

Laoniappe

League of New Orleans

Spring 2017

Sustainer of the Year: Margo Phelps

Lifelong New Orleans Resident
Recognized for Her Commitment
to Our Community

**Wellbeing and the
Female Paradigm**

**The Sandwich
Generation:
Caring for Children
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**Why You Should
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On the Cover

A lifelong New Orleans resident, Margo's commitment to her home and our collective community sets an extraordinary precedent for active and sustaining Junior League members, clearly warranting her the honor and distinction of the 2017 Sustainer of the Year.

Photo by: Jessica Bachmann



Letter from the President

Happy Spring Readers! I hope that on the day you are reading this issue the weather is beautiful and you have plans to get outside and enjoy it.

Remember all that introspection I spoke of in the last issue? I have found that the flip side of all that quiet time with myself was regret rearing its ugly head. The first thought that came to mind was a quote from a one of my favorite James Bond movies, “regret is unprofessional.” And it may be. However, I think leadership requires us to be “reflective practitioners” and look at what we are doing and make sure after a meeting, event or fundraiser to question whether or not we accomplished what we set out to do and how does it fit into the big picture. Regret carries the burden of guilt but a reflective practitioner says, “I can do better.” There are definitely things I could have done better in the past nine months but it is the promise of a new tomorrow and a fresh start that keeps me going. I get this attitude mostly from my mother who sewed many of our prom dresses and our travel clothes (horrid matching sets for her four children). As my sister was walking out to a dance in her beautifully sewn black velvet dress, she noticed navy blue thread peeking out from the shoulder seam. She proceeded to pitch a fit and my mother who tolerated no nonsense said, “Walk fast and no one will notice.” So what that taught me is to not sweat the small stuff. Rarely do people notice the little things that go wrong especially when you create a whirlwind of fun and activity around them.

There is a difference in the Junior League of who we are and what we do. We are foremost a training organization equipped to produce effective and resourceful volunteers and we do that by creating, supporting, and managing impactful community projects to build a greater New Orleans. This issue provides a snapshot of the many things we do as an organization. Whether it is a community project, event or fundraiser there are plenty of women out there living the mission of the organization. One such sterling example and an embodiment of this creed is Sustainer of the Year, Margo Phelps. I am excited for you to read her story and all of the things she has accomplished to make New Orleans a better place for all of us. She is the kind of person I want to be when my active JLNO years are over.

As a self-proclaimed “Junior League nerd,” I revel in that fact that my training will never be over and regret is just baggage that weighs down our potential to make an impact in New Orleans.

Gratefully,



Maria Pardo Huete
Junior League of New Orleans President 2016–2017



Photo by: Jessica Bachmann

Letter from the Editor

Spring cleaning, budding flowers and baby animals. This time of year seems more sharply focused for me. The fuzzy edges of the grey winter drabness make way for the vibrant colors of growth and the greater intensity of the sun as we circle back around it. The greens are a little brighter, the water is a little more glittery and life is just a little more comfortable during those first days of sun dresses and sandals. Generally, I associate this part of the cycle with regrowth and renewal as we shake off the dead and enjoy the fresh.

However, this year, during these divisive and uncertain times, I'm challenging myself to improve differently. I want to use this time of year not for regrowth but for new growth. I'm hoping to make myself and my world a little better by growing a little more, like a tree that adds a ring each year, instead of just restoring what was. I want to be a better human because the world isn't getting better without us. I want to allow myself to expand my mindfulness and earn a deeper commitment to my personal wellbeing without forsaking any past growth.

In this issue, we're exploring what this season offers us – outdoor events, gardening projects and self-improvement opportunities – and celebrating our Sustainer of the Year. While a group of women in a small city like New Orleans may not regularly make a national impact, we certainly can influence our community in huge ways, and Margo Phelps is our own example of that.

We always rally after tragedy and turn decay into new growth, never just rebuilding but making it even better. The future is uncertain, but there will always be a constant force of women under the hot New Orleans sun who seek improvement for themselves and their community. I can find comfort in that strength, and I hope that this season turns into new growth for us all.

Warmly,



Lea Witkowski-Purl
Lagniappe Editor 2016-2017



Photo by: Jessica Bachmann

Bulletin Board

Compiled by Elizabeth Walcavich



You can designate JLNO as a recipient when shopping online at Amazon. Simply go to JLNO.org/AmazonSmile

LEMONADE DAY UNIVERSITY

JLNO partners with Lemonade Day to teach youth how to start, own and operate their own business – a lemonade stand! Lemonade Day University takes place Saturday, April 22 and is free for children ages 8-12. For more information, visit: JLNO.org/lemonade



DATES TO KNOW

- Headquarters to be closed for Good Friday on April 14 and Memorial Day on May 29
- Bloomin' Deals to close at 3 p.m. for Good Friday on April 14
- Bloomin' Deals to be closed for Memorial Day on May 29

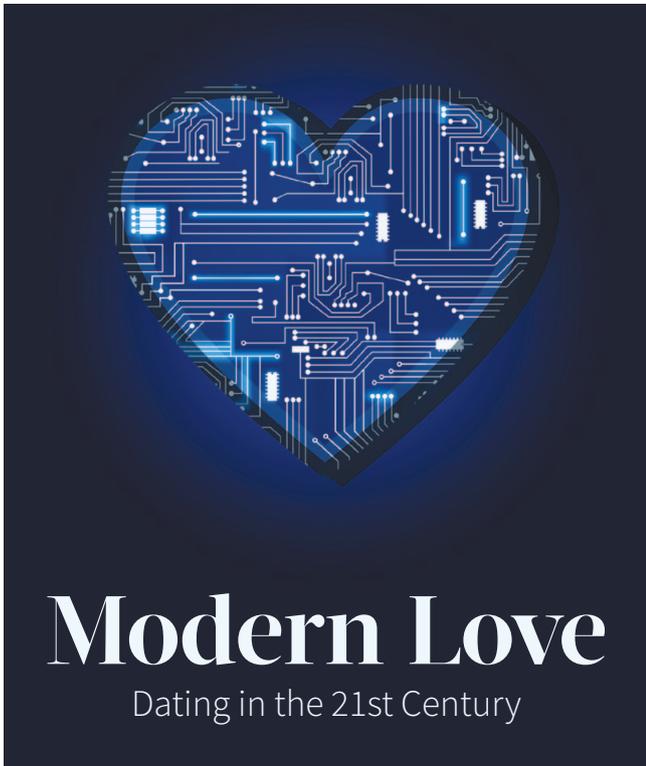


TOUCH A TRUCK

What child doesn't dream about getting behind the wheel of a fire truck, an ambulance, a bulldozer or a tow truck? Touch a Truck makes this a reality! This unique, interactive event allows families to touch and learn about how a wide variety of vehicles protect, serve, invest in and build our community. The Fifth Annual Touch a Truck is Saturday, March 25 at the Lakefront Airport Omni Hangar. For more information, visit: JLNO.org/TouchATruck

SAFE SITTER

SAFE SITTER® is a training program that provides boys and girls ages 11-13 with improved childcare skills. The Junior League of New Orleans teaches this program in collaboration with The Parenting Center at Children's Hospital. Classes are held throughout the summer. For more information visit: JLNO.org/safesitter/ or chnola.org/parentingcenter



By Kristin Durand

Dating in the 21st century can be vexing. The old social norms are quickly becoming passé. First dates aren't formal affairs. Communication is more digital than personal. A computer algorithm can even decide whom you should meet. Nevertheless, don't give in to ennui. Approach this new challenge with enthusiasm using these etiquette tips from some of our members who are experts in the field.

First Impressions

With the digital age taking over, online dating is no longer taboo. Advocates say it helps expedite the connection by eliminating the guesswork. Instead of small talk, you have a pocket full of conversation topics ready to discuss. While you're getting to know the person, keep the communication level consistent. If they send a text or contact you through the dating app, respond in kind. If they take the next step and leave a voice message, pick up the phone and call them back. Manners, dears.

The anatomy of the first date has changed as well. JLNO Active Melissa Aymami McGrane recommended, "Coffee or drinks, but never a meal. Short, no pressure first encounters where you can have an easy escape if it doesn't work out." JLNO Active Meredith Beers added, "If it goes well then dinner can be added on, but if there is no chemistry or if it isn't going well then at the end of a glass of wine it's easy to say, 'good meeting you' and end the date."

What hasn't changed is how to act on a first date. While technology may have brought you together, it has no place on your date. Do not text, tweet or otherwise use your smartphone while on a date. Take this time to get to know the other person. You can go a step further and turn your phone off so you don't have any vibrating interruptions. Bad behavior on a first date is a deal-breaker, so be on your best and expect theirs.

