



Hostile takeover disguised as consolidation

House Bill 3028 is referred to as a “consolidation bill.” By reading the fine print, it is actually a hostile takeover. Let’s use the language of business to describe what is happening.

Like any public corporation, the Oklahoma Historical Society has shareholders, a board of directors, a management team, assets, and an action plan. The only difference is on the bottom line. Whereas a business defines success in terms of profit, the OHS defines success in terms of collecting, preserving, and sharing Oklahoma history.

The shareholders are the members and donors who have invested in our mission. Reflecting our success, the number of member-shareholders has increased from 1,500 in 1989 to almost 10,000 today. On top of that are some of Oklahoma’s most important companies, foundations, tribes, and community leaders who consider themselves shareholders with investments that average \$3 million a year.

House Bill 3028, in clear language, abolishes the membership of the OHS. Yes, there would be no member-shareholders if the bill is passed. In fact, this bill would surpass most hostile takeovers and be closer in analogy to taking a public corporation private. In this case, it would be taking it political.

The OHS Board of Directors, which is empowered by the member-shareholders either through elections or gubernatorial appointment, is a group of twenty-five citizens who give their time and treasure to serve the OHS. The board is the governing body of the public corporation with the authority to hire the top managers, set goals, review results, and allocate assets.

House Bill 3028 converts the OHS Board of Directors to an advisory group with no authority. The director of Tourism, as it is spelled out in the bill, would hire top managers and all staff, set goals, and allocate resources. Even the watered-down advisory board, devoid of real authority, would change every time a new governor is elected.

The OHS management team, as in any corporate structure, currently serves at the pleasure of the board of directors. The executive director, in turn, is the appointing authority who selects division directors, who have the authority to hire their staffs. At each level of this management hierarchy, we have historians and museum professionals with the skill sets to carry out the goals set by the board.

House Bill 3028 transfers the authority to hire all OHS managers to the director of Tourism, which traditionally has

been a position filled by either a large donor or a celebrity. The Tourism director’s average term of service over the past thirty years has been less than three years. Consolidation would drag top management of the so-called history division into the political arena.

Through an entrepreneurial business plan and generous contributors, the OHS has accumulated impressive capitalization in collections, cash, and fund-raising capabilities, which has helped us earn affiliations with both the Smithsonian and National Archives. This includes an endowment that hovers around \$3.9 million, an award-winning History Center in a prominent location, and some of the most important historic properties in the state.

House Bill 3028 transfers all property, collections, and cash to Tourism, where the power to use these resources would rest solely with the new director. The many commitments for how we use resources accumulated over decades as promised could be subject to new priorities more aligned with image and tourism than heritage and education.

Finally, the action plan developed by the OHS Board of Directors and management team is based on an integrated set of priorities that cascades down from a central set of historical contexts to strategic goals, annual objectives, budgets, and action reports. This overlapping process is predicated on collections and education.

House Bill 3028 places authority over the planning process in the hands of a political appointee whose mission is image and economic development.

So why do we consider this consolidation a hostile takeover? It is because the OHS Board of Directors voted unanimously to reject the suggestion of consolidation. By pressing forward with a last-minute committee substitute after the bill was rejected in the Senate, the proponents of consolidation have turned the conversation into confrontation.

Even when House Bill 3028 is defeated, the OHS will still emerge with wounds. If people perceive that the integrity of an organization that has been earning public trust for more than 120 years is this easy to destroy, might they ask whether they should donate their collections or their resources?

We need to stop this hostile takeover and get back to what we do best, serving the people of a great state by collecting, preserving, and sharing history.

The newly renovated Kerr-McGee Gallery in the Oklahoma History Center features an exhibit on the oil and gas industry in Oklahoma. Opened in February 2014, the exhibit includes interactive activities for all ages and illustrates the important role of the industry to the state.

**Far right: a replica of the Golden Driller in Tulsa
Right: a reconstruction of a 1950s gas station
(photos by Marvin Lee)**



House Bill 3028

Director's Column

Consolidation bill still alive



I am sorry to share bad news, but on February 27 a committee of the Oklahoma House of Representatives advanced House Bill 3028, the bill abolishing the OHS Board of Directors as a governing body, eliminating OHS membership, and making the OHS a division within the Tourism Department.

It was a close vote, 6 in favor and 5 against. As Chairman Jason Murphey responded to questions and debate, he made two points clear. He was carrying the bill "out of respect for the governor, who requested it," and "a vote for passage will advance the bill so it can be considered further."

I do not think the vote reflected House members' opinions about the merits of consolidation. Rather, it was about advancing the governor's agenda and supporting Chairman Murphey, who usually complains about committee substitutes at the last minute, but who did it anyway in this case. We found out about the committee substitute at the last minute after the bill had died for lack of support in Appropriations and Budget committees the previous week. Yes, at the Capitol, the dead can become undead overnight.

So what does this mean?

Passage keeps the issue of consolidation alive, if barely. It will have to be scheduled for a vote on the floor of the full House, which can be done only by Speaker Jeff Hickman and Majority Floor Leader Pam Peterson. If it is not scheduled by March 13, it dies. If it is scheduled and passes the full House, it advances to the Senate, where it starts at the committee level, probably in Appropriations and Budget, where it has already failed to get a hearing.

