



# The Houston *VOTER*

League of Women Voters – Houston Area

July 2011

## SUMMER FIELD TRIP

**Friday, July 29, 2011**

11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Rutherford B. H. Yates Museum

1314 Andrews Street [Map](#)

<http://www.yatesmuseum.org>

Cost: \$15

Includes lunch, on-site parking, admission, tour & air-conditioned lecture designed just for our League.

The museum complex is a preservation project in progress in Freedman's Town, part of the historic Fourth Ward.

**Pay before July 27, 2011**

Call 713.784.2923 with credit card number or write checks to LWV-Houston, 4001 N. Shepherd Drive, Suite 213, Houston, TX 77018-5507. To pay online:

<http://www.lwvhouston.org/html/contribute.html>

choose 501c4 on membership form, then click DONATE to use PayPal or credit card.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Linda Cohn

A typical greeting offered to your new Houston League president:

"Congratulations. Are you crazy?"

Well, yes. I suppose I am a little bit crazy.

I'm crazy about the chance to lead a grass-roots organization with a long and honorable record of civic accomplishment.

I'm crazy about being a citizen of a country where my opinions and my hard work can help shape the future.

I'm crazy about being able to register voters, welcome aspiring Americans, inform the electorate, educate schoolchildren, explore important public issues and cheerlead for democracy.

And I suspect if you're reading this you might be just a little bit crazy too. Crazy in that good, American, can-do way. Shoot me an email at [linda@thecohns.net](mailto:linda@thecohns.net). I've got a project for you.

In the next issue: Election Season.

## Summer Reading – League Style

### LWVUS Education Study Materials Available Now

No need to curl up with that beach thriller this summer. Instead, you can dig into some great LWVUS research from *The Education Study: The Role of Federal Government in Public Education*. A sneak preview of just some of the information available is at page 5 of this *VOTER*. Follow these links to all ten background papers available from the [LWVUS website](#). For a quick read to test the water, try the five condensed papers: (1) [Common Core Standards and Assessments](#); (2) [Early Childhood Education, Equity and Funding](#); (3) [Funding and Equity Issues](#); (4) [Legislation and Funding for the Education of Children Who are Disadvantaged](#); and (5) [Role of Federal Government in Public Education Historical Perspectives](#). Ready for the deep end? Follow these links to in-depth background papers: (1) [Standards](#); (2) [Early Childhood](#); (3) [Equity](#); (4) [Disadvantaged](#); and (5) [History](#).

Download these papers soon. A completely new LWVUS website will be up later this summer and these links may change. Your reading will prepare you for the September Focus on Issues and your Unit discussions in September and October. LWVUS seeks local League responses to consensus questions. Remember: the League is a grassroots organization. We read, engage in thoughtful discussion, reach consensus (most of the time), and then act to educate and persuade other voters and our elected officials.

Chairs for the committee preparing us for the Education Study consensus are Marjorie LaFoe and Davetta Daniels. To join the committee email [lwv@lwvhouston.org](mailto:lwv@lwvhouston.org).

**SAVE THESE DATES****We Have an Awesome 2011-2012  
League Year Planned**

July 29 11:30 a.m.	Field Trip 1314 Andrews Street 77019
August 24 5:30 p.m.	Fall Fundraiser 1218 Heights Blvd.
August 11	VOTER copy deadline
August 26 .	Board Meetings 4001 N. Shepherd Drive
September 9 11:30 a.m.	Focus on Issues: Education Gregory School African American Library 1300 Victor Street 77019
September 19-23	Unit Meetings Restart Education Consensus
September 23	Board Meetings 4001 N. Shepherd Drive
October 5	VOTER copy deadline
October 13 6:00 p.m.	Program Planning Meeting LWVUS and Texas Programs Sosa Community Center
October	Unit Meetings Education Consensus
October 24	First Day of Early Voting
October 28	Board Meetings 4001 N. Shepherd Drive
November 4 11:30 a.m.	Focus on Issues: TWV-TX Water Study
November 4	Last Day of Early Voting
November 8	Election Day
December 2	Board Meetings 4001 N. Shepherd Drive
December 15 5:00 p.m.	Elected Officials Reception Black Lab 4100 Montrose 77006

More on page 3

**Volunteers Needed for Debates and  
Forums Committee**

By Aimee Mobley Turney

For the 2011 election season, we will organize a series of debates covering all Houston municipal elections. It is a mighty task and we will need volunteers for several jobs.

Our debates will be held at the studios of Houston Media Source on Thursday evenings beginning in mid-August. Each debate will be televised live, re-televised, and also posted to our website ([lwvhouston.org](http://lwvhouston.org)) for on-demand viewing.

