



The Norman VOTER

Winter 2012

LWVN

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Norman, OK 73070
norman.ok.lwvnet.org

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League of Women Voters of Norman

Established in 1925

Join the discussion

Speakers, Meetings & Forums

Monday • Feb. 27, 2012 • 7:00 PM

Norman Public Library, Lowry Room

Roger Frech: "Water Issues"

OU Professor

Monday • March 12, 2012 • 7:00 PM

City Hall Council Chamber

City Council Candidates Forum

Election, Tuesday, April 3, 2012

- Ward 2 — incumbent Tom Kovach, 49, Matthew Leal, 29
- Ward 4 — Rhett Michael Jones, 36, Greg Jungman, 35, Zac Abbott, 33
- Ward 6 — incumbent Jim Griffith, 62, Jacy Crosbie, 68
- Ward 8 — Chad Williams 32, Jackie Farley, 59, Andy Stephenson, 58, Stephen Lucas, 54.

Wednesday • April 11, 2012 • 11:30 AM

Interurban

Susan Connors: City Planning "Hot Topics"

City of Norman Planning Dept.

Saturday • May 19, 2012 • 11:30 AM

Memorial Presbyterian Church

Marion Hutchison: Update on ACOG & ODOT plans for Rail



“When all think alike, no one thinks very much.”
— Albert Einstein

True education is to learn how to think, not what to think.
— J. Krishnamurti

“There is one thing stronger than all the armies in the world, and that is an idea whose time has come.”
— Victor Hugo

“Consumption and constant stimulation do not equal happiness. By applying the principles of sustainability to our personal lives, we can discover treasures of perennial value: a beautiful and healthy earth home, enduring relationships, strong communities, work that contributes to the common good, and play that restores our bodies and lifts our souls.”

Read more: Rev. Dr. Michael Schuler speaks on ‘Sustainable Living’ at Winchester UU - Winchester, MA - The Winchester Star, <http://www.wickedlocal.com/winchester/news/lifestyle/x1886187756/Rev-Dr-Michael-Schuler-speaks-on-Sustainable-Living-at-Winchester-UU#ixzz1jkGnaG78>

League of Women Voters of Norman Nonpartisan Policy, adopted Dec. 7, 2011*

The LWV 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.

Steering Committee President/Co-Presidents, Voter Service Chair, or anyone highly visible on the SC may not:

1. Hold partisan office or serve as a precinct chair.
2. Hold an office in a political party or its caucus.
3. Serve as a campaign manager for a candidate in an election.
4. Host candidates’ gatherings or add one’s name to a candidate’s or political party’s campaign material.
5. Express a view through the public media contrary to a League position.
6. Engage in political activity that is in conflict with their portfolios.
7. Sign and/or circulate a petition to have a candidate’s name placed on a ballot.
8. Display candidate signs in their yards.
9. Serve in discreet campaign activity, such as clerical.
10. Serve on a local, non-partisan elected board, such as a school or parks.

Steering Committee Members not listed above may:

1. Engage in political activity not in conflict with their portfolios.
2. Sign and/or circulate a petition to have a candidate’s name placed on a ballot.
3. Display candidate signs in their yards.
4. Serve in discreet campaign activity, such as clerical.
5. Serve on a local, non-partisan elected board, such as school or parks.

The Steering Committee:

1. Shall exercise extreme care not to give the appearance of supporting or opposing candidates on the basis of their positions on an issue in which the League is involved.
2. May take the initiative in recommending people to serve on appointed public commissions and committees and considers it appropriate for SC members to serve in such capacity.
3. Shall decide the application of the nonpartisan policy in situations stated above or not covered in LWWUS guidelines.

