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June 28, 2020

Oklahoma Bankers Association
643 N E 41st Street
Oklahoma City, OK

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am pleased to have the opportunity to submit this letter of recommendation for your consideration of Shirley Barber to be inducted into your Hall of Fame.

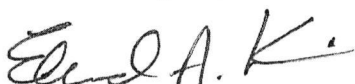
I've known Shirley for almost thirty years having met her with I was with Liberty Bank's broker/dealer. She may not be one of a kind but I think she's pretty close to it – a woman who succeeded in the spirit of a great plains pioneer, who excelled without fanfare, by becoming the President of a rural Oklahoma community bank at a time when female CEO's were a rarity. She worked to learn the business of banking by attending OBA and Graduate level banking programs. Shirley recognized that she could not only give back to the industry but would continue learn and grow through her involvement in the OBA (serving as the OBA's first female Board member) and other banking trade organizations.

Shirley became a Vice President and Director of Security State Bank, Cheyenne, in 1970, Vice Chairman in 1977 and CEO in 1988. Shirley had a wonderful banking career spanning almost five decades. Serving the ranchers, farmers, families and businesses of Cheyenne, Roger Mills County and the surround area was her passion. Shirley's life as a banker was certainly exemplary but as you look deeper into whom she is as a person we can be reminded of the Old Testament book of Micah which gives guidance as to how we should live every day: Do justice, Love kindness and Walk humbly with God. That describes her to a T. She was active in the local chamber of commerce and the Roger Mills County Health Care Foundation in addition to leading the Bank.

I remember running to Shirley and Wayne, her husband, at Will Rogers airport several times. As I remember she was always nattily dressed, usually wearing a colorful jacket. Always excited to talk about the good things happening in Cheyenne and at SSB, she was a proud Oklahoma banker!

I hope you will strongly consider Shirley Barber as a worthy candidate for your Hall of Fame. I can think of no better banker and no better person.

Warmest regards,





THE STOCK EXCHANGE BANK

BRUCE T. BENBROOK

Chairman of the Board
President

June 24, 2020

OBA Bankers Hall of Fame
Selection Committee

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to serve as a reference for Ms. Shirley Barber and her nomination for induction into the OBA Bankers Hall of Fame. I have had the good fortune to know Shirley for over 40 years and have seen her be an outstanding banker, leader, and a devoted community servant in numerous ways.

Her career started in 1956 as a bookkeeper at Security State Bank in Cheyenne and led to her being named CEO of the bank in 1988. She retired in 2005 after blazing the trail for women bankers throughout our state. She served a chairwoman of the Women's Division of the OBA and became the first female director of the OBA. She served on numerous other OBA committees and was always willing to serve the industry when called upon.

Shirley always found time for her children and grandchildren, supporting them in their many activities.

She was a leader in the Cheyenne community serving on the board of the Chamber of Commerce and the Roger Mills County Health Care Foundation.

Shirley is well-respected and loved by all of her fellow employees and bankers she worked with in Cheyenne and across the state. She would be an outstanding addition to the OBA Bankers Hall of Fame.

If you need other information, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

Bruce T. Benbrook



Larry Briggs
President / CEO

January 24, 2020

RE: Shirley Barber

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure and pride that I recommend Shirley Barber to the Oklahoma Bankers Association Hall of Fame. Mrs. Barber epitomizes a Hall of Fame banker.

I have had the opportunity to know Mrs. Barber since I was a child. She grew up in Roger Mills County, as did I. Because of that, I had the opportunity as a young person to see the respect and admiration that the community had for her.

She loved her customers, her communities, and her staff. She treated everyone with respect and dignity and they knew they would get treated fairly and honestly. My mother worked in the bank in the bookkeeping department and she would make comment on many occasions of how good of banker that Shirley was. The respect that my mom felt for her was indicative of the whole community.

She broke several glass ceiling barriers by becoming one of the first female officers in the Oklahoma banking industry. She also set the stage for others by becoming chairman, vice chairman, president and CEO.

She was active in banking associations and served in several capacities in those organizations. I had the privilege to appoint her the first female board of director of the Oklahoma Bankers Association in 1989. She did an outstanding job in leadership roles in those organizations.

Shirley Barber is a person of character. She is honest, trustworthy, reliable, and an all around good person. Again it is with great pleasure that I submit Shirley Barber as a candidate for the Oklahoma Bankers Association Hall of Fame.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Larry Briggs".

