

HEARTLAND

Older Women's League



Newsletter – September 2004

September 18, 2004 Meeting

TIME: 10:30 A.M.

PLACE: Village Presbyterian Church
6641 Mission Road
Prairie Village, KS



PROGRAM: - Carol Ready has arranged for **Ms. Tywana G. Paul**, Public Affairs Specialist for the Food and Drug Administration's Kansas City District Office to talk to us about the many jobs that the FDA is doing for us. As Public Affairs Specialist, she is the Agency's first line of contact for consumers, health professionals, educators, state and local officials and the media on "hot" or current issues. She provides the public and the District staff with an up-to-the-minute view on public health issues related to FDA's regulation of the marketplace, philosophy, technical data and philosophical and political considerations. She also conducts workshops, seminars, training programs and exhibits throughout the states of Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri. Ms. Paul is a graduate of the University of Missouri - Kansas City and is a native Kansas Citian.



PROGRAM CALENDAR

On **October 16** - Our February speaker, **Barbara Bonnekesen**, will return with another exciting program for us. We'll have a follow-up to our lively discussion with her about "Women's Human Rights".

November 20 - The big presidential election will have occurred on November 2 and we will hear **an expert's** view on what it all means and what we will have in store for us for the next 4 years.

December - Holiday luncheon. The site and date to be determined later.



REFRESHMENTS

September 18	Betty Hall
October 16	Ruth Gieschen
November 20	Helen Kirk
December	Holiday Party
January 15	Doris Griffith
February 19	Ruth Shisler

LUNCHEON TODAY!!

Everyone is invited to go to lunch today at **the Grand Street Café** at 1:00 p.m. It is located on the Country Club Plaza near Winstead's at 4740 Grand. Their phone number is (816) 561-8000. We can go there directly after the meeting.

OWL Meeting Minutes August 21, 2004



Meeting was called to order at 10:30 by co-President Sara Pedram. There were 12 members and 5 guests present. Sara welcomed our guests to the meeting and introduced them. One guest, Janis McDonald, was there because she had seen the notice in the *Best Times* newspaper. We were glad to welcome back Bev Kelly, who had attended our July meeting and former member, Carol Proctor. Carol brought Neil Proctor with her.

Sara announced that Peg Fish had undergone knee replacement surgery (second knee) and passed around a get-well card for the group to sign.

To start the meeting, Sara led a short memorial for deceased member Joan Bennett. Several members of the group offered remarks and observations about Joan, then Liz Gordon read a piece that had been read by one of Joan's daughters at the memorial service. This memorial is reprinted elsewhere in this newsletter for those who were not able to attend either the memorial or the regular meeting. Liz also brought some extra memorial programs for members who had not been able to attend the service.

Sara introduced our speaker, **Barbara Lawrenz**, from the Social Security Administration. Ms. Lawrenz is Public Affairs Specialist in the Area Director's Office for Social Security Field Offices in Kansas and Nebraska, located in Topeka, Kansas. She has twenty years experience working as a representative for Social Security, assisting clients in filing for Retirement, Disability and Survivor benefits as well as the Medicare and Supplemental Security Income Programs. She brought packets of information for all attendees and spent her allotted time explaining some of the intricacies of Social Security and how they specifically affect women.

The bill authorizing social security was signed in 1935 and workers started paying social security taxes in 1937. One of her key points is that the public doesn't always think about those benefits of social security other than retirement benefits, such as survivor benefits and disability benefits. There were two women in the room who had lost husbands at an early age and they testified to the importance of survivor benefits while they still were raising families. Other facts that affect social security's ability to maintain payouts are that one out of seven workers do not reach retirement age and three of ten workers become disabled and draw disability benefits.

Several topics were discussed and the hand out packet of information contained literature on most items:

- The advancing age of full retirement
- Receipt of full benefits after age 65 (67)
- Privatization of social security (note: OWL's position is that it should not be privatized)
- The time when the trust fund can no longer meet the needs of retirees
- "Notch babies" – those born between 1917 through 1921
- ID theft

After the speaker's presentation, a brief business meeting was held. Ruth Gieschen moved that \$100 be given in Joan's memory to the Mainstream Coalition, and Doris Griffith seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Sara announced that Carol Ready will chair the September meeting, while Sara is working with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, here in Kansas City. She passed out information on the conference. Meeting adjourned.

