

## Shirley Chisholm, RIP

November 30, 1924 – January 1, 2005

**S**hirley Chisolm, the first black woman elected to the U.S. Congress, as well as the first woman to run for the presidency, died January 1, 2005. She was eighty years old.

Representative Chisholm served seven terms in the House of Representatives, from 1969 until 1982. In 1972, she sought the Democratic presidential nomination.



Born in New York in 1924, Shirley Chisholm was the eldest of four children of Caribbean immigrants to America. She began her professional career as a nursery school teacher, and soon became actively involved in local politics with the Democratic Party. She ran successfully for the New York State Assembly in 1964, before becoming the first black congresswoman - representing her native Brooklyn district - in the House of Representatives five years later.

During her terms in office she campaigned tirelessly for women's and minority rights, and was also a

**Don't forget the L Word—showing at Herland Friday evenings at 7 pm. See Herland Calendar inside this issue for details.**

staunch critic of the Vietnam War. Her failed presidential bid in 1972 was viewed as more symbolic than practical. "I ran for the presidency, despite hopeless odds, to demonstrate the sheer will and refusal to accept the status quo," she later wrote in her book *The Good Fight*. She also said regarding that quixotic race, "The United States was said not to be ready to elect a Catholic to the Presidency when Al Smith ran in the 1920's. But Smith's nomination may have helped pave the way for the successful campaign John F. Kennedy waged in 1960. Who can tell? What I hope most is that now there will be others who will feel themselves as capable of running for high political office as any wealthy, good-looking white male."

After retiring from Congress in 1982, Representative Chisholm remained active as a political figure, an educator, and a spokesperson for women's rights, and held several university teaching positions. She also created and chaired the National Political Congress of Black Women, and served on the Advisory Council of the National Organization for Women.

Herland has always held Shirley Chisholm in the highest esteem; we mourn her passing and celebrate her life, her courage and her wisdom. Here is a little sample of that wisdom:

- Racism is so universal in this country, so widespread and deepseated, that it is invisible because it is so normal.
- Of my two "handicaps" being female put more obstacles in my path than being black.
- That I am a national figure because I was the first person in 192 years to be at once a congressman, black and a woman proves, I think, that our society is not yet either just or free.
- At present, our country needs women's idealism and determination, perhaps more in politics than anywhere else.
- One distressing thing is the way men react to women who assert their equality: their ultimate weapon is to call them unfeminine. They think she is anti-male; they even whisper that she's probably a lesbian.

*(Continued on page 2)*

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- Rhetoric never won a revolution yet.
- The emotional, sexual, and psychological stereotyping of females begins when the doctor says: It's a girl.
- When morality comes up against profit, it is seldom profit that loses.
- I am, was, and always will be a catalyst for change.



## Thanks, Jim!

The policy below was unanimously adopted by the County of Oklahoma County in December 2004. On January 20, 2005, the policy was reaffirmed by the Oklahoma County Budget Board, who voted down two proposals which would have removed "gender orientation" from the policy. Credit and thanks go to County Commissioner Jim Roth for getting this fine, inclusive non-discrimination policy passed and reaffirmed. Additionally, we are grateful to Wanda Jo Peltier, Nathaniel Batchelder, and long-time Oklahoma City civil rights leader Clara Luper, Jim Nimmo, Phillippe Beaudette, and Ellen Kazmierczak, among others, for speaking up for the policy; and to the members of the community who flooded county offices with emails and phone calls supporting the policy. And to Court Clerk Priscilla Pressley, who was quoted as saying in regard to her votes to keep the original language, "I have never had the moral clarity that I feel today". Here's the new Oklahoma County policy.

*The County of Oklahoma County is committed to ensuring that no employee, applicant, or independent contractor, shall be discriminated against based on sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, veteran status, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, gender orientation, use of family medical leave, political affiliation, or any other basis protected by federal or state law. This policy shall apply to all employment practices.*

*It is the policy of the County of Oklahoma County that equal employment opportunity is consistent with the basic principle that all persons be afforded equal access to positions in public service based on their ability to do the job. Hiring will be made on the basis of job-related criteria, and all employment decisions will*

*be made on the basis of merit, in conformity with these principles of equal opportunity.*

*The County considers violation of this policy on the basis of any of these categories to constitute misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. Corrective action up to and including termination of employment shall be taken against individuals who violate any provision of this policy.*

## POETRY MONTH

April is nationally designated as Poetry Month, and Herland has several poetry events planned.

