



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF LOUISIANA
MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK®



BRIEF LEAGUE REPORTS

summer 2015



LWV OF CADDO-BOSSIER

LWVCB sponsors voter registration drives, but its members also frequently dress as suffragists (circa 1920) when presenting programs in local schools as a way of emphasizing the struggles of those who fought so hard for Democracy, not only on battlefields, but on the streets and in the legislative halls of this country

LWVCB recently began a series of programs of conversations about race. We asked the audience of about 120 people to give the City of Shreveport a letter grade on race relations. Although our panel of academics and public servants addressed the issue in several ways, there was a negative perception by some that we were not addressing the real problems. In June of this year, we supported another program sponsored by a large, diverse group of local organizations. It used a method of storytelling: personal experiences of exclusion and inclusion told first-hand by local, well-known personalities. Feedback is not complete on the efficacy of this approach.



LWV OF LAFAYETTE

In May the Lafayette League planned and facilitated an energy efficiency workshop for residences and small business owners. The planning, organization, preparation, and presentations were approached using a two-pronged format: dividing the tasks into categories (topics, publicity, technology needs, presenters, venue, hospitality) and by specific assignments to the five committee members. Maintaining open dialogue and sharing ideas resulted in the energy efficient workshop's being co-hosted with two governmental entities, a proclamation endorsing the event from the city-parish president, a diverse panel of experts, filming of the event for

widespread viewing, and, true to a league cornerstone, a new registered voter!



LWV OF NATCHITOCHEES (A MAL UNIT)

The League does have a presence in Natchitoches! We were invited to speak at a Forum of the Black History Coalition during their celebration of Black History Month. The Real Views, a local newspaper, invited us to do voter registration during their Juneteenth Celebration. We have had other voter registration events and plan still more before the Fall election.

Meg Fitzhugh, a nurse practitioner whose passion is health care, and Dian Snowden, another of our members, are planning a public forum on that topic with the assistance of Linda Hawkins. We are still a small group but we are growing. Our members are enthusiastic about the League and its mission. Because of this we are considering the steps we need to complete to move beyond our Member-at-Large status and become a full-fledged League.



LWV OF NEW ORLEANS

Officers and the Board members were elected at the LWV of New Orleans 2015 Annual Meeting. At the meeting, the winners of this year's Polly Guthrie Service Awards were introduced: Nathan Martin from Southern University of New Orleans and Eric Gremillion from the University of New Orleans. Both students completed a community service project that improved the quality of life in New Orleans.

The new officers and the board are working on several projects this year: voter registration at naturalization ceremonies; registration drives with other organizations; a forum of candidates (as in the past, in co-ordination with other New Orleans' groups); an Election Guide of candidates for the state legislature from local districts; promoting legislative issues; and creating events to orientate new members.



LWV OF ST. TAMMANY

The LWVST partnered with the East St. Tammany and Greater Covington Chapters of the NAACP to register 476 students to vote during voter registration drives held this month at eight public high schools in St. Tammany Parish. Organized by League voter services volunteer Bonnie Schmidt, the registration drives were held during the high school seniors' lunch period. Schools who participated included Covington, Fontainebleau, Lakeshore, Mandeville, Northshore, Salmen, Slidell, and Pearl River. LWVST hopes to hold voter registration drives annually, and is

always looking for volunteers to assist. Training is provided to all registration drive volunteers.



LWV OF LAKE CHARLES

Recently the LWVLA invited former Lake Charles members to rejoin as members-at-large of the state league. Several former members replied with powerful and positive words about the past work of the LWV-Lake Charles: "great successes," "a pleasure," "productive," "setting benchmarks for countless causes and community concerns." LWVLA recognizes the genuine efforts that many made to keep the Lake Charles League vital and valued in past years. Anyone interested in continuing the work can join as a member-at-

large by going to the LWVLA website at www.LWVofLA.org. LWVLA will provide mentoring, facilitators, discussions of shared leadership, Board training, and technology support. Call Thetis Cusimano at 337-962-6954 or email Joyce Corrington, at LWVLA_President@hotmail.com with questions or suggestions.

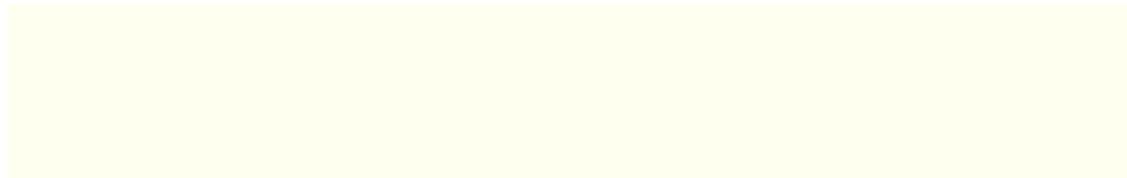


LWV OF LOUISIANA

At a weekend retreat held in Bay St. Louis, the LWVLA officers and Board members reviewed and approved questions for candidates for state wide offices. Once we receive answers from the candidates, the Q&A will be posted on the LWVLA web site to inform voters. We also participated in a

training session led by the state's LWVUS Liaison and formulated the following goals:

- Improve communication –internal and external
- Rework and expand technology
- Educate the community about issues
- Build Membership Leadership Development (MLD)
- Lead an advocacy campaign for Medicaid expansion in Louisiana



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P.O. Box 5493

Covington, LA