



April 2013

Volume 17 # 9



Love Your League

Annual Fund Drive



It's that time of the year for our annual Love Your League Fund Raising! The Austin League of Women Voters needs your financial support to continue the programs important to our local community. As your local League, we focus on voter registration programs; *Voters Guides* of candidates and bond propositions; and providing information on health issues, water concerns, public education, and voter services that affect us locally.

LWVAA Austin Area needs your support to continue our advocacy for:

- Public Education
- Fair and Equitable Management of Water, Healthcare, Natural Resources
- Citizen Participation in All Levels of Government

LWVAA Education Fund needs your support to continue our Voter Education projects:

- Community Conversations on Public Education in Each AISD District
- *Voters Guides* for Every Election
- Candidates Forums
- Voter Registration Drives

Please consider a financial donation to either the **LWVAA Austin Area** (advocacy fund), or the **LWVAA Education Fund** (voters service). The Austin Area is a 501 (c) 4 that provides advocacy on education, water, healthcare, and civic participation. The Education Fund is the 501 (c) 3 that publishes the *Voters Guide*, sponsors non-partisan candidates forums, conducts voter registration drives, and provides public educational meetings. All contributions to the Education Fund are **tax deductible**.

Make your \$35, \$100, or \$250 donation today. Contributions can be made by check by mailing your financial support to League of Women Voters of the Austin Area, 1011 West 31 Street., Austin, TX 78705. Contributions can also be made by credit card by clicking on the [DONATE link](#) on our home page (lwvaustin.org) and using PayPal. On

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The League shall not support or oppose any political party or candidates. It may take action on governmental measures and policies in the public interest.

The *VOTER* is partially funded by the League of Women Voters of Austin Area Education Fund.

If you received this email from a friend, [click here](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

to get on our list. You do not

the screen where you "Review Your Donation," click on "Add special instructions to recipient" and **indicate whether your donation is for the Austin Area Fund or the Education Fund.**



You can also provide for a Legacy in your name by including the Austin League of Women Voters in you will. For more information, contact Co-President Carol Olewin at 512-380-0088 or c.olewin@gmail.com.

LWVAA Calendar

Mon., Apr. 1, 6:30 pm, Board Meeting, Central Market, 4001 N. Lamar Blvd., Open to all members.

Tues., Apr. 2, 10:30 am, 12:30 pm, 6:30 pm, Volunteer Deputy Registrar Training, Travis County Tax Office, 5501 Airport Blvd.

Mon., Apr. 8, 10:15 am, "Perspectives on the AISD Bond Election," Howson Library, 2500 Exposition Blvd. Combined Unit Meeting. Open to the public.

Tues., Apr. 9, 7:00 pm, Encore presentation "Funding Texas Public Schools," at the home of Judy Parken, 7917 West Rim Dr., 78731. Open to the public.

Thurs., Apr. 11, Last Day to Register to Vote in May 11 election.

Sat., Apr. 13, 9:30 am - 12:00 noon, Community Conversation in Public Education, AISD District 3, North Austin Community Recreation Center/YMCA, 1000 West Rundberg. Open to the public.

Wed., Apr. 19, 6:00 - 7:30 pm, Healthcare Study Committee, Schlotzky's at Riverside and South Lamar. Open to all members.

Sun., Apr. 28, LWVAA Voters Guide for May 11 election available as a supplement in the *Austin American-Statesman* and online at lwvaustin.org.

Sun., Apr. 28, 3 - 5:00 pm, "Water Supply and Demand in Central Texas," Parish Life Center Bldg., Ascension Lutheran Church, 6420 Hart Lane, Austin 78731. Open to public.

Mon., Apr. 29 - Tues., May 7, Early Voting for General Election.

Mon., May 6, 6:30 pm, Board Meeting, Site TBA. Open to all members.

Sat., May 11, Election Day, 7 am - 7 pm.

Thurs., May 16, Applicant Review Panel name 60 finalists for Austin's **Citizens Independent Redistricting Commission.**

have to be a member.

We will NOT give your email to anyone else.



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Voters Guide

April 28

Sun., May 19, 3 - 6:00 pm, Annual Meeting of LWVAA, Faith Presbyterian Church, 1314 E. Oltorf, 78704 (near I-35.) Open to all members.

Back issues of the LWVAA *Voter* can be found at [this link](#).

