

FEW Notes

February 2005
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Federally Employed Women Inc.
**Greater Oklahoma City
Chapter, No. 30**

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The
President's
Pencil.....
By Brenda Hagar

During the month of March we will be looking forward to Women's History Month. GOKC will be having a program on March 14, 2005 at the Holiday Inn Airport at 6:30 p.m. The speaker is to be announced so be sure to keep an eye on our website and we will post it there. I'm looking forward to a great program.

By now you should have received your annual renewal invoice. Our membership year is from March 1 through February 28. Please renew your membership promptly, and update the information on your invoice.

The 2005 National Training Program (NTP) will be held in Reno, NV, July 18 – 23. I hope you are making plans to participate in this event. FEW training is excellent training and a good value for the training dollar. The training courses will be posted on the National website (www.few.org)

I hope each of you had a wonderful Valentines Day and told someone you love them.



Next Board Meeting
Monday, March 14, 2005
5:00 pm

Holiday Inn Airport
2101 S. Meridian

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE @
<http://www.gokcfew.org/>

GOKC CHAPTER EXECUTIVE BOARD 2004-2006		
President	Brenda Hagar	(w) 954-4514 (h) 376-5318
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*Condoleezza Rice Sworn in as
United States Secretary of
State*

Condoleezza Rice, PHD, was sworn in on January 25, 2005 as the United States Secretary of State.

Ms. Rice was born November 14, 1954, in Birmingham, Alabama. She was the the only child of Angelena Rice and the Reverend John Wesley Rice, Jr. Her father served as a minister at Westminster Presbyterian Church and her mother was a music teacher.

She earned her bachelor's degree in political science, cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa, from the University of Denver in 1974; her master's from the University of Notre Dame in 1975; and her Ph.D. from the Graduate School of International Studies at the University of Denver in 1981. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and has been awarded honorary doctorates from Morehouse College in 1991, the University of Alabama in 1994, the University of Notre Dame in 1995, the National Defense University in 2002, the Mississippi College School of Law in 2003, the University of Louisville and Michigan State University in 2004. She resides in Washington, D.C.

She is the first African American woman, the second African American (after Colin Powell), and the second woman (after Madeleine Albright) to serve as Secretary of State. Ms. Rice served as National Security Advisor to President Gorge W. Bush during his first term

According to the BBC News website, the new US Secretary of State is a close friend of President Bush and his former foreign policy tutor. She is renowned for her intellect and her passion for football. She is also an accomplished classical pianist.

Fraudulent Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Web Site

Submitted by Debbie Miller, 1st Vice President

Due to the heightened interest of identity theft via the internet, the following information is provided. OPM has discovered that another company is hosting a web page that is very similar to the "official" government website Employee Express. The .COM address can load spy ware on a PC and can capture your SSAN and PIN. Therefore, please do not be fooled and utilize the incorrect site. The .COM site address is <http://www.employeeexpress.com> and identity theft is a possibility if an employee thinks they are accessing the secure .GOV site.

OPM will be updating their web page site to include a warning message in the announcement area that confirms secure access to the web site. The official government web site (notice the "s" following the "http") is <https://www.employeeexpress.gov>.

Please exercise caution whenever accessing websites requesting personal information.



BLACK HISTORY MONTH



By Carolyn Delong

Every February, Americans celebrate Black History Month. This celebration is credited to Harvard scholar Dr. Carter G. Woodson, who was determined to bring Black History into the mainstream public arena.

In an effort to bring national attention to the contributions of black Americans, Woodson organized the first annual Negro History Week in 1926. He chose the second week of February to coincide 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.

Information compiled from Biography.com and www.historychannel.com



Free College Scholarships

The Federal and Military Scholarship Group announced on February 7, 2005, that there are now COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS available to active duty members of the US military AND to Veterans AND Family Members - INCLUDING Spouses - from a fully accredited college, thanks to a new program from Grantham University, a leading distance education institution of higher learning.

John Whitney, Executive Director of the Federal and Military Scholarship Group (FMSG), an independent organization, said "Grantham University has always been there for our men and women in uniform. Now they offer Special Scholarships for Family Members and for Veterans. These scholarships will help all members of the extended military community get their College Degrees."

Whitney continued, "These scholarships will help make the difference in whether or not someone can afford to get their College Degree. This demonstrates Grantham University's continued support for our military community."

Not long ago, Grantham University was even recognized by The Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, for its education programs as "a great morale building effort."

Whitney continued, "Add all these wonderful scholarships together, and you can see why we've singled out Grantham University as one of the most "Military" friendly Universities anywhere."

And on top of all of this, Grantham still offers its amazing program that allows every active duty member of the US military to obtain their College Degree in General Studies - FREE of charge.

Once again, our hat's off to Grantham University. Give them a call today, and they will walk you through the details of all their programs.

Call Grantham University Today Toll Free 1-866-850-2979

FEW applauds actions to repeal GPO/WEP



Information from FEW.org

The members of FEW are applauding Rep. Howard McKeon's (R-25-CA) introduction of HR 147 on opening day of the 109th Congress that amends title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). The bill has 122 co-sponsors.

