

May 2010  
Annual Meeting  
Issue

**LWVN**  
P.O. Box 720621  
Norman, OK 73070  
norman.ok.lwvnet.org

#### STEERING COMMITTEE

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Vice President  
329-5358

Lois Hilbert  
Secretary  
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Joyce Collard  
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Mary Francis  
Member  
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Marj Greer  
Member  
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Barbara Robinson  
Member  
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League of Women Voters of Norman

Established in 1925

## 2010 Annual Meeting Pot Luck Salad Luncheon

**When:** Saturday, June 12, 2010  
11:30 am–1:30 pm

**Where:** Memorial Presbyterian Church  
601 24th Ave SW in Norman

#### What to bring:

- A salad, bread item or dessert
- This issue of the *Norman VOTER*
- A guest to share lunch and hear our speaker



### Message from the President

An article that we submitted to the Norman Transcript in March of this year to honor the Norman League's 85 birthday and the National league's 90th birthday was given a title by the paper: "LWV fights for good government". I believe that many people recognize the LWV as fighters for good government and realize it is a fight which, "...is never permanently won, but must be waged afresh each day," as voiced by Genevieve Earle, League president in Brooklyn in 1930.

Another quote that I think is appropriate for our Norman League is one from Teddy Roosevelt: "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are." This is the motto we have been following for the last few years. Some of the activities we have pursued this past year include meeting last fall with Linda Sexton, long-time member of the Norman School Board for an update of Norman Public Schools; having lunch at Red Lobster to honor two League members who received their 50-year-membership certificates from National – June Morgan, former president of the Norman and LWVOK Leagues and member of the National Board and Libba Smith, who served on the Norman Planning Commission for 3 years and the City Council for 5 years after getting involved in city government through the League; having lunch at Olive Garden with Judge Tom Lucas for an update on the OK Drug Court Program in Cleveland Co.; in December we tried something different -sharing an

*continued next page*

## *Message from the President continued*

appetizer potluck dinner and watching “Iron Jawed Angels”, a powerful movie about the last stages of the women’s struggle for suffrage.

We had made plans for a public forum in January with a panel to explain the two State Questions related to education – 743 and 754 – that will be on the ballot Nov. 2, 2010. Because of bad weather we had to cancel this event. We had also planned to offer one or two issue forums on water quantity and quality. Before we had set dates for our meetings, the city began their series of 8 water forums. We decided to take advantage of the city’s forums and try to attend as many as possible.

*Democracy is based upon  
the conviction that there  
are extraordinary possibili-  
ties in ordinary people.*  
—Harry Emerson Fosdick

In February 2010 we sponsored a Mayoral/City Council Candidates Forum at City Hall. There were eleven candidates and only two hours for ask questions and get answers. The city offered us the use of their electric timer with a very annoying buzzer, and that turned out to work a small miracle. It was probably the first forum in the history of League forums that candidates stopped when their time was up – some in mid-sentence.

This spring we met with Jill Irvine, Director of Women’s and Gender Studies (WGS) at OU and Karin Jonsson, who works at the Center for Social Justice – part of the WGS program. We discussed possible ways for us to collaborate with them on helping register OU students to vote, sponsoring an unpaid intern in social justice, helping with a Voters Guide and other possible community issues.

## **Plans for 2010-2011**

1) Voters Service. We are planning a Legislative Forum for local candidates this fall and a one-page Voters Guide in conjunction with *The Norman Transcript* for Norman legislators (House Districts 44, 45, 46, 53 and Senate District 16).

2) State LWV Convention. We plan to host the state convention in Norman the weekend of May 20-21, 2011.

We request that any member who has not already agreed to help with one of these projects, please consider doing even one thing to help make these events successful in our community. “We must help restore in people the belief that they can make a difference in their communities and in their government.” - Ann McBride.

For more information about these projects, you can email me at [phoebeflute@hotmail.com](mailto:phoebeflute@hotmail.com) or phone 364-4493.

*Phoebe Schmitz, President*



More than 50 Oklahoma schools, faith groups and community organizations – mostly led by children – have raised over \$18,000 in “Pennies for Peace” to support the schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The students made a symbolic presentation of their pennies on Wednesday, April 21, to Greg Mortenson, founder of Pennies for Peace and the author of New York Times bestselling book “Three Cups of Tea.” Mortenson was in Norman to give a free public address and participate in Centennial Symposium events sponsored by the University of Oklahoma College of Engineering.