Offline Connections

Of course it is still possible to meet someone without using technology. Enlist the aid of your most powerful allies – your friends. Meeting the friend of a friend makes good sense, since they can vouch for the person's attributes and personality. You can also take advantage of the vibrant New Orleans cultural scene to meet like-minded revelers. JLNO Active Lauren Broussard suggested, "... going to social gatherings around the city – fundraisers, festivals, etc. We live in a city with so many events each weekend. Get out there and talk to people!"

It's bound to happen at some point – you meet someone you like at work. No surprise, as it is your second home. But before you take that extra-long lunch break together, make sure you're aware of your company's policy on these relationships. Be mindful of your office time socializing. Above all, remain professional.

Access Denied

If it's not a good match, how do you end it? First off, it's not okay to "ghost" on someone – suddenly ceasing all communication hoping they'll get the hint. Give the same amount of respect to the other person you would expect. If you've only gone on a few dates, a simple 'I don't think this is working out' message will do, but if you've been exclusive, this means a face-to-face meeting, not email, text or heaven forbid a Post-It Note. At the same time, know when to move on. Meredith said, "Some guys would wait several days (72 hours to a week sometimes!) to ask for a second date. In my mind, if you're interested you ask as soon as you can, not a week later when you get around to it ..."

Swiper Beware

As with any technological gadget, online dating has its perils. Anonymity can attract untrustworthy people looking to take advantage of others. Be your own advocate. Declare upfront if you'd prefer a casual or serious relationship. Discreetly ensure you're seeing a current picture by requesting their favorite pic from this past Christmas or the Pelican's game they went to last weekend. Check out your prospect's social media accounts and, yes, googling their name is both savvy and shrewd.

But beware the double-edged sword of online dating. JLNO Active Alexa Dixon, warned, "The easiest pitfall to online dating is the sense that there is always someone better who's just a click away. Do NOT date this way." Always make your date your primary focus, and don't let the mere idea of another prospect distract you from getting to know them.

So log on, be yourself and go for it. I'll leave you with a ringing endorsement for embracing this brave new world. Melissa beamed, "My husband and I met online, and here we are – eight years and two children later – living our happily ever after!"

Bon chance!

Top Online Dating Website & Apps

- [Match.com](#)
- [OkCupid](#)
- [E-harmony](#)
- [Tinder](#)
- [J-Date](#)
- [Bumble](#)

JLNO Loves Outdoor Events

By Autumn Town

It doesn't get much better than New Orleans in the springtime, and our city provides ample outdoor opportunities for fun. Whether you're attending one of our many festivals, watching parades, or looking for an educational experience, NOLA has it all. You may be familiar with the bigger fests — French Quarter Fest, Jazz Fest and Greek Fest, to name a few — but there are many smaller festivals that are just as exhilarating!

March 22-26, 2017

This year marks the 31st annual **Tennessee Williams Literary Festival** in the French Quarter. "The arts are the heartbeat of New Orleans," said Paul Willis, Executive Director. "Now more than ever, it is important for us to celebrate the creative spirit of so many diverse voices." This annual celebration of contemporary literature, culture, theater, and the works of Tennessee Williams offers speakers like Bryan Batt, Amy Dickinson, Robert Wagner and many more. The 2017 program includes such opportunities as master classes, celebrity interviews, theater and music events, and wraps up with the Stanley and Stella shouting contest in Jackson Square. tennesseewilliams.net

March 25, 2017

If your child has ever dreamed about being behind the wheel of a fire truck or bulldozer, **Touch A Truck** is the event for you! The Junior League of New Orleans hosts the fifth annual Touch A Truck on March 25, 2017, and Chair Laura Carroll is particularly excited about the return to the Lakefront Airport.

This unique and interactive opportunity allows children to experience their favorite "big trucks" and vehicles up close. A family friendly event, it's sure to be exciting for kids and kids-at-heart. Laura notes that Touch A Truck is also a good way to "to meet the people who protect, serve, and build Metropolitan New Orleans." This event gets bigger and better every year, and they are even offering birthday party packages for 2017! jlno.org/touchatruck

March 31-April 1, 2017

You can eat your fill of delicious barbecue at **Hogs for the Cause**, which started in 2009 as a small fundraiser for pediatric brain cancer. Eight years later, co-founder Becker Hall is proud to note that Hogs for the Cause has emerged as the best barbecue festival this side of the Mississippi, with 92 local and regional BBQ teams competing in seven categories. It moves to the Lakefront Arena this year, and plans to be bigger and better than ever. Junior League Activists Emma Pegues and Susana Ruddock have both fielded teams for several years, and plan to be back this spring. Emma's team, Holy Smokes, has been together four years. She loves the festive nature of the event and the camaraderie that comes from working together and competing for such a worthwhile cause. "As we say, Praise the Lord and Pass the (First Place Alabama Peach) Sauce!" Emma said. Susana's team, Sweet Swine O Mine, is not only one of the oldest teams, but also is the only all women's team competing. hogsforthecause.org



May 17-21, 2017

Founded after Hurricane Katrina to help bring back Mid-City, **Bayou Boogaloo** is three days of music, food vendors and arts and crafts on Bayou St. John. Founder Jared Zeller said, “[The Boogaloo] starts with the ingredients of a great New Orleans festival world-class music, incredible food and the work of talented artists and artisans. But when you’re here, it’s an experience that feels bigger than any of these parts. You’re standing there next to Bayou St. John, seeing people from all walks of life dancing and relaxing and playing together around the bayou, and even in the bayou.” One of the best things about this fest is that it “draws New Orleans

people together because it’s accessible to everyone and it gets into something they have in common – our love of this city.” Even though the Boogaloo organizers work hard to make this fest amazing, “it’s the way that people bring their joy, their sense of community and their openness in sharing our cultural riches that makes it so special.” Jared explained, “It just feels like such a great showcase for what makes New Orleans tick and why it’s our home.” thebayouboogaloo.com

May 25-28, 2017

The **New Orleans Wine & Food Experience** is one of the most incredible culinary events in the nation, attracting more than 7,000



OPPOSITE PAGE: The Hogs For The Cause fundraising festival.

Photo provided by: Hogs For The Cause

ABOVE: The Tennessee Williams Festival held annually in the French Quarter. *Photo provided by: Ride Hamilton*

BELOW: New Orleans Wine and Food Experience.

Photo provided by: NOWFE



gourmands and connoisseurs. Executive Director Jamie Hall notes that the four-day “bacchanalia” features dozens of local and regional chefs, many of whom are nationally known, and aims to place a spotlight on the region’s many indigenous ingredients. Thousands of wines and champagnes from more than 100 wineries are paired with food from more than 75 restaurants at various events throughout the extravaganza. Each year NOWFE, a “perennial ‘Top Ten’ Wine and Food festival,” as noted in *Wine Enthusiast*, also gives back to area nonprofit organizations, with more than \$1 million donated since its inception. nowfe.com

Editor’s note: In the winter 2016 issue, Autumn’s story entitled A Profile in Planning was mistakenly credited to another writer.

Why You Should Get on Board

Participant Success Stories

By Amber B. Barlow

As a part of the Junior League of New Orleans' commitment to the community, advancing the wellbeing of women and making life better for all New Orleanians, JLNO offers training for participants interested in becoming involved with local nonprofits through membership and leadership roles. Get on Board is a two-day workshop providing knowledge and skills to current board and staff members and those that wish to be placed on a nonprofit board at the conclusion of the training. Through engaging presentations from nonprofit experts and interactive role-playing, participants learn a board member's responsibilities and how these responsibilities relate to others within the organization.

There is a pervasive need for quality board members among New Orleans' nonprofits. However, board membership is a mystery to most. Many times people want to get involved in nonprofits and take on board roles but are not sure how to do so and or what to do to take the first step toward getting involved. GOB is designed to train its participants for active leadership roles on boards for nonprofits and introduce its participants to nonprofits in need of quality leadership and involvement.

GOB serves as a vital first step for many getting involved in the community in a broader way and using their tools to serve on committees and boards for local nonprofits. Many have participated and have used their training to make positive impacts on the community and build their personal and professional skills.

To highlight just a few, JLNO Active Dreda Smith, Michael Plaisance and JLNO Active Amanda Gammon are among the GOB alumni succeeding and using their resources and tools in local nonprofits.



Photo provided by: Dreda Smith

Dreda Smith: Get on Board Participant fall 2013

"After completing GOB, I had confidence that I could serve on a board in a meaningful way."

Dreda first heard about GOB at a general membership meeting and signed up right away. Dreda was drawn to the training GOB offered, partnered with the opportunity to meet and become acquainted with local nonprofits in search of potential board members.

GOB has many benefits for its participants and each participant gains something different from the experience. As an attorney, Dreda found the portion of the program discussing conflicts of interest and involvement as an attorney versus being the Board's attorney critical to her involvement on a board.

