



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF NEW ORLEANS

LEAGUE ESSENTIALS

Volume 54, Issue 3

November/December 2011

AN INVITATION TO OUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY EVENT



WHEN: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4TH FROM 1:00-3:00 P.M.

PLACE: THE HOME OF LEAGUE MEMBER
REGINA BARTHOLOMEW ON BAYOU ST. JOHN @
5618 BANCROFT DRIVE

FEATURING: AUTHOR STEPHANIE BRUNO WHO WILL PRESENT HER
NEW BOOK "NEW ORLEANS STREETS:
A WALKER'S GUIDE TO NEIGHBORHOOD ARCHITECTURE"

AND
FLUTIST ESTELLE CAMPAGNE

ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO BRING A GUEST

FOOD PREPARED BY MARTIN'S WINE CELLAR, WHITE WINE AND LIGHT BEVERAGES WILL BE SERVED
RSVP TO LWVNO OFFICE 504-581-9106



Message from the President

Dear Members,

Reflecting on our current year so far I realized how much we have accomplished (see next page) with much more to come. My question to you is; how can we do better? What would you like to see happening within our organization? Is there anything that you see that we are not addressing? And, if you can think of anything, is there any way you can assist in realizing your particular vision for the LWVNO?

Best Wishes to you and yours for a Happy and Joyous Holiday Season, looking forward to seeing you at our fabulously beautiful Holiday Event!

Judy Fisher

Of Special Note

Lela Neff has resigned from the board to focus her attention on starting her new business. She will, however, complete her fascinating LWVNO Visions video project- Extra Warm Wishes and Love to Lela

Welcome New Members! ***Bridget B Carter and Joyce Corrington***

We are especially grateful to our members who have made extra generous donations, you have helped make our efforts so much more effective.

News from the Environmental Committee

Wendy King, Environmental Committee Chair

At the LWVNO's most recent environmental committee meeting, we discussed the LWVUS' Clean Air Promise, and how it might be applied to our city's and area's clean air issues. We will be drafting a letter to several environmental groups, to see what we can do, to support their work. We're also interested in setting up a forum to discuss environmental issues, such as clean air, with groups with wide-ranging viewpoints. We're also planning to take LWVNO members out to Jean Lafitte National Park, for a talk, and hike/walk through the park, in the early spring. Details are in the works!

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News Update from our state League

Thetis Cusimano, LWVLA President

Thanks to the New Orleans League for sharing their knowledge, time and experience as we re-vamp our state League. Here are some highlights;

- Co-hosted the state convention in April at the lovely and historic Columns Hotel
- Sent a full 13 members delegation to the convention
- Added three members to be on the state board; Althea Lawes, Sandra Trahan and Lea Young
- Sandra Trahan and I attended the LWVUS Council in Washington DC
- Hosted a very informative field trip to Port Fourchon for all members and guests
- Assisted with the statewide candidates election questions, Thanks to Linda Walker, Ann Meese
- Participation in the Groundwater Commission hearing
- Initiating a request for national advocacy on coastal restoration bills currently in Congress
- Thanks to Ann Meese for initiating and chairing the Universal Pr-K study

LWVNO Activities Report since July 1st

- ❖ **On July 23rd we held a general meeting to discuss and gain consensus on our fascinating Election Study; Celebrate or Vote? Does the election cycle affect voting in Orleans Parish.**
- ❖ **In August we were stationed in the Court House to greet candidates and hand out LWVNO materials, we also developed candidate questionnaires then answers were posted at LWVofLA.org.**
- ❖ **Our Environmental Committee has initiated the LWVUS Clean Air Promise Campaign and is planning to conduct a forum on how our air quality standards are measured, etc. AND they are planning a field trip in the early spring to Jean Lafitte National Park for the seasonal bird migration and wild iris celebration.**
- ❖ **Our Education Committee is planning to focus on high school performance academic, performance and drop out rates.**
- ❖ **In September we held a panel discussion "The Effects of Redistricting on Orleans and Jefferson Parishes".**
- ❖ **We have been represented at a "Grab the Vote" event, WBOK radio to discuss the constitutional amendments, and the feminist film series at Newcomb/Tulane.**
- ❖ **We have nominated Lea Young, our current treasurer and LWVLA Board member and past LWVNO President, for the LWVUS board.**
- ❖ **A Privatization Committee was formed. They have been meeting to discuss their direction.**
- ❖ **We are wrapping up the "Visions" production of interviews with League members and their vision for the future of the League. We plan to unveil the project at a future new member recruitment event yet to be determined.**
- ❖ **On October 3rd LWVNO released their candidate information on the website for voters. By the October 11 primary election, the website had received 11,000 visits. This was without any publicity.**
- ❖ **The LWVNO has requested that our the LWVLA President coordinate with the LWVUS for permission to advocate for the "Restore the Gulf Acts"**

Public High Schools in New Orleans Can the Performance Gap between Schools be Narrowed?

Ann L. Meese PhD, Education Chair

Public high schools in New Orleans on average were performing poorly before Katrina. However, a small number of schools with selective admissions policies were high performing although they had significantly fewer minority students and low income students than did the open enrollment schools. These high schools remained in the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) while post Katrina most of the other high schools were taken over by the state initiated Recovery School District (RSD).