If it passes that committee, it then has to be scheduled for a vote on the full floor of the Senate, which can be done only by the Pro Tem Brian Bingman and Majority Floor Leader Mike Schulz. If it is scheduled and passes the full Senate, it probably would be referred to a joint conference committee of Appropriations and Budget. If it gets through that committee, it goes back to both the House and Senate for floor votes.

Even if the bill dies somewhere along this circuitous route, consolidation can pop up in an appropriation bill as an amendment. That process will unfold under the watchful eyes of House Appropriations Chairman Scott Martin and Senate Appropriations Chairman Clark Jolley.

So what do we do now?

We have to make a case that an independent Oklahoma Historical Society, with its own governing body, membership, and unified mission is more effective than it would be as a division of an agency that is dedicated to image-making and economic development. I will make that case with individual legislators who ask for my opinion. I will work with House and Senate staff to analyze the fiscal impact of consolidation. In the meantime, supporters can express themselves in the tried and true tradition of communicating with their own elected officials.

For all of us on the staff, we will keep working to collect, preserve, and share Oklahoma history.

Call if you have questions.

Open letter to my friends

Dear Fellow Members of the Oklahoma Historical Society:

We are under assault and we must fight back. House Bill 3028, the legislation filed in the dark of night at the last minute, would destroy the Oklahoma Historical Society as we know it.

My entire career has been dedicated to public service. I was a county attorney, state representative, state senator, and legislative director for Governor David Boren. I have served my country in uniform and I have volunteered my time for a long list of good causes. With that said, I am most proud of my service to the Oklahoma Historical Society.

I joined the OHS Board of Directors in 1976 and served two terms as president. I helped write the current OHS Constitution and Bylaws and fought shoulder to shoulder to secure funding for the Oklahoma History Center. I know the mission of the OHS inside and out. I know the staff and the leaders who guide the efforts to collect, preserve, and share history. It is no exaggeration when I say that the Oklahoma Historical Society is one of the top three historical societies in the entire nation, with recognition from both the Smithsonian and the National Archives.

This consolidation bill would abolish OHS membership, reduce the Board to an advisory panel, and transfer all assets and funds to the Tourism Department, which has been under assault for years as a bloated, inefficient political agency with a revolving door in the director's office. In terms of reputation and creative business plans, there is no comparison between OHS and Tourism.

I urge each of you to call your state senator or representative. I know that works. When I was in office, a few phone calls reflected real interest among my constituents. A lot of phone calls meant it was a groundswell. The general numbers to call are: 405-521-2711 for House members and 405-524-0126 for Senate members. Call today and let them know what you think.

It is time to stand up for preserving our heritage.

Thank you,

Former Senator Denzil D. Garrison, Bartlesville



Photos from the exhibit on the steamship *Heroine* in the Kerr-McGee Gallery at the Oklahoma History Center. The exhibit portrays life at the time of the sinking of the ship, interactive activities for all ages, and displays pieces of the ship excavated from the Red River. (photos by Marvin Lee)



Time for questions . . . and answers?

Talking points to share

You would think that major changes in mission, governance, resource allocation, and future of an organization that has been successfully serving the people of Oklahoma for 120 years would be carefully studied with a detailed plan. Think again.

The proposal to fold the Oklahoma Historical Society into a super tourism agency was a total surprise to us, to legislative leaders, and to the press when it was released on February 3, 2014. So, where has the conversation gone since then? Not very far, limited to one meeting in Bob Blackburn's office the night before the bill was about to die in the Senate, and a series of quotes from the Governor's office to the press.

The meeting in Blackburn's office on February 18 was the first time he had seen a copy of the bill now known as House Bill 3028. He was not asked what he thought, but he was told that if it was defeated in the Senate, it would, quote, "not go away." Well, it did not go away after defeat, but was resurrected at the last moment in the dark of night as a committee substitute with less than twenty-four hours to respond. The next time we are threatened, we will take it seriously.

The quotes to the press from the governor's staff and appointees represent the rest of the conversation. Here are a few of those, with what would have been said if given the chance.

Quote: "The governor's lack of consultation with impacted agencies is not a bad thing."

Response: What can we say to that?

Quote: "Consolidation will preserve the agency's mission at a time when the budget is tight and some lawmakers would like to abolish it."

Response: There has never been an attempt to abolish the Oklahoma Historical Society. In fact, we are constantly used as an example of an agency that has done more with less by developing an entrepreneurial business plan based on higher standards, greater efficiencies, and partnerships. In Blackburn's thirty-five years of public service, budgets have always been tight. We have learned to serve the people with other resources, both donated and earned.

Quote: "When a smaller agency is consolidated into a larger agency, they can save on back office expenses like human resources and office space."

Response: The Oklahoma Historical Society is not a small agency. Combined operations including appropriations, earned revenue, grants, and donations, exceed \$22 million. And with more than 150 employees and a complex, statewide mission, we have one human resources person, one purchasing agent, and four accountants. What about that open office space? Around here, any unused space is quickly home to a historic collection.

Quote: "We haven't proposed eliminating the board . . . we envision the Historical Society operating as a department within the tourism agency."

Response: Yes, they included an OHS Board of Directors in House Bill 3028, but it is advisory only, appointed by the governor, without any powers of resource allocation or selecting top managers. And there would be no membership to link the board with grassroots citizens across the state. The board would reflect politics, not the people.

Quote: "Housing these two agencies as independent entities in the Department of Tourism will enhance, not detract from their missions."