One of the benefits that most GOB participants enjoy and prosper from is the ability to connect with local nonprofits looking for board members and volunteers to join their organization. For example, the program allows local nonprofits to come meet GOB participants during a mixer on the first Saturday of the program. The mixer provides participants with the opportunity to learn about the different nonprofits and to determine which nonprofit would be a good fit. According to Dreda, "I've felt more comfortable approaching nonprofits as a result of my training with GOB because I

have a general understanding of what board involvement means as well as what is expected of me as a board member."

Dreda was nominated to the board of the Woodlands Conservancy, which is a local land trust managing bottom-land hardwood forest in Orleans and Plaquemines Parish. Her current position is secretary, a position she has held for the past two years. "There are no specific times in which I feel I've used some discrete aspect of my GOB training; however, I feel that it has positively impacted every aspect of my involvement with Woodlands Conservancy," Dreda said. "I am able to serve the board as well as I can because of Get on Board."

GOB is just another way that JLNO enriches its members and promotes positive, community involvement. GOB trains its participants to be strong civic stewards and use their resources and strengths to benefit the community. This training benefits its participants both professionally and personally. The presenters are highly qualified providing quality instruction and excellent materials to utilize throughout your future on boards and in your professional world.

Dreda has found being on a board and involved in a nonprofit has benefited her both professionally and personally. "Being on the board of the Woodlands Conservancy has allowed me to develop my community involvement. As a member of the Junior League, I volunteer for League events and with organizations for my community shifts; however, I also wanted to get involved with an organization on a regular basis so I could see projects to fruition. I've met some wonderful people through the Woodlands Conservancy including my fellow board members and members of the community," said Dreda.



Photo provided by:
Michael Plaisance

Michael Plaisance: Get on Board Participant spring 2012

“I have recommended GOB to everyone I meet who expresses an interest in board service. I have found the experience invaluable.”

Michael first heard about GOB from his wife, JLNO Active Allison Plaisance, a former Board member. She suggested that he participate in GOB because not only does it train its participants to be active board members, but is also a program that matches its participants with local nonprofits looking for volunteers.

Michael found GOB to be a well-rounded program and extremely beneficial. GOB has a lot of great topics and training opportunities. “My two favorite topics were the lectures on strategic planning and fundraising,” Michael said.

Through GOB, Michael was paired with his top choice, Reconcile New Orleans. Michael credits Alice Wright, a past JLNO President and member of the Reconcile New Orleans Board, with connecting JLNO and the nonprofit and thinks the connection was instrumental. Michael is in his second term on

Reconcile New Orleans Board. He is also the Governance Committee chairperson.

Michael still uses his GOB training to navigate the various duties and responsibilities of serving on a board. Michael stated, “... each meeting I attend seems to provide an opportunity to call upon my GOB training. From the purpose and structure of committees to mission creep to effective strategic planning.”

Michael said that being on the board for a nonprofit has been beneficial both professionally and personally. “Community service was a foundational tenet of the Jesuit colleges that I attended,” Michael said. “As a professional, balancing work and family with community service is challenging but rewarding.”

GOB training has extended beyond his service at Reconcile New Orleans. “Since joining Reconcile New Orleans, I was also given opportunity to serve on the board of the Louisiana Fire Soccer Club – another nonprofit,” Michael said. “While my time on that board was brief, the universality of the GOB training proved its worth again during my time in service to that organization. Both experiences were rewarding, but I don’t think I would have been as effective as a board member without the GOB training.”



Photo provided by:
Amanda Gammon

Amanda Gammon: Get on Board Participant spring 2016

“GOB provided me with the tools to step out of my comfort zone and become more involved in a leadership capacity through a local nonprofit.”

Amanda recently attended GOB at the recommendation of other JLNO members who said that it was a helpful way to learn about board involvement. Amanda also favored the idea of being able to meet with local nonprofits searching for new board members and members in general. For Amanda, GOB allowed her to learn about the various commitments, responsibilities and obligations that come along with being a board member, which is an area she was not otherwise familiar with before attending the training.

Through the nonprofit mixer, Amanda was introduced to the American Cancer Society’s Friends of Hope Lodge. This nonprofit was specifically looking for committee members to assist in planning the annual gala, the organization’s largest

local fundraiser with proceeds going to Hope Lodge, a service of the American Cancer Society that offers cancer patients and their caregivers a free place to stay when their best treatment options are in another city from their home. Learning more about the organization and its mission, Amanda was fully committed to joining the effort. “This was my first experience learning about boards and serving on a board for local nonprofits. After meeting with ACS and hearing about their need for various committee members, I knew I had to get on board.”

Amanda was asked to participate in the auction committee and has served in this capacity for one year. In her role on the auction committee, Amanda was tasked with going out into the local community and talking with local businesses to gain donated auction items for the annual gala. “Being on the committee has benefited me in that it allowed me to go out into the community, meet new people, connect with local businesses, and rally the community around supporting ACS.” Amanda credits her newfound initiative with the training she received through GOB and looks forward to her continuing service.

Wellbeing & The Female Paradigm

By Tara Quin-Hagmann

Being a woman presents a lifetime of unique experiences inherent to the female gender. Some of these experiences, like pregnancy for example, may even afford us a path to immense personal growth. Women have never been more challenged than we are today as more of us take on the traditional wifely and motherly roles while also attempting to balance a career – all while faced with the additional task of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Given women are very likely to wear various hats at any given time, a deeper understanding of the female predicament with regards to disease occurrence and associated risk factors is crucial to a healthier us.

Whereas communicable diseases (such as strep throat and sexually transmitted infections) affect women in the earlier stages of their life cycle, non-communicable diseases (such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes) tend to dominate as they age. Not only do women tend to live longer than their male counterparts, but their risk factors for certain conditions are different.

“There is not a lot of clear data about gender, but women have unique risks. There has been some research done in the cardiovascular field, and women have risks for certain types of cancer.” said local physician Elizabeth Lapeyre, M.D., an Obstetrician and Gynecologist with Ochsner Health System since 2003.

Dr. Lapeyre, who is originally from Atlanta, has lived in uptown New Orleans for more than 23 years with her husband, Etienne, and their five children. She is actively involved with The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists where she serves as a district officer. When she is not seeing patients at Ochsner Baptist Medical Center, you’ll find her cheering on her children at any one of their many sporting events, going for a quick run, or on her family’s annual summer trip to Watercolor, Florida.

“Preeclampsia, gestational diabetes and pre-term delivery are linked to cardiovascular disease, and women with type 2 diabetes and coronary artery disease can have a more severe course

than men with the same two medical conditions,” said Dr. Lapeyre. “Also, hypertension after a certain age for women is not as well controlled by medication as it is for men.”

A two-day course entitled “Perinatal Mood Disorders: Components of Care,” held at Junior League Headquarters on January 12 and 13, 2017, addressed the assessment and treatment of such disorders. Participants of the event included physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses and other healthcare professionals from the Metropolitan New Orleans area and beyond. Renee M. Bruno, M.D., Birdie Gunyon Meyer, R.N. and Wendy Davis, Ph.D. presented the results of ongoing challenges in the assessment and treatment of perinatal mood disorders, as well as addressed possible consequences if left untreated. Postpartum Support International, an advocacy organization with branches across the country, hosted the two-day meeting.

Dr. Lapeyre, who was not affiliated with the course, weighs in on the subject. “Perinatal mood disorders include major and minor depressive episodes that occur during pregnancy or during the first 12 months after delivery,” said Dr. Lapeyre. “It can be depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, mania – those are really the big ones. As many as 10 percent of women will experience perinatal depression, and 15-20 percent can experience postpartum depression.” Why such a high prevalence, and what are the associated risk factors? “A history of depression or anxiety, and life stressors, are risk factors,” said Dr. Lapeyre. “Lack of social support, unintended pregnancies, domestic violence, lower income, smoking, poor relationship quality – all of that can put you at risk. Then in the post partum period, there’s fatigue. It’s kind of the perfect storm.”

So, when it comes to our health, are we as women doomed to a fate worse than men, by the very virtue of our gender? Not necessarily. While controlling for our family histories is clearly off the table (unless of course



Dr. Elizabeth Lapeyre, M.D., of Ochsner Health System, is an Obstetrician and Gynecologist at Ochsner Baptist Medical Center located in uptown New Orleans. Photo provided by: Dr. Elizabeth Lapeyre

you can time-travel and even then you threaten your very existence à la Back to the Future) there are steps we can each take to help promote a happier and healthier you. “Many things are preventable on some level. Diet, exercise, keeping your BMI at a certain level, healthy choices, trying to live a healthy life in terms of stressors – those are the things that you can control to some extent,” said Dr. Lapeyre. “Mindfulness I think is important too. Even if you find it difficult to carve out time for hour-long, weekly group classes – which many women do find works well for them – oftentimes just sitting in your car is enough to gather your thoughts and regroup.”