# League of Women Voters of Norman

## 2010 ANNUAL MEETING

June 12, 2009, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

*Welcome and Introductions:* Ruth Loeffler

*Speaker:* Asia Scudder

Author of a series of articles on local water issues for *Voices of Oklahoma*  
<http://www.voicesofok.org>, an online community magazine

**Topic:** Sustainable Water Resources: Water Quality and Quantity Issues

*LWVUS Impact on Issues 2008-2010*, P. 53

The League supports:

- water resource programs and policies that reflect the interrelationships of water quality, water quantity, ground-water and surface water and that address the potential depletion or pollution of water supplies;
- measures to reduce water pollution from direct point-source discharges and from indirect nonpoint sources;
- policies to achieve water quality essential for maintaining species populations and diversity, including measures to protect lakes, estuaries, wetlands and in-stream flows;
- stringent controls to protect the quality of current and potential drinking-water supplies, including protection of watersheds for surface supplies and of recharge areas for groundwater. (Guidelines for interbasin water transfers are provided on P. 53.)

### BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

Phoebe Schmitz, Presiding

I. Treasurer's Report

II. Nominating Committee Report

Nominees for Steering Committee:

Diane Blank	Helen Duchon	Lois Hilbert	Phoebe Schmitz
Cathy Buchwald	Mary Francis	Ruth Loeffler	Linda Sexton
Joyce Collard	Marj Greer	Barbara Robinson	

Call for SC nominations from the floor

Election of Steering Committee

III. Budget Committee Report:

Report on informal audit

Adoption of 2010-2011 Budget (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011)

IV. Adoption of Local Program as printed for 2010–2011

The Steering Committee does not recommend new study, restudy, or amendments to existing positions for 2010-2011.

V. Adoption of Changes to the Bylaws

The Steering Committee does not recommend any changes to the bylaws.

VI. Call for volunteers for the Nominating Committee

VII. Direction for members of the Steering Committee

VIII. Adjournment

*Note: Minutes are approved by the SC at the first SC meeting following the Annual Meeting.*

**League of Women Voters of Norman  
2010–2011 Proposed Budget  
July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011**

<b>Income</b>	Current Budget 7/1/09–6/30/10	Proposed Budget 7/1/10–6/30/11
<i>Who's Who</i> Sponsor	200.00	200.00
Member Donations	400.00	300.00
Member Dues	1,900.00	1,930.00
Misc.	40.00	390.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>2,540.00</b>	<b>2,820.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
State and National Per Member Payments (PMP)	1,635.00	1,700.00
State/National Conventions and State Council	0.00	300.00
Workshops, Training, and Travel	100.00	50.00
VOTER Printing and Postage	50.00	60.00
<i>League Easy Web</i>	200.00	200.00
<i>Who's Who</i> Printing	200.00	200.00
Supplies, Postage, and Copies (other than VOTER)	115.00	70.00
Post Office Box Rental	40.00	40.00
Voter Service / Citizen Education	150.00	100.00
Misc.	50.00	100.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>2,540.00</b>	<b>2,820.00</b>

**Current Fund Balances**

Operating Fund as of 4/30/10	2,645.82
Education Fund	1,282.90
Certificate of Deposit	1,395.29 (1,451.00 at maturity)

# League of Women Voters of Norman

## Local Program Positions

### 2009–2010

#### Section I. City Planning

The LWVN supports the concept of city planning, with the following policies and approaches.

##### A. Zoning

1. Strict procedures for rezoning and stronger provisions for protesting rezoning.
2. A professional city planner and an adequate and qualified staff.
3. Long-range planning for the location of parks and schools, with adequate access by streets and paved routes for pedestrians and bicyclists.

##### B. Sidewalks

1. Sidewalks should be required by ordinance in new subdivisions, except that the sidewalk requirement may be waived in industrial subdivisions, with the exception of the perimeter, if the developer can demonstrate that the sidewalks will not contribute to the health, safety or welfare of the public in those areas.
2. Sidewalks should be built in existing areas to the greatest extent possible with special emphasis on providing access to schools and recreation facilities.
3. The City should adopt an aggressive attitude in initiating sidewalk construction.

##### C. Bicycle Routes

1. Bicycle routes should be studied and implemented whenever feasible, with the idea of bicycle riding as a recreational activity as well as an alternate means of transportation.
2. The League also favors upgrading the City's current bicycle safety programs and stricter enforcement of bicycle safety provisions.

##### D. Parks

1. The LWVN supports long-range planning for the acquisition and development of new and existing parks in Norman to better meet the needs of the community with endorsement of the following policies:
  - a. Neighborhood parks of ten acres as a desirable goal.
  - b. First attention to acquisition and development of multiuse parks in areas most in need.
  - c. Adjoining park-school site development with school board cooperation.