Response: First, the OHS would not be independent. The executive director and entire staff would be selected by the director of Tourism and all assets, both collections and funds, would be transferred to Tourism. Most importantly, the missions of the two agencies are not even in the same league. The mission of Tourism should be image and economic development. The mission of the OHS is heritage and education.

Maybe there will be more conversations about the implications of abolishing the Oklahoma Historical Society as we know it. Let's hope there is no reason to do so.

Like many of you, we have been bombarded with requests for talking points to summarize House Bill 3028 and its impact on the Oklahoma Historical Society. Obviously, there are some changes that are clearly written in the bill, while others are probabilities based on past experience. We will try to distinguish the differences with the terms "will" and "could."

Consolidation will:

- eliminate the OHS membership and direct citizen involvement in governance
reduce the OHS Board of Directors from a governing body with a comprehensive planning process to an advisory panel with no real policy-making authority
transfer all funds, including a \$3.9 million endowment, to the Tourism Department
transfer title of all collections, library materials, and historical properties acquired over the past 120 years to the Tourism Department
make the executive and deputy directors of the OHS appointees of the Tourism director
grant hiring authority over all OHS staff, most of whom are historians or professionals, to the Tourism director
by virtue of eliminating membership, reduce nonappropriated income by a minimum of \$800,000 the first year
elevate Tourism's mission of image and economic development above OHS's mission of heritage and education

Consolidation could:

- destroy the identity of the OHS as an independent, nonpolitical organization
undermine the ability to raise an average of \$3 million a year in grants and donated funds
discourage donors from entrusting their collections with the OHS, which no longer would have the authority to guarantee integrity, contractual obligations, or use
subject the OHS to the revolving door of Tourism leadership that has changed an average of once every three years as governors come and go
replace the professional leadership of the OHS with the usual mix of campaign donors, political friends, or celebrities who have traditionally filled the position of Tourism director
subvert the original intent of financial gifts and endowments that will be transferred to Tourism and lead to litigation
with no administrative programs or closing of museums and sites would be the only ways to meet goals for cost savings

The Gateway to Oklahoma History is an online repository of historic Oklahoma and Indian Territory newspapers collected and digitized by the OHS John and Eleanor Kirkpatrick Research Division. The public can browse through hundreds of thousands of newspaper pages dating from the 1840s to the 1920s. The Gateway provides free access to 182,579 issues and 911,419 pages of historical newspaper content. To search the Gateway, visit gateway.history.org.



House Bill 3028

If it ain't broke, don't fix it

At a special meeting on February 12, 2014, the OHS Board of Directors voted by unanimous consent to oppose the consolidation into the Tourism department.

Denzil Garrison, a veteran on the board, used the old Army phrase, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Frederick Drummond, a community leader from Osage County, echoed that sentiment and said we must oppose consolidation while not embarrassing the governor. Leonard Logan, an attorney from Vinita, pointed out many of the successes achieved by the OHS and warned that consolidation could jeopardize many of our programs.

The OHS Board of Directors, as a reflection of Oklahoma's conservative populism, is citizen-based governance in its truest form. The majority of the board is elected by citizens who care enough about history to join the OHS. The minority is appointed by the governor. This balance has been the bedrock of stability since 1981 when the new OHS Constitution and Bylaws were adopted and codified into state statute.

The members of the OHS Board of Directors represent a true cross-section of Oklahoma people, whether that is defined by geography, occupation, ethnicity, gender, or age. Here are short biographical sketches of the people who would no longer govern the OHS if consolidation is approved.

Jack Baker is a retired businessman and a member of the Cherokee National Council. He grew up in Cherokee County and now resides in Oklahoma City. He is an active family historian.

Sherry Beasley is an interior decorator and community leader who learned about the OHS through her son, Bryan, who has directed documentary films about Allen Houser and Edith Kinney Gaylord.

Mickey Clagg is a CPA and partner in a real estate firm that specializes in rehabilitating historic buildings. Some of his firm's major achievements include Plaza Court, Midtown, and the Sieber Hotel.

William Corbett is a professor of history at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah. He earned a PhD at OSU and is well known for his lectures, speeches,

and public programs through the Oklahoma Humanities Council.

Betty Crow is a retired educator from Altus. In addition to community work, she is the coauthor of a book about the Oklahoma Governor's Mansion.

Frederick Drummond is a banker and rancher from Osage County. He was instrumental in creating the Tall Grass Prairie Preserve and is active in the Nature Conservancy.

Cheryl Evans is president of Northern Oklahoma College in Tonkawa. She was a founding member of the group that raised \$9 million for the reinvention of the Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center.

Deena Fisher is a historian and dean of the Woodward Campus of Northwestern Oklahoma State University. In the past, she was a high school history teacher and owner of a small business.

Billie Fogarty, a native of Guthrie, is a national authority on genealogical research and a consultant for Ancestry.com. She is active in several ancestral groups, including the 1889er Society.

Karen Keith is a retired television news anchor in Tulsa who currently serves as a Tulsa County Commissioner. She is now serving as president of the Downtown Tulsa Rotary Club.

Martha Lippert is the matriarch of the Lippert Brothers Construction family in Oklahoma City. She was a longtime leader in the American Red Cross.

Leonard Logan is an attorney and rancher from Vinita who is an active volunteer for numerous organizations, including the Friends of Cabin Creek.

Guy Logsdon is a folklorist, historian, and musician who served as the director of the University of Tulsa Library and president of the Oklahoma Folklife Council.

