, director of the Oklahoma Health Authority, speaking on July 17th. On August 21st, the LWV OK County will celebrate the 90th anniversary of the League in Oklahoma City by honoring "Nine 90's," nine women, all over the age of 90, will relate memorable voting experiences. The Bartlesville League will have a fundraising breakfast on July 3rd. On August 28th, the Bartlesville League will join with the Women's Network to re-enact the Susan B. Anthony trial. This is a complete play, complete with period costumes and jury members.

Three Oklahoma Leaguers will be attending National: Jacqueline Achong, Sharon Pettiford and Karen Melcher. They were instructed to vote their best judgment.

SIS = SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE SUMMIT

By Bernice Mitchell, Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women (OCSW) Commissioner

For too many years, OKLAHOMA has had the distinction of being RATED #1 in the NATION in the INCARCERATION OF WOMEN. And for the last decade this topic has been discussed and debated, but never dealt with properly. In 2003, a Special Task Force was Legislatively authorized (SB810) to find the answer to the WHY of this high ranking and the Findings/Recommendations were presented to the Governor and published in 2004. In June 2009, (5 years later) the numbers/ranking had not changed, so the Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women, at its annual retreat, unanimously elected to address the problem with a Solutions Initiative focusing primarily on the How and the What (can/should be done) to fix the problem and reduce the number of females incarcerated in Oklahoma.

IN OCTOBER 2009, OCSW formed a steering committee to give legs to the 2004 published report; adopt an action agenda and to broker a partnership with other organizations with the same interest, those being the Oklahoma Department of Corrections and the Oklahoma Women's Coalition. The goal of the Incarceration of Oklahoma Women Solutions' Initiative was to hold a Summit on the issue in 2010 and to identify collaboratively Strategies to lower the Incarceration rate of Oklahoma women by 2020 by way of an Action Plan. A Blue Ribbon Panel was formed to determine the overarching strategies and action steps for the spectrum of Incarceration, ranging from prevention to intervention/redirection and last, but not least, re-entry/recidivism.

On Friday, April 30, 2010, the hard work of many, came to fruition by the convening of the SIS—Solutions Initiative Summit—with citizens from across the state, including state leaders and lawmakers, coming together to identify the solutions and adopt a plan of action. The *ACTION PLAN, as adopted by the Summit attendees, called for reducing the incarceration rate of Oklahoma women to under the national average by 2020 using evidence-based practice and policy. The OVERARCHING STRATEGIES were defined as such:

- >Interrupt the pathways to incarceration.
- >Expand critical services to at-risk individuals, populations and communities.
- >Enhance public safety while implementing/expanding lower cost alternative to incarceration for nonviolent female offenders.
- >Remove barriers and provide support for successful return from incarceration to society.

Approximately three weeks after the Summit, HB2998 authored by Steele & Lamb, passed the House (90-0) and was on its way to the Senate. The legislation is for a pilot program to reduce the number of women, especially mothers, who are sentenced to prison for nonviolent crimes. A small step, perhaps, but a BEGINNING! Stay tuned.

*can be viewed in its entirety by visiting: Oklahomasis.com



A long and winding road (that we still walk), a report on May 11th's meeting

By Kirsten Tautfest

On May 11th, League members heard fellow Leaguer Adelia Hanson speak on women's political history in Oklahoma.

Before women were allowed to vote in all elections in

Oklahoma, they were allowed to vote in school elections. Additionally, they were allowed to run for some county offices. The original state constitution forbade women from running for executive offices. They were allowed to run for legislative offices, but could not

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Women's history, cont. ...

even vote for themselves.

Thankfully, progressive thinking Oklahomans (at the time) granted women the right to vote in 1918. Getting there was not easy, however. A state statute held that no person shall be eligible to run for a county office unless they were a "qualified voter of the county." Mrs. Stone wanted to run for county clerk. A court case heard in the state supreme court, *Stone v Riggs* (1914), upheld that a female citizen allowed to vote at the school level is a qualified voter. According to the state statute wording, voter was used, not elector. An elector must be male, a voter could be either sex. Mrs. Stone was then certified to run for county clerk. Four years later, suffrage was passed in Oklahoma. Also, since 1918 was a Presidential election year, Oklahoma sent the first female delegates to the National Democratic convention.

In two years, the number of women who voted in the general election was estimated at 150,000. Some women were running for state legislative office, and even winning. However, the word male was still a restrictor for running for executive elected positions. Also during this time, women were not allowed on juries, either.

