



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF NEW ORLEANS

LEAGUE ESSENTIALS

Volume 54, Issue 4

January/February 2012

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WHAT: 3 Meetings, Education Committee Meetings

WHEN: Wednesday, January 18th 7:00 - 8:30 pm
Thursday, January 19th 9:00 - 10:30 am
Friday, January 20th 2:00 - 3:30 pm

WHERE: At the home of committee chair, Dr. Ann Meese
3 meetings have been scheduled in hopes that those who would like to participate will be able to make 1 of them, to RSVP or for further info call 504-218- 8985

WHAT: Privatization Committee Meeting

WHEN: Tues day, January 31st @ 7:00pm

WHERE: The LWVNO office at 1215 Prytania, Suite 212
Call Annemarie Dewey at 504-319-7627 to RSVP

WHAT: Spring Field Trip

WHEN: Saturday, March 31st @ 10:00 A.M.

WHERE: Jean Lafitte National Park, Barataria Visitor Center
cost is \$15 and includes a trail tour & birding info & a special bag lunch please call 504-581-9106 to rsvp

P.S. Our Annual Meeting luncheon will be held on June 2nd

Upcoming Election Schedule

For detailed Voter Information please see our website @ www.lwvno.org

March 24, Saturday
Presidential Preference Primary and General Municipal Primary
Early Voting: March 10 - March 17
April 21, Saturday
General Municipal Election
Early Voting: April 7 - April 14

VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINES:
February 22, 2012, for March 24 Primary Election
March 21, 2012, for April 21 General Municipal Election

FOR VOTER REGISTRATION ON-LINE, go to <http://WWW.GEAUXVOTE.COM>

MAIL BALLOT DEADLINES:
March 24 Primary Election:
Request for Mail Ballot 1/24/2012 - 3/20/2012
Return Mail Ballot by 3/23/2012

April 21 General Election:
Request for Mail Ballot 2/21/2012 - 4/17/2012
Return Mail Ballot by 4/20/2012



Letter from the President

Dear Members,

As we enter the Mardi Gras season I can't help but remember why some the LWVNO leaders embarked on the Election Study, "Celebrate or Vote" Does the Calendar affect voting in Orleans Parish? Fortunately, there are no election schedule conflicts with football or Mardi Gras this year!

The study reminds me that LWVNO members initiate important civic actions in the community, there are articles in this edition written by members who lead committees and they are providing several opportunities to either get involved or become more involved with the League, all are welcome!

Judy Fisher

2011-12 LWVNO Board of Directors

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Judy Fisher: President
Rosalind B. Cook: 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:

Rosalind Cook: Voter Services
Wendy King: Environment
Ann L. Meese: Education
Aimee Bussells: Membership
Francine Giugno: Co-Chair Membership
Marie Williams: Director
Sandra Trahan: Director



Candidate Information for the Orleans Parish Juvenile Justice and Council At Large positions will be posted on our website by February 15th



Of Special Note

- ❖ The Bohn-Weil Foundation has made a generous donation the LWVNO Education Fund in honor of Evelyn Christman. Ms. Christman, who is a 50 year LWV member served as the former president of the LWVNO and LWVLA.

Thank-you!



Welcome New Members!

*Eugene Green, Jr. ~ Yvonne Mitchell-Grubb ~ Jordan Hirsch
Clare Jupiter ~ Mary Stern ~ Tracie Washington*



Environmental Committee Update-Wendy King, Committee Chair

Clean Air Promise Campaign (LWVUS-sponsored project);

I have begun drafting a letter to be sent to New Orleans-area and state environmental groups, to ask what we can do, to support their work. We are also interested in setting up a forum (no date, time, or place, as yet), to discuss environmental issues, such as clean air, with groups with wide-ranging viewpoints.

Our nature walk and talk in Jean Lafitte National Park is March 31st, beginning at 10 a.m. Cost is \$15 per person (Please see announcement in this newsletter, for more details). Please RSVP at 504-581-9106, so we'll know how many are coming.