Patricia Loughlin is professor of history at the University of Central Oklahoma. Her first book was about three pioneer women in Oklahoma—Alice Marriott, Angie Debo, and Muriel Wright.

John Mabrey is a banker with roots in both Okmulgee and Bixby. He was one of the founding members of Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. and was instrumental in saving the Creek Council House.

Sherry Muchmore is a journalist who lives in Ponca City. In addition to her

regular newspaper column, she is active as a volunteer at the Pioneer Woman Museum.

Shirley Nero, a native of Clearview, is a retired history teacher who has chaired the Black Heritage Committee for most of the past decade.

Sandra Olson is a community leader in Waynoka, where she has chaired the effort to preserve and redevelop the ornate Santa Fe Depot and celebrated Harvey House.

Betty Price is an artist and the retired director of the Oklahoma Arts Council. She has been a champion for art in the State Capitol and a spokesperson for art in the daily lives of all Oklahomans.

Donna Sharpe from Checotah is part of the Sharpe's Department Store family. She has been a longtime volunteer and board member with the Friends of Honey Springs Battlefield.

Emmy Scott Stidham, a native of Edmond who now lives in Checotah, is the godmother of Honey Springs Battlefield and is currently president of the OHS Board of Directors.

Lewis Stiles is a rancher and retired veterinarian who owns and operates the historic Gardner Home near Broken Bow. He is an author of a book about fur trapping and trade in Oklahoma.

Charles Tate from Ardmore is a former district judge and council member with the Chickasaw Nation. He is currently a consultant for the tribe with a specialty in research.

Barbara Thompson is a retired educator and community leader who lives in Oklahoma City. She is a former National Mother of the Year and longtime Honorary Consul for the French Ambassador to America.

James Waldo, a native of Shawnee, is an attorney in Oklahoma City who has been active as a leader in the Boy Scouts of America. He is the immediate past president of the OHS Board of Directors.

Today, these community leaders are the trustees of the assets, mission, and management of the Oklahoma Historical Society. If House Bill 3028 is approved, their roles become simply advisory—if they are appointed to the new board.



The Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center in Enid. An OHS site, the CSRHC includes a special exhibits gallery for traveling and temporary exhibits, a reading and research room, gift shop, plaza, the Phillips University columns, and "The Homesteaders" monument by H. Holden. Completed in April 2011, the CSRHC was voted "Outstanding New Attraction in Oklahoma" in 2012.

Consolidation would weaken public-private partnerships

Abolishing the OHS membership, reducing the OHS Board of Directors to advisory status, and converting the Oklahoma Historical Society to a division buried in a super agency would irretrievably undermine the prospects for further public-private partnerships.

“Ironically,” said Dr. Bob Blackburn, “the proposal to save unidentified mystery money would actually reduce funds available to collect, preserve, and share history.”

Blackburn points to a record of leveraging reduced state resources to attract an increasing amount of outside funding. That ability to raise funds, he said, rests squarely on the independent identity of the OHS and a focused, long-range business plan divorced from the revolving door of politics.

“The most visible outcomes of public-private partnerships include the Route 66 Museum in Clinton, the Oklahoma History Center, and the Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center in Enid,” said Blackburn. “Not only did we raise millions for all three museums, but we developed operational systems that generate cash to support the improved services.”

The new exhibit, “Power to Grow: The Oil and Gas Industry in Oklahoma,” is another example of the ability to generate funds that leverage a shrinking state appropriation. “More than \$1 million was donated for the good cause,” said Blackburn, who curated the exhibit.

Developing collections is another way that fund-raising capabilities serve the people of Oklahoma. The most recent example is a multi-year grant from the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation to digitize and make searchable more than 1.4 million photographs that appeared in the *Daily Oklahoman* and *Oklahoma City Times* from 1928 to 1998. “Without the grant, we could not get the collection,” said Blackburn.

Blackburn points to another recent grant from a foundation that is paying to digitize and make searchable the OHS newspaper collection from 1844 to 1923. “Within the next year, thanks to our identity in the academic community, we will post more than 7 million pages of newspapers on the internet that will be searchable by key words . . . and it will be offered free to everyone.”

“Consolidation under House Bill 3028 would cripple our ability to attract partners with their funding,” said Blackburn. “Why would anyone contribute money to a division that does not control its own mission, policies, and quality control?”



Above: The *We Are Who We Were* exhibit in the ONEOK Gallery at the Oklahoma History Center represents all thirty-eight federally recognized American Indian tribes associated with Oklahoma. (photos by Marvin Lee)
 Right: A new exhibit, *Realizing the Dream*, chronicles the African American experience in Oklahoma, including Clara Luper’s Civil Rights work. The exhibit is located in the Kerr-McGee Gallery in the Oklahoma History Center. (photos by Tabatha Toney)



OHS accomplishments

The proposed consolidation bill to merge the Oklahoma Historical Society into Tourism includes provisions that suggest the OHS would function better within the confines of a super agency. This is an unfounded assumption. The OHS Board of Directors in special session recently voted its viewpoint that the OHS would in fact function better independently. Contrary to the consolidation assumption, the OHS board can point to a proven track record to supports its position. Below is a partial list of the OHS’s accomplishments as an independent agency achieving its core functions to collect, preserve, and share Oklahoma history.

