



The Norman VOTER

Fall 2012

LWVN

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League of Women Voters of Norman

Established in 1925

Can NPS keep "public" in its name?

Fall Membership Meeting

Monday • Sept. 24, 2012 • 7 PM

Conference Center Multi-Purpose Room at Norman High School

Enter off N. Berry Rd at first parking lot. Look for round front entrance

Let's get together to hear about and discuss PUBLIC education

Our Speaker: Linda Sexton*

Board Member, Norman Public Schools Board

Kids, Changes in our Demographics, Our Bond Issue Projects, Funding Losses, Leadership and Morale

*I grew up in Oklahoma, earned a PR/journalism degree from OU and have hours toward a masters in public administration; my husband, John (38 years!), and I have five sons and a daughter--three are "ours" and two came to us by chance. Six grandchildren live in Norman! We are easy to find, having lived in the same house for 36 years--adding on as needed! The household is down to two adults and two dogs. After several years working as "mainly mom," I worked for the Jacobson Foundation and the Firehouse Art Center. I have served on boards for the LWV, PTA, Center for Children and Families and Norman Public Schools.

My interests are restoring my house to it's atomic 50s decor; gardening; my kids, their kids and everybody else's kids. My biggest wish is that Norman unite to provide structure and nurture to every child in town.

Know who represents you in the Legislature

Candidates Forum

Tuesday • Oct. 16, 2012 • 7 PM

Conference Center Multi-Purpose Room at Norman High School

Enter off N. Berry Rd at first parking lot. Look for round front entrance

Seats in the Legislature

House 44, 45, 46, 53 and Senate 15

All reps have been invited to speak even though they don't have opponents on the November 6th ballot. We want you to know them.

"Oklahoma—How can we make it even better?"

Some background information on the LWVOK positions on **Education**

Education Program Position of *League of Women Voters of Oklahoma*:

Support of strengthened financial and administration structures which would provide for quality education in Oklahoma.

Concern for the **quality of education** provided Oklahoma's children has been a thread running through League program positions for decades. The current education positions reflect the intense national interest in improving the **equality of opportunity for quality education**, which arose in the 1970s. Oklahoma focused its attention on improving **administrative structures** and the manner in which education (both common and higher) was **funded**. Much of what has been accomplished in the field of education in Oklahoma has had the active backing of the League.

FINANCE: COMMON and HIGHER

The League of Women Voters of Oklahoma believes that improved financing is the key to providing equal opportunity for quality education for all children in Oklahoma. It believes that the state should assume the major responsibility for financing common school education. The state should also assume the responsibility for improving and equalizing financial resources among the school districts. The major portion of financing for common schools should come from state funds, moving away from a base of ad valorem taxes. Overall tax reform must be achieved with continued improvement of assessment practices and removal of constitutional limitation on millage.

The LWVOK will continue to support removal of loopholes in tax laws and exemption from property taxes and the requirement that each school district vote the maximum millage.

Consideration should be given to formulas for state aid other than Average Daily Attendance.

The LWVOK believes that improved financing, accountability of expenditures, and more efficient financial procedures are the keys to providing quality higher education in Oklahoma. It believes that the state government should assume the major responsibility for financing state institutions of higher learning.

Vocational-technical education should play a larger role in the story of total education. Counseling in career education needs emphasis, and the greater opportunities for youth and adults in vocational-technical education need to be provided.

The League's citizen awareness campaign, funded by the LWV Education Fund helped build support for the new system of equalizing ad valorem taxes across the state.

ADMINISTRATION

The League believes that the State Superintendent of Public Instruction should be appointed.

Whether appointed or elected, the members of the State Board of Education should be selected to represent districts based on population such as congressional districts.

The LWVOK supports the reorganization of school districts for quality education and believes that we should continue to support equalized collection and distribution of ad valorem taxes.