##### E. Housing Supply

1. The LWVN recognizes the need for low-income housing and supports the concept of public housing equitably distributed in Norman.
2. In order to ensure adequate low and moderate income housing in Norman, the LWVN recommends as a priority, providing incentive for private enterprise to obtain this goal, and the use of federal housing programs that allow the greatest possible freedom for local decision making.

##### F. Protection of land in the Little River Watershed

The LWVN believes that the Little River watershed is an environmentally sensitive area that must be protected.

1. The League recognizes that uncontrolled development in the watershed could allow hazardous pollution of Norman's water supply.
2. De-annexation of land in environmentally sensitive areas would end Norman's control over its land use; therefore, de-annexation of land in the Little River watershed should be considered with great care.

##### G. Public Transportation

In order to reduce highway congestion, fuel consumption and vehicular pollution, and to provide better access to housing, jobs, recreation and medical care, the LWVN advocates the development and maintenance of energy-efficient and time-efficient public transportation systems within the City of Norman and connecting with other communities in Oklahoma. Priority should be given to government-funded transportation projects that are directed toward better public access to fuel-efficient transportation and the reduction of single occupancy vehicles on the roadways.<sup>2</sup>

##### H. Traffic

The LWVN believes the City should provide for safe bicycle traffic and encourage a pattern of development that facilitates public transportation and diminishes automobile congestion.<sup>2</sup>

#### Section II. Infrastructure

The LWVN believes that a modern, properly maintained infrastructure is essential for health, safety, and positive economic life of the community. Since lack of attention over many years to Norman's existing infrastructure,

inadequate planning during rapid growth and inadequate resources have resulted in a crisis situation, the LWVN encourages compliance with a master plan that would assure citizens that all problems will be addressed in an orderly and timely manner. The plan would:

- A. Include repair, maintenance, and expansion of the sanitary sewer system and of the water supply system.
- B. Resolve current and prevent future drainage problems.
- C. Address street modernization.
- D. Enforce City codes.
- E. Be environmentally sound and fiscally responsible with bond issues presented at regular intervals for major projects, and continued allocation each year within the operating budget for smaller capital projects of highest priority.
- F. Reduce maintenance costs by replacing inoperable systems.
- G. Set priorities in the order in which repairs and improvements are made.

**Section III. Municipal Services and Finances**

The LWVN believes that city government should be efficient and economical, that the government should retain competent personnel, insure clear assignment of responsibility, and secure adequate financing. The following points should be considered:

- A. The League supports the concept that municipal government should supply its citizens with **basic services** that provide for the health, safety and welfare of citizens including public safety (police, fire, emergency medical service), sanitation (responsible solid waste pickup/disposal), water (safe drinking water and sewage treatment), infrastructure planning and maintenance (streets, sidewalks, lights, signalization), and community amenities (parks, recreational facilities/programs, museums, libraries), and as many recycling centers in Norman as practicable, with continued support of curbside recycling.
- B. **Amenities** such as parks, recreational facilities, and cultural institutions should be recognized as important in maintaining a sense of community.
- C. **Funding:**
  - 1. The League believes city services and programs should be funded through a combination of sales taxes, bonds, and user fees.
  - 2. Shared funding could include privatizing some elements of city government with retention of responsibility for:

- a. Establishing clear criteria, oversight, and periodic assessment of how well citizens are being served, and
- b. Making sure citizens are not losers in the process.
- 3. Capital needs of Norman are too massive in cost to be addressed by the general fund alone and should be funded through General Obligation Bonds.
- 4. The general fund and user fees collected in enterprise funds can more appropriately be used to support administration of city government and ongoing maintenance needs in sanitation and the infrastructure.
- 5. Sales tax revenue should be reserved for items in the general fund.
- 6. Some services necessary to insure the general health, safety, and well being of the community should be the responsibility of city government and must be made available even if they do not pay for themselves.

**D. Adequate City Staff**

Adequate staff is necessary to oversee the management, planning, and orderly development of the community.

- 1. Professional planners and engineers are needed to insure continuity of programs.
- 2. City Council policy makers must acknowledge their responsibility to provide for an adequate staff to meet city needs.

**Section IV. County Services and Finances**

- A. The LWVN encourages the modernization of bookkeeping and record keeping procedures by Cleveland County.
- B. The LWVN encourages the use of the county’s share of road-users tax money for the benefit of ALL residents of the county, including the improvement of city streets where legally possible.
- C. The LWVN will continue to monitor the functioning of county government including the organization, finance, and accountability of funds.

