



May 2011 Stillwater Voter

Kirsten Tautfest, President

A Publication of Stillwater, Oklahoma,
League of Women Voters

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in joining the

League, please

*contact **Helen Jordan** at*

372-6420.

SLWV Calendar*

Date/Time	Place	Description
May 3rd (Tues.) 7 p.m. May 4th (Wed.) 8 a.m. to noon 1 to 5 p.m.	Stillwater Public Library Rescheduled from February!	Stillwater Global Affairs Forum Tuesday Evening - presentation by Mark Elam, " <i>Human Trafficking</i> " Free Training Session on Friday, Registration required. 372-3633, ext. 106 or www.orcpi.com/training/training.cgi (Contact Person: Public Library)
May 9th (Mon.) 7 to 9 p.m.	Nancy Andrew's home, 1207 Mansfield. Directions: 6th to Country Club Rd., turn S. to Country Club Dr., turn E. and go 4 or 5 blocks to Mansfield and turn N. to 1207	SLWV Book Discussion: <i>Major Pettigrew's Last Stand</i> by Helen Simonson (Contact Person: Beth Thornton)
May 10th (Tues.) 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Freddie Paul's Restaurant 1707 E. 6th	SLWV Noon Meeting: <i>Update on the Lake McMurtry Project</i> . Speaker: Valerie Bloodgood Lunch at 11:30, presentation at noon. (Contact Person: Nancy Andrews)
May 10 to 12 (Tues. to Thurs.)	Embassy Suites, Norman, OK	Oklahoma Conference on Aging - <i>Real World, Real Aging</i> Visit our website for further information.
May 21st (Sat.) 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Holiday Inn 1000 N. Interstate Dr. Norman, OK	LWVOK State Convention Friday evening 4 to 8 p.m. Holiday Inn President's Suite. Reception hosted by Norman League Sat. 8:30 a.m. Convention registration; 9 a.m. Call to order Convention concludes at 3:30 p.m. (Contact Person: Kirsten Tautfest)

Inside this issue:

Call to Convention	2
Park use	
Sustainability	3
LWVOK Positions	
Book Club	4
Facts for Voters	
<i>The Guys, a play</i>	5
OK Voting Rights	
Annual Meeting	6
Girl Scouts	
OK Legislative Advocacy	7
Voter Service	8

*League-sponsored items are in bold.

SPRING 2011

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OKLAHOMA

CALL TO CONVENTION - LWVOK - Convention 2011 - May 21, 2011

Location / Lodging:	<p>Holiday Inn, 1000 N. Interstate Dr., Norman, OK 73072, (405)364-2882. \$89.00 for single/double, plus tax. Cut-off date for guest room reservations is April 30, 2011.</p> <p>Check in is 3:00 p.m.; and check out is noon.</p> <p>Breakfast – Free for two people per guest room; for all others the cost is \$8.60 including tax.</p>
Directions:	<p>From the south on I-35 – exit 110 at Robinson St. and turn right (west) onto Robinson St. From Robinson St., cross over I-35 and turn left, south, on N. Interstate Dr. Merge to right lane (so as not to re-enter I-35). You will see Holiday Inn immediately on the right.</p> <p>From the north on I-35 – exit 110B at Robinson St., merge left onto N. Interstate Dr., cross Robinson at next light, and merge to right lane, (so as not to re-enter I-35). You will see Holiday Inn immediately on the right (0.6 mi.).</p>
Social:	<p>Hospitality – Friday, 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Holiday Inn in the President’s Suite, 2nd floor, room # 218. Hospitality is hosted by the Norman League.</p> <p>Dinner – Friday, 6:30 p.m., LaBaguette French Bakery and Restaurant, 1130 Rambling Oaks, Suite 100. Restaurant is across the street (behind and to the west of Holiday Inn in the shopping center). Dinner is on your own, and prices range from &13.95 to \$19.95, excluding beverages. Add soup or salad for \$2.95 extra.</p> <p>There also are other salads and sandwiches options from \$6.95 to \$13.95. .</p>
Time:	<p>Saturday, May 21, 8:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. – LWVOK Convention 2011</p> <p>8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. – Registration</p> <p>9:00 a.m. – Convention Call to Order</p>
Cost:	<p>\$25.00 (Includes packet of information, and boxed lunch). See Lodging above for breakfast options.</p> <p>Questions? call 405 232-8683. Deborah will call you back.</p>