Finally, Dr. Lapeyre recommends creating a life-long partnership with a physician who can offer advice on how to maintain your healthiest lifestyle every step of the way.

“The work/life balance is kind of that new badge that we feel we have to have, and I think that in and of itself can sometimes be a little stressful for women,” said Dr. Lapeyre. “As caught up as we get in caring for others, our jobs, other family members, or our friends even, you’ve got to take care of yourself so you can take care of other people. And don’t ever start smoking!”

Margo Phelps

Sustaining a Commitment to Community

By Lacy Strohschein



Photo by: Jessica Bachmann



Margo poses with students at Louise S. McGehee School where she is an alumna and has served on numerous committees. She was recognized in 2016 with the Distinguished Alumnae Award. *Photo by: Jessica Bachmann*

For the influx of new-New Orleanians—particularly the post-Katrina millennials—taking in the culture, traditions and causes of the city is an easy right-of-passage. The passion is nearly contagious. But there is another class of individuals who make great change in the city, those who weren't just bred to love it but born to. Margo Phelps belongs to the latter category.

A lifelong New Orleans resident, Margo's commitment to her home and our collective community sets an extraordinary precedent for active and sustaining Junior League members, clearly warranting her the honor and distinction of the 2017 Sustainer of the Year. Thoughtful in her causes and purposeful in her mission, Margo's dedication to the city has enriched New Orleans and set a high-bar for Junior League members to aspire to. As current JLNO President Maria Pardo Huete said, "I hope that active and provisional members look at Margo and know that their membership in JLNO is but an opportunity to finely tune their interests and to find that which fires up their inner heroes to continue to make a difference after their active years are over."

In many ways, the entry point for Margo's community involvement was the Junior League. As Margo said, "It never entered my mind that I wouldn't be a League member—my mother lived and breathed the League!" Her mother's involvement was a hallmark of her childhood, and she remembers fondly returning to her house filled with chrysanthemums after her mother's committee meetings. In fact, she still holds onto the original recommendation letter for her League placement years ago.

Yet, like many New Orleans residents, Margo's life and personal journey of community advocacy can be marked by one benchmarking event—Hurricane Katrina. Margo said, "There was my life before Katrina and after." With the storm wreaking havoc on not only her life, but the homes and lives of close family members, Margo was consumed in recovery and clean-up in the aftermath of the storm. But through the chaos, she still came to recognize the greater changes underway in New Orleans—especially in education.

As an alumna of the Louise S. McGehee School, Margo has continued to serve on numerous committees, representing her graduating class and being honored with the 2016 Distinguished Alumnae Award. This commitment to education has extended beyond her alma mater, however, as she has become a community-wide champion for education reforms. Via her positions as both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Citizens for 1 Greater New Orleans Education Committee, as well as a Choice Foundation Board Member, Margo is a committed advocate for changes in New Orleans schools. Beyond these leadership roles, she has been consistently engaged with the Louisiana Children's Museum, Cowen Institute and Audubon Nature Institute.

Through her service on these boards and with various organizations, Margo has a clear vision for public education enhancements in New Orleans and is a vocal supporter of greater teacher accountability, charter school prevalence, voucher programs and especially enhanced availability of early childhood education. Margo said, "If we can start education

young, it sets the foundation through high school and even into college.”

Recognizing the interconnectedness of community issues, Margo has leveraged her engagement in the education sphere to influence crime and criminal justice reforms as well. “There seems to be a pipeline from cradle to prison,” Margo said. “When it should be from cradle to college.” To fulfill this vision, Margo has expanded her service on education committees and efforts, to provide insight and leadership as an Executive Committee Member on the Crime Coalition, a Board Member on the Metropolitan Crime Commission and a Board Member of the Salvation Army.

Though she continues to roll off of some boards and onto others, Margo’s standards for involvement remain firm. She said, board engagement “has to be something I’m passionate about—education, crime or criminal justice.” The focus on and dedication to these issues has not only garnered admiration from the JLNO, but also the young professional community of New Orleans, as reflected in her recent Young Leadership Role Model 2016 award.

Margo’s service to the community has extended far beyond her Junior League days chairing the Placement Committee, or—her personal favorite—the JLNO Thrift Shop, but still provides her a network to continually draw upon. It was her friend and fellow JLNO Sustainer Janet Bean who first recruited Margo to work with Citizens for 1 Greater New Orleans, where she is currently the Board Chairman. In fact, Margo says her greatest inspirations and mentors have often been Junior League members, particularly past JLNO Presidents. Continuing to align her volunteer activities with other JLNO members ensured she was working with women who had a “proven track record of success,” Margo said.

These feelings of admiration are clearly mutual. Janet said, “Margo is a unique person who is lovely on the inside as well as the outside. She brings together intelligence, dedication, sensitivity and vision. Additionally, her leadership in so many areas is laced with a quiet wit which makes working with her a joy.” Maria agreed, “Margo Phelps is the embodiment of the mission of the Junior League of New Orleans to be a trained and active volunteer who is working diligently to improve our communities.”

Margo continues to see the value of JLNO across her activities and engagements, particularly recognizing the advocacy training JLNO members now often engage in. Margo said, “I think the Junior League can do just about anything they



Margo with her family before the YLC 2016 Role Model class black tie gala. Margo was one of the honorees of the evening. *Photo provided by: Margo Phelps*

set their minds to.” With much of her future work riding on successes in the state legislature, Margo sees great power in JLNO voices and initiatives.

When Margo isn’t filling her time giving back to the New Orleans community, she is rewarded by a rich personal life, walking Audubon Park, dining at Vincent’s on St. Charles Avenue, or spearheading initiatives at her church, St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church. A great arts enthusiast as well, Margo particularly enjoys frequenting the New Orleans Museum of Art and the Ogden Museum, even taking in a Victory Belles show at the World War II Museum. “That’s what I love about this city — there are so many traditions,” Margo said.

But a clear source of pride and joy for Margo is undoubtedly her family. She said, “I am so proud of my four children!” With four children and nine grandchildren, birthday parties in New Orleans and trips to New York to visit her daughter and grandchildren are frequent compliments to her busy schedule. Margo’s sons have continued her tradition of community service locally as well, organizing their own Hogs for the Cause team for the past three years and raising more than \$30,000 for charity.

It is perhaps this consistent reminder of the generations to come that shapes Margo’s vision for the future of New Orleans. When asked what she wants the New Orleans of the future to look like, Margo said, “I hope that we have a crime free and drug free city, and if we do have incidences of crime and addiction that we have re-entry and drug rehab services to address these issues.”

Margo is emphatic about her love for our city. “I’ve lived in New Orleans all my life,” she said. “I would never want to live anywhere else.” The residents of New Orleans and members of JLNO should all hope she never does.



Michele Wink (right) and her son, Archie Wink (left) with the family dog Indie. Photo by: Rana Francois

The Sandwich Generation

Caring for Children and Parents *By Alicia McCraw*

With more than 12 million elderly individuals requiring long term care and millennials taking longer to land on their feet economically, many adults increasingly find themselves as members of the Sandwich Generation. The Sandwich Generation refers to middle-aged adults who care for their parents and children at the same time. This care may be physical, emotional or financial. Gregory Ricks, a financial advisor and owner

of Gregory Ricks & Associates, said much of this work will fall on women. According to Gregory, the average caregiver is a 46-year-old female and 75 percent of home care providers are unpaid women. About half of women providing care will have to quit their jobs or take a leave of absence to fulfill their roles as caregiver. And it's not just their jobs; women will spend about 50 percent more of their time than men providing care.

Sociologists have long discussed how women's role in the home often extends beyond housework and meal preparation. For example, sociologist Micaela di Leonardo, professor of anthropology, gender studies and performance studies at Northwestern University, found that women often feel required to, and do, maintain their family's kin network. Thus, women often enjoy, but also feel responsible for maintaining relationships between

family members. Additionally, family scholars note that women often engage in emotion work. Emotion work refers to actions that provide moral support or maintain bonds of affection helping to keep people emotionally happy. As such, it comes as no surprise that women might be more engaged in providing care for their children and their elderly loved ones.

Nadia Haik and Michele Wink shared the challenges and rewards of caring for one's parent or in-laws while caring for kids. Nadia, a JLNO Sustainer, cared for her in-laws while raising young children. Michele cares for her parents intermittently while also supporting her two sons.

Nadia said that her husband primarily cared for his parents allowing them to "divide and conquer" to ensure the children were cared for when he was away from home. She noted that it's challenging because family members can't predict what is going to happen and constantly have to adjust plans for care.

Michele said, "Communication is a challenge. If there's hearing loss or any kind of dementia there can be confusion and the lack of communication can make it difficult to get things done." In order to combat challenges Nadia recommends having a solid plan even if it's a difficult conversation. She said, "Everyone has to figure out his or her plan. What are your goals?" Confirm the goal with your parents or children. Do your parents want to be in a retirement home? Do they want to stay in their own home? Discuss these issues and make sure everyone is clear on their wishes.