Recent OHS Accomplishments (partial list):

Collect:

- OPUBCO Photo Collection of 1.4 million images (1928-1998)
- Oklahoma Banking Project interview and artifacts for books and exhibit
- Oil and Gas Project interviews, artifacts, collections for exhibit
- OKPOP Project interviews, artifacts, collections
- Estimated more than one collection received per day
- Statewide newspapers of up to 33 million pages
- African American Exhibit collections and artifacts for new exhibit
- Century Chest artifacts and new exhibit

Preserve:

- Newspaper digitization project (1844-1923)
- Steamboat Heroine archaeology
- Daughter of Dawn* silent film project
- Bob Wills and Leon Russell projects
- Restoration projects, e.g., Fort Gibson, Murrell Home, Pawnee Bill
- OHS film and photograph collections digitization

Share:

- OKPOP programs and speeches, webpage information, YouTube videos
- Indian archival outreach programs
- Oklahoma History Center exhibits, e.g., Oil and Gas, Steamboat Heroine, African American, Military, Federal Reserve, Century Chest, Woody Crumbo
- Museum of the Western Prairie new gallery, Route 66 Museum new exhibits, Pioneer Woman new exhibit on women in broadcasting
- Reenactments, e.g., Honey Springs Battle, Cabin Creek Battle, Murrell Home Lawn Social, Wild West Show at Pawnee Bill Ranch, Rendezvous at Fort Washita
- Educational programs, e.g., Candlelight Tour at Fort Gibson, Bake Day at Fort Gibson, Statehood Day at Oklahoma Territorial Museum, Lunch and Learn at Research Center, Outreach Programs to schools across the state, Teacher Workshops, National History Day, Home School Days, OHS Annual Conference, SHPO Annual Conference
- OHS Publications, e.g., *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, *Mistletoe Leaves*, *OHS Extra!*, *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*
- Social Media, e.g., OHS websites, Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, YouTube videos

Committee names candidates for 2014 Board Election

Barbara Thompson, chair of the OHS Nominating Committee, has announced the names of individuals who will stand for election to the OHS Board of Directors. Ballots have been mailed to members, and they are encouraged to mail their ballots sufficiently early to allow them to reach OHS offices by the April 18 deadline.

Instructions on how to submit ballots were included with the ballot mailing. Please note that members are no longer required to place their signatures on the exterior of the return envelope.

In this election, members will elect one director each from Districts 5 and 6 and three directors from among the State At-Large candidates. Biographical sketches of the nominees appear below, organized by district and in alphabetical order.

District 5

Jack D. Baker (Oklahoma City)

Baker is an eighth-generation Oklahoman and a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. He is a graduate of Westville High School and Oklahoma State University. He retired from Liberty Mutual Insurance Company after twenty-nine years. Baker is involved in a number of civic and historical activities. Currently, he is president of the National Trail of Tears Association, treasurer of the Cherokee National Historical Society, Inc., president of Goingsnake District Heritage Association, board member of the Cherokee-Moravian Historical Association, and a member of the Cherokee Nation Tribal Council. He has served as a member of the Cherokee Nation Constitutional Convention, Design Planning Committee for American Indian exhibits for the Oklahoma History Center, and has contributed to the *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* project. He has written articles and books related to Cherokee history and genealogy. Baker has been a life member of the OHS since 1973. Elected to the OHS Board of Directors in 2002, he currently is a member of the Executive Committee and chairs the Research Division and Indian Heritage Committees.

John T. Greiner (Oklahoma City)

Greiner is a native of Henryetta, Oklahoma, who earned his BA degree in journalism at the University of Oklahoma. He served as a lieutenant in the US Army for two years following his graduation in 1964. He went to work as a reporter at the *Daily Oklahoman* in 1966 and retired from the paper after forty-two years of service. The last thirty-seven years at the paper he covered the State Capitol, at various times reporting on the House of Representatives, the State Senate, the Oklahoma Supreme Court, and the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals. He also covered three national political conventions. Greiner received a variety of awards in recognition of his work, and he is a member of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame. Immediately following his retirement, he was presented the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Oklahoma Professional Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. He retired in 1996 as a colonel after thirty-two years of service in the US Army Reserves and in the Oklahoma National Guard. He is a supporter of the Henryetta Territorial Museum, and he has been a member of the OHS since 2008.

District 6

Deena K. Fisher (Woodward)

Fisher, dean of Northwestern Oklahoma State University's Woodward Campus and professor of history, holds an EdD in higher education administration from Oklahoma State University and a MEd in history education/school counseling from Southwestern Oklahoma State University. In 2006 Fisher attended the Institute for Management and Leadership in Higher Education at Harvard Graduate School of Education. She is a contributing editor and developed the teacher/student material for the textbook *Oklahoma—Land of Contrast*. For ten years she coordinated an Oklahoma History Summer Institute sponsored by NWOSU, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center (CSRHC),

and Plains Indians and Pioneers Museum (PIPM). She has served on many boards, including CSRHC Advisory Council, PIPM (past chairman), and Oklahoma Council for the Social Studies (past president). In 2012 Fisher was inducted into the Journal Record Woman of the Year's Circle of Excellence. An OHS board member since 2004, she serves on the Executive Committee, Museums and Sites Committee, and chairs the Publications Committee.