Local Park and Multi Arts Center Use:

To help City of Stillwater develop a long-term plan for city parks and facilities, the Stillwater Park Board asks for your input via an online survey. To complete the survey, please visit this website:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/stillwaterparksandrecreationsurvey>

Thank you for taking time to complete the survey.

Jim Scott

Parks and Recreation Manager

City of Stillwater

[\(405\) 533-8505](tel:4055338505)

jscott@stillwater.org

Meeting Report:

Dr. Toni Shaklee spoke to the League on March 22nd. She brought us up to date on OSU's efforts toward sustainability. Defined as: *Sustainability – taking care of the needs today for the future generations (7 generations out)*. Similar to, but not identical are terms such as "green," "going natural," and "recycling."

A multifaceted program at OSU included a contract in 2007 with Energy Educators Co. to survey campus buildings and find what are we doing, doing effectively, and what could be better.

Activities on campus included:

Retrofitting – lighting kits, low flow toilets, low flow showers, solar energy panels in the bus stops

Recycling – increased efforts to find new outlets for recycled materials; a student effort to collect materials particularly at the tailgating times

Transportation – the bus system, the building of the CNG – clean natural gas station at the corner of Lakeview and Western (a joint Stillwater and OSU project)

The current director of dining services has several creative ideas about sustainability. There are organic options in food lines, vegan meals, using made in Oklahoma products, using recycled recyclables, energy star appliances and the best idea (I think) are 'trayless Tuesdays.' Since the food lines are all-you-can-eat there was considerable food waste when food taken was not eaten. Trayless Tuesdays are still all-you-can-eat but the students couldn't pile the food on a tray, but have to go back for more. Now trayless is the norm.

All of the sustainability ideas and programs are accomplished without hiring new administrators; departments handle their own programs.

Last but not least, the new architecture building won a "Green Award" for meeting the LEED standards. The campus will work to make other campus buildings and renovations are 'green' as possible but may not necessarily try to meet all LEED standards.

—Kay Murphy



LWVOK Positions

In December we discussed the LWVOK positions and since that time, the effort has been made to make a link you could access. Cheri and Kirsten were successful and the links are below. Thank you very much Cheri and Kirsten.

<http://www.lwvok.org/positions.htm> Short

<http://www.lwvok.org/Program%20Positions%20May%202009%20Draft.pdf> The whole thing.

Please alert your membership of this. We will not print this for distribution at the LWV OK Convention this year.

Deborah Langley LWV OK President

Book Club Report

On Monday evening May 9th the SLWV Book Club will discuss *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand* by Helen Simonson.

Synopsis: Written with a delightfully dry sense of humour and the wisdom of a born storyteller, *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand* explores the risks one takes when pursuing happiness in the face of family obligation and tradition.

When retired Major Pettigrew strikes up an unlikely friendship with Mrs. Ali, the Pakistani villages shop-keeper, he is drawn out of his regimented world and forced to confront the realities of life in the twenty-first century. Brought together by a shared love of literature and the loss of their respective spouses, the Major and Mrs. Ali soon find their friendship on the cusp of blossoming into something more. But although the Major was actually born in Lahore, and Mrs Ali was born in Cambridge, village society insists on embracing him as the quintessential local and her as a permanent foreigner. The Major has always taken special pride in the village, but will he be forced to choose between the place he calls home and a future with Mrs Ali?