Please look for an update on the Restore Act written by the Director of the Gulf Restoration Network included in this newsletter.

Privatization Committee Update- Annemarie Dewey, Committee Chair

There is good news regarding the League's Privatization study. The National office had posted the Privatization Site including the consensus questions. For those of you who would like to checkout this site, I will post the link. You may find it a bit hard to navigate. Here it is: <http://lwv.org/member-resources/privatization>

There is more good news though. The Saint Tammany League has all the necessary documents on their web site in easy accessible pdf form. Here is that site: <http://lwvofst.org/studies/privatization-study/>

Since this is my first League study, I have been coached on how we proceed. Here goes:

1. We will meet Tuesday, January 31, 2012 at the League office at 7:00pm. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.
2. Everyone interested in attending should print a copy of the consensus questions from the Tammany site, for us to discuss. (This is a four page, double spaced document. I will bring a few extra copies).
3. I will also bring copies of, or summaries of the rest of the documents(some documents are rather long)
4. At this same meeting, we will assign the readings, and pick dates to discuss them.
5. Mid April, we revisit the consensus questions, and arrive at our consensus in time to submit our response the National in early May.
6. If you have any questions or suggestion, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Looking forward to our work, Annemarie Dewey

P.S.For those of you who are interested, I also managed to get myself on the League Privatization mailing list. I received an ocean of emails, most of which were interesting as background information. I filed most of them in my gmail, and can access them if I need them. I also bought two books that I learned about from these emails. One is, *You Don't Always Get What You Pay for - the Economics of Privatization*, by Elliott D. Sclar. The other is, *All that We Own Together, a Field Guide to the Commons*, by JayWalljasper. If anyone would like to borrow either one, let me know.

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Calling All Retired Teachers by Lea Young, Treasurer

Remember when we toured Parish Prison? Member Marian Bourgeois saw a need and immediately volunteered to assist the prison teachers with their task to help young prisoners achieve the goal of attaining a GED. A chance to reform and build a new life is what you can do if you spend a few hours per week teaching them. For info call Marian at 891-5430 or call the prison teachers Debby Pulkowski or Jackie Moss at 827-8556. It is a real eye opener and also very rewarding!

Early Childhood Pre-School for 4's Coalition State LWV Proposed Project

By Dr. Ann Meese, LWVNO, Chair

GOAL: To stabilize and permanently fund a high-quality Pre-Kindergarten System for Four Year Old Louisiana children eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch (F/RL) that meets both national and state standards and accountability measures. (The local, state and national League support this goal so no study or adoption is necessary.)

5 Reasons Why High Quality Pre-K 4 is Especially Important for Low Income Children

- The first five years are the most critical in the development of a child's brain.
- Achievement gaps develop well before children begin kindergarten. (Haskins, R. & Rouse, C. (2005). Closing the Achievement Gaps, The Future of Children, Princeton/Brookings.)
- Children born into disadvantage receive less stimulation and child development resources than children of advantaged families.
- Early learning puts value on acquired skills which leads to self-reinforcing motivation to learn more.
- Early intervention has a much higher economic return than later interventions such as reduced pupil-teacher ratios, public job training, convict rehabilitation programs, adult literacy programs, tuition subsidies, expenditures on police and juvenile detention and incarceration facilities.

Research Results Providing Evidence for Long Term Success in School

- The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) evaluated the effects of state-funded pre- K programs in Michigan, Oklahoma, New Jersey, South Carolina and West Virginia. Positive effects on learning for language, literacy and math were noted as were some other significant impacts.
<http://www.sesp.northwestern.edu/docs/publication/16129652354859671644dba.pdf>
- An evaluation of the Louisiana LA4 programs showed strong gains in learning for language, literacy and mathematics for children of low income families. Gains continued at least through kindergarten and substantial decreases were found in grade repetition and special education. <http://picardcenter.org> (see LA4 Longitudinal Study: The Impact of LA4 Participation on Academic Achievement in 3rd and 4th grade: iLEAP and LEAP Performance for Cohorts 1-4 (August 2011).
- An evaluation of the More at Four (MAF) pre-K program by the University of North Carolina found increased reading and mathematics achievement in third grade for children of low income families. www.fpg.unc.edu/~mafwwal/pdfs/MAF-Yr3_Rpt.pdf

