



# The Norman VOTER

## Membership Forum

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*League of Women Voters of Norman*

*Established in 1925*

**Tuesday, Sept. 16, 7-9 pm**

**Norman Public Library, Room A-B**

## The **FUTURE** of Norman

**Panelists:** Roger Frech and Cynthia Rogers from the University of Oklahoma, Mike Fowler from the Norman Chamber of Commerce and Lynne Miller, City Council Member. The panel will discuss Norman's future, including issues such as water availability, Norman Forward and appropriate ways to finance future needs for our city. Attendees at the event will also be able to ask questions of the presenters.

Dr. Frech is a member of the board of the Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District and served on the Citizens' Ad Hoc Committee to assist in the development of a master water plan for Norman. Dr. Rogers is an Associate Professor of Economics whose research interests are in regional and urban economics with a focus on state and local public finance and economic development policy. Mike Fowler is the current president of the Norman Chamber of Commerce and a leader in the formation of Norman Forward, a community initiative to "create a vibrant quality of life in Norman with first class cultural, recreational, athletic venues, and improved outdoor park space."

Please join us in a discussion of these issues and the choices voters may be asked to make in the coming months.

**Tuesday, Oct. 7, 7-9 pm**

**Memorial Presbyterian Church, 601 24th Ave SW, Norman  
FORUM —Okla House Districts 45, 46 and 20**

The public is also invited to attend the League's Legislative Forum often sponsored in the fall of every election year. This year's Forum will feature candidates for Oklahoma House Districts 45, 46 and 20.

The League of Women Voters is a citizens' organization that works to improve our government and engage all citizens in the decisions that impact their lives. The League is nonpartisan, which means we don't support or oppose candidates for public office. However, we are well known for hosting candidate forums. We undertake this because we believe deeply that the public should hear different views on the issues facing our communities.

## **Kris Steele (5/10/2014)**

### **“Justice Reform in Oklahoma”**



Kris Steele, former Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives, became Executive Director of The Education and Employment Ministry (TEEM) effective November 26, 2012. He served in the Oklahoma House from 2000 to 2012. He spoke to us at our Annual meeting

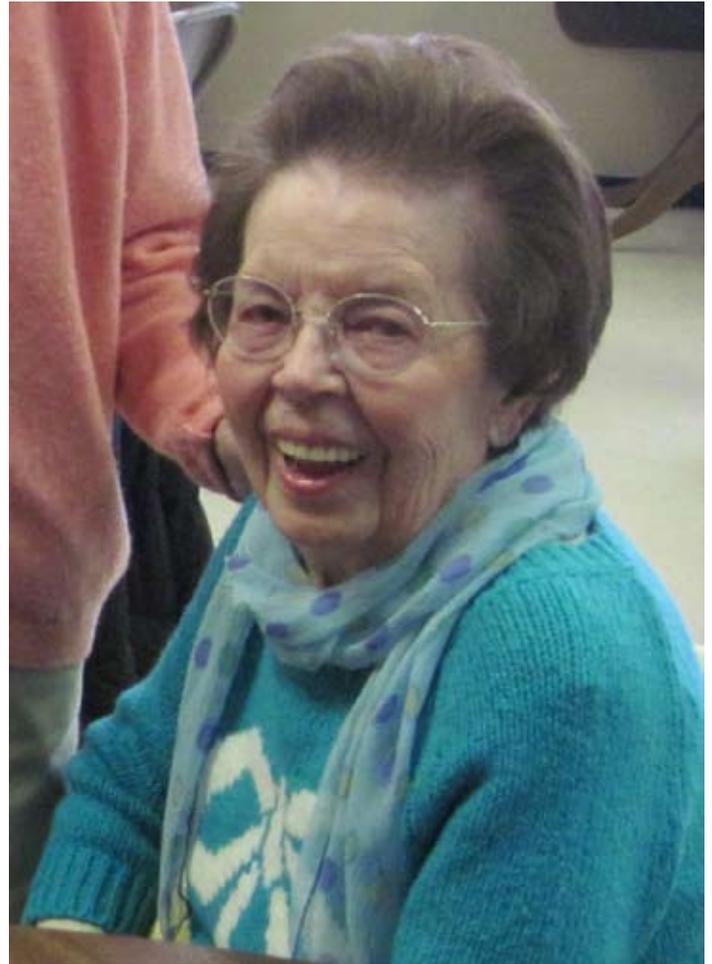
about the need for Justice Reform in Oklahoma, especially for women inmates.

Mr. Steele was the author of the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, which seeks to help inmates reintegrate into society and reduce the recidivism rates in Oklahoma. Specifically, Mr. Steele emphasized the need for programs that help inmates to gain their GED, attain certification in careers such as the food industry and nurses aids, and to become positive members of the community once they are released. His focus has been on female inmates, most of whom are non-violent offenders. His programs would offer counseling, mentorships, assistance in developing positive family relationships and help with reintegration into their communities.

Positive personal relationship with a mentor seems to have a big impact. TEEM has partnered with Chesapeake: employees teach interview skills, Internet, computer skills; take to a beauty parlor; advise on business appropriate dressing. (Men's Wearhouse donates 400 suits to men's program.)

The legislature, to date, has failed to fund the justice Reinvestment Act. This is unfortunate, because in other states, such as Texas where such programs have been supported, there has been in reduction in the inmate population, sufficient to allow the closing of prisons. Efforts such as reeducation, job training, and mentorships are important to local communities in helping offenders develop positive relationships and learn responsibility.