Beyond the emotional and physical challenges there are financial ones as well. Gregory advocates seeking out financial guidance and doing it early on. Ask yourself do I need to work longer? Do I need to adjust how much financially I provide to others? As such, communication and continually rerouted plans can create challenges but a solid overall plan can help overcome challenges.

Nadia and Michele feel that the rewards were far greater than any challenge they had incurred. Michele said, "The first thing that comes to mind for me is that you've had the opportunity to give back to the people that gave so much to you, with real hands on care. You've been able to take care of people who took care of you for so long."

Nadia said it helped teach her children what it meant to be a member of a family. She explained, "For our children it was really showing them and demonstrating this is part of loving your grandparents." In physically and emotionally caring for children and parents, individuals feel the love involved in being a member of a family.

Both women emphasized that remembering to care for yourself is important, especially in situations like these. Nadia said, "Care enough about yourself to give yourself breaks to allow the people in your support system to help you out...I think that as women particularly -- women in the League who are strong, independent women, who can multi-task like nobody's business -- I think it's hard to accept help."

Similarly, Michele said, "Take time to take care of yourself and get decent rest. You really will run yourself into the ground, which then you're of no use to anybody." She also recommended actively asking others for help.

What should you do if you have a friend who is currently a member of the Sandwich Generation? Nadia recommends being more direct about how you can help rather than saying "Call me if you need help." She notes that the best help she received was people being direct -- offering to pick kids up from school or to go grocery shopping for a friend.

Researchers estimate that by 2030, 61 million Baby Boomers will be elderly and in need of some form of care. Concurrently, social scientists predict, given the current economic and social conditions, that the

prolonged transition from adolescence to adulthood requiring parental help will not dissipate. As such, it is unlikely that caring for both children and parents simultaneously will soon be a bygone social phenomenon.

Many individuals who provide care for both are sure to feel emotionally or economically stressed at some point in their caregiving. Fortunately, individuals who are prepared and remember to take care of themselves also report the joys and blessings that come with providing care for others.

WOMEN OUTLIVE MEN BY AN AVERAGE OF **5** YEARS

OVER 2/3 OF AMERICANS 85 AND OLDER ARE FEMALE

WOMEN ACCOUNT FOR **80%** OF THE CENTENARIAN POPULATION

ON AVERAGE, WOMEN SPEND **TWICE** AS LONG IN A DISABLED STATE (3 YRS)

MORE THAN **70%** NURSING HOME RESIDENTS ARE WOMEN

MORE THAN **75%** OF ASSISTED CARE FACILITIES ARE POPULATED BY WOMEN

2/3 OF HOME HEALTH CARE RECIPIENTS ARE WOMEN

AVERAGE IN HOME CAREGIVER IS A **46 YR OLD** FEMALE

75% OF HOME CARE PROVIDERS ARE WOMEN

Information provided by: Gregory Ricks & Associates

Proposing Passion Projects for the Greater Good

Each year, Active and Provisional members give **45,000 volunteer hours** to the Metropolitan New Orleans community. From sorting food at Second Harvest Food Bank to teaching business skills at Lemonade Day University, each of these projects had the same start with JLNO. The Project Selection Committee does the hard work of finding projects that align with our mission. Here's a peek into that process:

Attend an information session

To formally apply to be a Junior League project, a community partner is encouraged to attend one of the information sessions for nonprofit partnerships that generally occur in the fall. At this session, the potential partners will learn about the League's mission, what the League looks for in a project, how the League would like our members to be involved and to what extent and how the League can assist with development and implementation of the project as part of our participation.



Submit a Concept Paper

If the partner feels that their project aligns with the criteria learned at the information session, they can submit a concept paper describing their project idea and how the League can become involved.

JLNO invites partners to submit a Full Application

The Project Selection Committee reviews concept papers and investigates further projects that align with our mission, allow for extensive League member involvement and have quantifiable impact. After the screening process, JLNO invites the partners to submit a full application to become a community project partner.



The full application is an expansion of the concept paper and details background information on the parent organization of the partner, a narrative about the project - what it is and how it is structured, timelines, volunteer hours, associated costs and who pays for them - in detail, along with detailed organizational finance information, audience served, evaluation process, etc. As much detail as possible is always encouraged.

Project Selection Committee reviews applications

The Project Selection Committee reviews and thoroughly vets the completed applications prior to a presentation to the full Planning and Development Council for a Council vote.

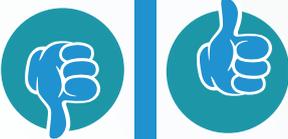


How an Idea becomes a Community Project

By Lea Witkowski-Purl

PSC presents to the Planning & Development Council for a vote

The Committee presents all of the applications and makes recommendations as to the ones that JLNO should fund.



A Council vote is taken and recorded approving or denying new projects.

P&D Council Director presents to the Executive Board for Approval

The Council Director then presents this recommendation to the Board of Directors for approval. Often the Board of Directors will discuss the potential project and request additional information from the Project Selection Committee before a final vote.

Once the Project Selection Committee provides all information to the Board of Directors, they vote on the potential projects.

Full membership vote on new projects at a General Membership Meeting

If approved, the project is then submitted to the full membership for a vote at a General Membership Meeting. If approved by the membership, the project becomes part of the following League year project/placement offerings and is added to the placement brochure and roster of League activities.



The calendar for these steps changes from year to year. For example, this year the P&D Council was presented with projects in January and gave a recommendation to the Board of Directors. The projects received Board approval at the February board meeting and new projects were voted in by the Membership at the February General Membership Meeting.

Occasionally, projects organically come to the League from members or other partners. For example, Lemonade Day University sprang from the local Lemonade Day group asking for League assistance to distribute the Lemonade Day Backpacks, which we did as a Community Shift opportunity. League leaders saw the potential for greater involvement and Lemonade Day University was the result. Sometimes groups apply to the League for Community Assistance Funds (CAF grants) and are better suited as potential projects. The opposite can happen, too - sometimes groups apply to be project partners but are better suited as grant monies recipients.

JLNO is always looking for new passion projects to develop into community projects. If you have an idea, look out for the next information sessions in the fall. Visit JLNO.org/community to see our current community projects.



Growing a Green Thumb

Do-It-Yourself Tips for Making the Most out of Your Garden

By Adele Abboud

Spring is arguably the best time of year in New Orleans! Azaleas bloom, days grow longer, weekends are jam packed with festivals and generally the weather is warm but enjoyable. Spring is also an opportune time to start planting a garden of your own or even raising your own backyard chickens. With some advice from the Edible School Yard and League members, it is easy to get the whole family involved in the process.

Kerrie Partridge, the Director of the Edible School Yard New Orleans for First Line Schools, runs garden and kitchen programs at five schools throughout the area. The Edible School Yard program teaches children to make healthy connections through food. “We envision generations of New Orleans children who have healthy relationships with food, their natural world, themselves and their community,” said Kerrie. Children learn the basic concept of how to take a seed and raise it to the point of harvesting in the program. Students in the ESY Program are much more willing to try foods that they helped grow even if it’s a sprig of mint or a raw piece of kale. “Most children are eager to taste what they have grown and prepared,” said Kerrie.

Growing foods and gardening at home does not have to be a big undertaking. Kerrie encourages those eager to start gardening to begin in small ways that yield big results. “Containers are an amazing place to start. Tomatoes and other plants are specially made for growing in containers,” said Kerrie. Planting containers are available at most home improvement stores. They offer those with space limitations the ability to start a small garden and use fresh uncontaminated soil. The mild New Orleans spring weather lends itself to growing many things around like herbs, tomatoes, cantaloupe, collards, corn and cucumbers.

In keeping with the farm to table theme, wouldn’t it be nice to have fresh eggs from your own backyard? Past JLNO President Liz Creel has had backyard chickens for years in the heart of the city. “We have kept chickens here in New Orleans since 2005. Over the years we have had chickens, geese, ducks, pea fowl and even an emu and ostrich here in the Garden District. There have also been goats, miniature horses and a pig that lived in our backyard too,” said Liz. She offered these tips to consider before getting started with your own chicken coop.

1. **Locate a reputable dealer such as a farmer or feed store. Chickens are available from online sources as well.**
2. **Keep in mind that roosters are not allowed in Orleans Parish.**
3. **Build or install a strong sturdy chicken coop or house. New Orleans is home to a large number of pests like opossums, raccoons and even coyotes. Unfortunately, chickens can fall prey to predators and chicken eggs may disappear.**
4. **Chickens need poultry feed and some supplements (such as oyster shells). But they are also wonderful garbage disposals and will eat vegetable leavings and family leftovers**
5. **Take into consideration your lifestyle and neighbors before taking the plunge.**

If you do not have room for a garden or chickens of your own, it’s simple to volunteer – just sign up with ESY for one of your JLNO community shifts or visit esynola.org. “Open garden days are a really cool way if you know that you just want to spend a few hours in the garden either by yourself or with your family. We are always really excited for people to come, especially if you have kids,” said Kerrie.