First, our April issue of the Herland Voice will be devoted primarily to poetry. Submission deadline for this issue is March 1, 2005. Please indicate if you wish your name included, and if so, how you want it printed. Send submissions to Herland Sister Resources, c/o Voice editor, 2312 NW 39<sup>th</sup>, OKC, OK 73112, or email to [herlandsisters@cox.net](mailto:herlandsisters@cox.net) with "Voice Poetry Issue" on the subject line.

Secondly, a Poetry Workshop "Moved by Words": Saturday April 9, 2005, 1 – 4 pm at Herland. Using movement, meditation and poetry to connect with self and others. A workshop in creating and appreciating poetry. Participants will write their own poetry, contribute to group poems, and share their poetry at the evening's HERLAND poetry gathering. Our workshop facilitator is Carol Davis Koss; a well-known and respected Oklahoma poet. The Workshop is limited to 15 participants, so please call Herland at 405/521-9696 to reserve your place; or email [herlandsisters@cox.net](mailto:herlandsisters@cox.net) with "Poetry Workshop" on the subject line.

Finally, a Poetry Gathering.; Saturday evening, April 9, 2005. Participants from the workshop will be encouraged to share their poetry, and all other members of the community, especially those who have contributed to the Voice, are welcome to participate also. This will follow our monthly Supper Club, which will meet and dine at a location yet to be determined.

This Month's website of the month is:  
[www.projectwoman.org](http://www.projectwoman.org)

### Herland Supper Club

The February Supper Club will meet Saturday February 12th at 4:30 pm at The Java Joint—NW 39th and Donald in Bethany. Those wishing to carpool can meet at Herland Sister Resources at 4:15 pm (Herland is located at 2312 NW 39th street in OKC). After the meal, all are invited to attend the SNU women's basketball game at SNU. The game begins at 6 pm. The SNU women's basketball team are the reigning NAIA champions so come see some of the region's finest women players.

### Herland Sets Goal to Raise Social Consciousness

As part of a recent Herland Goal, we are adding a social consciousness component to all of our activities. The Herland board has chosen to adopt the YWCA Passageways Women's Shelter as a cause. We are asking those who are able to bring an item to donate to the shelter whenever they attend a Herland event. Items can be new or used—used items need to be in clean, usable condition. Following is a partial list of needed items: Women's and children's socks, bath towels, twin sheets and pillowcases, baby blankets, women's slippers, hats, gloves, washcloths and women's two-piece clothing outfits. Donations to Passageways are not required to attend Herland events but are welcome and encouraged.

The Voice is published monthly by Herland Sister Resources, Inc. 2312 NW 39th, Oklahoma City, OK 73112. The Voice is offered as an open forum for community discourse. Articles reflect the opinions of the author and not necessarily those of Herland Sister Resources. Unsolicited articles and letters to the editor are welcomed and must be signed by the writer with full name and address. Upon request, letters or articles may be printed under a pseudonym or anonymously. Herland reserves the right to edit or not publish any article. Subscriptions to The Voice are free upon request although a donation is requested to meet publication and distribution costs.

### Don't Forget to Support the Voice!

Your contribution is important! Just \$15 a year will help us pay for the \$300+ it costs every month to print and mail the newsletter.

Enclosed is a contribution for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please add me to the mailing list for The Voice.

Please change my address (new address below).

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Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## HERLAND EVENTS CALENDAR

### February—Black History Month

- **Tuesday, February 1 & 15:** Marci and Skeeter will be running open mic night at Excuses starting at 8 pm. Bring your instruments or just you.
- **Tuesday, February 8:** Peace House Mardi Gras Party 7 to 9 pm at Mayflower Church. For info. Call 524-5577.
- **Monday, February 14:** OGLPC Monthly Meeting at the Center, 2135 NW 39th, 7 pm.
- **Friday, February 4:** Fifth showing of *the L Word* at Herland—episodes 9 and 10 starting at 7 pm.
- **Friday, February 11:** Sixth showing of *the L Word* at Herland—episodes 11 and 12 starting at 7 pm.
- **Saturday, February 12:** Herland Hike at Martin Nature Park, 5000 W. Memorial, 10 am.
- **Saturday, February 12: Herland Supper Club** will meet at The Java Joint—NW 39th and Donald—restaurant at 4:30 pm (4:15 at Herland to carpool). After the meal, all are invited to attend the SNU women's basketball game.
- **Friday, February 18:** Seventh and last showing of *the L Word* at Herland—episodes 13 and 14 starting at 7 pm followed by the **drawing for the L Word DVD set.**
- **Saturday, February 19:** Herland Scrabble Night, 6 pm
- **Sunday, February 20:** Herland Board Meeting at Herland, 4 pm, everyone welcome.
- **Saturday, February 26:** Herland Video Night, 7 pm — Herland will be showing a special Video in honor of **Black History Month.**

### Native American Women

OKC Two-Spirit Society is having meetings for lesbian and bi-sexual women of Native American descent. Please call the OKC Two-Spirit Hotline number at (405) 317-7283 for information.

