Trial Lawyer Mary Olive Pierson Sues Leaders of the St. George Movement

Norman Browning, Chris Rials Sued Personally For Their Roles in Forming City of St. George

BATON ROUGE - A trial lawyer with a long history of supporting leftwing causes and politicians has filed suit against the leaders of the movement to incorporate the City of St. George. St. George incorporator Norman Browning and his assistant chairman Chris Rials have been targeted with the suit filed by Baton Rouge attorney Mary Olive Pierson. The litigation could end up costing Browning, a small businessman, and retiree Rials hundreds of thousands in attorney fees.

Although Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome is one of the named plaintiffs in the suit, Pierson is the person actually funding the litigation. The City of Baton Rouge is not a plaintiff in the suit and the mayor-president is not suing in her official capacity. Pierson said she is taking the case pro bono.

Because of the enormity of the potential costs, Browning and Rials are seeking contributions to help defend the right of the people of St. George to incorporate and themselves.

In The News Recently

Mary Olive Pierson graduated from the LSU Law School. Early on, she practiced with Pat Screen and Shelly Beychok. Over the years, she has represented a world of clients, some of an unsavory sort. Not known for her social graces, she was referred to as a “red headed barracuda” in the Business Report. One of her former clients, Johnny Anderson, has been in the news lately, the subject of TV spots in the governor’s race. He allegedly engaged in sexual harassment at the Governor’s office.

Donald Trump is running for his second term this year in the election on Saturday, Nov. 16. St. George is one of several conservative voting areas in the state that Rispone needs to win big.

Edwards Opposes St. George, Rispone Supports It

Candidates Differ on StG

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IN THE NEWS RECENTLY

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Mary Olive Pierson is funding a suit targeting St. George leaders and blocking incorporation.

LEFTWING ACTIVIST and trial lawyer Mary Olive Pierson is funding a suit targeting St. George leaders and blocking incorporation.

Candidates Differ on StG Filings and State Archives.

The candidates for governor are in the final days of the Nov. 16 runoff election. Democrat John Bel Edwards (left) and Republican businessman Eddie Rispone offer a liberal/conservative contrast. President Donald Trump has made two trips to Louisiana to campaign for Rispone.

Two statewide races will appear on the Nov. 16 election ballot. Besides governor, the other race is for Secretary of State. Republican incumbent Kyle Ardoin is facing the Demo-cratic challenger Gwen Collins-Greenup. Ardoin led with 41 percent in the primary, followed by Collins-Greenup with 34 percent. Republi-can Thomas J. Kennedy followed with 19 percent.

The Secretary of State oversees Louisiana’s elections and manages business filings and state archives.

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Local Republicans Had Many Victories Oct. 12

Republicans Hope to Finish Job

**BATON ROUGE** - The night of Saturday, Oct. 12 was a watershed moment for Republicans in East Baton Rouge Parish. They hold four of six parishwide offices, and a majority of the Metro Council and the parish school board, along with the city governments and school boards in Central and Zachary. But could they hold those offices through the 2019 elections after a large majority of parish voters had supported Democrats for President and Governor?

The answer was yes! The GOP held all parishwide offices and most of the rest on the ballot. They hope to complete the job on Nov. 16 with their candidates for state and local offices:

- Governor - Eddie Rispone
- Secretary of State - Kyle Ardoin
- BESE - Greg Spiers
- Senate Dist. 16 - Franklin Foil
- House Dist. 68 - Scott McKnight
- District Judge - Trae Welch

Newsletters Endorse Two Rep. Candidates

**BATON ROUGE** - The St. George Leader, Capital City News, and Introuma Journal have endorsed two additional candidates: Dr. Leah Cullins in House District 67 and Barbara Freiberg in House District 69. Editor Woody Jenkins said, “Both candidates are individuals of high integrity with much to offer.”

Community Press

Also Endorses These Candidates in Other Races on November 16, 2019

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Candidates for BESE: Differing Philosophies

Morris, Spiers in Runoff for BESE

ST. GEORGE - One race, which the Oct. 12 primary left unresolved, will appear on the ballot throughout much of East Baton Rouge Parish in the election planned for Saturday, Nov. 16.

