



# LWVOK VOTER

Helping Citizens be  
Informed Voters  
The League of Women  
Voters of Oklahoma

October 2007

## Publicity From Our President

Dear League Members and Friends of the League,

I hope everyone had a restful and enjoyable summer, because this fall will be a busy time for the state and local Leagues, with the upcoming presidential primary and the February 1, 2008 deadline for reporting consensus responses to LWVUS.

The state board has two new members: Rita Boyle from Tulsa and Anita Alford from Lawton. Both of these ladies are talented League members and we enthusiastically welcome them. Please look for articles from each of them in this Voter issue concerning our Re-entry Study Consensus and the Department of Corrections.

The state board will be addressing the subject of the state office at our next board meeting on September 29<sup>th</sup>. A LWVOK Office Location Committee was formed at our state convention to study that issue. Members of the committee included Trish Emig (chair), Jacqueline Achong, Barbara Robinson, Jay Engle, Vivian Schmidt, Dolores Martin, and Barbara Wilson. The committee submitted a report of their findings to the state board for their review. A copy of the report may be requested by email at [lwvokla@aol.com](mailto:lwvokla@aol.com).

The state board is also in the planning stages of our Advocacy Workshop to be held this January with Barbara Robinson as chair of the event. This is always one of the state League's significant efforts to inform citizens in methods to be better advocates for their issues.

I hope each of you remembered to celebrate the 220<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Constitution on September 17<sup>th</sup>. To quote LWVUS president Mary G. Wilson, "Constitution Day marks an important opportunity for us to reflect upon the democratic foundations we still rely on today... For more than 87 years, League members all over the country have worked hands-on to preserve and strengthen our system. Constitution Day serves as an important reminder of that work, and inspires us to keep working to build a better democracy."

An important issue for League members to observe this fall is the impact of HB1804, Oklahoma's new state immigration bill, which will take effect on November 1, 2007. It is expected that the constitutionality of the bill will be challenged. The actual effects of the bill will depend on whether the bill does take effect, and if so, how it is interpreted and implemented by public agencies and private entities. Because of the uncertainty on what will happen, some families are apparently keeping their children out of school this semester, and others are planning on leaving the state before November. More information about the bill can be found on the Community Action Project's website, <http://www.okpolicy.org/>. A table presenting a summary of the major provisions and concerns of HB1804 is presented in this Voter on page 8.

As always, it is a pleasure to meet and work with the dedicated women and men that are found in the League, and I thank each of you for your expertise, time, and enthusiasm so generously given.

Barbara Wilson

## Position on Re-entry

by Rita Boyle

A new position paper will soon be released by LWVOK. This paper will state conclusions reached as a result of the just completed two-year study of four major barriers faced by females leaving prison.

Recognizing that Oklahoma can take no pride in incarcerating such a high percentage of its female population, the League studied the issues surrounding medical care, employability, adequate housing, and restoration of voting rights for women exiting the prison system. With improvements in these areas there is a real possibility that reintegration into society will be more successful, the recidivism rate will decrease, and with improved skills women will be able to provide for their families.

Following a resolution passed at the convention in Guthrie this year, local Leagues may begin immediately to take action in the following areas. 1. Network with other interested groups to obtain passage of legislation restoring voting rights upon release from Department of Corrections. 2. Advocate for better funding for training inmates to improve employability; work for improved transportation for former offenders in the communities in which they live. 3. Work with Department of Corrections on a method to provide individuals with dental and physical and mental health records of treatment while incarcerated at the time of their release; network with local groups to improve dental care of these women and their children; enlist volunteers to mentor or otherwise assist women on reentry. 4. Cooperate with Department of Corrections to assure that former offenders have all identification documents they will need upon release.

One of the organizations with whom LWVOK and local Leagues might be able to ally with on these issues is Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants of Oklahoma --CURE/OK.

CURE began in 1972 in Texas as a grass roots movement to oppose the death penalty in Texas. It has since become a national organization with an organized presence in most states. CURE/OK was formed in Oklahoma in 1990 and is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) corporation. Throughout the nation CURE is dedicated to the reduction of crime through the reform of the criminal justice system. It does this by advocacy and education on criminal justice issues.