FEW President, Patricia Wolfe states, "FEW supports the repeal of both of these unfair provisions. Both the GPO and WEP lower the retirement income of federal employees by altering the Social Security benefit formula for certain groups. What is particularly egregious is that spousal and retirement benefits are reduced for Americans simply because they worked for the federal government."

Repeal of these provision is a top legislative goal for FEW members. "We firmly believe that both affect women much more harshly than men because women are more likely to spend time out of the workforce (about 12 years) to tend to family care giving responsibilities," said Rhonda Trent, FEW's Vice President for Congressional and Government Relations. "That is time she is not earning a pension, vesting in a pension or contributing to Social Security," Trent concluded.

The GPO was enacted in 1977 to prevent government retirees from collecting both a government annuity based on their own work and Social Security benefits based on their spouse's annuity. This law decreases by two-thirds whatever spousal social security benefits for which a retired government worker might be eligible.

The WEP greatly reduces the Social Security benefits of a retired federal worker who paid into Social Security and also receives a government pension. Private sector retirees receive monthly Social Security checks equal to 90% of their first \$561 in average monthly career earnings, plus 32% of monthly earnings up to \$3,381 and 15% of earnings above \$3,381. Federal

retirees, however, are only allowed to receive 40% of the first \$561 in career monthly earnings, a penalty of \$280.50 per month simply for working in the federal government.

This is obviously unfair, so take the time to write your congressional representatives!



FEW.org

Have you checked out the FEW.org website? There is a wealth of information on the website for FEW members and non-members.

Of particular interest on the website is the link to Capwiz.com/few where you can write to your congressional representatives with just a few clicks on the computer.

Not only can you write to your congressional representatives, you can also read about Important issues, recent votes, current legislation, and more.

The site also includes the daily House Schedule, Senate Schedule and the Committee Hearings.



*MARK YOUR
CALENDAR FEW'S 2005
NTP*

Federally Employed Women Invites You
To Join Us in the "Biggest Little City in the World"



At FEW's 36th National Training Program
July 18-22, 2005 Reno Hilton Hotel
Reno, Nevada

Online conference registration begins March 15, 2005
Register before May 27, 2005, and save \$75.00
Visit www.few.org for further program information and registration

STATEWIDE DAY OF PRAYER

By Peggy O'Neal, Secretary GOKC

*Pray for an End to Violence to Women
Sunday, March 6*

Thank you to Rep. Rebecca Hamilton, for your actions to end violence against women. Rep. Hamilton gathered 35 Oklahoma religious leaders at the Capitol to ask for their help in stopping the violence against women. Each leader signed a Declaration of Opposition to Violence Against Women. Rep. Hamilton asked them to support the statewide Day of Prayer for an end to violence to women on March 5 by praying and spreading the anti-violence message to their congregations and communities. Rep. Hamilton said "Violence against half the human race – which is treated with indifference – is a crime against God. It is a sin."

Also, thank you to those 35 religious leaders who signed the declaration. We look forward to your actions and join you in prayer to end violence on March 6 and every day.



*PRESIDENT'S
DAY*



From http://www.patriotism.org/presidents_day

The original version of the holiday was in commemoration of George Washington's birthday in 1796 (the last full year of his presidency). Washington, according to the calendar that has been used since at least the mid-18th century, was born on February 22, 1732. According to the old style calendar in use back then, however, he was born on February 11. At least in 1796, many Americans celebrated his birthday on the 22nd while others marked the occasion on the 11th instead.

By the early 19th century, Washington's Birthday had taken firm root in the American experience as a bona fide national holiday. Its traditions included Birthnight Balls in various regions, speeches and receptions given by prominent public figures, and a lot of revelry in taverns throughout the land. Then along came Abraham Lincoln, another revered president and fellow February baby (born on the 12th of the month). The first formal observance of his birthday took place in 1865, the year after his assassination, when both houses of Congress gathered for a memorial address. Although Lincoln's Birthday did not become a federal holiday like Washington's, it did become a legal holiday in several states.

In 1968, legislation (HR 15951) was enacted that affected several federal holidays. One of these was Washington's Birthday, the observation of which was shifted to the third Monday in February each year whether or not it fell on the 22nd. This act, which took effect in 1971, was designed to simplify the yearly calendar of holidays and give federal employees some standard three-day weekends in the process.

Apparently, while the holiday in February is still officially known as Washington's Birthday (at least according to the Office of Personnel Management), it has become popularly (and, perhaps in some cases at the state level, legally) known as "President's Day." This has made the third Monday in February a day for honoring both Washington and Lincoln, as well as all the other men who have served as president.