It is a seat from District 6 on the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) currently held by Kathy Edmonson (R) of Ascension Parish.

St. George is a key battleground for both races.

BESE District 6 includes 1/8th of the state and includes South Baton Rouge, the new City of St. George, Central, Zachary, Ascension Parish, Livingston Parish, Tangipahoa Parish, and Washington Parish.

The runoff candidates are Ronnie Morris and Greg Spiers. Greg Spiers is a former Navy SEAL and public school teacher at Port-
chatoula High School who is now in the technology business. Spiers has been endorsed by the Republican Party in East Baton Rouge Parish, Ascension Parish, and Livingston Parish.

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chatoula High School who is now in the technology business. Spiers has been endorsed by the Republican Party in East Baton Rouge Parish, Ascension Parish, and Livingston Parish.

Spiers is endorsed by Republican Party of Tangipahoa Parish and is a supporter of charter schools.

BESE makes some aspects of education policy in the state. Seven of the eight elected members of both the current and the new BESE were supported by the La. Association of Business & Industry, which also supports Supt. John White, Common Core, and charter schools.

The only current member of BESE who was not supported by LABI is Kathy Edmonson (R-Ascension). She is a more traditional conservative Republican who opposes Common Core. She decided not to run for reelection but for the Louisiana House from Ascension Parish.

Morris or Spiers will take her seat. Morris is expected to align with the other LABI candidates on the board, whereas Spiers would likely be a traditional conservative Republican who opposes Common Core and many of White’s education reforms.

BATON ROUGE - After voters in the proposed City of St. George approved incorporation on Oct. 12, it appeared that Gov. John Bel Edwards would appoint the first officials of the new city within 30 days of the certification of the results of the election. However, the filing of a suit by Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome and two others has interrupted the running of that 30-day period.

As a result, the appointment of the first Mayor, Police Chief, and members of the City Council for the City of St. George won’t occur until a decision is reached by the trial court or the trial court clears the way for the appointment. In all likelihood, that would occur after the new governor is sworn in during January 2020.

The delay in the appointment could work to the advantage of supporters of St. George. Since Democratic Gov. John Bel Edwards opposes the creation of the City of St. George, organizers of the new city have been concerned about who he might appoint and what direction they might take.

On the other hand, Republican Eddie Rispone has been a supporter of St. George and is likely to appoint pro-St. George individuals to the top offices.

The swearing in of the first officials will be considered the date the city officially begins. The new Mayor, Police Chief and City Council will serve until a special election.

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State Board of Elementary & Secondary Schools
6th District
Ronnie Morris (R)
Greg Spiers (R)*

*Spiers is endorsed by Republican Party
The Law Is Clear About Who Can Sue to Block Incorporation And Mayor-President Isn’t One

BATON ROUGE - Perhaps attorney Mary Olive Pierson, a longtime proponent of (“Mayor-President” or “the Mayor-President”) Sharon Weston Broome, is not one who reads the law. In fact, Louisiana law is quite clear on who can file suit to block the incorporation of St. George. Ms. Pierson has been speaking for the Mayor-President in the most combative and unappealing manner toward the organizers of St. George (and thus toward the 86,000 people of St. George whom they represent). Ms. Pierson has made a lot of bold statements about meeting the leaders of St. George in court. Unfortunately for Ms. Pierson, she has a client without standing to sue. Often, apparently complicated legal problems have easy answers. But the answer is often hidden in plain sight from lawyers who fail to open the Revised Statutes and actually read the law, which would allow them to make public statements about the law with some authority. So it is with Ms. Pierson. We wonder why she hasn’t bothered to read the law. In fact, Louisiana law is quite clear on who can file suit to block an incorporation. L.a. R.S. 33:4:3 sets forth who may sue in such cases. It says:

§4. Legal action contesting an incorporation
A. Any of the following persons or governmental entities may file a petition contesting the incorporation:
(1) Any elector residing in the area proposed for incorporation.
(2) Any person owning land in such area.
(3) Any municipality which might be adversely affected by incorporation.
(4) Any government entity which might be adversely affected by incorporation.
No, she is a human being not a municipality. Furthermore, she’s never mentioned it to us.