Doris Griffith

OCTOBER SPEAKER

Dr. Barbara Bonnekesen is a feminist anthropologist who did her undergraduate studies in Ancient American Languages and Cultures at the University of Hamburg (Germany), earned an M.S. in Cultural Anthropology at Purdue University and her Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology at the University of Kansas. Her research and teaching interests lie at the intersection of "race," class, and gender, where women of various groups meet and interact. Her education and fieldwork have focused on Central America and include ethnohistory, acculturation of development consultants, and the invisibility of teenage street-girls to national and international development consultants. Her current research focuses on the images and stereotypes Western women hold (or are being presented with) of so-called "Third World" women in cultural anthropology, women's studies, and in HIV/AIDS prevention. Stereotypes of "proper" feminine behaviors and colonial images of "raced" behaviors influence information construction and flow and appear to combine to hide women's various life experiences and needs.

Dr. Bonnekesen teaches classes in cultural anthropology, "race" and ethnic relations, and women's and gender studies at the University of Missouri at Kansas City. She is the director of the Women's and Gender Studies Program and of the American Humanics Certificate Program.



Tribute to Joan Bennett

She walks down by the river, smells the
sweet spring breeze

Barefoot with the grass beneath her feet,
walking gently, walking slow.

Feel each blade touch her and whisper to her
melodies

She feels the life and she is free.

As a dragonfly, beautiful colors with the world
on it's wings.

As the pebble washed by the water and
rough edges smoothed with time.

See her stand now, at the river's edge.

See her spirit lift and soar.

She is free now , she feels the life and she is
free.

She stands ankle deep in crystal waters with
cool liquid; fresh.

Like a spring of purity, to wash the old, and
replace the new.

Letting it calm her, letting it soothe.

Ahh the water, drowning doubts.

Feel the sun, feel the wind, feel the energies
abound.

See her spirit awake for she knows love.

Could it be any other way now....

Not even if the heavens were falling down.

She breathes in the sun and lets it warm her
heart.

It becomes the fire burning inside her; the
creation of herself.

Her legs will not carry her; but only where her
spirit calls.

She becomes the dragonfly, letting go of that
which holds her bound to this heavy burden
of life.

She feels the life, she feels the love and she
is free.

Spirit dance now, as we celebrate her birth.

It has been many moons from when we last
knew her.

And she is here. Feet planted deep in her
people's soil.

Drawing from the strength of her people the
wisdom which is hers.

Red Earth Red sister.

Spirits sing; one more sister has found her
way back to herself.

See her kneel now and embrace the Earth
Mother.

Spirit planted in fertile soil will not wither and
will not die.

Listen as she grows.

She is the life now, she is the love, she is the
Earth Mother and she is free.

Hear the voices of her children.

She is free

Mitakuye Oyasín Waynonaha

This poem was read by one of Joan Bennett's
daughters at the Memorial Service for Joan.

OWL's sole mission is to address the special needs and concerns of women as they age.

OWL meets the third Saturday of the month at Village Presbyterian Church except for the months of April, July and December when there are special luncheons planned.

2004 Officers of Heartland OWL

Co-Presidents: Sara Pedram
sarapedram@earthlink.net

Carol Ready
dready6971@aol.com

Co-Presidents-Elect

Secretary

Treasurer Ruth Shisler

Program chair Sara Pedram

Newsletter Editors:

Even months: Doris Griffith
doriander@aol.com

Odd months: Peggy Fish
peggyafish@hotmail.com

Yes – I want to join OWL and add my voice to this national grassroots organization.

OWL is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and is tax deductible to the extent allowed under law.

National	\$ 25
Local	\$ 10
Donations	\$ _____
Grand Total	\$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Send check to:

OWL

P. O. Box 9013

Shawnee Mission KS 66201