This policy should be reviewed each year at the first SC meeting after the Spring Annual Meeting to educate any new members and answer/address any questions. Also, it should be printed in our **Voter once each year.*

Public Education Consensus Study

In October, 2011, Norman League members participated in the Public Education Consensus Study in 3 afternoon meetings. The National League Public Education Study Committee described the study as follows:

The Education Study scope is broad and includes the following areas under the role of the federal government in public education (pre K through grade 12): the history, funding and equity issues which are addressed under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the common core standards/assessments which are required for many federal grant programs but are national, not federal. The culminating position will address only those issues delineated in the scope.

The Norman participants appreciated the quality of the National Committee's outstanding, comprehensive study materials. On November 2 the results of the Norman study were presented to the Steering Committee and approved for submission to the League of Women Voters of the United States. The National Committee will compile the results from across the country and publish a final report.

If you would like more information about the Education Study, feel free to call Cathy Buchwald at 329-6988.

The League in the 1920s ... a few facts

Mrs. Maud Wood Park was the first President of the National League of Women Voters, 1920-1924. She called the first League program adopted in 1920 a "kettle of eels." And no wonder! It contained some 69 items grouped in broad subject areas: child welfare, education, the home and high prices, women in gainful occupations, public health and morals, and independent citizenship for married women!

The League's first major national legislative success was the 1921 passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act providing federal aid for maternal and child care programs. At the time the legislation was introduced, childbirth remained the second leading cause of death for women. About 20% of children in the United States died in their first year and about 33% in their first five years.

In 1928 the League sponsored "Meet the candidates," the first national radio broadcast of a candidate forum.

Transportation Survey

Please share this survey link with your friends! <http://www.ci.norman.ok.us/content/community-transportation-survey>

Here is the link to our **local position**: http://norman.ok.lwvnet.org/about_action.html (copy and paste into your browser)

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.

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.

And our **LWVUS position**: <http://www.lwv.org/content/meeting-basic-human-needs>

Ranked Choice Voting, aka Instant Runoff Voting

Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) or Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)

At the 2009 LWVOK Convention, delegates voted to study the possibility of recommending Ranked Choice Voting (RCV), sometimes called Instant Runoff Voting (IRV), for use in Oklahoma.

In the Ranked Choice Voting system, the voter has the option of ranking the candidates on her ballot: first choice, second choice, etc. (Nobody has to rank more than one candidate.) As in any election, the voters' first choice is tallied. If any candidate has won a majority of the vote, that candidate wins and the election is over. If no candidate wins 50% + 1 (a true majority) then the lowest polling candidate is eliminated. Then the second place votes on the ballots of the eliminated candidates are added to the first place votes of the remaining candidates. The lowest polling candidate continues to be eliminated in each round of counting until someone receives a majority vote.

However, some states including Oklahoma have a two round runoff. In that case, if no candidate gets a majority in an election, all but the 2 top vote getters are eliminated and a second election is held to determine the winner. Using the RCV system, the second place votes on the ballots of the eliminated candidates are added to the first place votes of the remaining candidates.

The LWV of Norman joined three other local Leagues in reaching a positive consensus on the question of whether or not to endorse Ranked Choice Voting (also called Instant Runoff Voting) for all statewide and local elections.

In accordance with the League of Women Voters' position of promoting political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government, the LWVOK will support legislation that assures that the candidate preferred by a **majority** of voters wins the election.

Specifically, the **LWVOK will support instant runoff voting (IRV) for all statewide and local elections.**

Ethics Commission Refuses to Require Full Disclosure

The 2010 ruling of *Citizen's United v. FEC* by the U.S. Supreme Court was called a "tragic mistake" by LWVUS President Mary Wilson and has been roundly condemned by current President Elizabeth MacNamara. The ruling has resulted in huge sums of corporate money being spent on campaigns. In the Oklahoma City municipal race, no one has been able to trace who it came from.