Among CURE goals are the use of prisons only for those who MUST be incarcerated, promotion of rehabilitative programs which help prisoners turn their lives around, and education of families of errants on effective advocacy for needed changes.

CURE/OK has advocated for several sessions of the legislature for changes in restoration of voting rights to former offenders as well as the need for change in the telephone rates charged families for calls they receive from loved ones in prison. Education on prison issues is an ongoing work of the local organization.

For more information on CURE/OK--  
<http://home.earthlink.net/~okcure/>

National CURE----  
<http://www.curenational.org/new/index.html>

Lynn Powell, Tulsa League member and CURE/OK president includes this statement in most letters and press releases: Today's inmates are tomorrow's neighbors.

**LWVOK BOARD MEETINGS** The League of Women Voters Oklahoma board will meet in Norman on September 29th. The meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m. in the Norman Economic Development building, 710 Asp. Asp is the second street east of University, across from the north oval, which is on Boyd. The parking lot is in front of the building. The Norman League will arrange for lunch and local Norman members are encouraged to come to the meeting and/or for lunch.

There has been a trade for the November 3 meeting. It will be in Bartlesville. There was too much football activity planned in Stillwater for that day. Bartlesville is looking for a good easy-to-find place and making plans for lunch. Stillwater will try for March.

## LWVOK Advocacy

*By Karen Melcher*

Responding to the wishes of local Leagues, the LWVOK board plans to become more active in advocating for League positions and in helping local Leagues become better advocates.

One of the easiest ways to do this, the board feels, is to use other groups who follow legislation of interest to the League. The board is excited to have two new board members who can guide LWVOK to advocate for the re-entry of women ex-offenders back into society. Rita Boyle is a member of OK CURE (Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants) and Sheila Anita Alford works as Transition and Reintegration Coordinator for the Department of Corrections. These women are willing to alert the board and members when issues come up relating to the re-entry consensus. They can also provide the members with the reasons why the League either supports or does not support legislation.

The board also plans to use members who have joined the Institute for Child Advocacy to study that group's legislative agenda. They will follow issues that LWVOK can support and get that information to members across the state. In additions the board will utilize members in NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) to help alert members on mental health issues that the League should support according to the mental health consensus.

Stillwater League members have met with an OSU College of Education faculty member who follows education issues in the OK legislature. The League will look at the legislative issues she mentioned to ascertain how the LWVOK should lobby.

The board would like to find members active in statewide environmental groups to keep LWVOK up-to-date on those issues.

Last year President Barbara Wilson did a good job of helping the board follow proposed bills affecting the right to vote. This can be done again, and if any bills get to the floor, the board will let members know background information and ask them to either oppose or support the bills depending on LWV principles.

Let the board know of any other League issues you would be willing to track or any suggestions on how we can be more active advocates.

## LWV Oklahoma Convention in Guthrie, Oklahoma - May 19, 2007

*By Cheri Spears*



The activities began on Friday, with tours of the Masonic temple and trolley rides through historic Guthrie. Pictures here show members and guests gathering for dinner at The Stables and the entertainment for the evening, Women Speak from Stillwater. Each of these ladies portrayed at least a couple of famous ladies from our history.

On Saturday morning, LWVOK President, Barbara Wilson, welcomed all who came and introduced Elaine Wiant, the LWVUS liaison for Oklahoma, and Members of the board of the League of Women Voters of Oklahoma. Barbara then introduced the mayor of Guthrie, Chuck Burtcher. Mayor Burtcher welcomed the League to Guthrie and gave a brief history of Guthrie. (Continued on page 4)

o(Continued from page 3)

There were 13 local league delegates from five local Leagues and 10 delegates from the LWVOK board for a total of 23 delegates present for the convention.

Treasurer, Sheree James gave the Treasurers report. She ended her report by comparing May 1, 2007 balances to balances on July 1, 2005. League members can get the numbers from LWVOK members.

Barbara Robinson presented the budget for fiscal year 2007-2008.

