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HUMANITIES

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**The Smithsonian Makes a Final Stop in Oklahoma**

*Voices and Votes: Democracy in America*

(Oklahoma City—December 3, 2024) – Small towns and suburbs play large roles in American democracy. The state of our union and the progress we make falls to each of us and unfolds not only in the marbled halls of Congress, but in corner cafes, on main streets, down red dirt roads, and across rural and suburban America.

Starting December 14, Bethany Library is inviting the public to explore and reflect on the responsibilities of citizenship when they host *Voices and Votes: Democracy in America*, a traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian’s *Museum on Main Street (MoMS)* program. Running for six weeks, it will be the final stop in the state, having previously traveled to the Nowata Historical Society & Museum, the Bristow Train Depot & Museum, Anadarko Community Library, Cheyenne-Roger Mills County Chamber of Commerce and Tourism, and the Al Harris Library at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford.

“As Americans we share a responsibility,” said OH Executive Director Caroline Lowery. “Democracy requires work and reflection and to better understand our current state, we must look to the past. I invite all Oklahomans to join in this endeavor and experience *Voices and Votes*.”

*Voices and Votes* is based on a major exhibition currently on display at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History and includes many of the same dynamic features: historical and contemporary photos; educational and archival video; engaging multimedia interactives with short games and additional footage, photos, and information; and historical objects like campaign souvenirs, voter memorabilia, and protest material.

Designed for small-town museums, libraries and cultural organizations, *Voices and Votes* invites the community into conversation about our country’s complex history founded on dialogue, debate, and dissent as they consider the exhibition’s key questions:

- Who has the right to vote?

- What are the freedoms and responsibilities of citizens?
- Whose voices will be heard?
- How do you participate as a citizen?

Don't miss the chance to experience the Smithsonian right here in Oklahoma. The Revolution. Civil Rights. Suffrage. Elections. Protests. Citizenship and more. See how voices and votes shape not only the past, but the present.

Learn more at [okhumanities.org](http://okhumanities.org).

### **About *Voices and Votes: Democracy in America***

*Voices and Votes: Democracy in America* is part of *Museum on Main Street*, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and State Humanities Councils nationwide. It is based on an exhibition by the National Museum of American History. Support for *Museum on Main Street* has been provided by the United States Congress. Local support has been provided by The Carolyn Watson Rural Oklahoma Community Foundation (an affiliate of the Oklahoma City Community Foundation), The Stuart Family Foundation, The Gerald H. Westby Jr. Foundation, The Southwestern Urban Foundation: John E. Green Community Fund, 2 Fellas Moving Company, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. To learn more about *Voices and Votes: Democracy in America* and other Museum on Main Street exhibitions, visit [www.museumonmainstreet.org](http://www.museumonmainstreet.org).

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### **About *Museum on Main Street***

Since 1994, *Museum on Main Street* has worked with State Humanities Councils to empower more than 1,800 rural communities through specifically designed exhibitions and public programming. Hosted by libraries, museums, and cultural organizations, each examines elements of rural history, encourages discussion and participation, and helps establish local agency.

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### **About Oklahoma Humanities:**

Oklahoma Humanities (OH) is an independent, nonprofit organization whose mission is to strengthen communities by helping Oklahomans learn about the human experience, understand new perspectives, and participate knowledgeably in civic life. As the state partner for the National Endowment for the Humanities, OH is a grantmaking organization that provides a free educational magazine, Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibits, reading and discussion groups, and other cultural opportunities for Oklahomans of all ages. OH engages people in their own communities, stimulating discussion and helping them explore the wider world of human experience, through humanities disciplines such as history, literature, film studies, ethics, and philosophy.

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