In any case, there remains only one situation where the Mayor-President will be filing suit to block St. George? No, she is a human being not a municipality. Furthermore, she’s never mentioned it to us. Ms. Pierson claims Ms. Cormier can be on the proposed incorporation on her person and on the City of Baton Rouge. She can’t be a plaintiff! Ms. Pierson’s petition, ever so cleverly drafted, has the definitions of “governing authority” in our statutes.

The definition of public officers and employees in our law is set forth in R.S.42:1102. R.S.42:1102 (11) provides as follows:

"The Governor authority’ means the body which exercises the legislative functions of a political subdivision.”

Ms. Pierson, the “governing authority” of a municipality is a legislative body — the city council! In the case of a charter form of government in East Baton Rouge Parish, the governing authority is the Metro Council — not the Mayor-President.

The Mayor-President is clearly not a member of the Metro Council, not “an elected official” of the Metro Council, not “an elected official of the governing authority.”

Ms. Pierson failed to read the law or perhaps failed to understand the law. Her wonderful unpaid, pro bono offer to represent the Mayor-President in this matter is worth exactly what she is being paid — zero!

The Mayor-President will be dismissed from this lawsuit as a plaintiff, because she is not permitted under the law to file the suit. She needs better legal counsel!

By the way, another plaintiff, M.E. Cormier, will also be dismissed as a plaintiff. In the suit, Ms. Pierson claims Ms. Cormier can be on the suit even though she does not reside in the incorporated area because she wants “to assert claims pertaining to the adverse impact of the proposed incorporation on her person and on municipalities in the vicinity.”

Seriously?

The statute on incorporation spells out who can file suit. Ms. Cormier doesn’t reside in the area to be incorporated. She can’t be a plaintiff! The description in Ms. Pierson’s brief suggests she might be a witness, but there’s no way she can be a plaintiff in this case under the governing law. So Ms. Pierson has two unqualified plaintiffs, leaving her only one — Mr. Lewis Unghesby — whose task it will be show that the City of Baton Rouge, which he cannot legally speak for, is adversely affected.

None of the other points in her brief are even worth discussing, such as her claim that the Plan of Government prohibits another municipality in the parish and requires a parishwide vote. Read the Louisiana Constitution, Ms. Pierson. It invalidated that provision of the Plan of Government 45 years ago, and the courts struck down your interpretation 14 years ago in the Central case.

All you are doing is maliciously trying to impose your will on the people of St. George and substitute it for the democratic expression of the people there and what they want for their future. You should be ashamed!


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Welcome to St. George
November 2019

And Mayor-President Isn’t One Who Can Sue to Block Incorporation...
Election Day is Saturday, Nov. 16, 2019
Early Voting Saturday, Nov. 2-Saturday, Nov. 9
The Sheriff Doing His Job in Central Is Suddenly an Issue, Complaint Says

CENTRAL — Two opponents of creating the City of St. George have alleged Sheriff Sid Gautreaux has a sweetheart deal with the City of Central that allows the citizens of Central to receive law enforcement free of charge.

The Baton Rouge Advocate featured the allegations in a lengthy front page story last Saturday. Mary Jane Marcantel and Ben Taylor wrote a letter to a host of public officials — but not Central Mayor David Barrow — saying Central receives services not provided to other cities with their own police forces.

However, Sheriff Sid Gautreaux said there’s nothing unusual about what he is doing in Central. “The people of Central pay the same parishwide property tax as everyone else in the parish. We’re providing the same law enforcement services in Central that we did before incorporation. The creation of the City of Central has not changed anything from our standpoint. We receive the same tax, and we provide the same services as before,” he said.

The sheriff did say that he informed Central officials early on that if they want any additional services from his office, they would have to pay for those services. He said Central has requested additional services and pays the sheriff’s office for them, amounting to about $100,000 a year.

The sheriff has parishwide law enforcement powers and can work cases in any part of the parish.

Thank You, East Baton Rouge Parish!

