



**League of Women Voters®
Austin Area**

Voter

April 2010 Volume 14 #9

Frances McIntyre, President	451-1551	mcintyre.frances@gmail.com
Anne Clark, Secretary	347-0594	anneshelbyclark@yahoo.com
Anita Privett, Programs	467-2674	anita.privett@gmail.com
Betty Williamson, Advocacy	474-2130	bettybettybetty@austin.rr.com
Judy Parken, Membership	502-0278	japarken@aol.com
Susan Morrison, Membership	451-9808	susan_morrison@lawyer.com
Stewart Snider, Voter Editor	345-7047	s2snider@gmail.com

www.lwvaustin.org
512.451.6710

"The League may take action on governmental measures and policies in the public interest. It shall not support or oppose any political party or candidates." The VOTER is partially funded by the League of Women Voters of Austin Education Fund.

Calendar for April

Monday, April 5 thru Friday, April 9 - **Early Voting**
 Tuesday, April 13 - **Travis County Joint Primary Runoff**

Monday, April 12, noon - **Central Unit**
 Old Quarry Library, 7051 Village Center Dr.

Tuesday, April 13, 7pm - **North Unit**
 Judy Parken's, 7917 West Rim

Wednesday, April 14, 7pm - **South Unit**
 South Austin Senior Activity Center, 3911 Manchaca

Sunday, April 18, 2pm - **General Meeting - Roger Duncan on Austin's Energy Future**
 Faith Presbyterian Church, 1314 E. Oltorf (just west of I-35)

Friday, April 23, 11am - **Mailout Social** - League Office, 1011 W. 31st

Friday, April 23 - Sunday, April 25 - **LWV-Texas State Convention** - Embassy Suites
 Convention Center, 1001 McCarty Lane, San Marcos, TX 78666, 512-392-6450

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Roger Duncan, National Energy Expert

- Speaker at April's General Meeting

The path to clean, reliable, affordable energy is not at all clear. Our speaker has both practical experience and a wide-ranging knowledge of the energy field. He served on the City Council from 1981-1985 and joined Austin Energy in 1998, serving as general manager for the past 2 years. He has also served as an environmental and energy advisor to the federal government. Come and hear about Roger's vision for Austin's energy future as well as his answers to these questions:

- What major issues does our Electric Utility System face in the coming 10 years?
- How should our electric utility be structured?
- Where will future energy come from?
- How will we manage energy at home and at work?

And be sure to attend an April Unit meeting to get an overview of the Austin energy situation.

President's Report

Dear members,

In addition to the beautiful wildflowers, April brings to Central Texas the League of Women Voters of Texas Convention. I remember a LWV-TX convention I went to a long time ago in Beaumont. To use contemporary jargon, it was a "hoot". For entertainment (yes, Leaguers do enjoy entertainment), we listened to a Zydeco band that put a skip in our walk. They also gave everyone a loaf of bread made in the shape of an alligator. Of course, we did complete the business of the League with lively discussions about program and budget.

The State Conventions are always interesting and stimulating as the different Leagues around Texas exchange ideas, argue their points of view and points of parliamentary procedure. I hope that you will take this opportunity to be a delegate from the Austin League. You can find registration forms on the State League's website.

If you can go, please let me or any Board member know so we can coordinate transportation. Also, we have in our budget partial payments of some registration fees. This year, there is an optional convention activity that includes a guided excursion to the cave called Jacob's Well. We'll have a chance to learn the history as well as the

conservation measures relevant to the area. There is also a dinner scheduled at the Wittliff Collection at Texas State University which holds the archives from the Lonesome Dove miniseries. I'm sure you will enjoy it and have a chance to meet a lot of men and women who are dedicated to the public services the League offers.

Our meetings this month are exciting and informative. Our energy study committee has been gathering information which it will present at the April Unit Meetings. Our General Meeting boasts a distinguished and informed speaker in the person of Roger Duncan, Austin Energy's recently-retired general manager.

I want to thank the Air Quality study committee for such an informative and interesting meeting in March. They have done a superb job of interviewing and compiling so much information. I expect we will be hearing more from them on this important issue.

Also, coming up soon is our Annual Meeting, scheduled for May 12. Mark your calendar. You will be getting the Annual Meeting Workbook either electronically or by mail.

Stay informed by joining the fun of the Austin League.