April Combined Unit Meeting: "Perspectives on the AISD Bond Election"



On the upcoming May 11 ballot, Austin voters will be asked to consider an Austin Independent School District bond package totaling \$892,245,000. Early voting for the election is right around the corner--April 29 to May 7. Make an informed decision at the ballot box by coming to hear our two speakers. Open to the public.

Monday, April 8, 10:15 am
Howson Library, 2500 Exposition Blvd., near Windsor

We will kick off the program with an overview of what is in the bond package, presented by **Yesenia Garcia**, Public Relations Coordinator for the Office of Facilities for AISD. She will be followed by **Casie Wenmohs**, Legislative Director of the Austin City Council of PTAs who has a thorough knowledge of AISD financial issues and will provide different perspectives on the bond proposal.



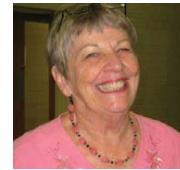
The AISD approved the bond program on Feb. 25, asking for authorization to issue tax bonds to finance improvements that are grouped into four propositions:

- **Proposition 1**, health, environment, equipment, and technology;
- **Proposition 2**, safety and security, relief from overcrowded schools, new schools, and new construction;
- **Proposition 3**, academic and building infrastructure renovations to safeguard investments in districts campuses; and
- **Proposition 4**, academic initiatives, fine arts, and athletics.

For more information, go to <http://www.austinisd.org/bond>.

~ **Anne Roussos**, April Unit Chair, roussos@swbell.net

An Encore Presentation: "Funding Texas Public Schools"



The May *Voters Guide* will be a small one because the Austin City Council elections were moved to even year November elections, as well as some of the smaller cities and ISDs. This May 11th election *Voters Guide* will contain municipalities and ISDs in Travis County that are holding elections. And we will have a bond issue from AISD and, as always, we will have the pro/con on the issues. The *Austin American-Statesman* will publish the VG on the Sunday before early voting, April 28th. It will also be online at lwaustin.org and VOTE411.org, in addition to hard copies in the Austin Public Libraries.

~ Frances McIntyre, *Voters Guide* committee,
mcintyre.frances@gmail.com

HELP Wanted: Office Corps



Can you spare 3 hours a month for the League? Volunteers to join the Office Corps are desperately needed for one 3-hour shift a month in the League office. We have no paid staff and need more members to help. Training is provided and I'm a phone call away to answer your questions each day. Call

Back by popular demand is League member, **Gwen Santiago**, who will give her well-received March 17 presentation a second time to meet the needs of those who couldn't make it on that date. Did you know that the approximate spending per hour per student in public education in Texas is \$7? (Compare that to the cost for child care.) Come learn about that and many other astonishing facts.

Tues., April 9, 7:00 pm
at the home of Judy Parken, 7917 West Rim Drive, 78731

Gwen Santiago, executive director of the Texas Association of School Business Officials, draws from her deep and rich experience with public school funding for a sobering yet entertaining and interactive approach to explain the hows and whys of our current system of funding public education. You will leave with a substantive document containing many questions and answers. Open to the public.

~ **Judy Parken**, japarken@aol.com, 512-502-0278

Fourth Community Conversation on Public Education for AISD District 3



Our League's series of community conversations is filling a need for people to increase their understanding of issues within their schools while having an opportunity to say what they truly need to express. LWVAA believes that this is in fulfillment of our mission to make democracy work.

For the full report of our first three conversations, click here:

- [Feb. 16, 2013](#) AISD District 2
- [Oct. 20, 2012](#) AISD District 1
- [June 16, 2012](#) AISD All Districts

The League will sponsor its **Fourth Community Conversation on Public Education** on Saturday, April 13, **focusing on AISD District 3, represented by Ann Teich.**

Sat., Apr. 13, 9:30 am - Noon
North Austin Community Recreation Center/YMCA
1000 West Rundberg

Residents from AISD District Three wishing to be participants should RSVP to one of us below. We will be needing the volunteer services of **League members** to facilitate, scribe, and assist with hosting. Members should also notify one of us if you can help.

~ **Nancy Oelklaus**, Program VP, nancyoelklaus@gmail.com
~ **Stewart Snider**, Co-President, s2snider@gmail.com

**"General Meeting:
Water Supply**

or email me if you'd like more information.

~ Judy Clack,
VP Organization, 512-731-0280, jbclack@yahoo.com

Next Year's Program; Education Study Group

What Would You Like to Learn?

The program chairs are asking what topics YOU would like for programs in 2012-13. Send your ideas by Monday, April 15 to Nancy Oelklaus, VP Program, NancyOelklaus@gmail.com.