This situation has generated considerable concern. The League of Women Voters of Oklahoma has joined several other organizations and individuals in urging the Oklahoma Ethics Commission to send legislation to the Oklahoma Legislature which would require disclosure of the names and occupations of donors and the amount. **The Court specifically wrote that States could require full disclosure of donations.**

The staff of the Ethics Commission has drafted comprehensive legislation which would require PACs to maintain records and track the money, even if it is moved from PAC to PAC. Once the money is donated to a candidate or spent on a race, the name and occupation of each donor would have to be reported to the Ethics Commission. The Constitutionally mandated EC may write legislation and send it to the legislature for an up or down vote. The proposed legislation may not be amended. If the legislature does nothing, the legislation becomes law.

On December 9th and January 12th, Mary Francis, Advocacy Chair for the State League, attended the Ethics Commission public hearing and delivered a LWVOK statement urging the EC to send legislation requiring full disclosure to the legislature. By a 3 to 2 vote, the EC rejected the draft legislation. One Commissioner stated she was afraid of a lawsuit.

The LWVOK Advocacy Chair will return to the Capitol on January 20 to repeat the League's request for full disclosure.

Privatization Study info:

There are 5 Privatization topics to choose from:

Subcontracting **Public Education**

Privatization of **Prisons**

Deregulation of **Railroads**

Privatization of a Publicly Owned **Waste Water Treatment Plants**

The **Legal Framework** of Transparency and Accountability within the Context of Privatization

Guess Who?

He failed in business -- age 22.

He ran for the legislature and lost -- age 23.

He failed in business again -- age 24.

He was elected to the legislature -- age 25.

*His sweetheart died -- age 26.
He had a nervous breakdown -- age 27.*

He was defeated for Speaker -- age 29.

He was defeated for Elector -- age 31.

He was defeated for Congress -- age 34.

He was elected to Congress -- age 37.

He was defeated for Congress -- age 39.

He was defeated for Senate -- age 46.

He was defeated for Vice President -- age 47.

He was defeated for Senate -- age 49.

He was elected PRESIDENT -- age 51.

Who was he???

That's the record of Abraham Lincoln.

Resources for Privatization Study are here: <http://www.lwv.org/member-resources/privatization>

To sign up for the privatization listserv, (or any other) go to:

<https://member.lwv.org/member.asp>

Guidelines:

List participants must be League members and shall identify themselves by name and League on all postings.

Participants are also requested to identify their League role.

Messages must be nonpartisan, not derogatory, not inflammatory, and nondiscriminatory.

Messages must be related to the subject of the list and must be consistent with the mission and goals of the LWVUS/LWVEF.

Questions for the LWVUS board should be directed to the moderators who will forward them to the appropriate board or staff person.

With the exception of LWVUS calls to action posted by the list moderator, no information on the list may be interpreted to be a request to take official League action. A state or local League wishing to take action at the federal level must consult with the LWVUS as provided in the LWVUS policy "Criteria for Approving Requests for Action."

You're expected to follow these rules and norms. List moderators will enforce them to encourage League-like participation.

A few additional tips:

To keep messages from becoming excessively long, when replying, delete the part(s) of the previous message that do not apply to your response.

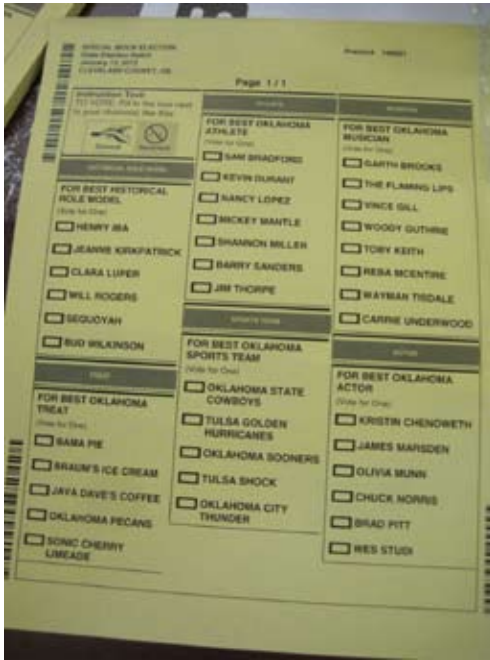
If your message is meant for one person (and this includes thank you's - or "me too's") change the "To:" line in your email program. Clicking on "Reply" without changing the address sends your message to the entire list and you'll hear from the moderator.