There has been progress since Katrina according to John White, Superintendent: "Five years ago, only 23% of RSD student scored at or above "basic" on state tests. This year, 48% of students achieved that mark. Among special education students, the number in New Orleans jumped from 11% to 36%...but it means only half of our students are on track for career or college. Students with special needs, over-aged students and too many young men are not achieving at the rate of their peers."

White promises that charter and traditional schools with students who are not reading and/or not graduating will be overhauled. He is committed to a citywide enrollment system, to a diverse portfolio of high schools, including career and technical skills, and a facilities plan that puts every child in a new or renovated building. Direct parent assistance phone lines have been installed.

The League of Women Voters Education Committee is sponsoring a spring member meeting on high school progress and continuing challenges. If you wish to be a part of designing that program, please contact Ann Meese (218-8985 or ameese@cox.net).

The table below shows the results of the 2010-2011 school year:

	<u>Oct.</u>	<u>% F/R</u>	<u>% Afr-</u>	<u>10/11</u>	<u>10/11</u>
<u>OPSB Charter H. Schools</u>	<u>t</u>	<u>Lunch</u>	<u>Amer.</u>	<u>Perf.</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Benjamin Franklin 9-12	657	29%	30%	169.8	A
Edna Karr 9-12	875	75%	93%	87.6	B+
Lusher Charter School K-12	1636	27%	34%	146.2	A+
N.O. Science & Math 9-12	349	69%	87%	81	B+
Warren Easton 9 -12	864	84%	97%	92.6	A+

<u>OPSB Run High Schools</u>	<u>Oct.</u> <u>Coun</u> <u>t</u>	<u>% F/R</u> <u>Lunch</u>	<u>% Afr-</u> <u>Amer.</u>	<u>10/11</u> <u>Perf.</u>	<u>10/11</u> <u>Grade</u>
Eleanor McMain 7-12	639	78%	93%	88.9	B+

<u>OPSB Charter H. Schools</u>	<u>Oct.</u> <u>Coun</u> <u>t</u>	<u>% F/R</u> <u>Lunch</u>	<u>% Afr-</u> <u>Amer.</u>	<u>10/11</u> <u>Perf.</u>	<u>10/11</u> <u>Grade</u>
Priestly Arch./Const. 9-12	268	79%	99%	56.6	
Alt. Lng. Institute 8-12	103	100%	100%	NA	
Youth Study Center 4-12	21	100%	100%	NA	

<u>RSD Charter High Schools</u>	<u>Oct.</u> <u>Coun</u> <u>t</u>	<u>% F/R</u> <u>Lunch</u>	<u>% Afr-</u> <u>Amer.</u>	<u>10/11</u> <u>Perf.</u>	<u>10/11</u> <u>Grade</u>
Abramson Sc. & Tech. k-12	591	80%	91%	78	D
Algiers Tech. Acad. 9-12	330	88%	93%	55	D+
Miller-McCoy Acad. 5-11	533%	72%	99%	70%	D
NO Sc. & Math Acad. 9-11	210	89%	98%	89.2	C
O. P. Walker 9-12	874	95%	99%	68.4	C+
Sojourner Truth 9-11	248	91%	94%	53.5	F-
Sophie Wright 6-12	405	100%	96%	83	D
Thurgood Marshall 9-12	387	88%	98%	NA	D

<u>RSD Run High Schools</u>	<u>Oct.</u> <u>Coun</u> <u>t</u>	<u>% F/R</u> <u>Lunch</u>	<u>% Afr-</u> <u>Amer.</u>	<u>10/11</u> <u>Perf.</u>	<u>10/11</u> <u>Grade</u>
G.W, Carver	401	79%	99%	31.9	F+ Acad, unacceptable
Greater Gentilly 9-11	258	79%	96%	47.3	
Hope Academy 7-12	165	75%	100%	NA	
John McDonogh Sr.	556	77%	99%	32.2	F+ acad. Unacceptable
Joseph S. Clark 9-12	72%	97%	23%		
L.B. Landry 7-10	561	75%	98%	NA	F
N.O. Career Academy 9	89	78%	93%	NA	
Rabouin Career Mag. 12	12	58%	92%	19.8	
Sarah Towles Reed 9-12	564	78%	92%	34.9	F Unacceptable
Schwartz Alter. 7-12	130	80%	100%	NA	F Unacceptable
Walter L. Cohen 9-12	418	77%	99%	28.2	F+ Unacceptable

<u>BESE Charter High Schools</u>	<u>Oct.#</u> <u>s</u>	<u>% F/R L</u>	<u>% Afr-</u> <u>Amer.</u>	<u>10/11Perf</u> <u>.</u>	<u>10/11 Grade</u>
International 9-10	167	90%	62%	NA	

2011-12 LWVNO Board of Directors



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Judy Fisher: President
Lela Neff: 1st Vice President
Rosalind B. Cook: 2nd Vice-President
Lea Young: Treasurer
Elizabeth Pape: Secretary
Board Members can be reached by leaving a message at the LWVNO office, 504-581-9106

DIRECTORS:

Wendy King: Environment
Ann L. Meese: Education
Aimee Bussells: Membership Chair
Francine Giugno: Co-Chair Membership
Marie Williams: Director

The General Election is on November 19th



A LWVNO Election Study update will follow in the next newsletter with information on the drafting of the legislation and the lobbying efforts to follow.



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DON'T FORGET OUR HOLIDAY PARTY ON DECEMBER 4TH!