The committee needs:

- A group to compose questions for the moderator - the majority of this work can be done from the comfort of your home if you have access to email.
- Volunteers to schedule and meet with the candidates and/or the candidates' representatives at LWV headquarters to discuss the format and rules of the debate at least two weeks before the candidates' debate.
- Two timekeepers for each debate - one to control the timer and one to cue the candidates with cards about their remaining time. Ideally, the timekeepers will be available from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. on at least one Thursday evening between August 11 and October 13 at Houston Media Source's Studios just east of downtown Houston. If you'd like to sign up for multiple shifts, we'd love to have you!

If you would like to serve on this committee, please contact Aimee Mobley Turney at 713-907-5255 or [aimee.turney@gmail.com](mailto:aimee.turney@gmail.com).

**Network with the League!**

[www.Facebook.com/LWVHouston](http://www.Facebook.com/LWVHouston)  
<http://Twitter.com/LWVHouston>

**Is Your League in Your Will?**

LWV-Houston received a gracious bequest last fall left by long-time League Jeanette Naman. If you are updating your will, please remember the League through a bequest to the League of Women Voters of the Houston Area or The League of Women Voters Education Fund.

## Annual Meeting Honors Hardworking Members



Outgoing president Nancy Parra (left) presented an award to Nancy Hentschel (right) and Aimee Mobley Turney (not pictured) for their work as co-chairs of the Committee on Debates and Forums. Laura Blackburn was also thanked for her work as chair of the Human Trafficking Study.

The Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of the Houston Area took place May 19, 2011. Members approved the budget for next year, annual dues of \$70 for individuals, bylaws changes, and a new local study.

The members heartily approved a motion to honor Nancy Parra for her distinguished service as President of the Houston League. New President Linda Cohn is taking the helm for the next two years at a time when the League is challenged by an increased need for our bipartisan efforts to increase citizen participation with the goal of good government.

George Greanias, CEO of Metro and Congressmen Al Green addressed the members before the business meeting.



Sharon Cunningham (right) accepted the 2011 Helen Hunter Award for productive work and excellent department furthering the mission of the League of Women Voters.

### Police Advisory Committee Report By Barb Swartz

At recent meetings Chief McClelland has focused on budget problems. The final budget allowed the department to keep from laying off 181 officers. There are consequences, however. Storefront hours will be reduced. Follow-up investigations will be slower. In minor accidents when no injuries are involved, the individual must move the car, exchange information, then report to the police station. Patrol officers will not be directly involved.

Crime statistics continue to show a downward trend in Houston. McClelland continues to be proud of the officers in the Police Department and says he is lucky to work with such dedicated people.

### Welcome to Our New Members

Welcome to new members Sue Schwaller, Jo Frederiksen, Natalia Oakes, Kendra Nowlin, Susan Kellner, Claudia Hogue, Lynn Furay, Janaeya Carmouche, Carolynne White and Rogene Calvert.

### Thanks to Our Contributors

Sharon Friedman honored Jeanette Vanderwater and Shirely Gibson remembered Adelyn Bernstein with donations to the LWV- Houston Education Fund. Member Jan Wilbur also contributed. Thank you.

## SAVE THESE DATES

2012

Continued from page 2

January 13 11:30 a.m.	Focus on Issues Privatization of Government
January Units	Privatization Consensus
January 27	Board Meetings
February TBA	Repast
February Units	International Issues
February 25	Board Meetings followed by Local Program Planning
March 8 Evening	Focus on Issues – Local Study on Voter Turnout
March 23	Board Meetings
April 13-16	LWV-Texas Convention Hilton – San Antonio Airport
April 20	Focus on Issues Houston City Budget Seminar
April 27	Board Meetings
May 10	Annual Meeting

## Multiple Studies Fill the 2011-2012 League Year

This League year is chock full of study. We are asked to report consensus on two LWVUS studies on Education (page 1), and Privatization in Government. LWV Texas is seeking our input before updating the state League's position on water resources. Our local LWV-Houston study will focus on ways to increase voter turnout in Harris County. Joining a League study committee is a perfect way to acquaint or re-acquaint yourself with the League.

### Privatization in Government

Judy Hollinger is seeking local committee members for a LWVUS study on Privatization in Government.

At LWVUS Convention 2010, delegates approved a new national League study on privatization of government services. Every local league will discuss this issue and come to consensus on several questions by May 2012. LWV-Houston has scheduled general and unit meetings on this topic for January 2012.

Most of the local committee work will be done September-December 2011 and will likely involve some research into ways our local governments currently participate in partnerships with other entities to provide public services and proposals for future partnerships.

For more information or to join the committee, contact Judy at 713-665-4458 or [jbhol@hotmail.com](mailto:jbhol@hotmail.com).

### LWV-Houston Studies Ways to Increase Harris County Voter Turnout

Ana Cummings and Wayne Derrick will lead the our LWV-Houston study investigating ways to increase voter turnout in Harris County. Do want to be part of the team? Send an email to [lwv.lwvhouston.org](mailto:lwv.lwvhouston.org).