Preserving Fresh Herbs

According to the Louisiana Agricultural Center, drying and freezing fresh herbs are easy ways to preserve your harvest. Follow these steps to keep your kitchen garden fresh for longer.

Drying Herbs Harvest the stems from the plants, leaving them long enough to easily tie them together. Then, wash with water and place on towels to dry. Bundle about three to five stems with rubber bands or twine. Hang the bundles in a cool, dry place indoors with good air circulation. Store your dried herbs in containers labeled with the name of the herb (or herb blend) and the date. You can leave the leaves whole or crumble them.

Freezing Herbs Harvest, rinse and dry. Separate the leaves from the stems and chop the leaves finely. Place herbs in a freezer bag, spreading them out in a one-half inch layer to make it easier to break off a chunk when they are frozen. Force as much air as possible out of the bag and then seal it and freeze. Label the bag with the name of the herb, since chopped frozen herbs tend to look the same.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The students at Samuel J. Green Charter School grow their own fruits and vegetables. *Photo provided by: Robert Warren* **BELOW:** Tad and Phoebe Sens take a break on the farm to pet the goat. *Photo by: Michelle Sens* **RIGHT:** Animals are always welcome on the farm. *Photo provided by: Maile Lani* **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Pender and Parker Laborde enjoy Saturday mornings playing in their garden. *Photo by: Michelle Sens*



Try this salad dressing recipe with your home-dried herbs!

An Edible School Yard New Orleans Favorite

HERB-Y Delight Dressing

“I never liked salad until I tried this dressing.”
— an LHA sixth grader on Food Day 2013.

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. dijon mustard
- 1/2 tsp. dried marjoram, oregano,
or ANY herbs!!
- 1/2 tsp. dried basil
- 3/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

Directions:

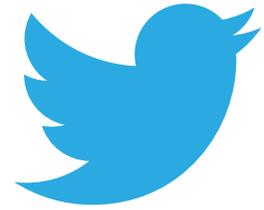
Combine all ingredients except olive oil in a jar. Stir well with a fork. Add olive oil, cover tightly and shake well until combined. You can also use a blender and drizzle the oil in slowly while it is running. Serve over a basic green salad.





#Trending

Impacting the Community One Hashtag at a Time



By Elizabeth Walcavich

President Maria Pardo Huete is asking everyone in JLNO to **#BeAHero** this year. She doesn't mean don spandex and a mask to avenge evil. (Though, I mean, if you want to, I'm not here to stop you!) What Maria means is to make decisions and put forth efforts that impact the lives of others in a positive way. In her fall letter to *Lagniappe*, she relays a story of a kind woman who sat with her after she was in a car accident. Thirty years after the incident, Maria explains that the simple action has stayed with her to this day. She wants the Junior League of New Orleans' actions to have an impact on the lives of others like that kind woman impacted her own.

And it would seem great minds think alike! Throughout the past few months, we looked to other Junior Leagues' social media to see what they were up to and lo and behold, they, too, were being heroes! While they did not necessarily use the phrase "Be a Hero," their Leagues encouraged and promoted impacting their communities in a positive light.



Our neighbor League to the west, Junior League of Baton Rouge, uses the hashtag **#BeACatalyst**. This hashtag encourages Baton Rouge women to "work toward lasting community change" by joining the Junior League.



The Junior League of Shreveport Bossier City uses the hashtag **#IAMJLSB** to spotlight various League members and activities in which they participate. With this hashtag, JLSB spotlighted the League receiving an award for their great service, members zip-

lining at a leadership retreat and members named to the 40 Under 40 list.



It's not just Louisiana Leagues being heroes. The Junior League of Birmingham has a **#IAMTheJLB** series highlighting its members and their placements and other community involvement. Headshots of members are featured quotes relaying their experiences. Stories range from caring for children, supporting victims at a crisis center, and brainstorming with fellow members about ways to impact the community.



Whether we are heroes, catalysts or simply members of a Junior League, it is evident that even just being a member carries a great weight in the community. Junior League members around the state, the South, the nation and even the world are leaving their impressions on their respective communities.

Making Connections

Breaking into the New Orleans Social Scene While Contributing to a Greater Good

By Tara Quin-Hagmann

Whether you are new to the city or a New Orleans native, there most certainly is no shortage of opportunities to meet other like-minded individuals while also giving back. Through membership in charitable organizations, community service groups, social organizations and the like, not only do you increase your network of friends, but you also learn what it really means to be a part of a team while directly having a hand in your city's growth.

The Young Leadership Council, which formed in 1986, is the oldest independent young professionals' organization in the country. Started as a nonprofit, nonpartisan civic organization, their mission is to build leadership through service with a focus on initiatives that work to improve overall quality of life in Greater New Orleans. Areas of service include arts and culture, beautification, youth enrichment and education, and economic development. Since its formation, YLC has raised more than \$25 million to support their efforts. Crave a mid-week reprieve to help with those office blues? YLC's Wednesday at the Square, a free, 12-week concert series that raises funds through food and drink sales, is just what you need to feel reinvigorated midweek.

Maybe you've often wondered what exactly a philanthropist does, or maybe you've always known you wanted to donate your time and money to a cause but never knew quite where to start. The Emerging Philanthropists of New Orleans, which first formed in 2008 as

the nine-member "Young Professional Giving Circle" Steering Committee, can help with that. "EPNO does a great job of bringing a very diverse group of young professionals together - different ages, professions, ethnicities, some originally from New Orleans and some from elsewhere - who all share a love for this great city and a commitment to give both their time and money to making it even better," said EPNO board member and alumnus Jonathan Levy. It currently boasts more than 200 class members and alumni who have collectively donated more than \$200,000 to various nonprofits with focus areas ranging from youth development to housing and more. Marketed as a "high-engagement 6-month experience," members join a team targeting an issue of interest. Each team then works to pool their resources together with outside sponsorships. It is then, once the funds are combined, that members learn the basics of grant making from experts through sessions such as "Grantmaking 101." What follows is a hands-on, multi-faceted experience where members are directly involved with deciding where their funds go while also cultivating their personal growth.

"EPNO exposed me to sides of New Orleans that I think I never would have known otherwise- from people who work in completely different fields from my own to small and medium nonprofits helping to build and strengthen New Orleans," said Jonathan. "It was a





completely eye opening experience every step of the way.”

What if you own a local business and increased community development and growth are what you seek? There are organizations for you too. “Being a part of regional chambers of commerce like the New Orleans and St. Bernard Chambers have given me a platform to support economic development while networking for my own business,” said Mindy Nunez Airhart, owner of St. Bernard-based steel fabrication company Southern Services and Equipment, Inc. “Over the past couple of years, I’ve also developed some really great friendships as well.” The New Orleans Chamber of Commerce, founded in 2004, provides opportunities and resources through networking events, education seminars and advocacy that help enable businesses to prosper.

Mindy is also a board member of the New Orleans Regional Leadership Institute. Forming in 1988 as a task force that included representatives of the Metropolitan Area Committee, Young Leadership Council, Jefferson Leadership Institute, Leadership Slidell, West St. Tammany Chamber of Commerce and Leadership Louisiana, their mission is to promote regional cooperation and collaboration. To achieve this, NORLI brings together 40 new members a year from business, nonprofit and governmental sectors from throughout the local regions. “It is a real leadership incubator, and I have met some fantastic people that I would have never met otherwise,” said Mindy. NORLI is an educational program providing emerging leaders with a thought-provoking, year-long curriculum that works to enhance their ability to collaborate. With so many influential movers and shakers together in one organization, what results is a more thorough understanding of issues and a greater move toward teaming up for the

greater good of the community.

Last but not least, what New Orleans social scene list would be complete without a nod to the most grandiose of all gatherings our city has to offer? That’s right, Mardi Gras! Whether you are a member of one of the more than 50 parade Krewe and you aspire for the crown your great aunt wore years before you, or you are a member of a walking or dance Krewe, participation in such organizations always translates into countless social events leading up to the main event.

The Krewe of Muses, which made its debut in 2001, was the first all-female organization to parade at night in Uptown New Orleans. This famed and difficult to join Mardi Gras organization is now more than 1,000 members strong and needs no further introduction. We’ve all made it our modus operandi to catch a highly coveted shoe, and some of us have even reveled in all its glory as others sorely and enviously look on until the next one is flashed. But what is it like being on the other side?

