



# Nov/Dec 2011 Stillwater Voter

Kirsten Tautfest, President

A Publication of Stillwater, Oklahoma,  
League of Women Voters

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## SLWV Calendar

Date/Time*	Place	Description
<b>Nov. 8th (Tues.) 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.</b>	Freddie Paul's Restaurant 1707 E. 6th	SLWV Noon Meeting: Review of the LWVUS National Education Study by the local study committee <b>Please read</b> your last Voter before coming for the consensus questions. (Contact Person: Nancy Andrews)
<b>Nov. 14th (Mon.) 7 to 9 p.m.</b>	Home of Gerry Nelson 1008 W. Eskridge Pl. <b>NOTE: Park only on one side of the street - the tree side!</b>	SLWV Book Discussion: <i>Elizabeth Cady Stanton: An American Life</i> - by Lori Ginzberg  (Contact Person: Avis Rambo)
Nov. 15th (Tues.) 1:45 to 5 p.m.	Francis Tuttle Technology Center Portland Campus 3500 NW 150th, OKC	<i>Oklahoma Women's Coalition Fall Issue Symposium</i> Click on the website for registration and more information. Cost \$40 <a href="#">click here</a> (Contact Person: Trish Emig)
Nov. 22nd (Tues.)/ Nov. 24th (Thurs.)		no 4th Tuesday November meeting or board meeting due to Thanksgiving week <b>HAPPY THANKSGIVING!</b>
<b>Dec. 1st (Thurs.) 6:30 to 8 p.m.</b>	Stillwater Public Library Board Room (138)	SLWV November and December Board Meeting  (Contact Person: Kirsten Tautfest)
<b>Dec. 10th (Sat.) 10 a.m. to Noon</b>	Unitarian Universalist Church of Stillwater 320 S. Stallard. Enter in back and go up-stairs.	<b>Holiday Brunch!</b> - Bring a breakfast dish to share. Board will supply paper goods and drinks. National positions will be discussed.  (Contact Person: Board Members)

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\*League-sponsored items are in bold.

## SLWV Calendar cont....

<b>Dec. 12th (Mon.) 7 to 9 p.m.</b>	Home of Carol Stone 1114 W. Frances Ave.	SLWV Book Discussion: <i>Locked Room</i> - by Laurie R. King  (Contact Person: Margaret Ewing)
<b>Jan. 10th (Tues.) 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.</b>	Freddie Paul's Restaurant 1707 E. 6th	SLWV Noon Meeting: An update on the Water Project by Valerie Zayat-Bloodgood and Gladeen Allred-Struthers.
<b>Jan. 24th (Tues.) 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.</b>	Freddie Paul's Restaurant 1707 E. 6th	January 24 meeting will feature a presentation on trees by Stan Fimple with the Extention Dept.
<b>Feb. 15th</b>	Meditations	<b>Annual Banquet!</b>  Information TBA.

Last month, your *Voter* had copies of the consensus questions plus links to LWV.org areas that you could get more information on the topic. I encourage you to bring your October *Voter* with you when you join us on November 8<sup>th</sup> as we attempt to reach a consensus on 15 questions. The following article covers questions 10 through 15. Please read as we will likely not have much time to discuss these questions. I plan on starting with announcements at 11:45 AM instead of our usual Noon so we can get started early. Please arrive as soon as you can and we may run late. If you need to leave early, but want your voice to be heard, you may leave your opinions on the consensus questions sheets and turn it in to the education study committee members. If we cannot reach a consensus, I will ring a cowbell and we will move on to the next question. We will just answer that question as "No consensus" for national purposes. Be polite (I know you all are) and keep your comments and questions short and to the point.

A big thanks to the committee members: Judy Clay, Martha McMillan, Coleen Fleming, Joanne Murer, and Cassie Taylor.



## The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education: Equity and Funding

Public school funding comes from many sources – federal, state and local taxes as well as grants provided by both governmental and nongovernmental agencies. The federal government adds less than 10 percent to local education budgets, yet it contributes significantly to the rules for how the funding is used. Additionally, the United States invests 5 percent of the GDP in public education. Nearly half of the k-12 education funding in the United States is intended to come from the states, drawn from a combination of income taxes, fees and other taxes. However, some states resemble Illinois, where the state's share is only 27 percent. The remainder usually comes from local property taxes.