The books for the following year have been selected and they are:

An American Life by Lori Ginzberg

C Street by Jeff Sharlet

Green Gone Wrong by Heather Rogers

Between Heaven & Earth

Earth by Fred Krupp

March by Geraldine Brooks

Deadly Spin by Wendell Potter

Daring Young Men by Richard Reeves

The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls

Panther in the Basement by Amos Oz

Every Last One by Anna Quindlen

Locked Rooms by Laurie R. King

The year's schedule with book, leader and hostess will be in the next Voter. If you would like to join us and would like to lead the discussion of a book or hostess the group, give me a call at 377-3797.

Beth Thornton



Facts for Voters Update:

If you have a paper copy of *Facts for Voters* dated January, 2011 following are changes you can make on your copy.

p. 6 Eddie Fields email address is incorrect. It is: efields@oksenate.gov.

p. 9 County officials
DA: Tom Lee – phone number is correct
Asst. DA: Debra Vincent

Spec. Dist. Judge for Payne Cty: Katherine Thomas 372-4380
Spec. Dist. Judge for Logan Cty: R. L. Hert, Jr. (I don't have the phone number)

p. 10 City Council
Chuck Hopkins Term ends in April, 2014
a second email is: councilorhopkins@stillwater.org

Seat 4 Cody Scott Terms ends April 2014
Cell phone: 762-0014
email: councilorsscott@stillwater.org

p. 11
Mike Dicks, Vice President Term ends April, 2016
Eric Gudgel, cross off Vice President

As far as I know those are the only changes or additions. If there are other errors please let me know.
Kay Murphy

Author Anne Nelson's April 10th Presentation

Many of the League members took advantage of the opportunity to hear Anne Nelson, author of *The Guys* discuss her play and the circumstances of the development of the play. We would be labeled as FOG'S – Friends of Gerry's as Anne described us (i.e., Gerry Nelson, mother of Anne and LWVS member). Since Anne grew up in Stillwater she knew many of the members of the audience. The Sheerar Museum invited Anne to talk in conjunction with their first responders' exhibit. [It is excellent if you haven't viewed it yet.]

I found it fascinating to hear how the play evolved. It started with helping write the eulogies for the captain of a fire battalion, to interviews with various members of the family and friends, to working through the

emotional and psychological aftermath of the 9/11 tragedy and ended with a "product", a play.

The Guys has been produced in 48 states and 14 countries by all types of theater groups. It is even safe enough for high schools (no bad language or sex.) Anne is an excellent speaker; she played the role of storyteller very effectively.

*Note: The SLWV book club has read another of Anne's play – *Savages*, but not *The Guys*.

—Kay Murphy



CONTACT:

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NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oklahoma voting rights in jeopardy

Oklahoma, known nationwide as [the state with the least choice on its ballot](#), is now poised to make things even more difficult from an election standpoint. The legislature's failure to coordinate also threatens another elections bill to help military voters, which is likely to be overturned as unconstitutional.

HB1058, introduced earlier this year by Rep. Charles Key, would in its current version reduce the signature collection requirement for forming a new political party to 22,500 signatures. Currently, the requirement is 5% of the total vote cast for Governor in the last election, which in 2012 would result in a requirement of

51,379 signatures. This is more than the 5,000 signatures in Key's original bill, but would at least eliminate Oklahoma's poster child status in the electoral dysfunction department.

However, this bill is now stalled in the Senate Rules Committee. This is where the lack of coordination becomes a problem for state legislators. Another bill which would help military service members vote, by moving the primary date from July to June, is now likely to be tossed as unconstitutional by the courts.

The second bill, known as HB1615 or the "Let the Troops Vote Act", would in the process move the deadline for new political parties from May 1 to March 1 of the election year. Petitioning deadlines that early [have been ruled unconstitutional 15 times](#). Given Oklahoma's already difficult requirements, without HB1058 to reduce the number of signatures needed, the law stands no chance in court.