Change the subject line on the message if you are changing the subject of the email.

"Digest" subscribers must write a new subject line.

Keep this email someplace where you can find it for future reference.

Continue on Page 6



Voter Suppression info:

Available Downloads: [voteHouseID_TestimonyNov142011.pdf](#) LWVUS Pres. MacNamara's testimony at a Forum, "Excluded from Democracy: The Impact of Recent State Voting Changes"

<http://www.lwv.org/blog/meet-alec> ALEC isn't a guy. ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council, is a factory for anti-voter legislation, funded by power barons like Kraft Foods, McDonalds, Pfizer and the Koch brothers. They are the driving force behind the recent flood of discriminatory voter ID laws, like the one in Texas, where a state-issued concealed handgun permit is an acceptable form of identification...but a state-issued student ID from a university is not.

Attorney General Holder Must Re-commit to Protecting Voting

<http://www.nationofchange.org/93-year-old-tennessee-woman-who-cleaned-state-capitol-30-years-denied-voter-id-1324999846>

<http://www.lwv.org/search/content/voter%20suppression>

http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/political-animal/2011_10/quantifying_the_war_on_voting032580.php

Ballot used by precinct workers to learn more about how to set up, operate and take down the new Hart vote scanning machines. Workers voted for Best Historical Role Model, Best Oklahoma Treat; Best Oklahoma Athlete; Best Oklahoma Sports Team; Best Oklahoma Musician; and Best Oklahoma Actor.



New voting machines

"The Hart InterCivic eScan A/T is a precinct-based digital scanner that provides features for scanning paper ballots and an external Audio Tactile Interface (ATI) device for voters with disabilities."

Headphones plugged into the black box (lower right) allow a blind person to vote in privacy, then press the big red button to cast his own ballot. A poll worker marks his blank paper ballot "ATI" at the top, sets the machine for ATI, then puts it into the scanner. Regular voting can still take place, thus not holding up the line.

Adapted from Evan Stair's www.PassengerRailOK.org newsletter.

STUDIES... STUDIES... EVERYWHERE AND NO TRAIN TO RIDE

Consider that the 206 mile Heartland Flyer started in 1999 with a reasonable \$2.6 million capital investment and just two years of planning.