Many attempted over the next few decades with state questions on whether or not to remove the word male from the qualifications for state executive office

brought before the people, and these either were voted down, or approved but thrown out due to political technicalities. In 1941, women finally got the word male removed. However, that question did not involve women being able to sit on juries yet. In 1952, the state constitution was amended to allow women to sit on juries.

In the late 1960's through 1974, there were six women in the Oklahoma legislature. In 1990, the first female state treasurer began her term. Currently, we have Jeri Askins serving as Lt. Governor. She will be running for governor as a Democrat. On the Republican side, another strong woman, Mary Fallin (currently serving as US Representative) will run as well. Could 2012 be the year that Oklahoma elects its first female governor?

The discussion that followed acknowledged that women still have a long way to go as far as getting respect from a still male-dominated political arena. The key is to stay active and informed. Also, we all need to encourage Adelia to publish the wonderful article she has been working on regarding this historical issue. The summary she gave, hitting the key points in her short talk, certainly piqued my interest to learn more about the struggle of the women who came before us.



The Oklahoma State Fiscal Year 2011 Budget

The state budget process is much like the policy making process. There are specific individuals allowed at the table and often last minute changes are made to the numbers due to an attempt to satisfy and get on-board a legislator or a key constituent. It is rare that the individual legislators know the specifics of the individual spending bills of which each agency has at least two until the day on which the chamber is voting on the bills. Sometimes the bill text is not available until minutes before the vote is taken.

This year, the budget process was even more difficult due to the state's already dire economic condition. The negotiations between Governor Henry, President Pro Tempore Glenn Coffee, Speaker of the House Chris Benge, House Appropriations Committee Chair Representative Ken Miller, and Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Senator Mike Johnson were long and painful. Perhaps this is why no debate/discussion was allowed in the House before the vote was taken. On several occasions it appeared that the negotiations team was close to a compromise when push back was received from one of the party caucuses. The result of the negotiations team's work is a \$6.676 billion budget

Continued on page 5...

OK budget, cont. ...

allocated to 2011 beginning July 1st. This is about 3.7 percent less than the 2010 budget of \$6.931 billion. To reach this number, funds that were not initially included in the budgeting process had to be allocated. These funds included all but \$100 million from the Rainy Day Fund and balances from the 2010 Federal Recovery Act. So that means there are hardly ANY RESERVES in the state coffers. Oklahoma can have no catastrophes in fiscal year 2011 because there will be very little reserve monies available to help.

Even though the budget process result was not the projected 15 to 20 percent additional reduction to the human service agencies, the agencies will continue to struggle with the current 10 percent cuts from this fiscal year on top of the 5 to 7 percent reductions shown in the fiscal year 2011 budget. This continued reduction to state agency budgets will result in ongoing reduced services to the Oklahoma vulnerable population.

The pain would not be so great if there were legitimate enhanced revenue sources to augment the state agencies' budgets. An example of a "soft" revenue enhancement is legislation that just passed that will fine vehicle drivers who do not have car insurance. The process to "capture" these offenders is cumbersome

and may be difficult to execute which could reduce the projected revenue amount.

David Blatt with the Oklahoma Policy Institute has best summed up the 2011 budget situation: "The dependence on one-time revenues to plug budgets is perhaps the inevitable consequence of the staunch unwillingness of leaders of both parties to consider outright tax increases or more sustainable revenue sources as part of the solution to Oklahoma's budget crisis, as many other states have done."

So dear Leaguers, fasten your seat belts. It has been projected by one Legislator whom we all respect that a Legislative Special Session may have to be convened in early Fall due to unrealized revenues that have been projected in the 2011 budget. Time will tell



For **Car Pool for June 26th meeting in Stroud**, meet at the parking lot in front of Sears/Locke Supply on East 6th. Please arrive by 8:30 AM if participating either as a driver or rider. Contact Karen Melcher or Kirsten Tautfest for details.

Attention Leaguers: Juneteenth Voter Registration is Sat. June 19th at the park on 12th and Washington. Volunteers are needed to help with registration. Call Nelda Sander at 624-8452 to help out.