Trish Emig of Stillwater suggested moving the state office from Oklahoma City to Tulsa to share office space with that local league office and save some expenses. The discussion of possible complications led to the formation of a committee to investigate the possibility. Trish Emig chaired the committee. Other members are Jay Engle, Vivian Schmidt, Jacqueline Achong, Barbara Robinson, and Dolores Martin. Barbara Wilson will be ex-officio member.

Mary Jo Neal, a member of the by-laws committee, presented proposed changes to the bylaws. The changes from LWVUS convention in 2006 need to be included as changes to LWVOK and local League bylaws. Changes suggested for the LWVOK bylaws that were passed are in: 1. Article VII Section 3, Article V Section 1, and Article XIII, Section 1.

Becky Wallace, chairwoman of the nomination committee, presented the proposed slate of officers and directors and nominating committee:

Barbara Wilson –President –Pontotoc County, MAL  
 Karen Melcher – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Stillwater  
 Polly Bowen – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Tulsa  
 Cheri Spears – Secretary- Bartlesville  
 Rita Boyle – Treasurer –Tulsa  
 Directors: Joyce Collard – Norman  
 Dortha Dunlap – Bartlesville  
 Barbara Robinson – Norman  
 Jacqueline Achong—Lawton  
 Marjorie Swofford Tulsa

Jacqueline Achong nominated Anita Alford from Lawton to be added to the slate.

#### **Nominating Committee 2007:**

Becky Wallace-Bartlesville  
 Jacqueline Achong-Lawton  
 Dolores Martin-Oklahoma County  
 Nancy Dodson-Tulsa  
 Beulah Hirschline –Stillwater

#### **Nominating committee for 2009**

Beulah Hirschline –Stillwater  
 Mary Jo Neal – Tulsa  
 Judi Johnson - Oklahoma County – Chair  
 Plus 2 from the LWVOK Board

This slate was later voted in unanimously.

There are no recommended state studies. Becky Wallace announced that there is a good possibility of a workshop or seminar on immigration done by an INS man, Mr. Jim Delia, to coincide with the US Immigration study this fall. Hopefully the

red tape will not take too long to cut through.

Dortha Dunlap reported on the Re-entry study and consensus. The four areas of emphasis of the study are 1. Voting rights, 2. Health Care, 3. Employment, and 4. Housing. Transportation and knowing how to find needed services are two items of great need that have surfaced from the study. The 211 phone system is a great system beginning to be open in a large part of Oklahoma; it will be very helpful to find needed services. Nancy Dodson reported in more detail on Tulsa findings and results. Lily Lamb also reported in more detail on the 211 system and gave a website ([www.211oklahoma.org](http://www.211oklahoma.org)) to locate local numbers to print brochures to make available to people coming out of prison into an area served by a local League.

Kyle Eastwood, who was Representative Ryan McMullen's campaign manager, gave a talk on House Bill 1937. It is called the Democracy Act and is a redistricting reform bill. It has been stopped from being brought to the floor by one person in the legislature. Representative McMullen would like the League to join the coalition to develop an initiative petition to get the bill on the 2008 ballot.



During the lunch break Annette Ketchum, a Delaware Native American spoke about the Oklahoma Land Run from a Native American point of view. She gave a good history of all the Indian removals before that time as background.

Judi Johnson reported on a state project The League Took Kit. After looking at the document *In League* on the LWV.org website, found that is becoming automated. LWVUS is revising *In League* and turning it into a tool kit. It should be issued in June. It will be a shorter document, but it will point to others. Judy supplied a list of 6 websites that she had found to be very useful. She and Jacqueline Achong asked for volunteers to look for and identify other websites that can be effective tools for non-profits to add to our list. Boardsource.com is also a good site.

Elaine Wiant, the Oklahoma liaison from LWVUS, presented a communication workshop. The key tool in communication is your *VOTER*. Your local *Voter*, the state *Voter* and the *National Voter*. Others are the weekly *Leaders Update* from National. It is recommended to pass this on to other members. Once a month, there is the *E Voice* from National. A good publication is *Observing Your Government in Action*.