Public Education Study Group

In the three Community Conversations that the League has convened thus far, we've learned that (1) Austin has no clear rallying cry that unites us on behalf of children, (2) parents need education and support to help their children succeed, (3) constituents are confused with regard to school boundaries and state requirements for low performing schools.

Several Leaguers have asked us what we will do with these findings and those that are yet to come. The answer is that the core of an education study group has formed and agreed that a campaign is called for. Thus far, this is all



and Demand for Central Texas"



Three experts on water will give their perspective from the front line of water supply and demand, as we project Travis County water needs for the next 50 years.

- **David Meesey**, Assistant to the Deputy Executive Administrator for Water Resources and Planning and Information, Texas Water Development Board
- **Karen Bondy**, P.E., Manager, Water Resource Management Department, Lower Colorado River Authority
- **John Dupnik**, P.G., Geoscientist, Asst. General Manager and Senior Regulatory Compliance Specialist, Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District

Sun., Apr. 28, 3 - 5:00 pm
Parish Life Center Bldg., Ascension Lutheran Church
6420 Hart Lane, Austin 78731
Free and open to the public.

~ **Karen Haschke**, Water Chair, karenhaschke@sbcglobal.net

Co-President's Letter: Stewart Snider



Just a quick note this month to remind you to check your email for the [LWV-TX Legislative Newsletter](#) ("LNL"). It's sent bi-weekly to every League member in Texas. It will keep you up-to-date on the bills the State League is watching. A number of bills will change the lives of people we know, and this is no time to tune out. It really makes a difference when legislators not only see us at the Capitol, but also hear from constituents via phone and email. (The League needs you to do BOTH, please).

The past two weeks have been quite busy for the League -- we've taken action on over 30 different bills on education, health care and voting. I've been to the Capitol numerous times, as have a number of Austin members. Special thanks to **Joann Robison** for helping me coordinate the Capitol Corps this session. LWV-TX Advocacy Chair Laura Blackburn lives in Houston, so I have assumed the task of ensuring we have a volunteer for every needed effort. Our team is meeting regularly to improve our process and communication. Thanks to all the LWVAA Capitol Corps members who've read testimony or "dropped a card" in favor or opposition to a bill.

While the "Lege" this year is a challenge, I can tell from the responses we get from legislators' offices that we are making a difference. It's not too late to get involved - call or email me if I've struck a chord.

~ **Stewart Snider**, Co-President, (512-345-7047) or s2snider@gmail.com

we know. The core group has had only two meetings thus far, both on Saturday mornings. If you want to be part of this group, contact Nancy Oelklaus, VP Program, NancyOelklaus@gmail.com.

Redistricting Commission Update



The Applicant Review Panel that was chosen at a drawing (3 women were randomly selected from 7 women and 6 men) is functioning now, looking at over 500 applications from citizens across Austin. They have open-to-the-public meetings that are posted on the Auditor's 10-One web site. So far, most of their meetings have been at 6:00 on Fridays.

On the [10-One site](#), you can look at all the candidates who made application and comment on any of them to the panel (in writing or in person). All the applicants who met the basic qualifications and are being considered by the Applicant Review Panel (all independent auditors) have their applications available on the site for anyone to look over.

The Panel has until the middle of May to choose 60 of the most qualified

Save the Date: May 19 Annual Meeting

Our Annual Meeting, which combines business with mixing, mingling, and eating is set for **Sunday, May 19**. It will be held from **3:00 to 6:00 p.m** at **Faith Presbyterian Church, 1314 E. Oltorf, 78704**, (between Travis High School and the intersection with I-35.)



This is your chance to have a say in the direction the Austin League takes next year. Please come and help us make plans for the coming LWVAA year. We will approve the proposed program, budget, bylaws, and nominations for officers. You also can contribute to the "I Wish the League Would" part of the program.

We're breaking new ground by meeting on Sunday afternoon, so please bring snacks and finger food to share rather than a supper dish.



This year's Annual Meeting is **dedicated to Frances McIntyre**, who has served several terms as president and has worked tirelessly to chair many committees and to produce the *Voters Guide* for numerous elections.