David S. Russell (Enid)

Russell is a prominent physician who has served as president of the Oklahoma State Medical Association. He was educated at Oklahoma State University, John Hopkins School of Public Hygiene and Health, and the University of Oklahoma. He is an active community leader who has shown a strong interest in state and local history. He currently is president of the Board of Directors of the Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center in Enid. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Cherokee Strip Community Foundation and serves on the organization's investment committee. Russell is a member of the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma State University Foundation and co-chairs the OSU Medical Cowboys. He is an active leader in his church and is a founding member of the Garfield County Medical Foundation. He has served as treasurer of the Garfield County Medical Society for more than thirty years. Russell has been a member of the Oklahoma Historical Society since 1981.

State At-Large

Thalia W. Eddleman (Oklahoma City)

Eddleman served on the OHS Board of Directors for a total of nine years beginning in 2003. During that time she served on the following committees: Oklahoma Museum of History, Research Division, Publications, and Membership and Development. A native of Oklahoma City, five generations of her family have been Oklahomans. She earned a degree in geology at the University of Oklahoma and worked for companies such as Eason Oil and Mesa Petroleum. She and her husband formed their own independent oil company that she continued to manage after his death in 1999 until 2013. An active volunteer, she was a volunteer guide for the Oklahoma City Museum of Art and gave tours of Oklahoma City to out-of-town visitors on behalf of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce. Eddleman was active in several political campaigns, serving as the women's campaign chairman in several gubernatorial and senatorial campaigns. She first became interested in Oklahoma History from reading her daughter's textbook on the subject. Eddleman joined the OHS in 1994.

Billie Stone Fogarty (Oklahoma City)

Fogarty is a member of the Research Division and the Publications Committees of the OHS. She is past president of the Oklahoma Genealogical Society and has been active in the genealogical community locally and nationally for more than thirty years. She is president of the Genealogical Speakers Guild and serves on the Board of the Association of Professional Genealogists. She is an active member of the International Society of Genealogical Writers and Editors, Daughters of the American Revolution, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Colonial Dames of the XVII Century, Daughters of 1812, the 1889er Society, First Families of the Twin Territories, and numerous genealogical societies. She teaches family history research and has been selected to speak at several National Genealogical Society Family History Conferences. She has served as a director for Historical Preservation, Inc., president of Heritage Hills Associate Board, and chair of the Heritage Hills Historic Homes Tour. She holds a BS degree from University of Central Oklahoma and a MEd degree from the University of Oklahoma. She became an OHS Life Member in 2006.

Davis D. Joyce (Spavinaw)

A native of Greenwood, Arkansas, Joyce earned his PhD degree in history at the University of Oklahoma in 1968. He taught history at the University of Tulsa from 1966-83 and at East Central University at Ada

from 1987-2002. His career also included teaching part-time at Rogers State University, Claremore, as Visiting Professor of American Studies, University of Keele, England, in 1981 and Soros Professor of American Studies, University of Debrecen, Hungary, 1994-96. He has authored, coauthored, or edited eleven books, including *An Oklahoma I Had Never Seen Before*, *Alternative Oklahoma*, *East Central University—The Wagner Years, 1969-1989*, *“Love Is The Spirit of This Church”: A History of All Souls Unitarian Church of Tulsa, Oklahoma*, and *Recollections of a Hitherto Truthful Man: Personal/Historical Essays*. His research and writing interests have focused on women, minorities, radicals, and common people in Oklahoma's history. His outstanding classroom teaching earned him the McCasland Award for Excellence in Teaching Oklahoma History, presented by the Oklahoma Heritage Association in 1997.

Leonard M. Logan IV (Vinita)

A native of Vinita, Logan is a fourth-generation Oklahoman and an attorney educated at the University of Oklahoma and the University of Tulsa College of Law. He has served his profession in many leadership positions, including serving on the Professional Responsibility Tribunal and on the board of the Oklahoma Bar Foundation. Logan was first appointed to the OHS Board of Directors in 1995 and has been reappointed for successive three-year terms through the present. He served as OHS president from 2006-09 and presently serves as treasurer. Active in a variety of civic organizations, Logan is the founder and president of the Friends of Cabin Creek, Inc., an organization dedicated to promoting the Civil War battles of Cabin Creek and preserving and maintaining the battle site. He also serves on the boards of the Eastern Trails Museum, the Vinnie Ream Cultural Center, and the Friends of Honey Springs Battlefield Park, Inc. Logan joined the OHS in 1990 and became a Life Member in 2002.

Betty Price (Oklahoma City)

Price retired as executive director of the Oklahoma Arts Council, a state agency that she served for a quarter of a century. Her life has been dedicated to bringing the arts to adults and children across the state of Oklahoma. Part of her work included managing the commissions of sculpture, murals, and paintings for the State Capitol and the dome on behalf of the Capitol Preservation Commission. The State Art Collection Gallery at the capitol has been named for her. After retirement, she remained as emeritus on the American Indian Cultural Center and Museum board and the Mid-America Arts Alliance board. She has been an advisor to Red Earth and was named Red Earth Ambassador in 2006. She served on the Board of Visitors of the Weitzenhoffer College of Fine Arts and Dance Partners at the University of Oklahoma. Price has been a member of downtown Rotary Club 29 and an advisor to the Jasmine Moran Children's Museum in Seminole. Price is a member of the Oklahoma Museum of History and the Indian Heritage committees for the OHS. She joined the OHS in 2005 and was elected to the board in 2011.