"The people of Oklahoma, and the United States, have a right to have their voices heard at the ballot box," said Micah Gamino of [Oklahomans for Ballot Access Reform](#), which supports the bill. "If

we won't support democracy here, how can we claim to be supporting it in Libya, Iraq, and Afghanistan?"

Free & Equal finds this an apt observation. "State legislators are putting the voting rights of active duty service members in jeopardy, just because they're getting cold feet about opening up the ballot to competition," Free & Equal founder and chair Christina Tobin said in a statement. "This is unacceptable."

Supporters of HB1058 are being asked to contact the members of the Senate Rules Committee as soon as possible, to let them know that HB1058 must pass as it currently stands to restore the right to vote of every Oklahoma voter. Also be sure to contact the Rules Committee Chairman, Senator Rob Johnson, at [\(405\) 521-5592](tel:405-521-5592) and Vice-Chairman, Senator Jonathan Nichols, at [\(405\) 521-5535](tel:405-521-5535) to urge them to take action on HB1058.

###

[Free & Equal](#) is a nonpartisan, non-profit public-policy advocacy organization dedicated to election reform and improving ballot access laws in the United States.

Annual Meeting Overview

The annual meeting was attended by 22 people at the Elk's Lodge. After a great potluck dinner, business was conducted. The members voted to continue with the local program priorities, retaining them as they are currently written. Judy Clay suggested we study the issue of charter schools. Beth Thornton reported for Karen Melcher that there would be no state study on education. The Tulsa League is conducting a study on education and the delegates to the state

convention were directed to support the Tulsa League's study. The motion passed. The next Voter will have a copy of the annual meeting minutes.

—Kay Murphy



Donation to Girl Scouts

In late March, Stillwater Girls, Inc. had an open house to let the Stillwater community know The Lodge and Camp Silvia Stapely, which formerly were used exclusively for Girl Scout functions, are now open to broader use by the greater community. During the open house, I asked if there were some possibilities specifically at the Helen Gorin Nature Center located at Camp Silvia Stapely where we could use the remaining funds we had collected in memory of Helen Gorin. We received a proposal requesting materials to install an underground pipe from the nearby creek bed to the pond at the Nature Center. The project will also include using a pump to bring water from the creek and an aesthetic fountain located in the center of the pond to provide aeration and an attractive focal spot on the water.

we hope to get some coverage in the NewsPress in the near future. After the fountain is installed, there will be signage acknowledging our gift and we will be invited to the Nature Center to see the completed project. I will keep you informed of the progress.

—Alice Richardson



The total cost of the materials needed exceeded the balance of \$870 we had remaining in the Helen Gorin Memorial Fund, but members at the annual meeting voted to approve the entire cost of the materials, using some of the undesignated balance in our accounts to complete this project. Therefore, on April 28, we had a ceremony at The Lodge, where Kirsten presented a cashier's check from BancFirst in the amount of \$1210 to Wanda Johnson, President of Stillwater Girls, Inc. There were photos taken at that time and

Legislative Advocacy Report for the 2011 Legislative Session for Annual Meeting - 04/20/11



With one week to go, and counting, the measures must be out of the opposite House of Origin by the 28th. The Minority Party's strategy has partially worked . . . questioning and disputing the Majority Party's rules, as legislation has slogged through the chambers this session. In spite of slowing down the process, damage has been done, in my opinion, to Oklahomans.

- The Legislature convinced Governor Fallin to forfeit federal dollars to establish an exchange where Oklahomans would be able to compare benefits and premiums of insurance companies. The state will be required, by federal law, to create the exchange that will be funded through private donations, and through public money, which will further reduce funds for core services.
- Several measures passed that will make it increasingly difficult for Oklahoman women to have abortions. The greater issue, whether you disagree or agree with abortions, is that these measures will be challenged in court. Once again, our tax dollars will be diverted from Oklahoma's core services and sent to defend unconstitutional legislation in the courts.
- There no longer is a checks and balance process for the State Board of Education; the Oklahoma Superintendent of Public Instruction and "her" board will now make decisions based on their political base which put them in the positions. Over the next several years, there will be repeated attempts for public funds to be diverted from public schools to private and "charter" schools that are already established and those schools to be established. The result will further deplete funds for common, public education.
- Oklahoma will have a further diluted tort process that sets the ceiling at \$350K for non-economic damages and will beg the question, "Is a jury still needed in these cases since the amount of recovery has been legislated?"

