

September 2009

League of Women Voters of Norman

Established in 1925

LWVN

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

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Education is to be Topic at Fall Membership Meeting

The Norman League is starting its fall program with an update on Norman Public Schools. Linda Sexton, in her 20th year as a member of the Norman School Board, will speak:

**Thursday, September 10, 2009, 7 p.m.
Memorial Presbyterian Church
601 24th Ave., SW in Norman**



We will begin with a reception at 7 p.m. followed by Linda's talk on school funding and how it affects faculty, class size and staff. She will speak about the cuts to all state agencies for 2009-10 and what it may mean for Norman Public Schools. She will also comment on other important public education issues, with time at the end for questions from the audience.

Please bring a friend with you to this fall membership event. We are offering half-price membership for new members 18 years and over. Share with friends that Norman League activities are related to socially redeeming issues that our members have expressed interest in and which they find personally satisfying to devote some time to.

Concern for the quality of education provided to Oklahoma's children has been a major issue of the League of Women Voters of Oklahoma for decades. The state League's current education positions reflect a strong national interest for quality education that arose in the 1970s.

Long-held League positions on Common Education include the need for counseling programs in elementary grades, consolidation of some school districts, smaller class size, strong qualifications for educators, support for in-service training, and consideration of formulas for state aid other than Average Daily Attendance. Some of these positions have been met – others have not.

To read more about the state League's positions on Common Education, go to our Web site <http://www.norman.ok.lwvnet.org> and check *In the Public Interest*.



Two Norman Members Receive LWVUS 50-year Membership Certificates

June Morgan and Libba Smith are now LWV Life Members. The Norman League will honor them at a luncheon on October 8, 2009. We asked them to share some thoughts on their LWV experiences.



by June Morgan

A retired League of Women Voters National Board member came by to visit and look at my 1960s photos of the LWV National Board. “You are all so young!” she said.

Well, yes. My League years began in the late 40s. WWII was over, and ex-GIs poured into Norman to get their promised college educations. We came because Bill Morgan (my husband) was hired at OU to help make that happen.

After serving with the Norman and the State League Boards, my time with the National Board erupted with another war: we had Vietnam.

Our Leagues went through the people-changes in Haight Ashbury in San Francisco and in Alabama and Mississippi. Leagues, including the Norman Board, tried to cope with the losses of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. In Washington D.C. we had fires over on 14th Street, where a few of the D.C. League office staff lived.

But great good things happened too. As the only mid-U.S. National Board member, I traveled to Brookings, South Dakota, Little Rock, Arkansas, and Oxford, Mississippi to meet with Leaguers determined to keep Voters Service strong. With all their energy and teaching me about their history, it was the best Masters Degree one could ever receive.

by Libba Smith

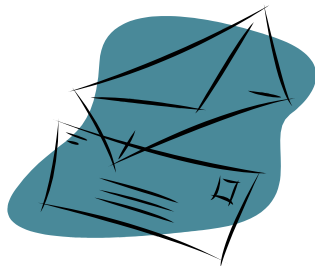
Tom and I moved to Norman in January, 1959, and within a few weeks I had met two of the activist members of the Norman League of Women Voters, June Viavant and Peggy Hyde. June Viavant took me to my first League meeting soon after that, and I was hooked: interesting women discussing interesting topics. Those years were probably the heyday of the Norman League - there were three “unit meetings” twice a month, scheduled on Wednesday morning (with a nursery for small children), Wednesday afternoon, or Thursday night. All three meetings covered the same topic, so you chose the most convenient time for you to go. I’ll bet combined attendance at the three meetings must have averaged around 30 women.

I gravitated toward the League’s local program committee, and became an official observer for the League at Norman Planning Commission and City Council meetings. It was there I got my start in local politics, and I went on to serve on the Planning Commission from 1974 to 1977 and then on the City Council from 1977 to 1982. It’s been a blast – and all thanks to the Norman League of Women Voters!

“Never doubt that a small group of citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

—Margaret Mead

Letters from Members



To the Editor:

Single Payer Health Reform

This is my opinion, but I'm sure many of you will agree. The best way to have health reform is by a single payer system. I am a member of the Physicians for a National Health Program and they have been working for years for such a program. Our present system is not working. Universal coverage would cost less. And on almost all measures of health care and mortality we lag behind Canada and Europe, and these are single payer countries. The uninsured suffer much more with medical problems because they can't afford care. There are 47 million people in our country without health insurance. We need to do something about this. Quite a few members of Congress would approve of a single payer system, but the administration apparently doesn't think it is politically viable. Wouldn't it be great if universal coverage became an actuality?

—Marjorie Greer

Drug Courts Provide Alternative to Incarceration

Since 1979 the League of Women Voters of Oklahoma has held that:

Sentencing other than imprisonment should play a major role in the criminal justice system. A wide variety of alternative sentences closely tied to community resources and involvement should be used. Because they are most effective in economic and human terms for the protection of society, alternatives to incarceration must be an integral part of the sentencing process.

“The simple rule is: Hold Power Accountable.”