- Frances

The League's State Convention is This Month

Please save the date for the League's **State Convention** in San Marcos on April 23-25, 2010. It will be held at the Embassy Suites Convention Center in San Marcos. This is a great opportunity to learn from other local Leagues and to share our knowledge with them. There will also be seminars on:

- Navigating the LWV-TX website, locating resources, looking at effective local League sites.
- Participating in program planning, generating a study, & consensus.

- Past LWV-TX president Diane Sheridan on the role of the president as leader and manager, and solutions for LL challenges.

- Attracting and retaining members.

This year, the Austin League will be lobbying to make public campaign financing a statewide priority.

If you plan to go, please contact the Austin office. We'll arrange registrations and will coordinate transportation.

A special bonus: our own Maxine Barkan is being honored.

Meetings in April

General Meeting

Roger Duncan (see bio on page 1) on Austin's Energy Future

Sunday, April 18th, 2 p.m. Faith Presbyterian Church, 1314 East Oltorf, (west of I-35)

Unit Meetings

At each of this month's unit meetings, the Austin League's Energy Study Group will present its findings and guide discussions on questions such as:

- What change in energy sources is realistic in the short term?
- Do we agree with AE's new Energy Plan?
- Should the League modify its position on nuclear power due to CO 2 concerns?
- Is AE's Transfer Fund calculated reasonably?
- What can be done about the effect of increasing energy costs on low income families?

Come to a unit meeting to get a concise update on AE's current situation, the new Energy Plan and to discuss questions like those above. Your input matters!! Plus, these meetings are a great way to get to know other League members. Be sure to bring the League Position insert in this newsletter when you come to the Unit Meeting.

Monday, April 12th, noon. Central Unit – Old Quarry Library, 7051 Village Center Dr.

Tuesday, April 13th, 7 pm. North Unit - Judy Parken's, 7917 West Rim Drive.

Wednesday, April 14th, 7 pm. South Unit - S. Austin Sr Activity Ctr, 3911 Manchaca.

Mark Your Calendar

Wednesday, May 12, 6pm - Austin League Annual Meeting - details in the *May Voter*.

Membership

Welcome, New Members

We cordially welcome Lenora DuBose, Toye Goodson, Marina Grant and Randi Shade (City Council Member) to the Austin League. We are delighted you have joined us. Your membership includes the national (LWVUS), state (LWVTX) and local (Austin) Leagues. We study and advocate issues at all three levels. If you have any questions about the League, please give us a call.

Thank You, Renewing Members

Barbara Allen, Nancy Bene, Adriana Cox, Marsha Fatino, Julia Marsden, Flora

and William McCormick, Helen Putman, Karen Rankin, Pam Reed, Sara Saltmarsh, Barbara Werth, Jan Williams, Martha Schumacher. We appreciate your prompt membership renewal.

If you made a tax-deductible contribution to the League, we thank you for your much-needed support, but this is not the same as paying membership dues. When renewing, please specify that your \$60 is for membership. Checks may be made out to Austin League of Women Voters. Call me if you have questions.

- *Judy Parken, 502-0278*

The Austin League: Helping to Get the Word Out

We hope you've noticed that we're working to modernize communications in the Austin League. This effort has created some interesting new volunteer opportunities. Please look at the following list and let us know if you have skills you want to share or are willing to learn:

- Create our monthly Program Alerts, or help produce the monthly *Voter*. You can do this from home. The program we use is fairly similar to Microsoft Word.
- We are looking for new types of articles for the *Voter*. Perhaps a personal history of a longtime member, or maybe a research article. For example: a page or so on the high cost of elections. We have some new ideas. Or, you can come up with your own.
- Attend a Unit or General Meeting and write a short review of what was said. Members who cannot attend meetings still want to hear about the League's

"...we think you would find it rewarding."

study topics.

- Take pictures at events so they can be used in the *Voter* and on the web. No need to be a professional and you don't have to attend all meetings.

- Videotape a meeting and post on YouTube.

- Manage the office computer - keep up the passwords, make backups and assure security software is current.

For all of these activities, you may put as much time into them as you choose. Each task would really benefit the League, and we think you would find it rewarding.

Try one and keep doing it if you like it.

If we've tweaked your interest just a little, please contact one of us. We'll be happy just to talk to you - whether or not you decide to take on a new task.

