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### Contents

General News

Columns

Civics

Economy

AutoScene

Variety

Dining

Fashion

Faith

Home & Garden

Health & Wellness

Saluting Our Military

Calendar

Kudos

Education

Union Education

Jenks Education

Broken Arrow Education

Tulsa Education

Owasso Education

Bixby Education

Sports

Composite Football Schedule

Union Sports

Jenks Sports

Broken Arrow Sports

Mid-Town Tulsa Sports

Owasso Sports

Bixby Sports

## Linda Bradshaw Joins First Ladies of Tulsa

BY LOUANN BUHLINGER

Contributing Writer



*LEADING OKLAHOMANS: Linda Bradshaw, right, has become the first female president of the Rotary Club of Tulsa, one of the largest civic clubs in the world. She joins former Tulsa Mayor Susan Savage, now Oklahoma Secretary of State, left, and Tulsa Mayor Kathy Taylor, former Oklahoma Secretary of Commerce and Tourism, as a significant leader in the state.*

GTR Newspapers photo

Linda Bradshaw has much in common with Susan Savage and Kathy Taylor. All three are leading ladies in Tulsa with efficient and powerful leadership styles.

Savage became the first female mayor of Tulsa in 1990 and served 10 years, while Taylor became mayor this year in the city's largest voter turnout for a mayoral election.

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Savage is now Secretary of State for Oklahoma, while Taylor served as Secretary of Commerce and Tourism. In order to run for mayor, Taylor left a department that included three agencies, 2,700 employees and a budget of more than \$200 million.

Bradshaw has made history by becoming the first female president of the Rotary Club of Tulsa, one of the largest Rotary clubs in the world with nearly 500 members.

“Linda is about the most energetic, organized and enthusiastic Rotarian in the club,” says President-Elect Tim Colwell. “She has devoted herself tirelessly to making her year as president one that will be historic, not only because she is the first woman to head the club, but because of the things we will accomplish.”

Most members of Rotary have experienced the “Linda effect,” otherwise known as “Git-R-Done.” Her enthusiasm and push for people to do their best is infectious and 2006-07 will be an exciting year as she takes over the helm.

Bradshaw has been a devoted Rotarian since joining in 1997. She has served in many leadership roles including directing the Henry P. Iba Citizen Athlete Awards and the Crescendo Music awards, as well as sharing her talent on the piano at the opening of meetings. Bradshaw also served as the Rotary Club of Tulsa chairman of the board in 2003. “I’m just like Ado Annie in the musical Oklahoma—I’m just a girl who cain’t say no,” she says.

Outside of Rotary, Bradshaw is the president of the Tulsa World of Gymnastics, a business that she and her husband Wayne opened in 1976. The business began with 22 gymnasts and has grown to 1,300 students over the past 30 years. For her efforts, Bradshaw has received many honors including the Tulsa Sports Commission J.V. Haney Community Service Award, 2006; the USA Gymnastics Shirley Marshak Memorial Award, 1999; Tulsa Metro Chamber Small Business Person of the Year, 1995; and the Tulsa People Magazine Female Entrepreneur of the Year, 1995.

“Things for me just seem to happen,” says Bradshaw. “The harder I work, the luckier I get.” For her hard work in Rotary, she has received numerous Rotary Club awards.

Bradshaw’s involvement in the community is also far reaching. She currently serves as a mayoral appointee to the Economic Development Commission. In the past 10 years, she has also served the community in many ways, including; through the Tulsa Metro Chamber, the Tulsa Area United Way, the Oklahoma Special Olympics, the Tulsa Sports Commission, the Oklahoma State Chamber, the Small Business Capital Corporation, the Tulsa Advocates for the Rights of Citizens with Disabilities

Board and was an Oklahoma Delegate to the White House Conference on Small Business.

As a young woman, Bradshaw's first love was classical music. She received her BME from the University of Tulsa earning the highest honors. She soon added bass fishing (introduced to her by her husband, Wayne) to her list of passions. In 1971 she was named Oklahoma Sportswoman of the Year and even had a personalized bass boat. When the couple's daughters expressed interest in gymnastics, they opened the Tulsa World of Gymnastics which has hosted USA Olympic qualifiers.

When Bradshaw throws her hat into the ring, people know things are going to happen. Bob Saied says, "You know ... Linda is the total opposite of the comedian-Larry the Cable Guy-in both sophistication and attractiveness. But just like him, her favorite phrase seems to be "Git-R-Done."

"I view Rotary as a wonderful opportunity," says Bradshaw. "Rotary allows ordinary people to do extraordinary things! I have concluded that Rotarians are people who need people. Thanks to Rotary, this is a better world and Rotarians are better off for being in our ranks."

Bradshaw plans to continue the club's focus on Rotary projects benefiting children including Camp Enterprise, Celia Clinton Elementary School, the Crescendo Awards, Shop with a Cop, and something new; this year the Rotary Club will conduct a Four-Way Test speech contest. In addition, Bradshaw has created a new committee made up of past Rotary Club of Tulsa presidents who will combine their leadership strengths to plan the mechanics for funding the club centennial in 2015.

Outgoing Rotary Club of Tulsa President Matt Davis says, "It is exciting and healthy for our club to have entirely new leadership on the board level once a year. I know Linda and her leadership team is enthusiastically looking forward to assuming the fun and challenges of running the most dynamic and active Rotary club in the world."

Bradshaw's inaugural meeting was July 5. She will serve as president through June 2007.

*Editor's Note: The author is a member of the Rotary Club of Tulsa and much of this article appeared in the Online Gasser. Visit the Rotary Club of Tulsa Web site at [www.tulsarotaryweb.com](http://www.tulsarotaryweb.com).*

[Back to Top](#)