### State Study: Texas Water

**Focus:** An update of our Water position to consider the competition for water in Texas, including governmental policy, public interest rights, and water resource protection concerns.

**Scope:**

- Analyze current state regulations which govern the sale or transfer of water rights.
- Consider ramifications if Texas were to classify water as a commodity rather than a natural resource.
- Explore options such as a state-run water marketing administration.
- Assess laws that would be needed for interstate or international water transfers.
- Assess the best use of our water (i.e., public interest concerns, environmental factors, effect on third parties, future water requirements).

Carolyn Mata, the LWV-Houston Natural Resources chair, is the person to contact to help plan the local League's November Focus on Issues meeting and units related to this Water Study.

Plan to join us as we commemorate  
**Women's Equality Day**

August 24, 2011

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

The John Palmer Gallery & Studio

1218 Heights Boulevard

Houston, Texas 77008

**Benefiting the League of Women Voters of Houston Education Fund**

## TIMELINE OF THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Produced by the LWVUS *The Education Study: The Role of the Federal Government in Education* © 2011 by the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Event	Date	Explanation
Land Ordinance & Northwest Ordinance	1785/1787	Requirement of a system of public education to be established in under a specified formula. Regulated monies raised via taxes and selling or renting land.
Land Grants	1841/1848	Congress granted 77+ million acres of land in the public domain as endowments for support of schools. Federal government also granted surplus money to states for public education.
Early philosophy – first six presidents		Discussion of a national university and urging of federal involvement in public education. Seen as critical to preparation for citizenship in a republican form of government.
First Morrill Act otherwise known as the Land Grant Act	1862	Donated public lands to states to be used for the endowment to support and maintain at least one college with specific purpose of teaching branches of agriculture, mechanic arts and industrial education.
The original Department (Office) of Education established	1867	Began to collect data – information on schools and teaching that would help states establish effective school systems.
Second Morrill Act	1890	Gave the Office of Education responsibility for administering support for the original system of land-grant colleges.
Smith-Hughes Act	1917	Promoted vocational schools
Lanham Act	1941	Eased the burden on communities affected by presence of military and federal installations: payments to school districts.
Impact Aid laws	1950	
GI Bill	1944	Provided post secondary education assistance to GIs returning from World War II
George-Barden Act	1946	Provided funding for agricultural, industrial and home economics training for high school students
National Defense Education Act	1958	In response to Soviet Sputnik. NDEA included support for loans to college students in science, mathematics and foreign languages.
Elementary and Secondary Education Act	1965	Established comprehensive set of programs including Title I of federal aid to disadvantaged.
Title IX	1972	Prohibited discrimination in education based on gender.
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act	1973	Prohibited discrimination based on disability.
Department of Education cabinet level agency	1980	Recognized the important role of public education in our country.
Educational Testing Service (ETS) and NAEP	1983	Federal government transferred responsibility for administering the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to ETS: the nation's report card.
Nation at Risk	1983	Report indicating that the USA was falling behind in education achievement.
President G.H. Bush	1989-1992	“Indian Education Bill of Rights” K-12 Drug awareness model Advisory committee on Hispanic education America 2000 education reform program Work began on national standards
President W. Clinton	1993-1999	Academics 2000 offered grant to states / local school districts for innovation. Teach for America.
President G.W. Bush	2001-2008	Reauthorization of ESEA –No Child Left Behind.
President Barack Obama	2009 -	President Obama's Blueprint for Reform – Reauthorization of ESEA. Race to the Top: Grants awarded to states with innovative ideas that accepted the Common Core Standards.

## Volunteer Today

Throughout this *VOTER* are descriptions of opportunities to volunteer. You can express an interest in ANY job by emailing [lwv@lwvhouston.org](mailto:lwv@lwvhouston.org). We need you.

<u>Jobs</u>	<u>Leader Recruiting</u>
Membership Chair	Leslie Taylor
Meeting Arrangements	Leslie Taylor
Proofreaders/Editors	Leslie Taylor
Privatization Study	Judy Hollinger
Water Study	Carolyn Mata
Education Study	Marjorie LaFoe Davetta Daniels
Local Study on Voter Turnout	Wayne Derrick Ana Cummings
City Council Observer	Jackie Alfred
County Commissioners Court Observer	Jackie Alfred
Speakers Bureau	Jackie Alfred
Voter Services/ Naturalization Ceremonies	Jackie Alfred



Jo Ann Peschel (left) and Sydney Nguyen were part of the team who helped 1,247 new citizens register to vote after the the December 2010 Naturalization Ceremony.

The League of Women Voters of the Houston Area publishes the Houston *VOTER* five times per year with funding from membership dues and the League of Women Voters of Houston Education Fund.

Linda Cohn – President  
Christina Gorczyński – Executive Director  
Leslie C. Taylor – Editor  
Penny Milbouer – Editor

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Photos on this page courtesy of LWV-Houston member Renee Cross.