I could continue, but as many of you dear friends pointed out to me at the last book discussion,

"Trish, you have been spending too much time at the Capitol." Those of you who pointed this out to me are so right. Without a doubt, this has been the sorriest

legislative session I have witnessed. It was all about efficiency, private enterprise and control. Hence, we will have consolidation of departments, public agencies, boards, and commissions. Also, we will have more agency services being outsourced to for profit entities, and continued attempts to outsource public services in future sessions.

The attempt to make it more difficult to file an initiative petition by requiring a fiscal impact analysis was, thankfully, thwarted. The measure would have gone to the people and it would have been a difficult issue for most folks to understand. Although many of us expressed glee when HJR 1002 was sent to the Governor for her approval, when reality set in we realized that passage of this measure, if the people vote for it, will just further reduce our state coffers. The measure will reduce increases to property values to no more than 3 percent per year. Currently, property values can be increased up to 5 percent each year. If passed by "the people", the measure will go into effect in 2013.

The measure to provide more sentencing options to those convicted of committing non-violent crimes, I think, will be signed by the Governor. The Oklahoma Women's Commission along with a few other women-focused organizations did an exceptional job informing the Speaker of the House, Kris Steele, about the plight of incarcerated women in Oklahoma and the horrifying statistics that verify what happens to families when moms are thrown into jail. There was fear, early on, that due to the split in the Majority Party between the Tea Partiers and the remainder of the Majority Party, that the Tea Partiers were going to successfully thwart the legislation. It is rare that the Tea Partiers vote with the Minority Party. However, anything authored by the Speaker of the House initially was voted against by members of the Tea Party. It appears that reconciliatory talks took place and some of the legislation survived.

Right now, I'm a-thinkin' retirement is a good thing. I'm also a-thinkin' that our kids and grandkids will be left with "the fight" to rebuild what we fought so hard to establish. Remember HB1017? I guess life is cyclic, right? So I can rationalize all of what is occurring by reminding myself that I am just experiencing nature's cycle. I'm thinkin' that gardening, raising chickens, and taking care of cats is a little closer to actually "experiencing" nature that might be in my best interest!

—Trish Emig

Voter Service

On March 22nd, the League sponsored a Forum at City Hall prior to the city election on April 5th. The two candidates, Marsha Gibbs and Chuck Hopkins, were running for a councilor's position on the City Council. They answered written questions from the audience. The debate was monitored by Gladeen Allred-Struthers and the timer was Kirsten Tautfest. League members distributed the cards and pencils and screened the questions. Thanks for everyone's help. The debate was televised and was shown again on the following Sunday.

The Stillwater NewsPress used our candidate questions and answers in an edition prior to the election. We are grateful to both the NewsPress and the Perkins Journal for using our thoughtful questions.

Distribution of the Voter Service booklets continues.

The many banks in Stillwater will be contacted so the booklets can be picked up there.

On April 20th, Beth Thornton, Judy Clay, Pat Jaynes, Kay Murphy, Gloria Hesser, Vera Long, and Kirsten Tautfest journeyed to the Pawnee Tribal Center to help with their candidate Forum. Kirsten was a wonderful moderator. The audience wrote many questions on the cards furnished by League members. The candidates (two for president, two for seat one and two for seat two) gave interesting and provocative answers to help the audience choose their favorites. The election will be May 5th. We thank the Pawnee candidates for participating, the attentive audience, and all the tribal members who made such good arrangements. We were glad to help extend our voter service activities abroad!

--Pat Jaynes



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF STILLWATER**

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