Larry Briggs
President/CEO



June 23, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

I offer this letter in support of the nomination of Ms. Shirley Barber for the Oklahoma Bankers Hall of Fame.

Ms. Shirley was a trail blazer for women in the banking industry when women weren't considered trail blazers. One of the first women in Oklahoma to hold the office of CEO and President, the first woman to set as a Director of the Oklahoma Bankers Association. A leader of women within the OBA and regional banking organizations, a mentor to all.

I first came to know Shirley when I started attending Oklahoma Bankers Conventions in the mid to late 1990s. Shirley, and her husband Wayne, were some of the first bankers I met while attending the convention. She thanked me for attending and encouraged me very strongly to get involved with the OBA and take advantage of what they had to offer. Over the next few years Shirley would be sure to look me up during convention to find out what I was up to and if I was getting involved. Shirley was typical of all bankers, never seeking fame or glory, but always looking for ways to serve and encourage. I can think of no other person more deserving of this prestigious award, Oklahoma Bankers Hall of Fame.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David J. Cook', is written over a horizontal line.

David J. Cook

President/CEO

Bank of Laverne

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To the Oklahoma Bankers Association

RE OBA Hall of Honor

I would highly recommend Shirley Barber to be inducted into the Oklahoma Bankers Association Hall of Honor. She was a great banker for almost fifty years, a farmer, a mother and a wife and grandmother. Mr. Red Males, whose family owns Security State Bank of Cheyenne took her under his wings and made her a great community banker. Shirley was a trailblazer for females in the banking industry. In 1980, She was the first female director of the Oklahoma Banker Association and served on the Agriculture Committee and the government relations council.

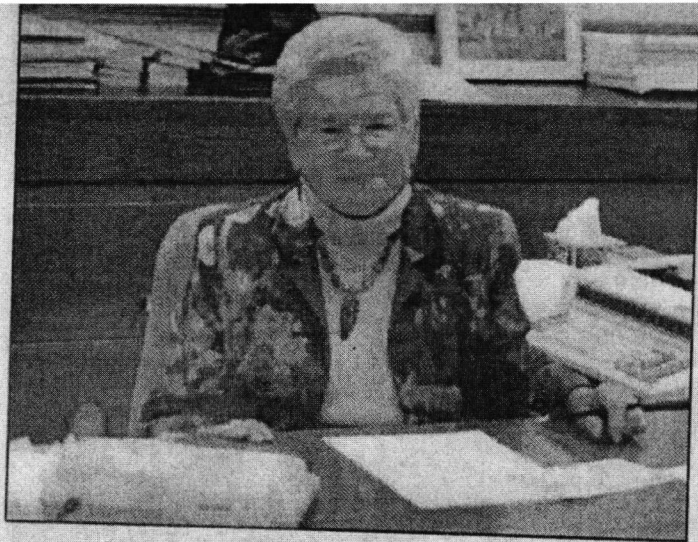
After starting her career in 1956 in the bookkeeping department, she rose to be the President and CEO in 1990. I first met Shirley in the mid 1970's from an introduction by her boss Red Males and was impressed the very first time I met her.

Shirley Barber is an excellent selection to be inducted into the Oklahoma Bankers Association Hall of Honor.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Will B. Strecker".

William B. Strecker, Vice President

BOK Financial



Shirley Barber

Reception Set for Shirley Barber

Shirley Barber, CEO of Security State Bank, is retiring after 49 years of service.

The public is invited to a retirement reception from 1-4 p.m., Friday, December 16, at the bank.

Her banking career began in the bookkeeping department of Security State Bank in March 1956. Shirley has worked in all departments of the bank.

She was elected Assistant Cashier in January 1966; Vice-President in January 1970; Vice-Chairman and Vice-President in January 1977; President and Chief Executive Officer in January 1990.

Shirley graduated from Cheyenne High School in 1953. She attended the Intermediate School of Banking in Stillwater and graduated from the Graduate School of Banking in Madison, Wisconsin and the American Bankers Association Investment School, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas.

Shirley has served on numerous committees of the Oklahoma Bankers Association. She is the first woman to have served as a director of the Oklahoma Bankers Association. She has served as President and Director of Western Bankers. Shirley has also served as Chairman and Public

Affairs Chairman of the Western Plains Group of National Association of Bank Women.

Shirley also served her community as a board of director for the Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce and as secretary and treasurer of the Roger Mills County Health Care Foundation.