Elaine asked for ways for state board to communicate with Local Leagues. Answers were: telephone, have board ask local members to attend, email, through board member, meeting in local League areas, communications on studies, website. The audience asked how to get communication from national. A chart on the website that says who to contact for what. Contact Cheryl Graeve, head of membership and field support at [cgraeve@lww.org](mailto:cgraeve@lww.org). The national post board summary is posted on the website shortly after board meetings.

(Continued on page 5)

*(continued from page 4)*

To make sure **all** eligible voters are heard on Election Day, the LWVUS has adopted five core areas of election administration reform:

1. opposing ID and proof-of-citizenship requirements
2. improving the administration of statewide voter registration databases and guarding against wrongful or incorrect purging
3. guarding against unnecessary restrictions on voter registration
4. improving poll worker recruitment, training and supervision
5. improving polling place management and ballot design

In 2007 the topics of some projects are DC Voting Rights, Global Climate Change, and Healthcare Reform. DC Voting Rights is gaining attention. Redistricting has moved under Education since it is a state priority.

In closing Elaine said, "Ask, ask, ask! Ask others if they are a member. If not ask them to join ..."

Barbara Wilson gave three awards, \$25 off PMP to 2 Leagues: Voters Service Award to Stillwater, The Action Award to Bartlesville, and the Membership award to Bartlesville.

Dolores Martin began action resolutions. She asked Leaguers to call their legislators about SB 424 by Tom Addison. It is called the All Kids Bill. 122,000 children are uninsured, but do not qualify for Sooner Care. Eighty-five percent of uninsured people are working people.

Barbara Robinson brought a concern of the Norman League about the Oklahoma City Crosstown Project before the delegates. They ask that people call legislators in support of HCR 1032 calling for the Governor to place a moratorium on the Crosstown Project and to appoint a Special Commission to restudy the issue before the May 25 session end.

Rita Boyle brought up a resolution: Resolved: The LWVOK, pursuant to the study on barriers to successful reintegration faced by female offenders leaving prison, will take the following actions:

1. Network with other interested groups to obtain passage of legislation restoring voting rights on discharge from DOC.
2. Advocate for better funding for training inmates to improve employability upon release; work for improved transportation for former offenders in the communities in which they live.
3. Work with DOC on a method to provide individuals with dental, physical, and mental health records of treatment

while incarcerated at the time of their release; network with local groups to improve dental care for women and their children; enlist volunteers to mentor or otherwise assist women on re-entry 4. Cooperate with DOC to assure that former offenders have all identification documents they will need upon release.

In addition, all local Leagues should cooperate with their nearest 211 agency in preparing a Reintegration Resource Guide for the area served using the Tulsa model and make it available to women coming into the area or community.

Trish Emig of Stillwater made a motion that the Oklahoma LWV Board explore and act according to their findings on Senator McMullen's coalition in an initiative petition drive to put the redistricting process before a vote of the people in the 2008 general election.

**Directions to the Board:** Write a press release regarding the motion on barriers to successful reintegration of female prisoners upon their release from DOC. Rita Boyle

Discuss possibility of holding council/Convention in late April. Also alternate convention between Tulsa and Oklahoma City or other site selected by delegates at Council. Becky Wallace, Bartlesville.

Hold a Seminar/Forum on Immigration (Continued on page 5) (Continued from page 4) utilizing Jim Delia of the INS department in mid October. Make it open to League and to the public. Cost includes lunch. League members get a discount. Becky Wallace, Bartlesville.

Question: How can we arrange funding to pay lobbyists?  
Suggestion: Save money by moving LWVOK office to Tulsa.

Becky Wallace gave thank you -awards to people who helped her plan and arrange for the convention: Beulah Hirschline, Vivian and Bill Schmidt, Kay Murphy and Barbara Wilson. Barbara Wilson awarded her own thank you to Becky for all her work in arranging for the Convention.

Jacqueline Achong distributed goodie bags from Lawton as she issued the invitation for LWVOK Council to meet in Lawton in 2008. Plan to go, get there early, and stay late to enjoy the Lawton area.



It has been a long day, but much has been accomplished!

## The Nuts and Bolts of Re-Entry

By Anita Alford

Re-entry is a complex term that is defined by the Oklahoma Department of Corrections as a systematic continuum of treatment, services, and processes that are integrated into all facets of the offender's incarceration at all levels of security.