The LWVLA is proposing a coalition of statewide organizations to join in support of lobbying the legislature for fully funding the LA4 program. New Orleans League members who are interested will be asked to help build this coalition and to assist in lobbying the state legislature.

Gulf Recovery Update: Regard the RESTORE ACT

Submitted by Aaron Viles, Director, Gulf Restoration Network

BP's oil continues to wash up in the Gulf, with BP clean up workers removing approximately 250 lbs of tarballs daily from Mississippi barrier islands.

Concerns remain about impacts to marine life, as a recent report from University of South Florida researchers underscores, finding increased numbers of red snapper and other fish with skin lesions (consistent with oil exposure) in the BP impact area. Reporters from the Mobil Press-Register recently found 1/2 their catch afflicted with nasty red sores when surf fishing on Dauphin Island.

BP has committed \$1 billion dollars for early restoration work, as determined by the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) process which is guided by state and federal resource agencies in coordination with BP. The first round of restoration projects has been identified, totaling \$57 million, \$28 million of which are Louisiana projects, doing everything from building wetlands to upgrading an oyster hatchery. Louisiana will end up with at least \$100 million in restoration projects from the NRDA restoration process, possibly quite a bit more, depending on how much damage to Louisiana's natural resources BP's disaster is ultimately linked to.

BP's NRDA process has one fatal flaw... BP can only legally be required to restore the Gulf to the state that it was on April 20, 2010, the day their disaster began affecting the Gulf. At that point it was already an ecosystem in crisis, losing a football field of wetlands every hour, and home to a seasonal dead zone as large as New Jersey.

This is where Senator Mary Landrieu's RESTORE Act comes into play. In addition to the NRDA resources BP is required to commit, the corporation is also on the hook for Clean Water Act fines for the 2 million barrels of oil they illegally spilled into the Gulf. Absent a change in legislation, this \$5 - \$21 billion dollars would flow into the federal treasury.

The RESTORE Act would instead direct 80% of the fines BP pays to Gulf economic and ecosystem restoration, a concept that has been embraced by the White House, and 9 out of 10 Gulf Senators.

Unfortunately, this common-sense, bipartisan legislation may fall prey to DC's toxic culture. Despite being favorably passed out of the Environment and Public Works committee in the Senate, and a hearing on a House companion bill, prospects of passage are far from assured. Very little legislation is making it to the President's desk these days, and as the Republican primary process reaches a fever-pitch, few of the partisan leaders see the value in finding common ground. There will be opportunities to advance the legislation, and groups as diverse as GNO, Inc,

National Wildlife Federation, the American Sportfishing Association, and mayors and other local elected officials from across the Gulf will all be pushing for the bill to become law. Help RESTORE the Gulf by urging Senate leadership to prioritize passage of this important legislation.

Visit <http://BPdrillingdisaster.org> to log in and send a message to your lawmakers today.



Don't forget to "like" the LWVNO on Facebook, [facebook.com/LWVNO](https://www.facebook.com/LWVNO)

**League of Women Voters/N.O.
1215 Prytania, Suite 224
New Orleans, LA 70130
(504) 581-9106**



Annual LWVNO Holiday Party



Held on December 4th, 2011 1:00 PM

Our sincere appreciation to our members who attended, new members who joined us, and our distinguished Author/Speaker Stephanie Bruno who presented her book about New Orleans neighborhoods and knowledge of architecture. Many Thanks to Regina Bartholomew for being such a gracious hostess in her beautiful home on Bayou St John ...on a gorgeous winter day!