### Equity

States that rely heavily on property taxes to fund education tend to have large inequities in school

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Ed Study *continued...*

funding, which mirror the inequity of wealth in society-at-large. Hurst (2007) noted that inequities in wealth stem from the fact that wealthy people earn much of their income from investments and/or inherited funds, while the poor earn all of their income from jobs and they spend it on food, shelter, transportation, etc. In the United States, the wealthiest 20 percent own 84 percent of the total wealth.

Inequities in school funding reflect housing patterns. During the past 50 years since *Brown vs. Board of Education*, schools have become re-segregated (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Currently, three-fourths of the Black and Latino/a students attend schools that are predominately non-white.

### **Adequacy**

Since, 1990, rather than looking at equity, most lawsuits have focused on adequacy—whether a state is providing local districts with just enough funding and resources to give all students a basic education. Odden and Picus (2008) developed a model calculating the cost of an adequate education. They defined an adequate education as one that includes factors such as a full-day kindergarten, core class sizes of 15 for grades K-3, 25 for grades 4-6 and specialist teachers. The cost of an adequate education varies. For instance, more money is needed to educate students from impoverished communities and students with special needs.

### **Funding Priorities**

When schools are not funded adequately, this has a long-lasting impact. For instance, Darling-Hammond (2010) noted that dropouts cost the country at least \$200 billion a year in lost wages and taxes, costs for social services and crime. Since the 1980s, national investments have spent three times more on the prison system than on education. Data show that the national average for educating a child is \$9500, while it costs \$43,000 per year to keep a person incarcerated. With 5 percent of the world's population in the United States, we house 25 percent of the world criminals (Kang & Hong, 2008).

### **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**

In 2001, President George W. Bush signed the reauthorization of Elementary and Secondary Education Act, “No Child Left Behind,” which was intended to close achievement gaps, particularly for minority children. However, data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reveal that scores were higher in math and reading for minority students before NCLB. One provision of NCLB permitted parents to remove a student from a low-performing school and transfer to another, better performing school. They would receive a voucher which would pay some of the cost of attending another school – public or private. Additionally, courts and education agencies stepped in to “remediate.” The sanctions imposed by NCLB had the effect of punishing or threatening punishment to low-performing schools and teachers, sending them the message that they were incompetent and that they should not have the right to make decisions about how to educate students. Studies (Reeve, 2009) showed that threatening public schools and teachers with punishment had harmful effects on students who remained in the public schools. Supporters of NCLB appreciate the increase in accountability for schools and teachers as well as the focus on low scoring sub-groups. Critics of NCLB decry the lack of federal funding for many of the Act’s mandates, the emphasis on penalties, the reliance on standardized tests, and the lack of attention to gifted students as well as to subjects such as science, social studies and the arts. One goal of NCLB has been to offer choice to parents whose children attend poorly performing schools.

However, large-scale studies of voucher school students have revealed little difference in their performance compared to public school students with similar backgrounds, and having vouchers has not raised the performance of the most needy students (Rouse & Barrows, 2009). Furthermore, many (Holland, 2011) argue that the NCLB goal of 95 percent of students meeting state standards in reading and math by 2014 is unrealistic.

### **Race to the Top (RttT)**

Race to the Top was signed into law by Presiden-

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Ed Study *continued...*

Barack Obama in 2009. This program shifted the basis of awarding funds to emphasize competition. Competitive grants reward reform planned in the winning states. Funding is flexible as long as states demonstrate grant dollars are aligned with the agenda outlined in their winning applications. Only twelve states received funding through RttT.

Two of the requirements met by states that received RttT funding were (1) improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance and (2) lifting the cap on the number of charter schools that could be created.

While both these funding requirements can be effective, neither is foolproof, and each addresses only one part of the problems schools face. For instance, research studies show that promising increased pay based on teacher effectiveness is not an effective incentive. Furthermore, research showed there is a problem when teacher performance evaluation is based only on student scores in standardized tests (Springer et. al. 2010).

Although there is no question that some charter schools are effective, they have not been the panacea many expected. They were originally proposed as an opportunity for educators to test research-supported methods for reaching hard-to-educate children, and some have done quite well. However, a large-scale research study funded by pro-charter advocates revealed that only 17 percent of the 2403 charter schools had significantly more growth in test scores compared to traditional public schools, and, in fact, 37 percent showed significantly less growth (Center for Research on Education Outcomes, 2009). Furthermore, many charter schools do not admit and/or retain students who need increased support, e.g., students from impoverished communities and students with special needs.

The progress of the U.S. Department of Education's Equity and Excellence commissions can be tracked through <http://www2.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/eec/index.html>.

