

# HerlandVoice

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## rosa parks stood up for all

*reprinted with permission from women's eNews*

When Rosa Parks died Oct. 24, the news spread quickly. Although the myth persisted in some quarters that Parks' famous refusal to move to the back of the bus in segregated Montgomery, Ala., in December 1955 happened because she was just a tired old Negro lady, most people understood that *hers was an act of civil disobedience*.

What they did not say, however, was that such an act had a long tradition preceding it and that Rosa Parks was surrounded by a community of people who not only supported but encouraged what she did.

The African Methodist Episcopal

Church, where Parks worshipped, had a *long history of activism*, stretching back to the abolitionist movement of the 19th century and embodied in the legacy of the church's famous member Harriet Tubman. From that time, too, came *examples of black women standing up* to racial segregation, particularly in relation to public transportation facilities: Sojourner Truth on the Washington, D.C., streetcars in 1864; Mary Ellen Pleasant on San Francisco's streetcars in 1866; and Ida B. Wells on Tennessee trains in the 1880s.

### a civil rights warrior

Parks was a 42-year-old warrior following in those footsteps. Around her were people who not only knew their history, but had been opposing racism for decades in school segregation, lynching, job discrimination and obstacles to voting.

Raymond Parks, Rosa's husband, had been a founding member of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which was constantly under surveillance and continually harassed. She had braved dangers to register voters and walked up many flights of stairs rather than use the "Negro only" elevators where she worked.

Parks' community included white activists Virginia and Clifford Durr, who would later act as her lawyer and bail her out of jail. Earlier that year Septima Clark—

*(continued top of page 2)*



## overlooked heros

*In 1951, Barbara Johns was a 16-year-old high school student at a segregated school in Farmville, Va. Though the school was designed to hold 180 students, it was massively overcrowded with 450—the overflow housed in tarpaper shack added to the school. Barbara Johns organized a walkout of her entire student body to protest the separate and definitely unequal educational facilities. A few weeks later the NAACP brought suit demanding the end of school segregation.*

*This suit, eventually bundled with four similar cases from elsewhere in the country, became part of Brown v. Board of Education. Generally considered the most important case decided by the U. S. Supreme Court in the twentieth century, it held that racially segregated public schools are inherently unequal and, therefore, unconstitutional.*

*Thousands of young people like Barbara Johns made a stand to integrate lunch counters, community centers, and sports leagues.*

# december 2005 events

## *Sisters of Swing* Sunday

**Dec 4** St Charles Borromeo Church  
NW 50th & Grove 3 pm, \$10

*OGLPC* Monthly Meeting Monday **Dec 5** Neighborhood Alliance  
1236 NW 36th 7 pm

*PFLAG* Tuesday **Dec 6** Church  
of the Open Arms 7 pm

*Miss Brown to You* Friday  
**Dec 9** Chouse 515 W Boyd 7 pm  
\$10

*Mary Reynolds & Louise  
Goldberg* Saturday **Dec 10**  
Full Circle Bookstore 7 pm

LGBT *Talking Circle* Tuesday  
**Dec 13** Church of the Open Arms  
7 pm

Herland *Supper Club* Saturday  
**Dec 17** Potluck and Dirty  
Santa Party at Herland 7 pm

*Sisters of Swing Christmas  
Show* Saturday **Dec 17**  
St Johns NW 52 & Brookline first  
show 2 pm second show 7 pm

*Family Pride* Sunday **Dec 18**  
Church of the Open Arms 4 pm

Herland *Board Meeting*  
Sunday **Dec 18** 4 pm

LGBT *Talking Circle* Tuesday  
**Dec 27** Church of the Open Arms  
7 pm

Herland *Scrabble Night*  
Thursday **Dec 29** 6 pm

(continued from page 1)

already famous for starting "citizen schools" across the South to help people pass the literacy test for voting—had come to Montgomery and inspired several black women, Parks among them, to go to the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee. Highlander's *workshops taught strategies for social action*.

Ella Baker, also Highlander-trained, came to work on the bus boycott that Parks' action ignited and later become the bedrock of the "new" civil rights movement, first in the Southern Christian Leadership Council and then with students conducting sit-ins across the South.

Living as she did in such politically sophisticated company, Parks well knew the consequences of defying the bus driver and the police who were called to remove her. Local activists had been looking for an opportunity to challenge the segregation practices in Montgomery and considered organizing after two earlier instances when black women refused to move to the back of the bus. Unlike the earlier two, Rosa Parks—a married, "respectable," soft-spoken, deeply religious woman—was perfect.

