

# STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



**Sen.-Elect Jeff Rabon**, D-Hugo, defeated incumbent Jack Bell, D-Idabel, in the August 27 primary election, and had no other challengers for the district 5 seat. He knows how government works, having served as an aide to former Senator David Boren and former Representative Bill Brewster.

Rabon ran for the senate to help his corner of Oklahoma. "I'm a lifelong native of southeast Oklahoma," he said, "and I'm concerned we were getting left behind down here. Everyone wants to fish our lakes and hunt our deer, but we don't get our fair share up there [Oklahoma City]."

Considering the needs of his Senate district, Rabon said he will support legislation for better transportation in southeast Oklahoma.

Infrastructure requirements in southeast Oklahoma prompted Rabon to request membership on the appropriations, transportation and wildlife and tourism committees, "which reflect the needs of this district."

**Sen.-Elect Kathleen Wilcoxson**, R-Oklahoma City, is still teaching school this week.

Active in local politics since 1980, Wilcoxson "found that Senator Cole was retiring and decided to run" for the district 45 Senate seat.

Wilcoxson ran as a pro-business, pro-education candidate, she said, but doesn't plan to sponsor legislation this session. "I'm going up there and learn what's going on. I will support the Governor's economic plan.

Worker's compensation reform and education are also on Wilcoxson's support list.

**Sen.-Elect James Williamson**, R-Tulsa, is a former teacher, a former Oklahoma House member — District 76, 1981-1986 — and an attorney. He ran for the district 35 seat because he "wanted to keep the Senate district Republican, and to support Governor Keating in his proposals to move the state forward economically."

Williamson is interested in supporting economic legislation to "reduce worker's compensation costs to business," as well as improving education in Oklahoma, a goal he also sought as a House member. His other interest is in seeing that "transportation gets its fair share of the dollars, and that we continue to funnel resources into that area."

—GERRY CHERRY  
11/13/96

## JOHNSON BIDS FAREWELL TO STAFF, HOUSE

■(GIT) Outgoing Speaker of the House of Representatives Glen Johnson took the House floor one last time Thursday to bid his final farewell to members of the legislative staff.

A bipartisan group of approximately 80 staffers, including Johnson's own office staff, secretaries, House researchers and others, gathered in the House chamber for what Johnson described as his final thank you to those with whom he had worked since entering the House of Representatives 14 years ago. Greeted by a standing ovation, Johnson said, "I wish you all had been voters in the Second District on Nov. 5," referring to his unsuccessful effort to unseat Republican incumbent Congressman Tom Coburn.

The outgoing speaker opened his remarks with a story about the day in 1982 when he came to the House for the start of the legislative session. First, he said, then-Rep. Kelly Haney, D-Seminole, claimed the larger desk in the office the two men shared by explaining that House rules dictated that the member with the most seniority received the better facilities.

"I don't think he ever showed me that rule," Johnson joked.

He then related how Sen. Gene Stipe, D-McAlester, visited his office following Gov. George Nigh's state of the state address. According to Johnson, Stipe said he had followed his campaign closely and praised him for the race he had run, saying that he was looking forward to working with the then-freshman lawmaker. As Stipe left, Johnson said, he said, "We country lawyers have to stick together."

Johnson admitted being impressed by the visit and said that he shared that feeling with Haney, who had sat quietly at his desk reading during the visit. Haney then told Johnson of an identical visit when he first entered the legislature. According to Johnson, Haney

said the meeting concluded with Stipe saying, "We Indians have to stick together."

Speaking on behalf of himself and other representatives, Johnson said the dedication and sacrifices of those who work behind the scenes in the House were appreciated.

"I hope you all have a sincere appreciation for the fact that what you do here impacts on people's lives," said Johnson.

On behalf of many of the staffers present, chief clerk Larry Warden presented Johnson with a series of gifts, including a wagon, an umbrella and a statue of a golfer leaning against a club. Warden said the wagon would remind Johnson of the House's delivery system, that the umbrella would serve to remind the outgoing speaker of his discussions concerning the Rainy Day fund that the statue represented the staff's hopes that Johnson would "always have great fairways and greens."

—SHAWN ASHLEY  
11/14/96

## VOSKUHL, MORGAN 'WIN' LEGISLATIVE SEATS

■(GIT) More than a week after the votes were originally counted, residents of state House District 41 and state Senate District 21 have duly elected legislators.

In a decision reached late Wednesday and a recount completed Thursday, incumbent Sean Voskuhl, D-Marshall, was declared the winner in the House District 21. Voskuhl's apparent 11-vote victory last week was challenged by his Republican opponent, Curt Roggow, of Enid.

Roggow demanded a recount of the ballots cast in the three counties in the district and also alleged irregularities in some of the votes cast for Voskuhl. In the recount, which was completed Thursday, Voskuhl gained seven additional votes, State Election Board Secretary Lance Ward said, while Roggow neither gained nor lost any, giving the incumbent an 18-vote advantage over his opponent. In a ruling issued Wednesday, the allegations of voter irregularities were dismissed, Ward said.

The conclusions mean Voskuhl remains the unofficial winner until Monday when the State Election Board will vote to certify the results.

Also on Thursday, a judge dismissed the allegations of Stillwater Republican Randy Wedel concerning some voting irregularities

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*"A man who is good enough to shed his blood for his country is good enough to be given a square deal afterwards. More than that no man is entitled to, and less than that no man shall have."*

*Theodore Roosevelt  
speech in Springfield, Illinois  
July 4, 1903*