“I can honestly say that the thrill of riding is a once-in-a-lifetime experience,” said Courtney Guste, Muses member for eight years and a “riding member” for the past four. “You will never understand it until you have ridden in a parade on St. Charles Avenue. To ride in an uptown parade should definitely be on everyone’s bucket list.”

“I have gotten to know so many people through Muses,” said Krewe member Maria Pardo Huete, current President of JLNO. “It is also the one thing my best friend and I get to do that is just us letting our hair down and having a good time together.”

Newer to the city and want to test the waters a bit before auditioning for the all-male 610 Stompers or vying for a spot on the Pussyfooter’s all-female dance Krewe? As a parade-goer, your

favorite spot on the route and side of the street will be determined well before Muses Thursday and most certainly by Thoth and Bacchus Sunday. By then you also will have slowly but surely amassed a small village made up of your closest friends, their families and their family members’ closest friends, because hey, your spot is the best, right?! Then, for every year thereafter, you will all come together again and realize why you started in the first place, and in case you were wondering, no, it never gets old! Not to be labeled as all fun and games, this infamous carnival known the world over just so happens to generate more than \$465 million to the New Orleans economy. Talk about having your cake and eating it too!

Leadership, intrapersonal skills, selflessness and commitment to your community are the intangibles that are gained through the various organizations our city has to offer, and you will undoubtedly have some Mardi Gras magic sprinkled in along the way. The intense personal growth to be experienced on every level will enrich your path in life – Mardi Gras masks optional. So, what are you waiting for? Jump in already!

OPPOSITE PAGE TOP: Pretty in pink, these Muses riders take pause from the revelry before being called to board their floats.

Photo provided by: Courtney Guste

OPPOSITE PAGE MIDDLE: Muses riders Courtney Guste, Julie Danna and Ayame Dinkler manage to take a quick break from throwing for a quick photo-op. *Photo provided by: Courtney Guste*

OPPOSITE PAGE BOTTOM: EPNO class of 2016 members congregate. *Photo provided by: Chandler Nutik*

ABOVE: Members of NORLI pose in front of the City Sightseeing bus following a public policy session held at the Basin St. Station. *Photo provided by: Mindy Nunez Airhart*

KonMari 1-2-3

Creating a Healthy, Happy Environment for You and Your Family

By Jill Holland

Recently, a little book about simplifying has created a big sensation, inspiring its readers to organize and declutter. *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing* is the work of Marie Kondo, a Japanese organization consultant. In Kondo's book, she outlines how to "tidy up" your environments by deciding what things bring you joy and keeping those – it is called the KonMari method.

Kate Kelley, a JLNO Active member, is a self-professed "walking advertisement for [KonMari]." She has adopted this method in two homes and her work environment. "I tidy up daily, weekly and monthly, hitting up different spaces each time," she said. "My stress level goes down instantly...it feels wonderful. When you tidy up your living space and have an environment that is welcoming to you, you are truly living."

Sustainer Marjory Harper, agrees that a zen-like atmosphere creates a less stressful and healthful environment. Marjory is the Director of Major Gifts at Ochsner Health System. "When [Ochsner] opened our Breast Center, we travelled all over the country to clinics to determine what was best for the patients," she said. They found that the sensory environment was very much a part of the healing process for patients and families. And so, Ochsner created a KonMari-esque space – clean without being sterile and full of objects pleasing to the senses (art, aquariums, music, pleasant aromas and a coffee shop).

With good intentions for living well in mind, here are a few of Kate's take-aways from KonMari that should help you get started finding happiness and good health in 2017 by decluttering and organizing your environment:

1. Research: Create a file. Pull pictures from magazines. Print pics from the internet. Create a Houzz or Pinterest Board. "Whatever photos you choose, most likely, it's of a clean space. Imagine how you feel in that space. Start there as you begin to discard and decide what to keep."

2. Find Joy: With this end goal in sight, don't tidy room by room. Tidy by category. "Start with clothing as it's the easiest to practice the technique, then books, miscellaneous accessories and finally sentimental items... If you haven't used the item and it's been with you a while, it's probably not going to be used, so discard." The items that remain should be the ones that bring you the most pleasure.

3. Maintain a Tidy Mindset: "Once you have selected your categories, decide where to store the items you are keeping and always put the items back where you found them." In order to maintain that vision that you researched in #1, you need to follow through with this step.

For those who are intimidated by implementing this method, take heart. Like any methodology, what works and is helpful to one person may be different for another. Kate said she "follows 80 percent of the book very closely...Once you get into the routine of following the 'joy' mentality, it becomes natural to stay consistent."

In addition to Kate's pointers, Marjory had specific tips for creating calm and collected closed door spaces in your home:

- **Closets:** Arrange clothing by color and type (blouses, pants, skirts, etc). Pair shoes on a shoe rack or shelf where they are easily visible. Keep seasonal items such as sweaters in Tupperware where they are easy to access but not mixed in with the current season's items. In the linen closet, put sheet sets in large Ziploc bags so the sets do not get mismatched.

- **Cabinets:** Have small, clear storage boxes designated for your medicines (cold/flu, prescription, tummy ache, etc). When travelling, use a medicine dispenser to separate any medications and vitamins that you need daily to avoid carrying around all of the bulky bottles. And as for the et cetera in your bathroom, have boxes for nail polish paraphernalia, extra makeup, miscellaneous bath salts and other under-the-sink items that tend to get shuffled together.

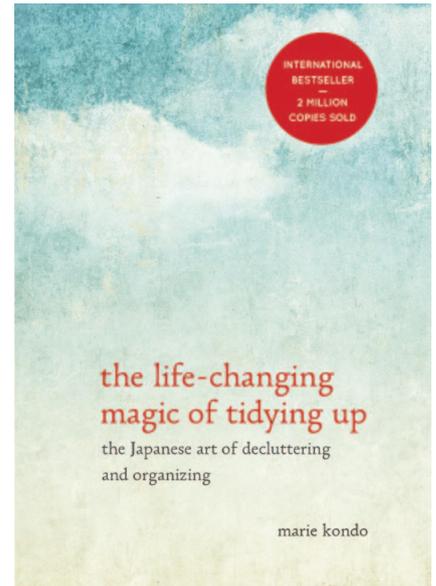


Photo provided by: Tidyingup.com

Marjory recommends labeling these types of boxes. JLNO Active Kris Fortier, owner of Porter Personal Concierge Service, agrees with this practice. She is an avid labeler. Kris is frequently hired to simplify homes and get them organized. She uses many of the tactics Marjory suggested and agrees with Kate's 1-2-3: research, toss what you do not use and keep things in their place.

Kris, a mother of two, finds this particularly helpful in children's rooms – an area she recommends parents tackle on their own. "It is easier to wait until the children aren't home and purge the things you know they aren't playing with [or wearing]," Kris said. While this may seem sneaky, she said it is a sure way of getting the joyful environment your kids and you both want. They may even thank you for it.

Whether decluttering for yourself or someone else, these three women agree that a consistently tidy home leads to a joyful mentality. Their takeaways and tips are just the magic needed to create a healthful and serene vision. Cheers as you KonMari and conquer your clutter.

Cultivating with Kathleen

Our Development Coordinator Extraordinaire

By Jill Holland

During the 2014-15 JLNO year, the Board of Directors decided to create a staff Development Coordinator position to offer members and donors continuity. Carrie Moulder, JLNO Communications Manager and Operations Administrator, outlined the DC role as an individual who “helps build and maintain processes for acquiring donors and donor recognition; maintains existing donor relationships; and trains members to be well versed in how to approach donors for contributions.”

Kathleen Ramsey, a JLNO member since 2003, was serving as Secretary to the Board during the creation of the DC position and when JLNO started searching for the right fit, Kathleen, a sustainer at the time, applied. She was hired and began in July 2016.

Immediately, there was much to do. Both Freret 5k and Girls Night Out were in the throes of planning, and Kathleen jumped in with both feet, helping to complete two successful events. The flood relief effort also began just a month after she started. The silver lining in this tragedy was “people saw JLNO that had not seen us before,” she said. It opened up new relationships in the community and helped Kathleen develop relationships with past supporters who were aiding in the League’s flood relief efforts.

“The Development Coordinator’s main role is establishing new and stewarding existing relationships with donors, which include individuals, businesses, and foundations... [My job] is to maintain an open line of communication between JLNO and its supporters,” said Kathleen. The flood relief effort, particularly, put her immediately in to contact with the community in exactly this way.

The first three events after Kathleen’s appointment also aided her to fulfill the other part of the DC’s purposes. “For members of fundraising committees, I can provide the history of past donors to their particular event or a list of potential partners curated for new projects,” she said. “I handle soliciting participation so that the chairwomen and committees can concentrate on bringing their unique contacts, ideas and strategy to grow their projects.”