Shirley and husband, Wayne, have two children, Bruce and Cindy and eight grandchildren. They always participate in all their children's activities and were class parents for both. They also love attending their grandchildren's activities. They are members of the Cheyenne Church of Christ.

Shirley Barber Named First Woman To Okla. Banking Board



Shirley Barber is Vice Chairman of the Board and Executive Vice President of Security State Bank in Cheyenne. Since joining the bank in 1956, Barber has worked in all departments, currently serving as loan officer. She is a graduate of the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin and a past chairman of the Oklahoma Bankers Association's Women's Division. An active member of the National Association of Bank Women, Inc., she has served as group chairman of the NABW Western Plains Group and currently serves as a member of the NABW State Council Executive Committee.

Shirley



SHIRLEY BARBER ELECTED STATE BANK VICE-CHAIRMAN

Mrs. Wayne Barber of Roll has just been elected to a state-wide office in the Bankers Association.

Mrs. Barber is now serving as Vice-President in the Security State Bank of Cheyenne, Oklahoma. During the past two years Shirley has been on the Women's Committee of Directors which was composed of ten women from across the state of Oklahoma. At this year's

meeting she was elected as Vice-Chairman of the Women's Division of the Oklahoma Bankers Association. Shirley will hold this post one year and automatically be elected to Chairman where she will serve a two year term.

At the Seminary held this past March, 350 women attended to better prepare themselves for the openings that may occur in the banks.

Shirley Barber Appointed To O.B.A. Committee



The Oklahoma Bankers Association has appointed several Oklahoma bankers to serve on OBA committees for 1983-84. Among those selected was Shirley Barber, Vice-President of Security State Bank of Cheyenne, OK to the Federal Government

Relations Committee.

Shirley has been employed by the bank since 1956.

She has served on Agricultural committee, chairman of Women's Committee, and the Board of Directors.



BANK WOMEN — Holding the proclamation signed by Gov. George Nigh declaring the week of April 8 as National Association of Bank Women Week, are Virginia Meadows, President of Washita State Bank, Burns Flat, and Shirley Barber, Exec. Vice President of Security State Bank, Cheyenne. Both women serve as co-chairmen of the NABW State Conference to be held in Elk City April 13, 14 and 15.

Back to *Oklahoma Banker* Archives

Shattering the 'glass ceiling'

Women are dispelling stereotypes in the banking industry.

By Heather Loveridge

Communications Assistant

They're on the move. And they're pushing the so-called "glass ceiling" higher and higher. Women in banking are changing the face of the once male-dominated industry.

But the road they travel hasn't been easy — and though many have tried to smooth out the bumps, a few still remain. For some women it's been a long, hard climb — facing resistance. For others, it has been more of an uphill stroll. But they all agree that the climb is steadily becoming easier.

According to the article "How Long Will Women Have to Wait?" in the January 2003 issue of *US Banker*, 75 percent of banking's workforce is female, but less than 25 percent of those in top management are women. There is good news though, when you consider how the numbers have changed over the years. In the early '80s, about 36 percent of those in middle management were women, and by the late '90s, that number had increased to approximately 50 percent, stated the *US Banker*. Quite a change from decades past. Consider what this California female bank director had to say: "At present it may be doubted whether the general public would place so much confidence in a woman banker as in a man; and an equal confidence is precisely what women, as bankers, must learn to deserve. There is reason to think they can do so, as they have already in other businesses," Mrs. Phoebe M. Rideout, *California Magazine*, San Francisco, 1915!

Today's public opinion has altered quite a bit, and women have succeeded in making their presence known in banking's upper management. Here in Oklahoma, we have exactly 16 female bank leaders (current at time of story) — ranging from CEOs, presidents and chairmen to a combination of all three.

So here's a look at Oklahoma's female bankers, from their beginnings in banking to their advice for other women seeking to move into upper management.

Everyone has to start somewhere

Many of our state's female bankers got their start early in life, working during summers in high school, and never looked back. Some planned to pursue banking, while for others, it was an avenue they hadn't considered, but were glad they tried.

"I had never thought about banking until Bob McCormack from Stillwater National Bank asked me to work at the bank. I was active in the community and had gotten to know him through community work. He recruited me and convinced me to try banking," said Terry Almon, CEO of Arkansas Valley State Bank in Broken Arrow."

For some, banking was in their blood — literally.

"My family's business is banking...my grandfather, W.D. Myers, purchased what is now the Central National Bank of Alva in 1919. I worked there during the summers through high school and then as a teller during college. I didn't leave Central National until April 2001, when I became chairman at Hopeton State Bank in Hopeton," said Mary Margaret Myers.