The Department of Corrections, in partnership with appropriate agencies maintains an infrastructure of offender assessment, needs identification, case planning, training, treatment, pre-release planning and effective programming to include comprehensive planning for offender transition to community to include programmatic supervision.

The primary goal of this process is the reduction of offender recidivism; achieved by providing adequate cognitive, academic, vocational, substance abuse treatment, and living skills while underscoring the philosophy the re-entry process begins at the point of reception. Recidivism is defined as those offenders that are reincarcerated into the Oklahoma Department of Corrections.

In March 2002, the Department of Corrections Assessment and Reception Facility at Lexington began conducting complete assessment of all offenders and developing case plans. The initial case plan is based on crime, length of sentence, physical and mental health, LSI-R score, and other objective assessment instruments. Literacy levels are tested at inception and it is expected that any inmate without a high school diploma will obtain a GED prior to discharge.

Because offenders releasing from secure facilities do not have the same opportunities to integrate as those releasing in the community, it is critical that institutional programming be based on proven theories of "what works". Findings from hundreds of criminal justice studies indicate the programs that work have common features. Good programs target factors related to offending and that can be changed. These dynamic factors are known as criminogenic needs. Addressing criminogenic needs (factors related of offending) show a greater correlation to reduced recidivism than much of the research on which we base social policy and medical practice.

When the offender is 180 days from his/her projected release, the focus shifts from the case plan to the pre-release plan. The pre-release plan is individualized focusing on the offender's basic needs (i.e., housing, clothing, etc.), and aftercare referrals for medical, mental health and substance abuse.

Between 600 - 700 offenders are released from custody monthly. The Department utilizes several different tracks to serve the needs of individuals transitioning from incarceration back to community as well as maintain successful outcomes for those under community supervision.

- ◆ Community Corrections – Offenders eligible for community corrections status prior to release will receive reentry services at those facilities. Services include work programs,

substance abuse aftercare, continuing education, transportation resources, and reestablishment of family and community ties.

- ◆ Transition Coordination – Offenders assessed as high risk and not eligible for community corrections are referred to a Reentry Transition Coordinator who utilizes the concept of "Wraparound". Wraparound is a process that develops and carries out plans for offenders and their families who have very complex needs.

- ◆ Diversion Program – A team of Probation Officers work closely with officials from the District Attorney and Public Defender offices and other stakeholders to focus on offenders exhibiting high risk behaviors for placement in a specialized transition plan

The Oklahoma Department of Corrections will continue to incorporate re-entry initiatives and implement programs with a primary purpose of reduction in recidivism to protect the public.

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

## LWVOK DEVELOPMENT MEETING SUMMARY Of August 18, 2007

*By Polly Bowen*

Polly Bowen (Chair), Barbara Wilson (President), Dolores Martin and Rita Boyle (Treasurer) gathered to discuss development possibilities for the State League.

Barbara reported on a meeting with the Hospice of Green County Development Director. We were advised not to do an event but research Oklahoma Foundations and corporations. We should learn who serves on these boards and be certain they are not in conflicting positions. However, we did discuss the possibility of a major fund-raiser every five years or so. Our goal would be to bring in a big name speaker to draw large crowds. We need the names of all potential Advisory Council members immediately. Dolores will send Oklahoma City names to Barbara. These Council members will be part of our fund-raising connections. All names should be sent to Barbara.

Other possibilities were also reviewed. Dolores will get the name of a contact at OCU research foundations. Grants will be looked into, i.e., Chesapeake. Mr. Clingman of the State Election Board has indicated funds are available for a statewide voter education get-out-the vote program. A proposal would have to be prepared, and local Leagues would be asked to supply names of possible speakers for Voter Education panels. Topics the League has addressed such as Immigration (coordinate with Hispanic organizations), Health would be appropriate. Another fund raising possibility could be tied to elections in late winter. A letter plus follow up would involve individuals and businesses.

Product sales is another possibility for a quick campaign. Barbara will look into the availability of pecans and e-mail her findings. These could be packaged at the next State Board meeting and distributed through local Leagues. Pecans could be sold locally with the local Leagues and State splitting the proceeds. Orders will be taken in advance, so we can estimate the quantity of pecans we need to purchase.