## WOO—Women of Oklahoma OKC

Women of Oklahoma (WOO) meets the second Friday of each month at Partners from 6 PM - 9 PM. There is a \$5 cover charge for this "private party." The money goes toward crackers and cheese, paying the door person, the DJ and bartender. The rest of the money goes toward a charity devoted to keeping women healthy, safe and independent.



By request of the organizers, most of the music is 60's and 70's music.

## Announcements

### Soulforce in Oklahoma

**S**oulforce in Oklahoma has established the Trevor Project, a toll-free helpline (1-866-4-U-TREVOR) (1-866-488-7386) for gay and lesbian teens and young adults. With anonymity and confidentiality guaranteed, a troubled youth can talk to someone who understands them, can advise them, and can reassure them that they are neither evil or twisted, nor less than a man or woman.

The teen years are very difficult; and even for the well-adjusted, secure child the whole world is turned upside down. Communication becomes difficult, and hormones can produce moods that the youth cannot understand. Shame often obscures life, and someone who does not yet have adult judgment faces adult situations. Suicide continues to be one of the three most common causes for death for our young people.

Sexuality is often a volatile component of this time. When the teen or young adult knows or fears that his/her sexuality is oriented to the same sex rather than the opposite sex, the risk factor increases. A gay teen is three times more likely to attempt suicide than his or her heterosexual counterpart, and for every successful suicide, there are twenty who make the attempt. Of all successful teen or young adult suicides, thirty percent involve homosexuality. Project Trevor hopes to have a positive impact on these young people.

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Metro Gay and Lesbian Community Center, located at 2135 NW 39<sup>th</sup> Street in Oklahoma City, will be sponsoring Purple Place, a coffeehouse held each Friday and Saturday late evening in a smoke-free, non-alcoholic environment beginning Friday, New Year's Eve (December 31<sup>st</sup>), 2004.

The coffeehouse will feature hosts gay youths Eric & Julian, exquisite coffee and hot chocolate from Starbucks Coffee, desserts from Dunkin Donuts, IHOP and **MANY OTHERS**, and light snacks courtesy of Cici's Pizza.

The coffeehouse will run from 11PM until 2AM each Friday and Saturday night. Donations of \$5 are suggested.

For further information call the Center at 524-6000.

Metro Gay and Lesbian Community Center  
[metrookccenter@yahoo.com](mailto:metrookccenter@yahoo.com)

### The 2005 Season Planning is under way

The OKC LIGHTNING practices for the 2005 season are starting on January 22. Practice time will be Saturday from 10:00am to 1:00pm and Sunday from 3:00pm to 6:00pm.



Practices will also be held on Tuesday and Thursday starting February 8, the times for these practices will be from 6:00pm to 9:00pm.

Practices locations will be determined by weather.

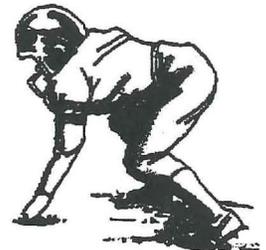
For more information contact Leonard "Coco" Bullock at [LeonardBullock@eaton.com](mailto:LeonardBullock@eaton.com) or Tammy Raiber at [GM@okclightning.com](mailto:GM@okclightning.com)

The OKC Lightning team is in need of Athletic Trainer(s) with experience preferred to volunteer time during practices and games. If you are interested, please contact Tammy Raiber at 405-417-0334 or [GM@okclightning.com](mailto:GM@okclightning.com).

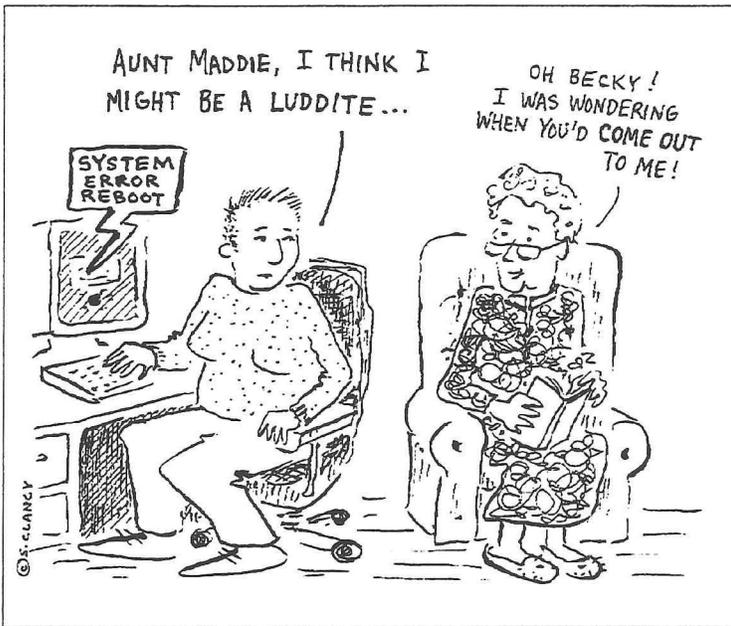
The OKC Lightning are looking for Cheerleaders for the 2005 season. Girls between the age of 5 and 12 that are interested can contact Kim Harnett at 405-605-3355 or email [kymmy6@cox.net](mailto:kymmy6@cox.net).