—Based on Ruth Loeffler's notes and TEEM press release. By Sandy Bahan & Helen Duchon



## **In Memory of June Morgan,**

### **June 29, 1915 to August 11, 2014**

June Morgan had been a very active member of the Norman League for over fifty years. She was President of the Norman and State Leagues and a Vice President and Director of the National League.

June was also a leader in many organizations in Norman, including Director of Cleveland County Community Services for Action, OK Alliance on Aging, OK Mental Health and Aging Coalition, McFarlin Church Advisory Council, Co-Founder of Meals on Wheels and several other service groups.

June and her husband, Bill Morgan (former Mayor of Norman) founded and was co-owner and corporate secretary of radio station KNOR in Norman.

We have sent June's daughter Faith and other family members our sympathy, and we appreciate all that June did for the League over the years and will miss her very much.

—Phoebe Schmitz

## Lois (Chiles) Hilbert digs Norman League History, Part One

As one ages, one often feels the need to “lighten the load.” Responding to that need, on a cold day last winter, I began to dig through boxes in the garage. What treasures! In one box, I found a scrapbook with clippings about the League of Women Voters’ activities from the late 1960’s and early 70’s. As it turns out 1970 was a very big year for the League. It was the 50th Anniversary for the organization as well as a very active year for the Norman League. It was time for history.

And History the Norman League does have! In January of 1969 there was a celebration in the Norman Public Library of the 44th anniversary of the Norman League of Women Voters. At that meeting were Mrs. M. L. Morris Wardell who joined the League in 1928, Mrs. W. J. Rouse who joined in 1934, Mrs. N. A. Court in 1925 and Dr. Gertrude Neilsen in 1925. According to the Norman Transcript, Dr. Neilsen, a charter member of the Norman League, reminisced about the early days. “We were full of enthusiasm,” she recalled, “and came to meetings with toddlers and babies in carriages to discuss issues of the day.”

Some of the early study projects were women in industry, legal status of women, pure food laws, profiteering on food, venereal disease control and the concept of a permanent court of International Justice. The League also worked for an ordinance for cleanliness in restaurant food handling and persuading Norman merchants to provide behind-the-counter stools for clerks so that they could rest their feet between customers. “For years, Leaguers went checking for stools behind counters,” Dr. Nielsen said.

The League worked for slum clearance in Norman and promoted an indoor privy campaign. “The WPA came along and put up beautiful sanitary outdoor privies to replace the old outhouses,” recalled Dr. Nielsen. “Later we found the WPA had done very well. Many of the new privies had been converted into sanitary cold storage houses.”

During the 30’s, the Norman League supported the cause for public kindergartens, re-apportionment in Oklahoma and prepaid medical and hospital care before the advent of hospitalization insurance. The League also worked for Social Security before its establishment in the United States, she pointed out. (All this from the *Norman Transcript*, January 17, 1969.)

## Part Two: 1970, A Tumultuous Year

Protests against the Vietnam War were evident all over the nation. It also happened to be the year for a National Convention of LWV.

Four Norman women attended this 50th Anniversary Convention of the LWWVUS in Washington, D.C. They were Mrs. Ralph Jenner, Mrs. W. Dean Chiles Mrs. John Alley, and Mrs. William Morgan, a former National Board member. Special speakers at the convention were Shirley Temple Black and Rita Hauser, U.S. delegates to the United Nations, and Marian Wright Edelman and Hilary Rodham, two young women active in student and civil rights movements.

The 2,287 delegates to the convention adopted a program for the coming biennium. It included:

- Evaluation of the U.S. Congressional structure, procedures and practices and their effect on responsive legislative processes;
- Evaluation of environmental quality to achieve and maintain a physical environment beneficial to life with emphasis on population growth and water resources and water quality;
- Support of equal opportunity in education, employment and housing and measures to combat poverty and discrimination;
- Support of U.S. policies to promote world trade, normalize relations with the People’s Republic of China and strengthen the peace keeping capacities of the United Nations;
- Support of direct popular vote to elect the president, of self government and representation in Congress for citizens of the District of Columbia and one-man one-vote apportionment of state legislatures.

Forty four years later, do these issues still sound familiar?

Back then, Washington was packed with 30,000 protesters against the Vietnam War. The killing of the four students at Kent State was fresh on everyone’s mind. The war was threatening to expand into Cambodia. The White House was uncertain of how events would proceed. City buses parked nose to tail formed a barricade around the White House. Speakers were setting up platforms at every opportunity. The smell of marijuana permeated the air. Protesters carried coffins across the bridge and onto the Capitol grounds. • **Could the League Convention ignore this tumult?**

— © Lois (Chiles) Hilbert, 2014



## 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.

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For updates on LWV activities go to <http://norman.ok.lwvnet.org>; click "Meetings and Events"; call one on the Steering Committee (page 1); or check our Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/pages/League-of-Women-Voters-of-Norman-Oklahoma/](http://www.facebook.com/pages/League-of-Women-Voters-of-Norman-Oklahoma/)

## 2014 Fall Calendar

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|----------|--------------|--|
| Sept. 16 | Tue. 7:00 pm | <b>Future of Norman Panel* @<br/>Library, Webster &amp; Gray</b> |
| Oct. 7   | Tue. 7:00 pm | <b>Candidates Forum @<br/>Memorial Presbyterian Church</b>       |

**\*Panelists:** Roger Frech and Cynthia Rogers from the University of Oklahoma, Mike Fowler from the Norman Chamber of Commerce and Lynne Miller, City Council Member. The panel will discuss Norman's future, including issues such as water availability, Norman Forward and appropriate ways to finance future needs for our city.

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