

A Celebration of Oklahoma

Women's History Month

Community Involvement

The mission of the Girl Scouts is to build girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place. As a former Girl Scout, Oklahoma native Jeane Kirkpatrick epitomized those words.

In 1967, Kirkpatrick joined the faculty of Georgetown University, where she became a full professor of political science in 1973. Also in the 1970s she became active in politics as a Democrat, including becoming involved in the campaigns of former Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey. Kirkpatrick then published a number of articles reflecting her eventual disillusionment with the Democratic Party and became a foreign policy adviser to Ronald Reagan. After his election to the presidency, she became the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations for four years. In 1985 Kirkpatrick became a Republican and returned to teaching at Georgetown University. She went on to co-found Empower America, a public-policy organization, in 1993.

As you can see, Kirkpatrick was an outstanding leader and gave much to her community and country. The Girl Scouts serve 3.7 million girls nationwide and continue to serve girls through providing leadership opportunities, educational programming and other unique programs to help girls make good life choices.

Did you know these women were Girl Scouts? Sen. Susan Paddock, former Sen. Nancy Riley, Rep. Sally Kern, Rep. Sue Tibbs and First Lady Kim Henry.



Jeane Kirkpatrick

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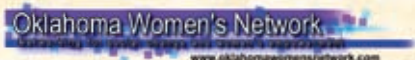
Read today's paper to find stories about girls and women who are making a difference in their communities and/or schools. What interests you? How could you use that interest to help your community and state?

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Sports

Being involved in athletics can help with developing team-building skills, self-esteem, responsibility and commitment. Some Oklahoma women, who went on to lead very successful careers, were involved in athletics.

Ella Mae Tooley made history in 1937 when, while playing basketball, she scored all 38 of her team's points in one game. **Tooley** set a record that day that stood until 1984 and earned her international fame. She went on to a successful twenty-eight year career at the Delaware County Bank (now First Arvest) where she was assistant vice president.



Ella Mae Tooley

Carolyn Whitener, whose Supreme Court case put the Equal Rights Amendment into the Constitution, played junior high basketball and softball in Ninnekah and Rush Springs. **Cindy Ross**, President of Cameron University, was an all-conference guard on the Medford High School team. Sen. **Debbe Leftwich** lettered in basketball, softball and volleyball at Oklahoma Baptist University. Norman Mayor and University of Oklahoma Professor **Cindy Simon Rosenthal** was a Big 10 Point Guard at Northwestern University.

Above are just some of the examples of outstanding Oklahoma women who were involved in athletics and went on to lead very successful careers.

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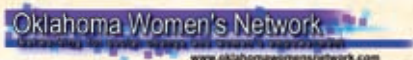
Visit with your mother and grandmother. Did they have the opportunity to participate in sports in high school and college? What issues did they face?

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The Arts

Women artists from Oklahoma have spread the state's spirit worldwide. On stage, Mary Thompson, "Te Ata," depicted the legends and traditions of her people—the Chickasaw Nation.

She performed before audiences worldwide including special performances before Franklin Roosevelt and King George VII.

Kristin Chenoweth won a Tony for her Broadway performance in "Wicked." She also appeared in a number of movies and television shows including "West Wing" and "The Pink Panther."

Tulsa native and four-time Emmy award winner Alfre Woodard graduated from Bishop Kelly High School. She has numerous television credits including "Desperate Housewives," and movies including "K-Pax" and "Star Trek: First Contact."

In opera and ballet, five American Indian ballerinas, Yvonne Chouteau, Marjorie Tallchief, Maria Tallchief, Rosella Hightower and Moscelyne Larkin, performed with international ballet companies.

S.E. Hinton, a Tulsa native who attended the University of Tulsa, revolutionized young adult fiction with her books, including "The Outsiders" and "The Puppy Sister."

Anita Fields is a clay artist whose work has been exhibited at many museums including the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian and the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

These are just a few examples of the many talented Oklahoma women artists. There are many more women creating art and making a difference in your community today.

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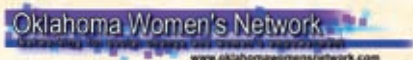
Why are the arts so important? Think about what an "artless" world would be like. If you were asked to create a piece of art, what would you create? How would you show the Oklahoma spirit?

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Civil & Women's Rights

During the 20th-century struggles with women's suffrage, civil rights and women's rights, Oklahoma women were there, making a powerful impact.



Ruth Bader Ginsburg & Clara Luper

Women's Suffrage

Aloysius Larch-Miller of Shawnee was Oklahoma's leading suffragette. After rising from her sick bed to speak at the Pottawatomie Democratic County Convention for ratification of the 19th Amendment, which would give voting rights to women in all the states, she caught pneumonia and died.

Civil Rights

On August 19, 1958, teacher Clara Luper and her students began the nation's first, nationally publicized lunch counter sit-in at Katz's Drug Store. After two days the Katz chain integrated its 38 stores. By 1961, people from all over the nation were marching with Clara Luper and her students. She is considered the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement" for her tireless efforts.

Women's Rights

Carolyn Whitener, an Oklahoma State University student and co-owner of a small convenience store, thought a state law allowing the sale of beer to females aged 18 and males aged 21 was unfair. She sued to try to overturn the law. Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who lived in Lawton in 1954-1955 and is now a U.S. Supreme Court Justice, joined Whitener's attorney in bringing the case to the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1976, the Supreme Court struck down the law as unconstitutional.

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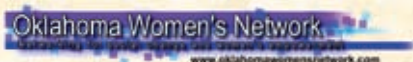
What makes it possible for an ordinary woman to make a difference? Have all the battles for rights been fought or is there room for one more woman to make a difference?

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Politics

Oklahoma has had a long struggle for women's political rights. The first Oklahoma Territorial Legislature allowed women to vote in school elections only and run, but not vote for, county offices and for offices in some cities and towns. Territorial women began an Oklahoma tradition of getting elected to offices they could not vote for. For instance, Cora Diehl was elected Logan County Register of Deeds in 1891.

Oklahoma's Constitution kept things more or less the way they were in the Territory. Women could not vote except in school elections but could be elected to county and some state offices. Ironically, Kate Barnard, who had opposed women's suffrage, was elected Commissioner of Charities and Corrections in 1907. On November 5, 1918, Oklahoma males voted 106,909 to 81,481 to allow women to vote. Oklahoma was only the thirteenth such state.

Today, Oklahoma women have been elected to every office except for Governor and U.S. Senator. Mary Fallin is currently in Congress. Lieutenant Governor Jari Askins, Corporation Commissioner Denise Bode, Insurance Commissioner Kim Holland, Superintendent of Public Instruction Sandy Garrett and Supreme Court Justice Yvonne Kaugher, joined by dozens of female legislators and elected trial judges, currently serve Oklahoma.



Kate Barnard

Activity:

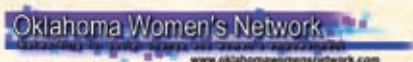
Last year we had a woman running for the presidential candidacy along with men. Have a class discussion. Do you think women vying for political positions have an advantage just because they are female? Or a disadvantage? Why? Can a woman be a better or worse president than a man? Why?

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