Consensus approved 1973

*"Stop counting crayons; just draw pictures."
—Mark Scharenbroich*

Six State Questions on Nov. 6th Ballot

SQ No.: 758 SUBJECT: Ad Valorem Taxation Limitation on Valuation Increases. (State Constitution, Section 8B of Article 10)

The measure deals with real property taxes also called ad valorem taxes. These taxes are based on several factors. One factor is the fair cash value of the property. The measure changes the limits on increases in fair cash value. Now, increases are limited to 5% of fair cash value in any taxable year. The measure changes the cap on increases to 3% for some property. The 3% cap would apply to homestead exempted property. The cap would also apply to agricultural land. The measure also removes obsolete language.

SQ No.: 759 SUBJECT: Prohibits certain preferential treatment or discrimination. (New section to State Constitution, Section 36 to Article II.

The measure deals with three areas of government action: **employment, education and contracting.**

In these areas, the measure **does not allow affirmative action programs.** Affirmative action programs give preferred treatment based on race, color or gender. They also give preferred treatment based on ethnicity or national origin. Discrimination on these bases is also not permitted. The measure *permits affirmative action in three instances.* 1. When gender is a bonafide qualification, it is allowed. 2. Existing court orders and consent decrees that require preferred treatment will continue and can be followed. 3. Affirmative action is allowed when needed to keep or obtain federal funds. It applies to the State and its agencies; to counties, cities and towns; to school districts. It applies to other State subdivisions. The measure applies only to actions taken after its approval by the people.

SQ No.: 762 SUBJECT: Modifies the power and authority of the Governor and Pardon and Parole Board in the parole process for nonviolent offenders (Amends Section 10 of Article 6 of the Oklahoma Constitution)

It enlarges the power and authority of the Pardon and Parole Board by authorizing that Board, in place of the Governor, to grant parole to persons convicted of certain offenses defined as *nonviolent* offenses.

The Legislature defines what offenses are nonviolent and may change that definition. Authorizes the Pardon and Parole Board to recommend to the Governor, but not to itself grant, parole for persons convicted of crimes for which persons are required to serve not less than 85% of their sentence prior to being considered for parole and those designated by the Legislature as exceptions to nonviolent offenses.

SQ No.: 764 SUBJECT: Creates the Water Infrastructure Credit Enhancement Reserve Fund; allows the Oklahoma Water Resources Board to issue bonds (New Section 39A to Article 10)

Any bonds issued would be used for a reserve fund for the Board for certain water resource and sewage treatment funding programs. The fund could only be used to pay other bonds and obligations for the funding programs. The bonds could only be issued after other monies and sources are used for repayment. The bonds would be general obligation bonds. Not more than Three Hundred Million Dollars worth of bonds could be issued. The Legislature would provide the monies to pay for the bonds. The Legislature would provide for methods for issuing the bonds. The Legislature would provide for how the fund is administered.

SQ No.: 765 Repeals Art. 25, §§ 2, 3, & 4; Adds new § 6 SUBJECT: It abolishes the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, the Oklahoma Commission of Human Services and the position of Director of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

The measure adds a provision to the Constitution authorizing the Legislature to create a department or departments to administer and carry out laws to provide for the care of the aged and the needy.

SQ No.: 766 SUBJECT: Exempts all intangible personal property from ad valorem taxation (Amends Section 6A of Article 10 of the Oklahoma Constitution. Intangible Personal Property which is still currently taxed but would not be taxed if the measure is adopted, includes items such as: • patents, inventions, formulas, designs, and trade secrets; licenses, franchise, and contracts; • land leases, mineral interests, and insurance policies; • custom computer software; and • trademarks, trade names and brand names.

If adopted, the measure would apply to property taxation starting with the tax year that begins on January 1, 2013.



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/

2012 Fall Calendar

Sept. 24	Mon.	7-8:30 pm	Fall Membership Meeting Norman Public Schools, Linda Sexton, School Board Member
Oct. 16	Tue.	7-8:30 pm	Candidates Forum, Oklahoma House and Senate seats
Nov 6	Tue.	7 am-7 pm	Presidential, State & County General Election, 6 State Questions
Date & Place TBA Nov. or Dec.			Water Quality & Supply Discussion & Consensus Questions

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