We will have our parents meeting Saturday, January 22nd at 2:00 pm.  
 Location: 2825 SW 66th St (right off of May)  
 Oklahoma City.

If you are interested in playing for the OKC Lightning team, please contact either Leonard "Coco" Bullock at [LeonardBullock@eaton.com](mailto:LeonardBullock@eaton.com) or Tammy Raiber at [GM@okclightning.com](mailto:GM@okclightning.com)



We are members of the National Women's Football Association.



Cartoon by Sue Clancey

## New Metro OKC Gay and Lesbian Community Center Forming

New efforts are underway to organize an OKC Gay and Lesbian Community Center. An initial meeting was held January 6, 2005 at the Center, 2135 NW 39<sup>th</sup>. Core lgbt organizations were invited to send representatives to form an ad hoc committee that will advise the Board of Directors and work on special projects. The core organizations invited to participate include: The Center, Cimarron Alliance Foundation, Herland Sister Resources, Red Rock Behavioral Services, Young Gay/Lesbian Alliance, Oklahoma Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, NAACP, Brother To Brother, Inc., Two Spirit Society, College LBGT student organizations, ACLU, Oklahoma Gayly, DBAMetro, Central Oklahoma Human Rights Alliance, Interfaith Alliance of Oklahoma, Church of the Open Arms, and Womyn of Color.

The incoming Board of Directors includes: Brad Beatty, Vice President of Nursing at Bone and Joint Hospital, who will serve as President; Keli Gillette, Jonnette Lynn, Mark Knight, Shonda Lewis, and Gary Hooker.

Some initial programming for the upcoming year is listed below:

- Information and Referral – serving as a clearing-house for information on the gay community and services on the local, state, national and even international levels.
- Discussion groups/activities – weekly presentations by knowledgeable people on issues for the gay community. (e.g. Marriage Amendment, GLBT health issues, Adoption, Workplace discrimination).

- Diversity Ball – a gay-themed prom for lgbt youth and their allies.
- National Coming Out Day activities – education and support for those coming out; recognizing businesses that are gay-friendly.
- Pride – our annual celebration of pride in being LGBT. The Center will support the plans and efforts of OKC Pride.
- Emergency housing projects for youth (Diversity House) and for adults (Lambda Living).
- Bayard Rustin Living Learning Project – an alternative education project for gblt youth who are unable or unwilling to attend traditional public school.
- Dining With Dignitaries – a political dinner where lgbt youth and policy makers discuss policies that affect the gay community.
- Organizational Meeting Space – serve as venue for lgbt organizational meetings.
- Community Barbecue Series – a get together of the gay community each summer month on a Saturday afternoon with live entertainment and, of course, barbecue.
- Phone/Email Tree – a call to action/ rapid notification service using a network of phone numbers and email addresses.
- Archives/History project – finding an appropriate facility to archive the local gay/lesbian community information including an oral history.
- Job board – a message board at the Center space and in cyberspace that list jobs available or people looking for employment.

Contact Toshav Storrs at 524-1311 or via email at [BTBOKCmetro@aol.com](mailto:BTBOKCmetro@aol.com) with comments, suggestions or questions.

**February marks the beginning** of Black History Month - an annual celebration that has existed since 1926. But what are the origins of Black History Month?

Much of the credit can go to Harvard Scholar Dr. Carter G. Woodson, who was determined to bring Black History into the mainstream public arena. Woodson devoted his life to making "the world see the Negro as a participant rather than as a lay figure in history."

In 1926 Woodson organized the first annual Negro History Week, which took place during the second week of February. Woodson chose this date to co-incide with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln - two men who had greatly impacted the black population.

Over time, Negro History Week evolved into the Black History Month that we know today - a four-week-long celebration of African American History.

"Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance & conscientious stupidity." ---  
Martin Luther King, Jr.

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