

EDITOR'S *note*

You hold the power in your hands



The qualifying period for fall elections just closed, and voters in Livingston Parish will soon be choosing school board members, mayors, councilmen/aldermen, a U.S. Senator and a U.S.

Congressman. I hope that every voter will take time over the next few months to learn as much as they can about the candidates, as well as about the issues that face our local school board, our municipalities and Congress.

Armed with that knowledge, I want everyone to ask questions of the candidates, evaluate them fairly, and decide who to vote for based on who will do the best job – not who they are, who they know or what they can do for them.

For me, that means the ideal school board candidate will put the education needs of our children first, be willing to cooperate and compromise with the other school board members, and come up with good ideas on coping with budget cuts to be able to, as Superintendent Bill Spear recently said, “Do more, with less money.”

The best mayoral and council/alderman candidates will be hand-working, honest and have creative ideas on how to attract new businesses to their towns, improve law enforcement, and improve their town’s services and facilities, all on declining tax revenues.

Our choice of a Senator and Congressman is critical given the current economic stagnation, budget crisis and terrorist threats. I hope voters will choose candidates who will fight to return our country to firmer financial footing before its too late. For me that means:

- Revise the national healthcare legislation to make it practical and affordable for all families and businesses, while not bankrupting our country.
- Enact business-friendly legislation to encourage free enterprise and growth, including funding tax credits for business that hire new employees.
- Get out of the businesses of banking and mortgages and let them adjust to the free markets.
- Refuse to fund additional stimulus plans since the previous ones didn’t work. Unemployment is still hovering around 9.5 percent after spending billions of dollars we don’t have.
- Renew tax cuts enacted under President Bush that will expire soon. If the cuts expire, taxes will go up for individuals and businesses.
- Oppose the Cap and Trade bill that threatens to greatly increase energy costs. Note: contrary to a viral email making the rounds, Cap and Trade does not require a energy efficiency retrofit or an energy label for an existing home as a condition of sale. What it will do is worse: under House legislation, the government would be required to set a cap on carbon emissions in an effort to slow climate change; companies would either upgrade to cleaner technologies or buy credits to be allowed to continue their current emissions. This will cause the cost of doing business to rise for many manufacturers, including energy providers. And – you guessed it – the cost will be passed

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Howard Arceneaux
Publisher

Margot T. May
Associate Publisher

Helen Wale Turner
Editor

Bryan May
Account Exec./Business Manager

Scott Landry
Amy McCoy
Tish Pierce
Kenny Sharpe
Devin Zito
Columnists

Jason L. Hunt
Web Master

Linda May
Ed May
Distribution

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Denham Springs, LA 70727-1956
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ON THE COVER

Assess the Need, a volunteer program to provide local needy students with school supplies, is kicking off its 2010 drive. Shown in the school supply department of the Denham Springs Wal-Mart are, back row, left to right, Natalie Tholborn, Community Coordinator for the Denham Springs Wal-Mart; Mike Lowery, Manager of the Walker Wal-Mart; Lynda Gardiner, Community Coordinator for the Walker Wal-Mart; Brian Spurrier, Manager of the Denham Springs Wal-Mart; and Jeff Taylor, Livingston Parish Assessor. Students, standing, left to right, Shane DeMars, Elle Denton, and Jessica Borne, and, seated, Dylan DeMars, volunteered to help publicize the need for donations.

on to consumers. If Cap and Trade is enacted, many economists predict the cost of gas to run your car, and electricity and other fuels to heat and cool your home could triple in coming years.

• Become economically and fiscally responsible by stopping the excessive spending going on in Congress and by adhering to Obama's professed but not enforced "pay-as-you-go" principle.

Also:

• Enforce our immigration laws and do whatever it takes to stop the flow of illegal aliens and drugs coming in from Mexico.

• Be smarter in our handling of terrorist suspects and responding to international threats.

If you think the average voter has no chance of forcing changes in government, look at recent examples of citizens' involvement in civic affairs: a grassroots petition forced the Livingston Parish council to change the way they do business regarding roads; a vocal group of citizens and local officials help persuade Gov. Jindal to veto the appropriation of more money to study the Baton Rouge Bypass Loop; and a loosely-organized group known as The Tea Party Movement helped elect a conservative Republican to the Senate seat formerly held by Teddy Kennedy.

If you get involved, you – yes YOU – have the power to influence change.

Helen Wale Turner,
Editor

Email your comments to helen@livingstonbusiness.com

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225-664-9798

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