Replacing our 2nd June meeting:

LWVOK MINI-CONFERENCE ON STATE QUESTIONS JUNE 26, 2010

What: Education and mini-convention meeting on the 9 (or more) State Questions on the ballot November 2. The group will hear presentations on the state questions in the morning. After lunch League members will break into groups to discuss the pros and cons of these questions and report their results. Pros and cons will be compiled and edited for clarity by a LWVOK task force to be included in the LWVOK November 2010 *General Election Voters' Guide*.

Who: All LWV members in the state of Oklahoma are invited to attend and participate. Speakers will include Wayne Greene, editorial writer for the Tulsa World and Dr. Bob Darcy, political science professor at OSU. State legislators will be invited.

Where: Territory Cellars, 1521 N. Highway 99, Stroud OK 74079 (1/2 mile North of the Turner Turnpike on State Highway 99).

When: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday June 26, 2010.

Registration: \$20 per person in advance or \$25 at the door. Lunch is included. Checks made out to LWVOK with "June Mini-Conference" in the memo line and **MAIL TO: LWVOK, 3200 NW 48TH ST., STE 217, OKLAHOMA CITY OK 73112.** Please include name, address, phone and email. Deadline for registration is June 18.

LWVOK MINI-CONFERENCE ON STATE QUESTION JUNE 26, 2010

NAME: _____

LOCAL LEAGUE OR MAL _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **OK ZIP** _____

PHONE: _____ **EMAIL:** _____

\$20 CHECK IS MADE OUT TO LWVOK IS ATTACHED _____



Schedule for the 2010-2011 Book Club

The participants of the SLWV Book Club have met and selected the books, leaders and meeting places for the coming year. The meetings are at 7:00 PM. The following is the planned schedule:

June 14, 2010

Book. *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout
 Leader. Gerry Nelson
 Hostess. Deanna Homer - 2105 East Marcus Ave.

July 12, 2010

Book. *Saturday* by Ian McEwan
 Leader. Pat Jaynes
 Hostess. Judy Clay - 423 S. Oak Knoll Court

August 9, 2010

Book. *The Family* by Jeff Sharlet
 Leader. Harold Sare
 Hostess. Margaret Ewing - 1810 W. 3rd Ave.

September 13, 2010

Book. *Prairie City* by Angie Debo
 Leader. Nancy Andrews
 Hostess. Roxie Weber Living Center, 807 S. Lowery

October 11, 2010

Book. *Half the Sky* by Nicholas D. Kristoff & Sheryl WuDunn
 Leader. Karen Melcher
 Hostess. Beth Thornton - 1215 S. Serenity Ln.

November 8, 2010

Book. *People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks
 Leader. Margaret Ewing
 Hostess. Gerry Nelson - 1008 W. Eskridge Place

December 13, 2010

Book. *The Liar's Club* by Mary Karr
 Leader. Avis Rambo
 Hostess. Trish Emig - 2724 North Monroe

January 10, 2011

Book. *Say You're One of Them* by Uwen Akpan
 Leader. Judy Clay
 Hostess. Carol Stone - 1114 West Frances Ave.

February 14, 2011

Book. *Game Change* by John Heilemann
 Leader. Trish Emig
 Hostess. Joyce Cox - 23 Brentwood Dr.

March 14, 2011

Book. *The Lucuna* by Barbara Kingsolver
 Leader. Deanna Homer
 Hostess. Syamali Nandi - 912 West Eskridge Ave.

April 11, 2011

Book. *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot
 Leader. Carol Stone
 Hostess. Karen Melcher - 523 S. Ridge Rd.

May 9, 2011

Book. *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand* by Helen Simonson
 Leader. Beth Thornton
 Hostess. Nancy Andrews

—Beth Thornton



Remembering Janet Cunningham

The SLWV lost a friend and faithful member this spring in the death of Janet Cunningham. Janet joined the SLWV in 1956. She served as treasurer from 1957 to 1967 and was president in 1976. Her home was always open for League functions.

There will be a Friends memorial service at 4:00 PM on June 19th at the Wesley Foundation located at 823 W. University. Members of the Friends faith believe that a memorial service should be a time to share stories of



Janet will be missed.

happy memories. A son is preparing a video of some of the family's happy days. Thora DuBois will provide music and friends will be asked to share their memories of Janet.

This will be followed by a dinner and a time for visiting.

All SLWV members are welcomed to attend and participate in this service. Clarence's words to me were "The League meant a lot to Janet and I hope the members will join us."

—Beth Thornton



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
OF STILLWATER

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