Like Myers, Roma Lee Porter, chairman of The City National Bank and Trust Company in Lawton, also had a banking family. "My father bought the bank in 1931. I started working there when I was 16, during the summers, and after college I worked there full-time. When my father passed away in 1975, my sister, Zelda Davis — chairman of Fort Sill National Bank — and I really became active in the banks."

Others even married into banking.

After high school, Betty Wolfe started as teller at the "gold dome" (known as Citizens State Bank) in Oklahoma City then married a bank examiner. In 1965, she and her husband bought Carney State Bank, and she became president in 1983 after her husband passed away.

Gender bias — a rung to the top?

Many of Oklahoma's female bankers think Gender bias is becoming a thing of the past. Some say they never experienced any gender bias, while others think it is still prevalent.

"I had one person that didn't like dealing with me because I was a woman, but overall there hasn't been any difference. Everyone has been fair and receptive," said Wolfe.

Carolyn Tooley, president and CEO of Pontotoc County Bank in Roff commented, "I would definitely say there is a gender bias, but it's not as bad now as it was. It's evened out in the past 10 years."

But some feel differently. "There hasn't been any gender bias that I've seen. I think the industry has probably been pretty receptive to women," said Susan Loosen, president and chairman of First Bank of Okarche in Okarche.

While they may disagree on bias, most of them agree on what it takes to make it to the top.

They stress having a college education, getting all the banking education available, dressing for the position you want, getting involved in community activities, having a mentor, working hard...even harder than their male counterparts.

"You have to show performance, be motivated and do better than the men — at least 10 percent better," said Tooley.

Almon added more to that. "Be very, very good at what you do. Be inclusive of all people, no matter their gender or race. Women shouldn't try to eliminate bias by making deals that are biased towards one particular area," she said.

Gwen Easter, president and CEO of First Bank and Trust Co. in Perry felt strongly that "women must focus on specific goals in their professional career and be committed to community service to achieve the jobs they want. They have to concentrate on the opportunities that will make them visible and assure that their credentials are impeccable. Women may have to work harder than the men do. They have to have higher aspirations, and be intentional about the choices they make because the opportunities are definitely there if they they aim for them and believe in their ability."

The juggling act — career and children

Well, one resounding opinion on this issue was...it's easier in a small town. Managing a career and children is never easy to begin with, but working at a community bank definitely helps. As one banker put it, there are better neighbors and a more committed community in a small town.

"It's always a challenge to balance work and family because you have to be involved in the community so much, but it's worth it. I have two daughters and have been able to take family vacations and be there for the important things. It's easier in a small town. I understand how it is. I let my employees take time to attend their kids' activities and it all works out. I think it also takes a spiritual commitment — we always went to church together," said Easter.

Being a banker takes a tremendous amount of dedication and time and oftentimes takes precedence over other issues. "Women cannot be top executives without making their job a top priority," said Wanda Bass, chairman of First National Bank and Trust Company in McAlester.

For Wolfe, a small community was a blessing. The year after her husband passed away, she became president and had five children, ages eight to 18, to raise. "Because of being in a small town, I was able to take off when I needed to."

But even with the pressures and obstacles the women have had to overcome, they say the journey has been very rewarding.

Banking's rewards

When all is said and done, though the climb may be rough at times, Oklahoma's female bankers have had few regrets and many rewarding experiences.

"Being able to mentor others, working with my employees, giving them opportunities, seeing them grow and reach levels they thought they couldn't — that's rewarding. Banking is about serving people, growing customers and helping them achieve their goals and dreams," said Almon.

For some of the bankers, watching their bank survive and grow through the years has made it all worthwhile.

"Being able to have the bank come through the 1980s when most small banks failed, that has been the most rewarding," said Wolfe.

Echoing her thought, Shirley Barber, president and CEO of Security State Bank in Cheyenne, said, "For me, seeing the bank continue to be the main thing in our community and having the loyalty and respect of the county has been the most satisfying."

The future of Oklahoma's female bankers has never looked better. Middle management's ranks are swelling with women, and the future is bright for the state's women banking leaders.

As Loosen said, "We've passed the glass ceiling. Women have an excellent future, they can do anything they want to do!"

To subscribe to *Oklahoma Banker*, contact Jeremy Cowen at 405-424-5252 or jeremy@oba.com.