“Kathleen being a Sustainer and past board member has been key,” said Maria Pardo Huete, JLNO President. “We want continuity [for donors] and also want our members to have training.” Maria said that because this is a new position and the League is learning what the balance is between staff and volunteers, Kathleen’s experience has been invaluable.

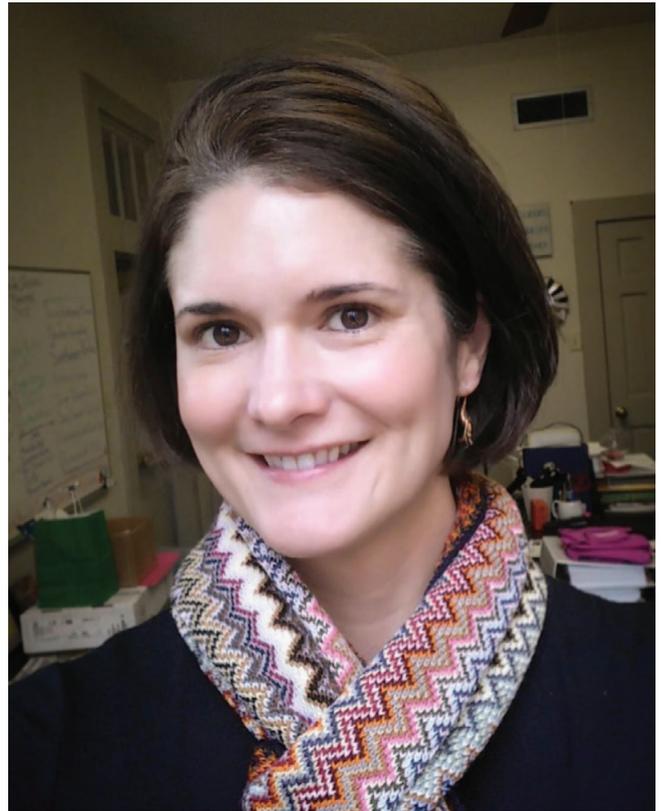


Photo provided by: Kathleen Ramsey

Kathleen considers herself a resource for others within and outside of the League and is passionate about promoting and cultivating “an organization that is making incredible strides to improve the lives of those in Metropolitan New Orleans.” She recognizes that our League is in perpetual development – an important perspective to have in the budding post she has taken on.

“JLNO will continue to evolve and refine the Development Coordinator position alongside the fundraising knowledge and skills of our members,” Kathleen said. As a Sustainer, she certainly is staying active in this evolution that she helped to shape for just over a decade. We hope she’ll continue for another.



How League Dues are Allocated

By Amber B. Barlow

Members of the Junior League of New Orleans are able to serve the community by volunteering their time and services. JLNO has nearly 2,200 members working together to bring about lasting and meaningful change in the community. Being a member of JLNO provides the opportunity for its members to strengthen leadership skills and utilize volunteer opportunities to improve Metropolitan New Orleans by identifying its most urgent needs and addressing them with relevant and effective initiatives. As the spring approaches, one thing on most JLNO members' minds is renewing their annual dues, but have you ever wondered how your membership dues are allocated?

Every spring, League members are required to pay their annual League dues. Depending on your current League member status, dues vary.

How are annual dues determined?

The amount of League dues is a topic that is discussed at the Board level annually. To arrive at the current cost of annual League dues, the League's Finance Council reviews the final results from the prior year and performs a dues analysis. This

analysis involves a look into how much revenue was brought in from the annual League dues and the financial commitments and obligations of the upcoming League year. If an increase in League dues is deemed necessary, the increase is first voted on by the Finance Council and then submitted to the Board of Directors for further action. However, if the Association of Junior Leagues International increases its dues, JLNO will automatically increase its dues by the same amount for the next League year.

Who pays dues? Do all League members pay dues?

No. Sustainers 80 and older are Sustainer Emeritus and no longer pay any dues. Dues differ for Provisionals, Actives, Associate Actives, Sustainers and Sustainer Plus members. Sustainer Plus members are members between the ages of 75 and 79.

How are annual dues allocated?

Junior League of New Orleans pays a specific amount per member to the Association of Junior Leagues International in dues each year. Dues

cover programming expenses to further the League's mission along with the organization's management. The breakdown results in 87 percent of the annual dues allocated to programming and mission expenses and 13 percent to management and operations. All of the League's fundraisers pay for themselves and the profits derived from the fundraisers after expenses are allocated toward community projects for the following year.

League members can be confident their dues are being used to promote voluntarism, develop the potential of women and improve communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. League dues also serve as a personal investment in an organization of women committed to leadership education, personal growth, social connections, fund and resource development expertise, communications skills, strategic and logistic planning abilities, consensus-building capacity and mentoring.

League Faces



Sustainer Amelie LeBlanc with JLNO President Maria Pardo Huete at the Sustainer Holiday Party. *Photo by: Liz Creel*



Cleta Bujol Toepfer, a Diaper Bank Committee Member, works with Elizabeth "Lizzie" Frein to sort diapers during the MLK Day of Service. *Photo by: Lara Mintz*



(L-R) Donna Dees, Co-Director of *Five Awake*, State Representative Helena Moreno, UW of SELA Public Policy Chairman Kim Sport, JLNO President Maria Pardo Huete, UW of SELA Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Charmaine Caccioppi, State Senator JP Morrell and JLNO Board Member Alice Glenn together after the showing of the movie *Five Awake* during the January General Membership Meeting at headquarters. *Photo by: Michelle Sens*



Active members Nancy Kirkeby, Beth Applewhite and Jeanel Farell at Holiday Marketplace during the General Membership Meeting on December 13, 2016. *Photo by: Melissa McGrane*



January's General Membership Meeting was a full house for the showing of the movie *Five Awake*. Photo by: Michelle Sens



Erin Allen and Michele Fay, Stylists with Peach, help women feel strong and beautiful in their own skin with intimate apparel from Peach at the December General Membership Meeting. Photo by: Melissa McGrane



JLNO Sustainers enjoy connecting and chatting at the Sustainer Holiday Party. (Left to right: Lou Hoffman, Carol Gelderman and Lucy Neill) Photo by: Meghan Keating-Finneran

The Sustainer Connections Committee enjoys arranging the annual holiday party and being able to mingle with the JLNO sustainers. (From Left to Right: Anne Mock, Christina Fritchie, Julie Radford, Emily Dike, Catherine Hales and Alice Glenn) Photo by: Meghan Keating-Finneran





State Representative Helena Moreno and State Senator J.P. Morell answer questions related to the movie *Five Awake*, which was presented at the January General Membership Meeting. *Photo by: Michelle Sens*



JLNO President Maria Pardo Huete, JLNO President-Elect Kristen Cocke Koppel and Freret 5K Chair Susan Kelly-Kliebert mingle before the January General Membership Meeting. *Photo by: Michelle Sens*



Virginia Shaw, Taylor Burgmon, Stephanie Vega and Rachel Robinson volunteered to assist in sorting diapers to benefit the JLNO Diaper Bank on the MLK Day of Service. *Photo by: Lara Mintz*



Bloomin' Deals brings out its best merchandise for the January General Membership Meeting. *Photo by: Michelle Sens*



Sara Harris, Courtenay Miller, Emily Dike, Aggie Dykes Richards and Molly Massey get together at Lambeth House for a Friday night social. *Photo by: Michelle Sens*



Ninette Eastman (second from right), 1995 JLNO President, is joined by (left to right) Denice Derbes, Karen Senter and Maria Evans. The ladies agree that their favorite part of sustainer events is reconnecting with old friends. *Photo by: Meghan Keating-Finneran*



Sustainers Marietta Stirratt and Judy Gessner at Lambeth House for social hour. *Photo by: Michelle Sens*

Héritage

Puppets: A Community Project

By Sarah Chase

One of the most exciting events for the Junior League of New Orleans is the annual Touch a Truck event. Held in the spring, it is the result of a year's worth of planning and organization to bring together the stuff that children's dreams are made of: fire trucks, ambulances, bulldozers, tow trucks... all at their fingertips for exploring and learning. The purpose is to provide a fun and interactive family experience while still providing education about the services, businesses, and vehicles that protect and build their community.

The Junior League of New Orleans has a long history of providing fun, educational programs. One of its earliest such projects was called "Puppets," established in 1927. League members made the puppets, created the sets and wrote educational scripts for puppet shows performed at libraries, hospitals and other public venues. After the performances, children were invited "backstage" to meet the puppets and the puppeteers. The program ran through the 1950s and was even nationally recognized in 1952 when they were invited to perform at the National Puppeteers of America, Inc. Festival.

Although times have certainly changed, the Junior League of New Orleans remains committed to Building a Greater New Orleans through programs designed to engage and educate.

Puppets a Popular Activity

Tommy Westervelt and Martha Shober get closeup to puppets with Mrs. John B. Shober, Jr.



Photo provided by: Junior League of New Orleans Archives