—John Gardner

One such alternative is the Oklahoma Drug Court Program coordinated by the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS). Judge Tom Lucas has been presiding over drug court cases since the program's inception. On November 9, 2009 Judge Lucas will update the Norman League on the status of the ODCP in Cleveland County. See page 6 for the place and time of the meeting.

In a report published online and dated August 2007 the ODMHSAS stated that in addition to 39 adult drug courts operating in Oklahoma covering 59 counties, there were also 9 juvenile, 2 family and 2 DUI courts operating within the agency's jurisdiction. The report further states that:

... with the expansion of drugs courts in July 2005, a marked decrease in DOC drug and alcohol receptions was realized. Comparing figures available for fiscal years 2005 and 2006, a 6.5% decrease occurred.

In fact, during that same time period, it is estimated that the program slowed expansion of the prison population by over 2,300 – the number of additional admissions had drug court participants gone to prison.

Join us as we learn from Judge Lucas how well the Oklahoma Drug Court Program is working in Cleveland County.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA

JOIN NOW

Receive your first year of membership in the
League of Women Voters
at half the annual membership rate

The new-member rate for an individual membership is \$25.
(Renewing individual members pay \$50)

The new-member rate for a full-time student over the age of 18 is \$15.
(Renewing student members pay \$30)

This offer expires October 31, 2009.

New members who join under this offer will become members of the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS), the League of Women Voters of Oklahoma (LWVOK), and the League of Women Voters of Norman (LWVN) for one year. Those who wish to renew their memberships at the end of that period will pay dues for a regular individual or student membership at the rate approved by the membership at the annual business meeting held in the spring.

To join the LWV at the new-member rate
complete this form and mail it with your check made payable to
League of Women Voters of Norman, P.O. Box 720621, Norman, OK 73070.

One-Year Individual Membership @ \$25

One-Year Student Membership @ \$15

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Email Address _____

Why I decided to join the League of Women Voters: _____

<http://norman.ok.lwvnet.org>

New Members' Corner

Roseanna Sontheimer is a student at the University of Oklahoma.

Carla Jenkins is a Clinical Social Worker for the State Department of Health in Cleveland and Kingfisher Counties. She is Ms. Oklahoma United States 2009, and her theme, which she has been spreading across Oklahoma, is to help prevent domestic violence and teen dating violence. She goes into high schools to bring more awareness to students about dating violence. She has been president for a few years of Moore-Norman Community Resource Meetings, where agency heads meet to share information. Watch for Carla on the cover of Super Model Magazine in January, promoting a feature article about her.

Paula Roberts has served as Secretary of the Cleveland County Election Board since 1989. Prior to being appointed to this position she taught at Norman High School from 1980 to 1989. She has served on numerous committees at the Oklahoma State Election Board, including the committee looking for a new election system for Oklahoma. In 2008 she became the first Oklahoma Election Official to receive National Certification in Election Administration, through the Master's Program from Auburn University. She belongs to several professional organizations and is chair of the Cleveland County Court Appointed Special Advocates, which serves as advocates for children who have to appear in court. Paula is a member of First Christian Church of Norman. She loves to watch movies, visit her daughter in California and do crafts. Her husband, Barry, is an attorney in Norman.

**WELCOME
NEW
MEMBERS**

Members, have you renewed your membership in 2009?

To renew your membership complete this form and mail it by Sept. 10 with your check made payable to
League of Women Voters of Norman, P.O. Box 720621, Norman, OK 73070

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone 1 _____ Phone 2 _____

Email Address _____

The newsletter and announcements will be sent electronically to members who have email addresses. Members without email addresses will receive printed copies by regular mail.

Membership:

- Individual Membership \$50
- Household Membership \$70
- Student Membership \$30

Contributions:

- LWVN Operating Fund (\$_____)
 - LWV Education Fund (\$_____)
- (Ed. Fund is tax-deductible. Make check payable to LWV Education Fund.)

Areas of Interest:

- Education Juvenile Justice City Storm Water Plan Water Quality and Supply
- City Government Help with Candidate Forums/Events Telephone Members

Other: _____

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).

2009 Fall Calendar

Sept 2	Wed	11:30 am	LWVN Steering Committee Meeting Memorial Presbyterian Church 601 24th Ave SW in Norman
Sept 10	Thur	7:00 pm– 9:00 pm	Fall Kick-Off Event Memorial Presbyterian Church 601 24th Ave SW in Norman Speaker: Linda Sexton Details on Page 1.
Oct 7	Wed	11:30 am	LWVN Steering Committee Meeting Memorial Presbyterian Church 601 24th Ave SW in Norman
Oct 8	Thur	11:30 am– 1:00 pm	Celebrate Life Memberships: June Morgan and Libba Smith Reb Lobster (open seating area) 201 N Interstate Drive in Norman (northeast of Sooner Mall) Restaurant Phone: 364-6724
Nov 4	Wed	11:30 am	LWVN Steering Committee Meeting Memorial Presbyterian Church 601 24th Ave SW in Norman
Nov 9	Mon	11:30 am	Lunch with Judge Tom Lucas Topic: Drug Court Program in Cleveland County Olive Garden (in a small room) 117 Ed Noble Parkway in Norman (south of Sooner Mall) Restaurant Phone: 573-0188

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