- Anita Privett 467-2674

Stewart Snider 345-7047

\$\$ Automatic Transfer \$\$

The Austin League wants to make it easier for you to make donations and membership payments. Our bank provides automatic bank drafts whereby you can make monthly or quarterly payments to the League. There is no cost to the member, but there is a monthly minimum cost for the League. If you would be interested in setting up an automatic bank transfer from your account to the League account, let one of the Board

of Directors know. If we get 10 or more people interested in the automatic bank draft, we can set up the service. In the meantime, the Austin League can accept automatic "bill payments" directly from you. Talk to your banker about setting up automatic "bill pay" for monthly, quarterly, semi-annual and annual payments.

- Carol Olewin, Treasurer

Honors & Memorials

The Austin League provides the opportunity for donations in honor of, or in memory of, League members. Please contact the Austin office if you'd like to do this.

Randall's Donations

Randall's Good Neighbor Program gives the Austin League a percentage of sales from members who link the League to their Randall's "Remarkable" cards. Our account number is 465.

State Board of Education Needs Your Help

If you are reading the national or local news these days, you are almost certainly hearing about the Texas State Board of Education (SBOE). Because of the volume of textbooks purchased by the State of Texas, the rest of the country often goes along with what is decided right here in the Lone Star State.

Many voters do not realize this is an elected board. For that reason, the Austin League is planning to hold an educational forum this fall that will describe how the SBOE operates, over what functions it has control (i.e. the Permanent School Fund), and how much its members are compensated.

In addition, PBS affiliate KLRU has agreed to produce and broadcast a candidate forum for the two SBOE districts (5 and 10) that cover Travis County. It will be broadcast here and in San Antonio. But we must raise the money for

“the SBOE needs qualified members”

the production costs. We hope you agree that the SBOE needs qualified members, and that the League should take a leadership role in educating voters about this critically-important agency.

We, the undersigned, are asking LWV members and others to pledge their support right now, with the expectation of paying in late summer. We are almost halfway to our goal of raising \$5000, and we think the Austin League can get us the rest of the way there.

Will you pledge something to help this very important effort? We'll respond and keep you informed of how it is going.

By the way, this gift is tax deductible.

Thank you in advance.

- Nan Clayton, Janet Hamilton, Lisa Harris, Susan Morrison, Mary Patrick, Anita Privett, Anne Roussos, and Alice Van Zant.

Observer Corps: Travis County Commissioners Court

March 9, 2010

Items of Interest on the Agenda:

Items 2/7B: Concept plans for the Onion Creek Greenway were presented. The planned greenbelt, which would stretch along Onion Creek from east of I-35 to the Colorado River, is a 21-mile corridor of public land. In various locations, there will be picnic areas, disc golf and ball fields, playgrounds, fishing ponds, equestrian areas and walking trails. The open spaces will also mitigate flooding concerns.

Item 26: The Downtown Central Campus Master Plan was reviewed. Between now and January, 2011, several public forums will be held to provide initial information to citizens and receive comments. Three alternative plans for development will be presented, then refined into a preferred alternative for the final plan. Suggestions and feedback can be given via the county's website during this process.

- Karen Rankin

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE AUSTIN AREA**
1011 West 31st Street
Austin, TX 78705

Are your dues paid?

ATTENTION MEMBERS: Please fill out the form below and send with your dues renewal and/or any changes to the LWV-AA Office, 1011 W. 31st, Austin, TX 78705. **The League is grateful for your support!** If you do not wish to renew, please notify **Jaci Collins, Member Records**, at jacic@sbcglobal.net or at 257-9636. This will save time and expense in sending follow-up reminders. Thank you .

For new and renewing members and for address changes:

***** Not for Women Only *****

Name _____ ; _____

Name of household member (if applicable)

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone (H) _____ (W) _____ (Cell) _____

Email _____

	Individual	Household	Student
Dues	\$ 60.00	\$ 90.00	\$ 20.00
Additional Donation	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

I'm an existing member and this is a change to my information.
You can also PayPal dues to lwvaustin@lwvaustin.org

(Dues allocation: National \$29.15; State \$22.80; **Local \$8.05**; Total \$60.00)

MAIL TO LWV-AA OFFICE: 1011 W. 31st, Austin, TX 78705