Kenny W. Sivard (Idabel)

A sixth-generation McCurtain County native, Sivard joined the McCurtain County Historical Society at age fifteen, was elected to the society's board of directors at age seventeen, and was elected president of the organization in 2009. He received the society's Distinguished Service award in 2007. Working with the society, he has created education programs, including a Choctaw Heritage Festival. He assisted Dr. Lewis Stiles in marking the Choctaw Trail of Tears route across McCurtain County. He also worked with the Research Division of the OHS to arrange for the donation of seven thousand historical photographs. He is the coauthor of the book *Images of McCurtain County*, and he has written more than twenty-five articles on historical topics for the *McCurtain Gazette* and *Oklahoma Edge* magazine. Sivard is active in preservation and restoration efforts in downtown Idabel and on behalf of the Barnes-Stevenson House in Idabel and Howell, Harris Mill, and Waterhole cemeteries. He worked for the OHS at the Fort Towson and Honey Springs sites and is a finance manager for the James Hodge Auto Group.

Kodak moments from Oklahoma City in 1913 in the Century Chest

Have you ever found a roll of photo negatives hidden away in an old cigar box or run across a long forgotten family photo album? Remember the excitement the discovery provoked in you? Well, that is exactly what happened to the staff of the Oklahoma Historical Society as they examined one of the last unopened artifacts from the Oklahoma Century Chest.

In 1913 the owners of the Westfall Drug Company at 206 West Main Street in downtown Oklahoma City donated a Vest Pocket Kodak camera to the organizers of the Oklahoma Century Chest. The camera, along with hundreds of other artifacts, photographs, and documents, were placed in a copper chest and buried in the basement of the First Lutheran Church of Oklahoma City.

On April 22, 2013, the chest was opened at the church and since that time the OHS has been opening packages, scanning documents, processing artifacts, and researching these priceless Oklahoma treasures. Last week the camera was carefully removed from its 1913 Westfall Drug Company packaging.

A closer examination revealed that a roll of eight developed negatives were hidden away inside the camera. The negatives were quickly scanned. The digital images and data from the camera box shows the photographs were taken on April 18, 1913, just a few days before the Oklahoma Century Chest was buried.

Mark your calendars, because all the treasures from the Oklahoma Century Chest will soon go on display in the Noble Gallery at the Oklahoma History Center. On April 21 all OHS members are invited to attend a special opening of the exhibit. Members will receive an invitation to the event and will need to RSVP in order to take part in this once-in-a-lifetime experience. For more information about the Oklahoma Century Chest Exhibit call 405-522-5207 or e-mail chadw@okhistory.org.

OHS archivist awarded Smithsonian fellowship

J. A. Pryse, digital projects archivist for the Oklahoma Historical Society, was awarded the Smithsonian Affiliations Visiting Professional Fellowship for 2014. Through a competitive application process, Pryse was selected to come to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, to meet and work with staff applicable to his project, entitled "Long Term Digital Asset Management—Best Practice Strategies for Archiving and Preserving the Institution's Digital Content."

Pryse's residency will take place at the Smithsonian Institution Archives, Smithsonian Institution Libraries, or the National Museum of American History's archives department. The opportunity provides continued progress within the Digitization Collections Division at the Oklahoma Historical Society through research at the nation's leading institution in the field of digital content management.

The Smithsonian Affiliations Visiting Professional Fellowship began in 2002 in response to staff members from affiliate organizations seeking additional training and specialized experience. The awarded fellowship is made possible by the Smithsonian Institute and the OHS.

Bob Wills documentary for OKPOP

By Carolyn Wills, daughter of Bob Wills

On behalf of the Estate of Bob Wills and the Bob Wills Heritage Foundation, thank you for recognizing the importance and historical impact of Bob Wills. Truly, we believe there is no more appropriate "home" for the Bob Wills collection than the Oklahoma History Center and, ultimately, the OKPOP.

We are also thrilled that *Still the King: Bob Wills. The Man. The Music.* will be the first film in the upcoming OKPOP Films documentary series. From veteran documentarians, Kevin Meyer and Chris Turner, this project promises to highlight Oklahoma's rich creative layers, OKPOP's revolutionary appeal, and Bob Wills's significance to America's musical and historical roots. The good news is, the film will serve double-duty as state-of-the-art content for the OKPOP and as a feature at film festivals.

The filmmakers have initiated an online crowdfunding campaign in support of *Still the King: Bob Wills. The Man. The Music.* on www.rockethub.com.

Today, we are making a special request for your support. Whether it is \$5, \$10, \$10,000 or more, we care most about the world seeing how much Bob Wills is loved and admired. The donation process on www.rockethub.com is quick and easy (and worth visiting for the introductory video, project information and list of rewards.)

If, though, you prefer to send a check, that is now an option. Please make it payable to Tulsa Community Foundation, Attn: OKPOP Administrative Fund. In case you plan to stop by the Oklahoma History Center and this option is best for you, envelopes and forms are available at the front desk.

Thank you for all that you do to support the great work of the Oklahoma History Center/OKPOP. Thank you, too, for loving Bob Wills.

2014 Oklahoma historians Hall of Fame honorees announced

Patti Loughlin, chair of 2014 Oklahoma History Conference Committee, has announced the selection of four individuals to be the 2014 inductees into the Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame.

The induction ceremony will take place during the Oklahoma Historical Society's Annual Awards Luncheon on April 25 as part of the three-day Crossroads of Commerce: The 2014 Oklahoma History Conference event in Stillwater at the Stillwater Community Center.