Like those who came before her, Rosa *Parks paid for her courage*. By 1957, she and her husband had lost their jobs and the South was dangerous for them. In Detroit, she eventually went to work for Congressman John Conyers.

Although she lived as a legend and continued to stand up against racism, she struggled financially in later years, relying on a church to pay her rent until her landlord decided to let the legend live rent-free. All that, too, is part of a long tradition.

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## herland potluck & dirty santa party

Join Herland as we celebrate the season with a potluck dinner on *Saturday, December 17th*, starting at 7 pm. This will be a chance to break in our new kitchen and put it to full use. Bring any kind of dish you would like to share with others.

After dinner, we will continue the holiday spirit by *exchanging "dirty Santa" - or white elephant - gifts*. This is where everyone brings a gift and draws a number and all of the gifts are numbered. Starting with number one, that person gets gift #1 and opens it. Then person number 2 gets gift #2 but before opening it, she can choose to keep the gift or trade it for gift #1. If she keeps gift #2, she opens it. If she doesn't, she trades it to the other person, and they open it. Then number three's turn. The game keeps going till you get to the end. The basic idea, is the person holding the unopened gift can either *keep it or trade it* for an opened gift. You can choose to bring something fun from around the house and wrap it or buy a gift to bring, but please spend no more than \$5-\$10 tops. This game is tons of fun as people steal, trade and barter for what they want.

## scrabble night

We're moving our monthly Scrabble game to mid-week this month. Join us on *Thursday, December 29*, at 6 pm as we challenge each other with words like tifers, sodality, and fum!

Remember pizza is ordered as soon as most of the players have arrived.





# 2006 Pride Logo Contest

OKC Pride has chosen "We Are the People" as the theme for the 2006 Pride season. The contest is open to all and the winner will be chosen soon after Dec 15th. The details:

On the back of each entry please attach an envelope with your printed name, contact information, and a disk of your images. Please do not sign the front of the design. Multiple entries are accepted. Each entry must include the theme. Please emphasize the word "are". In an effort to maximize creativity, we are not requiring Oklahoma City (or OKC), the year 2006 or any specific colors be used. However, OKC Pride reserves the right to make necessary adaptations or additions, including but not limited to the incorporation of OKC and 2006. Submissions should be printed, as minimum of 7" by 7" on 8.5 x 11 paper or larger *AND* a second, smaller, 1" by 1" version should be submitted with the entry. The 1" x 1" version does not have to be exactly the same, but very similar for pin production. All logos must be computer generated. Preferred file is Illustrator, vector format with all fonts converted to outlines/paths. pdf or tiff files will also be accepted at 600 dpi. Please save your layered image. We may request changes to a winning submission. Keep in mind color separation is necessary for t-shirt and pin production. The chosen logo becomes the property of OKC Pride. OKC Pride reserves the right to reject any and all logo submissions. Submissions will not be returned. Contest winner receives \$100 cash, and will be recognized as the artist with a text listing on the back of the shirts and the opportunity to sign the front of the shirt. All logo submissions should be mailed to OKC Pride, Inc., P.O. Box 60296, OKC, OK 73146. All entries must be received by 5 PM, Dec 15. For more information or for questions, email [info@okcpride.com](mailto:info@okcpride.com) or call T J McKinsey, 405-602-1224.

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## holiday giving & tax tips

As the end of the calendar year approaches, you may be starting to think about taxes. You can *use charitable donations as deductions* on your tax return to the extent allowed by law. If you make the donation by check and the charity doesn't receive the money until after the start of the new year, you can still take the deduction for the current year if you mailed the check by Dec 31.

## big thanks to our supporters

Herland has been the beneficiary of a couple of extra-large donations this month. A big thank you goes out to the *anonymous donors who gave generous gifts* of \$1,000 and \$200 to Herland. And our heartfelt thanks to each of you, our supporters—we couldn't do any of it without you.

*thank you for your generous gift!*

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**DOROTHY E. HEIM**

Attorney at Law  
(405) 616-5045  
[dheim033@yahoo.com](mailto:dheim033@yahoo.com)

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**Sandy Ingraham, J.D., M.S.W.**  
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McLoud, OK 74851

Tel. (405) 964-2072  
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