All Development ideas and "worker bees" are welcome. Please contact Polly or Barbara at any time.

### **87 Years of Fighting for Political Equality**

*League of Women Voters Marks Anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment*

Adapted by Jacqueline Achong from LWV national press release to include Lawton League activities for the Lawton newspaper

**This August 26 marks the 87<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the day that the U.S. Constitution was amended to grant women the right to vote. While American women now comprise more than half of our nation's voting age population, according to the League of Women Voters of Lawton, the struggle to become full participants in the political life of the country has yet to be fully realized.**

**"This anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment, Women's Equality Day, provides us with an opportunity to reflect with pride on the progress made on voting rights in the past 87 years," said Mary G. Wilson, national League president.**

**"This year, we've witnessed a number of remarkable milestones for women. For the first time, a female has been elected Speaker of the House of Representatives, and a major contender for the 2008 Presidential election is a woman.**

**"However, these achievements do not mark the end of our journey. In communities across the country, citizens still lack real representation by their elected officials and the policies they pass. It is only with the continued work of citizens and leaders, of all backgrounds, that this can change."**

**The League's current and recent projects include the launch of a major voter education website, [www.VOTE411.org](http://www.VOTE411.org), lobbying against the disenfranchisement of eligible voters, a campaign to end "taxation without representation" for D.C. citizens by granting DC a voting representative, and continuing voter registration drives nation wide. This year Lawton League has participated with Fort Sill's Women Equality Day and providing voting educational information to non-profit organizations.**

**"It is crucial that we continue to engage more citizens in the democratic process, on every level. Citizens volunteering, educating, lobbying; that's absolutely necessary to democracy, and we need to see more of it," said Jacqueline Achong, President.**

**"Today is a time to celebrate the progress achieved by active citizens over the past eight decades, but it is also a time to look to what still needs to be done to make democracy work for all Americans. The League of Women Voters will continue to be the place where hands-on work leads to a better democracy for all."**

**Summary and Hi-Lites of HB 1804 -- Major Provisions and Concerns**

Sec.	Provisions	Concerns
3	Makes it a state felony offence to transport, conceal, harbor or shelter an alien knowingly and in reckless disregard of the alien's illegal status; specifies exemptions for providers of certain services	Creates uncertainty and fear of arrest and criminal charges among Good Samaritans and those who may deal with undocumented immigrants as part of their regular business.
4	Restricts the issuing of official identification cards to US citizens, nationals and legal permanent residents; allows for exceptions for driver's licenses and school identification cards under specified circumstances.	School ID language creates fear that schools may seek to verify legal status of children and their families, which may lead parents to keep their children (including US citizens) from attending school.
5	Requires jails to verify legal status of persons detained on felony and DUI charges.	No standard for jails to determine citizenship status and legal presence; creates fear that law enforcement will go beyond the requirements of the bill in inquiring about the legal status of suspected illegal immigrants. No funding to assist local authorities with detention costs.
7	Requires public employers and those contracting with public employers to use an electronic employment authorization system to verify work eligibility; puts private employers who do not utilize electronic verification system at risk of a discriminatory practices complaint.	Existing employment verification systems can be inaccurate and cumbersome, especially for legal immigrants; verification system may be unable to handle increased demands in a timely fashion; undocumented workers using fake documents will still slip through the cracks; federal immigration law preempts the regulation of employment and hiring of unauthorized workers.
8	Requires public agencies to verify lawful presence of applications (over age 14) for 'public benefits', as defined in federal law; specifies exemptions for providers of certain services.	Language simply duplicates existing federal law requiring states to determine legal status for public benefits and excluding unauthorized immigrants; creates uncertainty and confusion among providers and recipients about eligibility for services exempted from definition of public benefits; potentially expensive requirement for US citizens to sign notarized affidavits attesting to their citizenship.
10	Requires state Attorney General to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding with federal government that would allow state and local law enforcement officials to assume certain federal immigration enforcement powers under specified circumstances.	Creates fear that state and local law enforcement will serve as agents of the immigration police, which can lead immigrants, legal and non-legal to avoid law enforcement whenever possible.
13	Prevents undocumented students from receiving scholarships and financial assistance; allows Regents for Higher Education to preserve policy giving undocumented students access to in-state tuition.	Makes it harder for Oklahoma graduates to pursue higher education, to the detriment of themselves and their communities.