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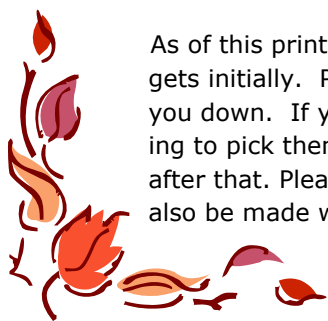
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**Produced by the LWVUS The Education Study:  
The Role of the Federal Government in Public  
Education**

## Pecans, Yes!



As of this printing of the Voter, 32 pounds are reserved of our 50 pounds that our Local League gets initially. Price is \$10/one-pound bag. If you have already reserved with Kirsten, she's got you down. If you haven't, email ktautfest@gmail.com or call 405-612-8558. Kirsten is expecting to pick them up on November 12th at the state board meeting in Tulsa. Distribution will be after that. Please have your money ready when the pecans are ready for pickup. Prepayment can also be made when we meet on November 8th for the luncheon.

## Book Club Report

### SLWV Book Club - Monday Nov. 14th

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was a brilliant activist / intellectual. That nearly all of her ideas - that women are entitled to seek an education, to own property, to get a divorce, and to vote - are now commonplace is in large part because she worked tirelessly to extend the nation's promise of radical individualism to women. Few could match Stanton's self-confidence; loving an argument, she rarely wavered in her assumption that she had won. But she was no secular saint. Elitism runs through her life and thought, defined most often by class, frequently by race and always by intellect.

Historian Lori Ginzberg narrates the life of this women of great charm, and intellectual gifts who turned the limitations placed on women like herself into a universal philosophy of equal rights.

Come join us on November 14th at Gerry Nelson's home, 1008 W. Eskridge Place at 7:00 p.m. Avis Rambo will lead the Discussion. (Remember, park on the South side of the street).

### SLWV Book Club - Monday Dec. 12th

*Locked Rooms* by Laurie R King is number 8 in the Mary Russell mystery series. Mary and her husband Sherlock Holmes pair up to unlock the buried memory of a shocking crime - lost somewhere in Russell's own past. After leaving Bombay, Mary and Sherlock are on their way to San Francisco. There Mary will settle some legal affairs surrounding the inheritance of her family's estate. But the closer they get to port, the more Mary

has some troubling dreams.

It's December - time to forget global warming, people on 'C' street, green that has gone and enjoy a good mystery, lively discussion and good company. Maybe since it's at Carol's home, 1114 W. Frances Ave., you should ask your God for clear streets.

### SLWV Book Club - October

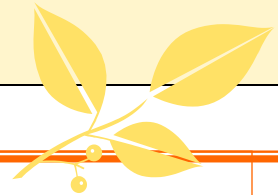
In October the members of the book club revisited the Vietnam War from the viewpoint of Le Ly Hayslip. The first 12 years of her life she was a peasant girl in a small village in Central Vietnam. Her father taught her to love God, her family, the family traditions and her ancestors. From her mother she learned humility and strength of virtue. She also learned that there is no love beyond faithful love for husband, ancestors and native soil. The next three years she loved, labored and fought for the Viet Cong against American and South Vietnamese soldiers. By the age of 16 she had suffered near starvation, imprisonment, torture, rape and the death of family members. In 1986, after 16 years living in America and becoming a U.S. citizen she went back to Vietnam to find out what had happened to her family and village. *When Heaven and Earth Changed Places* is the story of what Le Ly remembers of the war years and what she found on her return to Vietnam. We usually hear one side of a war and it is good to be reminded that there are many sides and that all sides suffer.

—Beth Thornton

## Voter Service Report

According to the Payne County Election Board office, December 13th is the "mock election" in Payne County in which the new voting machines will be set up in each precinct for a few hours. The public will be allowed to come and "vote" to see how the new machines work. Exact times to be announced later. Watch the local newspapers for more information on the times. Also, the Election Board will have a new voting machine set up for public viewing in their office during regular hours the week of October 31st. The Election Board will also host an open house in January.

— Deanna Homer



## Oklahoma Women's Coalition

### Chair's Report

We hope to see you at our Fall Issues Symposium on November 15 to learn how we can improve the status of women and girls in Oklahoma. Arrive early for networking, informative exhibits and refreshments. Doors open at 12:45pm.

At 1:45pm, hear about exciting initiatives from our first panel featuring Oklahoma Secretary of Education Phyllis Hudecki, Oklahoma Secretary of Health Terri White, INTEGRIS' Zora Brown and moderator Anne Roberts.