The honorees are: Dr. Kenny L. Brown, Edmond; Loretta Y. Jackson, Chickasha; Dr. Linda W. Reese, Norman; and Dr. Mary Jane Warde, Stillwater.

For additional information about Crossroads of Commerce: The 2014 Oklahoma History Conference or about the Annual Awards Luncheon, please contact Paul Lambert, Annual Conference coordinator, at plambert@okhistory.org or 405-522-5217.

Murrell Home time change

The Murrell Home's monthly third Saturday living history program has been changed from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each month to 1 to 4 p.m. For more information, call 918-456-2751 or email murrell-home@okhistory.org.

New members

Due to limited space, new members and twenty year members will be listed in the May issue of *Mistletoe Leaves*.

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Mistletoe Leaves is published for the members and friends of the Oklahoma Historical Society in partial fulfillment of the Society's purpose to "preserve and perpetuate the history of Oklahoma and its people, to stimulate popular interest in historical study and research, and to promote and disseminate historical knowledge."

The public and OHS members are encouraged to submit heritage-related items for publication. Students and teachers are invited to share studies and programs and to duplicate contents as desired. Editors are welcome to reprint materials with credit.

All Oklahoma Historical Society facilities are for the education and enjoyment of all. State and federal regulations prohibit unlawful discrimination in state and federally assisted programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, and/or handicap.

Anyone denied benefits should contact the grievance manager of the Oklahoma Historical Society, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Dr., Oklahoma City, OK 73105-7917, telephone 405/522-8989, and/or the director, Office of Equal Opportunity, United States Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

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PERIODICALS

Mistletoe Leaves

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April 2014

Membership of the Oklahoma Historical Society would be abolished under consolidation

If you received this issue of *Mistletoe Leaves*, you are a member of the Oklahoma Historical Society.

With your membership dues, you provide resources to accomplish our mission, including the costs of producing and mailing this newsletter. By voting for board members, you help set goals, allocate resources, and hold managers accountable. By joining others dedicated to history, you are part of a grassroots network that gives the OHS access to collections, resources, and partners who share our commitment to heritage and education. Perhaps most importantly, you and your fellow members have given the OHS an identity as an independent, nonpartisan educational organization.

House Bill 3028 would abolish all of that. Yes, in clear, direct language, the consolidation bill would eliminate the membership. Why? We have not been told why the membership would be eliminated, but we can guess.

One, it would consolidate control over the collections, resources, and staff of the OHS into the hands of one person, the director of the super tourism agency, who in turn would be appointed by the governor. There would be no direct citizen involvement in governance, no independent board of directors to set goals or allocate resources, and no firewall between the core mission of the organization and the changing winds of politics.

And two, we cannot think of a second purpose served by abolishing the membership.

So, what are the reasons to retain the membership?

The membership is part of the DNA of the Oklahoma Historical Society. In 1893, the Oklahoma Press Association created the organization; today, every publisher in the state is still a member and delivers, for free, every issue of their newspapers for our collections. Because of that partnership, we have preserved more than 33 million pages of newspapers, which in effect is the story of every community written one day or one week at a time.

The members, who come from every county of the state, are part of a balancing act that separates the OHS from all other state agencies and gives us the ability to raise funds and solicit collections from partners who voluntarily share their resources. The members elect thirteen of the twenty-five board members; the other twelve are appointed by governor, and the Legislature is an equal partner through the granting of authority and the appropriation of funds. Under this umbrella of shared authority, the OHS has created a reputation for being nonpartisan, professional, and free of political patronage.

Our members are ambassadors in their communities. They live in Woodward, Vinita, Antlers, Marlow, and Frederick. They farm in the Oklahoma Panhandle, drill for oil in Canadian County, produce machinery in Perry, and drive the wheels of the economy in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and Lawton. Through those members, we work for the people, not a political party, not a political appointee, not a person with short-term goals.

The membership is critical to the future of collecting, preserving, and sharing Oklahoma history. House Bill 3028 burns that bridge to the future.



April at a glance

- 3-May 16 *Lincoln, the Constitution, and the Civil War* exhibit, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center
- 2-6 Fort Washita Fur Trade Rendezvous, Fort Washita
- 8 "American Civil War in Indian Territory" lecture, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, held at Northern Oklahoma College in Enid
- 8 Weaving and spinning demonstration, Pioneer Woman Museum
- 8 Make it and take it lunchbreak craft, Pioneer Woman Museum
- 9 Lunch and Learn program, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center
- 12 Traditional candlemaking class, Oklahoma History Center
- 12 Victorian hatmaking, Pioneer Woman Museum
- 12 Easter egg hunt, Peter Conser Home
- 19 Pawnee Bill Easter Egg Hunt, Pawnee Bill Ranch
- 19 Southeastern Ceramic Effigy class, Oklahoma History Center
- 19 Pinewood Wagon Race, Oklahoma History Center
- 19 Murrell Home living history program, George M. Murrell Home
- 19 "Expeditions in Etiquette" class, Pioneer Woman Museum
- 19 Family Saturday, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center
- 20 Friends of the Pawnee Bill Ranch breakfast fundraiser, Pawnee Bill Ranch
- 26 "Germans from Russia in South America: New Research Frontiers" presentation, Sod House Museum
- 26 Civil War concert, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center

For updates on OHS events, find us online at <http://www.okhistory.org>, Twitter @okhistory, and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/okhistory.org>.