**Section V. Equality of Opportunity**

The LWVN will continue to support effective procedures to ensure non-discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations.

**Section VI. City of Norman Growth and Development Plans**

The LWVN is dedicated to monitoring growth and development plans for the City of Norman. The Norman ComPlan was replaced by the Norman 2020 Plan and later by the 2025 Plan. Topics of concern to the League

include growth management, traffic management and flow, neighborhood protection and city housing needs. The following areas are of concern, and should be monitored:

**A. Zoning Changes:**

1. The Planning Commission should review the policies of the 2025 Plan before accepting zoning change requests.
2. Requests for changes should be turned down if they clearly do not fall within the guidelines of preventing urban sprawl, balancing development on the east and west as much as possible, and protecting plans made for the central business/residential area.
3. All requests for demolition of property should be accompanied by any desired change in zoning, or the city should be assured that there would be no change. Demolition requests that call for changes in zoning should then be accepted or refused depending on their nature, plus an inspection of the property. The city needs to pass an ordinance allowing it to be more aggressive in removing derelict buildings and trash or trashy and unsightly items.
4. Requests for changes in zoning also should be made public with signs posted and notice in the newspaper. There should be a much larger area involved in protesting/accepting zoning changes.

**B. Definition of "Neighborhood":**

The LWVN defines a "neighborhood" as an area that

may have physical boundaries, such as a major street, or boundaries with cultural/social-economic characteristics; and it may be residential or commercial. A neighborhood may have a different definition depending on the interest of the individuals in it. It may be a small area for a neighborhood watch or a larger area when considering a wider interest, and these areas may overlap.

**C. Development Planning:**

1. Commercial development should be planned.
2. Businesses in residential areas should be restricted to those useful to a majority of the residents.
3. A new classification of "neighborhood business" should be developed, or only "special use" permits that revert to residential when sold for any other purpose should be issued.
4. Neighborhood businesses would include grocery stores, laundromats, beauty shops, and others that Norman residents might approve.
5. Protection is needed for a neighborhood when a property is sold so a business considered inappropriate to the area cannot buy and use the property.
6. New areas being developed could include plans for these "neighborhood businesses" as a part of the overall plan.
7. Care should be taken not to zone and use land that is best left for a greenbelt area.

<sup>1</sup> Language added to Section III. Municipal Services and Finances **A.** at the 2006 Annual Meeting: "*and as many recycling centers in Norman as practicable, with the future goal of having curbside recycling.*" Curbside recycling began in Norman in March 2008, which prompted a change in wording at the 2009 Annual Meeting to: *and as many recycling centers in Norman as practicable, with continued support of curbside recycling.*

<sup>2</sup> New wording for Section I. City Planning **G. Public Transportation** and Section I. City Planning **H. Traffic** approved at the 2007 Annual Meeting.

**News Note**

**Voices of Oklahoma Radio**, a non-profit, non-commercial, non-sectarian media outlet for central Oklahoma, is a step closer to becoming a reality. The FCC has ruled favorably on a 2007 Dibble application. Competitors have 30 days to file a petition to deny, but the project's attorney believes this is unlikely. After 30 days, the FCC will issue a Construction Permit (CP) which allows three years to build a station and get on the air. Two more applications are in the works, one in Cordell and the other in Wynnewood. To learn more about this project go to <http://www.voicesofok.org>.

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Any person of voting age, male or female, may become a voting member of the League. Associate membership is available for students not yet eligible to vote.



For updates on LWV activities go to <http://norman.ok.lwvnet.org> and click "Meetings and Events" or call a member of the Steering Committee (Page 1).

# Calendar

Jun 2 Wed 11:30 am

**LWVN Steering Committee Meeting**  
Memorial Presbyterian Church  
601 24th Ave SW in Norman

Jun 12 Sat 11:30 am

**Annual Meeting**  
Memorial Presbyterian Church  
601 24th Ave SW in Norman  
Details on Page 1.

Jul 7 Wed 11:30 am

**LWVN Steering Committee Meeting**  
Memorial Presbyterian Church  
601 24th Ave SW in Norman

Jul 27 Tue 7-7

**Primary Election**

Aug 24 Tue 7-7

**Runoff Primary**

Nov 2 Tue 7-7

**General Election**



In Memory of LWVN Member

*Kathleen Mahaffey*

*July 18, 1917 – November 21, 2009*



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORMAN

P.O. Box 720621  
Norman, OK 73070