FEW

- ❖ Of the 43 presidents, only 17 have occupied the Oval Office.
- ❖ President Lyndon Johnson's first job after graduating from college was to teach at a Mexican-American school in Cotulla, Texas.
- ❖ Woodrow Wilson became President of Princeton University, a **college** in New Jersey, in 1902. He was elected President of the United States in 1912.
- ❖ James Garfield was the only preacher to ever become President of the United States. He spent 17 years as a Congressman from Ohio before becoming President in 1881.
- ❖ Lyndon B. Johnson dedicated the Astrodome, in Houston, Texas, on April 9, 1965. Johnson served as President from 1963 to 1969.
- ❖ Richard Nixon was offered a position as a player's representative to the Major League Baseball Players Association in 1965. He declined stating that he was needed in politics. Nixon served as President from 1969 to 1974.
- ❖ George H.W. Bush played first base on the Yale University team that twice reached the finals of the College World Series. George W.H. Bush served as President from 1989 to 1993.
- ❖ Thomas Jefferson kept a mockingbird in a cage in the window in his office. He would occasionally let the bird fly around the room.

- ❖ The West Wing was built in 1902 at the request of President Theodore Roosevelt.
- ❖ President Howard Taft was the first president to use the Oval Office, which was built in the West Wing in 1909.
- ❖ President Franklin Roosevelt ordered the construction of a swimming pool along the colonnade leading to the West Wing. Swimming was therapy for the president, who suffered from the crippling effects of polio.



GOKC ASSISTS WITH 22ND ANNUAL DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE



By Peggy O'Neal

In keeping with FEW's legislative goals, GOKC FEW assisted the Oklahoma Conference of Churches with its annual Day at the Legislature (OCC DAL) for the past several years.

The OCC is a statewide community of 17 Christian communions who have covenanted with one another to make the Unity of Oklahoma's Churches visible, to share ministry, and when appropriate, and to participate in political action.

The 22nd Annual OCC DAL was held February 8, 2005, with the theme "Mind, Body and Spirit: Empowering Effective Advocacies.": GOKC FEW participants were Tammie Kierstead, Debbie Miller, Peggy O'Neal, Carolyn Delong and Brenda Hagar. In addition to being in charge of the registration table, Peggy facilitated the workshop on Teen Pregnancy Prevention and served as point-of-contact between FEW and OCC DAL committee in planning this event. The planning meeting for the event started in July 2004. Three of our workers had to take leave from work to participate, while two other retired workers had to get up much earlier in the morning than they are accustomed!

We performed a community service and added visibility to FEW by handling the registration table for this event.

Among legislative issues addressed were: teen pregnancy prevention, end of life care, the uninsured, affordable health care for Oklahoma's children, youth and the poor.

FEW supports the promise that analysis of proposed legislation designed to eliminate discrimination against women employed in government should receive top priority. However, it is increasingly important to support legislation that affects the status of women as a class.

FEW asks its member to actively participate in training in the program areas of compliance, diversity and legislation.

Participating in the OCC DAL gave GOKC FEW members an opportunity to further our legislative goals, be of service to an organization with similar goals, and meet some dedicated and interesting people, as well as prospective FEW members.

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS



Editor's note: I received the following request via email:

To: Any Interested Parties

Re: Encouragement and Acknowledgement Letters

We are looking for a collection of letters from individuals across the country that can be sent to deployed military members from Oklahoma. As their deployment lengthens, these men and women need all of the encouragement they can get.

Letters can be sent to:

Project Isaiah		Capitol Hill A/G
c/o Leslie DeHart		c/o Leslie DeHart
1312 SW 63 rd	Or	2400 SW 74 th
Oklahoma City, OK		Oklahoma City, OK
73159		73159

There is no end date on this project. I will continue mailing out letters until there are no more to mail. These letters will remain in their original envelopes and will be included in packages that are mailed out on a monthly basis to several men and women whose families are here in Oklahoma. My goal is to begin mailing letters out in late February and continue on until we run out of letters to send.

I appreciate any help you might be able to give me and am excited about forwarding on your letters!!

Sincerely,

Leslie DeHart
Project Isaiah Coordinator



Our sympathy is extended to Marilyn Hampton and family in the recent loss of her Mother-in-law.

IDENTIFY PROGRAM A SUCCESS

Information submitted by Tammie Kierstead

Members attended a program on Identify Theft which was held at the VA Medical Center on January 20.

The speakers were excellent and their message was really "eye-opening."

Approximately 35 people attended the program, most of them being prospective new members. As is our custom, all of these prospective members will be added to our newsletter recipient list and program announcement mailing list.

Who can join FEW?

ELIGIBILITY

The membership of FEW shall consist of chapters and members-at-large who have subscribed to the purposes and ideals of FEW, paid FEW dues and, in the case of chapters having been granted a charter, continue to function in compliance with the conditions set forth in National FEW Bylaws, and the policies established by the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. Membership shall be classified as stated in Article III of the Bylaws.

JOINING FEW

Membership in FEW is open to any person (not just women or federal employees) who meets the eligibility requirements described above. You can join as a regular member of an organized chapter, or as a member-at-large. Associate memberships are available to those outside the federal sector who support FEW's goals and objectives.

HOW TO JOIN

A membership application is included in every issue of *FEW Notes*. Or, contact Debbie Miller at (w) 734-8719 or (h) 691-2992