This table is taken directly from: *Issue Brief. Interpreting HB 1804: A Guide to Understanding Oklahoma's New State Immigration Bill.* Community Action Project. August 20, 2007. [www.okpolicy.org](http://www.okpolicy.org).

**League of Women Voters of Oklahoma  
Board Meeting, August 18, 2007**

*By Cheri Spears*

The LWVOK board of directors met in the League office in Oklahoma City.

New members, Anita Alford from Lawton and Rita Boyle from Tulsa, were welcomed to the board. Anita is a pastor's wife. She works for DOC and is active in other advocacy groups. Rita will push for action on our new position on formerly incarcerated women. She is active in the organization C.U.R.E.

Dates were set for the rest of the meetings of the year. The Development Council will meet after the Board meeting.

**September 29, 2007 - Norman**

**November 3, 2007 - Bartlesville**

**January 26, 2008 - Oklahoma City**

**March 29, 2008 - Stillwater**

**May 17, 2008 - Council in Lawton**

Barbara Wilson gave an approximate treasurer's report. She and new treasurer Rita Boyle have not been able to get together to get everything exact at this point. The budget is still tight, but the development council is working on plans to improve that situation. Copies of the Office Location Study were handed out and there was some discussion. There will be a vote at the September 29 meeting after everyone has had a chance to read and discuss the findings.

Planning for the Advocacy Workshop on a Wednesday in January has begun now. Barbara Robinson will chair this com-

mittee with a lot of help from board members as well as non-board members with lots of experience and connections. She is advised to find out when the meeting for a children's advocacy is and try to avoid reserving the same day and to invite small non-profit groups by email.

Karen Melcher will lead the Oklahoma advocacy committee. She would like to know what our priorities would be. Some suggestions were 1. Voters' rights, 2. children's advocacy. Your suggestions are welcome.

Jacqueline Achong volunteered to be the League representative for the Legislative Coalition. The next meeting for that group is Sept 12.

The board reviewed Re-Entry consensus statements written by Dortha Dunlap and Nancy Dodson. The same meaning is apparent in both. Dortha agreed to combine the best parts of both into one appropriate position statement for the position book. The board approved the position unanimously.

Barbara Wilson has applied for a grant to print the 211 flyers. Anita says DOC will print them and suggests they be written for all over the state, since offenders do not always go back to the same part of the state they came from. It was mentioned that local jails will also print the flyers.

Rita is happy to help local leagues collect info in their area for the flyers. Contact her at [rmb1704@aol.com](mailto:rmb1704@aol.com).

Barbara Wilson is going to ask the vo-tech school in Ada for a student to keep the LWVOK website updated.

Polly Bowen recommended we contact Leadership Oklahoma to encourage them to get involved with the League.

## Women's Groups meet with Mary Fallin



Anyone recognize our Leaguers, Barbara Wilson, Jean Warner and Jacqueline Achong, in the middle?

On Tuesday, August 21, 2007, several representatives of state-wide women's groups met in the Oklahoma City office of Rep. Mary Fallin. Attendees were: Commission on the Status of Women, Lou Kohlman; Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc, Jacque Achong; American Association of University Women, Faye Henson and Shelli Wasson; Federally Employed Women, Greater OKC Chapter, Debbie Miller and Jo Smith; Red Lands Council Girl Scouts, Cathy Stackpole; League of Women Voters of Oklahoma, Barbara Wilson; National Association of Women Business Owners, Tina Majors; National Federation of Business & Professional Women/Oklahoma, Connie Douglas; Oklahoma Women's Network, Jean Warner; Oklahoma Women's Foundation, Amy Klinge; YWCA of Oklahoma City, Jan Peery; and Dana Murphy, former Vice Chair, Oklahoma Republican Party. The meeting was coordinated by Jean Warner.