I am humbled by your vote of confidence. Together with the team of professionals in my office, I pledge to continue the Gold Standard by serving all the people of East Baton Rouge Parish. I am proud to be your Coroner!

Sincerely,

Dr. Beau Clark

Dr. Beau Clark, Coroner
East Baton Rouge Parish
Facts About New City of St. George

What City Will Look Like When New Mayor Sworn in

Things to Know About Louisiana’s Newest City

**Population:** 86,000 • **Rank in LA:** 5th largest after New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Shreveport, and Lafayette. St. George will be larger than Monroe, Lake Charles, Alexandria, Kenner, and Houma

**Land Area:** 60 Sq. Miles • **Location:** Southeast portion of East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana

**Median Household Income:** $79,000 • **Median Income Rank in LA:** 2nd in State. Highest is Youngsville in Lafayette Parish ($94,564). Next: Zachary ($75,472), and City of Central ($70,618)

**Demographics:** 79 percent white; 12 percent black, 8 percent Latin, Asian, and other

**Voter Registration:** 27,124 Republicans, 13,375 Democrats, 14,141 other party or no party

**54,680 Total Registered Voters**

**City Officials:** Mayor, Police Chief, and 5 to 7 members of City Council (Lawrason Act) Initially appointed by the Governor • Special election to be held within six months.

**Estimated Tax Revenue:** $48 million • **Source of Revenue:** Existing 2% parish sales tax plus existing occupational license fees • **Estimated Expenses** $34 million

**Law Enforcement:** East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff’s Office will continue to provide law enforcement (funded by existing property tax millage)

**Fire Protection:** St. George Fire Protection District will continue to provide fire protection (funded by existing property tax millage)

**Roads and Streets:** Existing parish roads will be allocated between the Parish of East Baton Rouge and the City of St. George by an intergovernmental agreement between the two. St. George will assume maintenance of an estimated 354 miles of city roads allocated to it. The State of Louisiana will continue to maintain state roads located in the City of St. George.

**Drainage:** Existing waterways, bayous, creeks, and other drainage will be allocated between the Parish of East Baton Rouge and the City of St. George by an intergovernmental agreement. St. George will assume maintenance of waterways allocated to it.

**Public Works, Planning and Zoning, Building Codes, Issuances of Permits, and Occupational Licenses:** Will be administered by the City of St. George.

**Garbage & Trash, Sewer Fees, Animal Control, and Mosquito Abatement:** Will be unchanged
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> Christian
> Former U.S. Navy SEAL
> Former High School Teacher / Coach
> IT Professional
> Husband and Father

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On behalf of our deputies and staff, Suzi and I would like to thank you for the confidence you have shown in me by reelecting me as your sheriff. I will continue to take my commitment to the people of this parish seriously and with great compassion. The safety of this parish and the employees of the EBRSO are my mission, and I am excited to continue the work of building a better community for all of us.

Thank you,
Sheriff Sid Gautreaux
Service to Our Country
Effective Conservative Leadership for Baton Rouge

Franklin Foil

• Member, Louisiana House, 12 years
• U.S. Navy Captain
• Military Judge currently serving his 28th year
• B.A from LSU; J.D. from Loyola School of Law
• Elder, First Presbyterian Church • Eagle Scout
• Married 28 years • Three children

Former U.S. Congressman Henson Moore said
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be trusted to listen and always do the right thing.”

Senator Dan Claitor said
“In the Louisiana Legislature, I’ve worked with many
but few have been as hardworking and effective as
Franklin Foil. It’s why I support Franklin to replace me
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Our parish embodies the best Louisiana has to offer. In spite of all we have been through, the future looks bright, and I am proud to serve as your Assessor!

– Brian Wilson

Brian Wilson • East Baton Rouge Parish Assessor
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Declaration of Independence
July 4, 1776

“All men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed”
— Declaration of Independence

The Lessons of the Declaration: 1) Our rights come from God. 2) Those rights, which are unalienable, include but are not limited to, Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. 3) The purpose of Government is to secure these God-given rights. 4) Government can only derive its powers with the consent of its citizens.

City of St. George, LA
October 12, 2019

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EDDIE RISPONE for GOVERNOR

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