Then learn what 2012 legislative initiatives aim to reduce the rate at which Oklahoma incarcerates women

(we're #1) from State Representatives Lisa Johnson and Jeannie McDaniel plus Resonance Center for Women CEO Pam Richardson.

Finally, explore ways to empower Oklahoma's women-serving organizations with Oklahoma's Secretary of Military and Veterans Affairs, Major General Rita Aragon, and Journal Record President and Publisher Mary Melon.

Register now and bring a friend. I look forward to seeing you there!

Jean Warner  
Chair, Oklahoma Women's Coalition



## Allison Dawson, Payne County Election Board Secretary

The very attuned to elections, voting, etc. SLWV members listened carefully to Allison's presentation and of course had lots of questions. She was well-prepared and knowledgeable about the new system and rules.

First in importance was that the new voting devices will be available at the next elections. The machines

are light in weight and the precinct officials will appreciate that. The ballots look very similar except you mark a box on the left side of the ballot with blue or black ink. The box must be fully covered. [Bring on those Scantron sheets we had as students!] The ballot is entered into the machine as before, but immediately the scanner read both sides of the ballot and will reject it if there is a marking

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Election Board *continued...*

problem (or some other problem). My notes say there is 'audio-tactile' interface and if I remember correctly that means non-sighted and non-hearing people will be able to use the same machines.

As always Pat Jaynes reminded us about precinct official training and encouraged us to attend; they have the number of officials they need but can always use subs. There will be a mock election on Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> to practice all of the new systems.

Back to the voting machine: The election results on each machine are saved to a flash drive and then entered into a computer at the Election Board office. No more green screens, may not mean anything to most people, but that demonstrates how old our previous voting machines were because that's what the computer terminals looked like in the past.

Sample ballots will be printed in the newspapers and on the website, as they have been previously. The first official election is February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

Next in importance was the requirement of presenting Voter Identification when coming to vote. The legislation was passed in Nov. 2010 and went in effect July, 2011. Options for ID's are:

- Your voter ID card (which has no picture or expiration date),
- Oklahoma driver's license with picture and expiration date,
- State ID card with picture and expiration date (expiration date exempt for over 65 years old),
- United States passport with photo and expiration date,
- Military with picture but no expiration date,
- Any other OK or US document or one issued by a federally recognized tribal government (with photo and expiration date),
- Temporary ID issued by the County Election Board (no photo and good for only 30 days).

Questions abounded:

1. Is there a double check system after the election to check the accuracy of the votes? NO
2. What about provisional ballots? If the person

has no voter ID they may vote and between the Election day and Friday of that week the CEB will verify the legitimacy of the voter. Then their ballot will be counted.

3. Absentee voting: Voters will still be able to vote in-person absentee as they have done in the past and will need a voter ID. Mail in absentee procedures remain the same.
4. How many ballots will be prepared before the election? 80% of the registered voters will have ballots.
5. How long do names remain on the voter roll? If a person dies, the next of kin has to remove the name of the deceased.
6. There are too many elections. How can these be consolidated? This is something the legislature has to reform by passing laws. They set the number of elections and dates. In addition counties, cities and school boards would have to make some changes to their charters or legal procedures.
7. What about Instant Runoff Voting? The new machines can handle IRV if it ever comes to pass.
8. Who made the new voting machines? I am fuzzy here – I think she said Hart. Someone correct me. (KM)
9. How else are names removed from the voter registration rolls? The health department shares the list of death certificates issued. A person would need to have voted in one of the two last general elections otherwise their name is removed.

There are some changes in precinct lines with the redistricting that just took place. These are posted on the CEB website.

Voter Trivia for you about Payne County. We have:

- 30,873 active voters
  - 7,918 inactive voters
  - 38,791 registered voters
- Don't ask how many vote in any one elections; it is too discouraging.

Election Board *continued...*

**Leaguers, our voter education efforts are cut out for us. Voters will need information about the Voter ID requirement, they will need to know how the new ballots are to be marked and they will need to know how the new machines will work. There will be plenty to do in 2012 to prepare the electorate.**

Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> General Election

There are no elections in January, May, July, September, October and December

*Submitted by Kay Murphy*

The elections dates for 2012 are listed here.

- Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> School Board Election  
Special Election for Dist. 1 seat  
County Commissioner
- March 6<sup>th</sup> Presidential Preferential Primary Election
- April 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual School Runoff Election
- June 26<sup>th</sup> Primary Election
- August 28<sup>th</sup> Runoff Primary Election



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS<sup>®</sup>  
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