Representative Fallin is Vice Chair of the Women's Caucus. She also serves on the Transportation, Small Business and Natural Resources committees. These committees have jurisdiction over national infrastructure, energy, water resources, land, and tribes, among other things. Rep. Fallin outlined the Women's Caucus topics of interest for this Congress. They include: environmental research, Title IX, children's studies, global and national sex trafficking, microenterprises, federal contracts for women-owned businesses, women in the work force, women in prison, issues for women of color, children's health, Internet and sexual predators, and violence against women. Women's health issues include eating disorders, heart disease, breast cancer, and osteoporosis. Rep. Fallin chairs the women in military and veterans subcommittee and is very active with the Caucus's focus on women in the military and women veterans. She has met with the Surgeon General of the Army and other officials to discuss several initiatives. These include mental health counseling for women soldiers suffering from PTSD, custody issues for women with PTSD and active duty members, sexual harassment issues for active duty members, and the lack of women officer role models. She supported a recently passed resolution regarding women suffrage. Rep. Fallin helped revise the SBA Women's Business Programs Act of 2007, HR 2037. This Act revises the SBA ACT designed to help women start businesses, by adding accountability measures, detailing distribution of funds, and including tiered benchmarks for progress. HR 2037 has passed out of the House and is pending in the Senate.

Jean has set up a great website with all kinds of information about women and women's groups. Included is the article on page 10 about Lawton Habitat for Humanity. Please check out the website.

<http://oklahomawomen.blogspot.com/2007/08/oklahoma-womens-groups-meet-with-rep.htm>

Jean has been trying to start an "Oklahoma Women's Advocacy coalition" and the women's groups that constitute the Oklahoma Legislative Coalition asked if they couldn't modify their purpose to do what Jean Warner wanted to do. So they met, re-named themselves the "Oklahoma Women's Legislative Coalition and voted to do the things Jean wanted to do. The official organizing meeting is Oct 5 (election of officers, etc.). To stay informed, monitor Jean's blog. (above).

Helping Citizens be Informed Voters  
**The League of Women Voters of Oklahoma**  
500 N Broadway, Suite 125  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102



Nonprofit  
Organization  
US Postage Paid  
Permit # 879  
Oklahoma City, OK,

*return service requested*

**LWVOK BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
2006—2007**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Barbara Wilson—President  
Karen Melcher - 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Polly Bowen - 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Cheri Spears –Secretary  
Rita Boyle –Treasurer

**DIRECTORS**

Marjorie Swofford  
Jacqueline Achong  
Joyce Collard  
Dortha Dunlap-  
Barbara Robinson  
Anita Alford

Email: [lwvokla@aol.com](mailto:lwvokla@aol.com)  
Phone: (405)232-8683

## **Lawton's Habitat for Humanity announces "Women Build"**

Sep 7, 2007 07:17 PM

Lawton's Habitat for Humanity announced another project in a groundbreaking on Thursday. This time, it's a Women's Build and the women are about to be hard at work! Habitat for Humanity has several projects year round to make more people proud homeowners. The organization builds good, affordable homes for people who ordinarily wouldn't be able to afford them.

The event was kicked off with Lieutenant Governor Jari Askins, Mayor John Purcell and lots of Red Coats were on hand with gold shovels. It's the second Women Build in Lawton. About 60 people showed up to support this new project and they were ready to go. They said if the weather continues to work in their favor, then they should be able to pour the slab next week, and in the weeks following, it should begin to look like a real home.

Frank Oheltoint is with Habitat for Humanity and he says people in southwest Oklahoma are ready and excited for their second Women's Build. "I will say that there's no such word as can't and I'm excited any women can come out here we would love to show you. Bring your muscle, time and energy and we will show you how to put up a house," he said.

Miriam Hernandez was last years recipient of a new home from Habitat and she says it has changed her life. "I feel very blessed to be a homeowner as a single parent. It tends to be harder you're inexperienced you don't really know were to start were to begin," she said. The thought of meeting realtors seemed intimidating. Hernandez was involved with the building of her home and she calls Habitat for Humanity her blessing. Needless to say, Miriam is 100% satisfied.