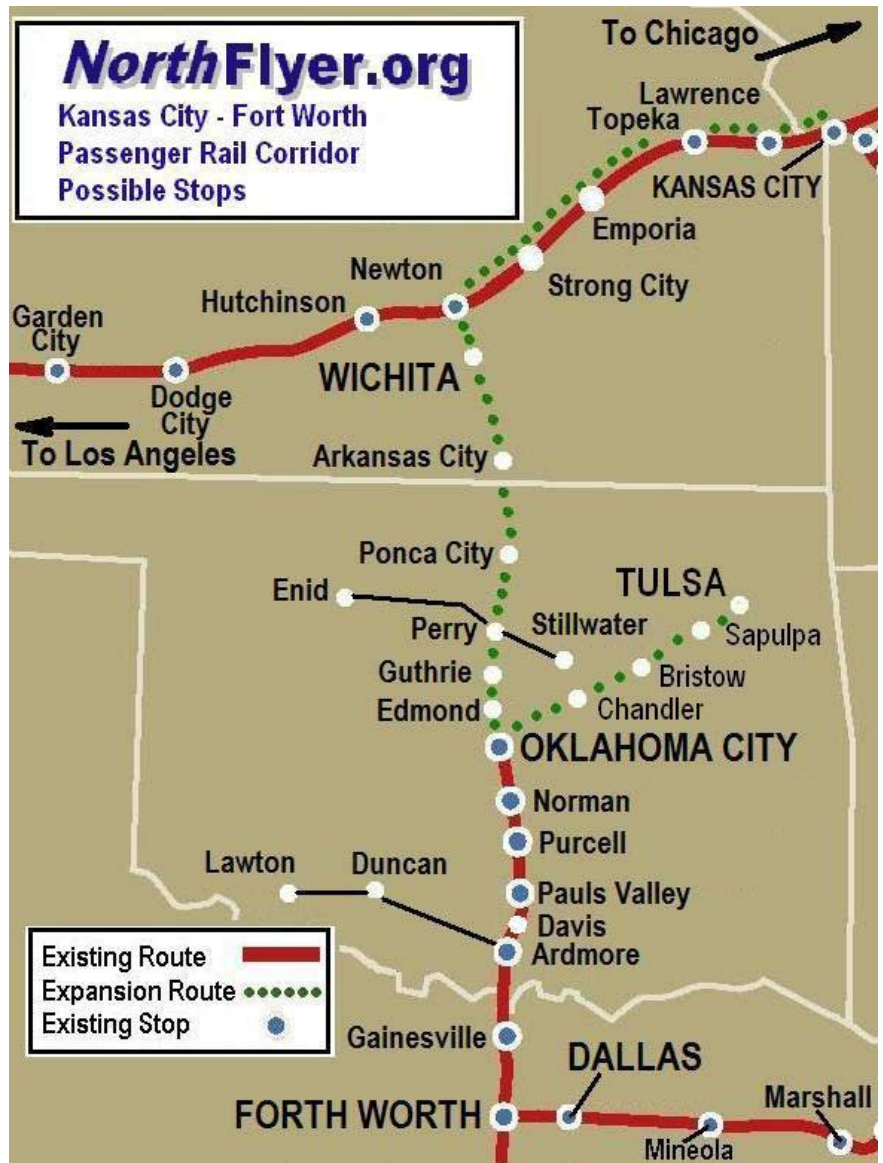
Then in 2001, Passenger Rail Oklahoma was founded in an attempt to fill an unfortunate 197 mile omission between Oklahoma City and Newton, Kansas; directly connecting the Dallas/Ft. Worth and Kansas City metro areas (TOK Corridor-see map below and attached). Easy, quick, no-brainer project right? Wrong...

You may ask, "Why is it taking so long to complete this project?" Well, instead of running trains, our representative governments just want to "study" the possibilities.

Here's the chronological order - the corridor will require nearly a dozen studies before a train can begin running. These include:

- 1) Amtrak's Feasibility study (Released in 2010)*
- 2, 3, and 4) State Rail Plans in Texas*, Oklahoma, and Kansas*
- 5) A Corridor Service Development Plan* (SDP) (Released last week)
- 6) Rail Traffic Controller (RTC) Simulator
- 7 and 8) National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) Study (unfunded)
- 9) Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
- 10) Preliminary Engineering
- 11) Final Design

* indicates a complete study.



The process is simply ridiculous. It has been legislated out of control. This process must be streamlined in order to be brought to a successful conclusion. In order to help speed this expansion it is important that you contact your state Representative or state Senator today.

Ask them to seek a way to streamline this study process.

All you need to know is your zip code to locate your legislator. A lookup tool is available at www.PassengerRailOK.org or <http://www.oklegislature.gov/FindMyLegislature.aspx> website.

Please snail mail your elected representatives and ask that they intervene. This study process is totally out of hand.

Evan Stair's www.PassengerRailOK.org newsletter

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).

2012 Winter & Spring Meetings and Events

Feb 27	Mon.	7 pm	Roger Frech: Water Issues
March 6	Tue.	7 am-7 pm	President Preferential Election
Mar 12	Mon.	7 pm	City Council Candidates' Forum City Hall Council Chambers
Apr 3	Tues.	7 am-7 pm	Norman City Wards Election
April 11	Wed.	11:30-1 pm	Susan Connors: City Planning Interurban
May 19	Sat.	11:30-1 pm	LWVN Annual Meeting Memorial Presbyterian Church

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORMAN

P.O. Box 720621
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