We need a quorum to do business, so come and be a part of your League in action. Look for the *Annual Meeting Workbook* that is scheduled to come out about April 19, a month before the Annual

Meeting, the same way you receive your *Voter*-by email or snail mail. It includes the agenda and the board-recommended program, budget, bylaws, and nominations. It also includes up-to-date local positions on many issues. **PLEASE PRINT IT OUT AND BRING IT TO THE MEETING.**

~ **Anne Roussos**, Editor, *Annual Meeting Workbook*, roussos@sbcglobal.net

Healthcare Study Group Reports

Medicaid Expansion:

After retiring as Senior Economist in the Texas Comptroller's Office, one committee member, **Tamara Plaut**, joined Billy Hamilton Consulting and helped author a publication entitled: *Smart, Affordable and Fair: Why Texas Should Extend Medicaid Coverage to Low-Income Adults*. The report analyzes state and local impacts of extending Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act on a county-by-county level. The full report can be downloaded from the Texas Impact website: www.texasimpact.org or from the Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas website: www.mhm.org .

In 2014-15, the federal government would provide \$9.1 billion to TX under Medicaid Expansion. It would cost TX \$1.2 billion. Whether TX will expand Medicaid is questionable although many Democrats and a few Republicans are now in favor of it. Even if the Legislature passed a bill, the governor could veto it and it is doubtful that the veto could be overridden. 24% or 6 million Texans are uninsured. It costs localities

candidates. There will be another random drawing for 8 Commissioners. Those Commissioners will choose 6 additional Commissioners from the original 60 being cognizant of forming a balanced, diverse group. Those will be the 14 citizens who will draw the first 10 districts for the City of Austin. ~ Frances McIntyre, mcintyre.frances@gmail.com

Honors and Memorials

Karen Haschke, past president and current water chair, just had knee replacement surgery Apr. 26. Send your messages to karenhaschke@sbcglobal.net or 512-345-8159. Karen we wish you a complete recovery.

To make a donation in honor of or in memory of a League member, [click here](#) for the form. Then mail with your donation to the LWVAA Office, 1011 W. 31st St., Austin, TX 78705.

10-Digit Dialing for Austin Area

Effective June 1, 2013, 10-digit dialing - the appropriate area code (512 or 737) plus the seven digit telephone number will be necessary for local calls to be completed. Calling rates will not be affected by this change. Calls will not go through if you just dial seven numbers.

Randall's Donations

Randall's Good Neighbor

\$4.4 billion to cover unreimbursed trips to the emergency room for uninsured individuals.

Under Medicaid expansion, the number of uninsured persons would drop by 25% and they would be able to access care before they developed more complicated (and costly) medical problems. Medicaid expansion also would help the economy by taking the burden of indigent care off local governments and hospital districts, possibly slowing the increase in property taxes. Billy Hamilton estimated that the influx of federal funds would generate increased economic activity and add an estimated 231,000 jobs statewide by 2016.

Dr. Laura Guerra-Cardus, Associate Director of Children's Defense Fund of Texas who spoke to the South Unit on Medicaid Expansion, invites all to subscribe to the [Texas Well and Healthy newsletter](#) about healthcare for children in Texas.

Affordable Care Act and Austin:

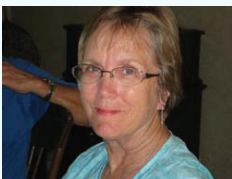
The new health insurance system under the Affordable Care Act is going live on January 1, 2014 and this study group may want to investigate how it's getting implemented in Austin. The free-ranging discussion at our March meeting came up with these possible tasks:

- Get a snapshot of where our community health care systems are in the implementation process (mental health as well as physical health)
- What exactly is expected to change in terms of care
- Determine what safety net is in place to take care of people that don't qualify for the new insurance system
- Find out what is being done to enroll people in the system, how is it being publicized
- What does it mean for the medical school
- How might we help with the enrollment process
- What is the role of public health once ACA is implemented

Do these questions interest you? All are welcome to join this study committee. Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday, April 10, 6:00 - 7:30 pm.** at Schlotzkys, S. Lamar at Riverside next to the Zach Topfer Theatre. Arrive early to order some dinner. Contact Mary Cullinane if you're interested in this group.

~ **Mary Cullinane**, Interim Chair, mculli@sbcglobal.net .

Travis County Commissioners Court:



March 5, 2013, Joann Robison

The Court gave generous recognition to HEB, Fiesta, and Randalls for their continuing support of Early Voting and Election Day Voting by volunteering their facilities to enable people to vote in a convenient location.

Throckmorton Ranch, 18 thousand acres, has been leased for 30 years by Spade Ranches and is owned by Travis County. Conservation funds and education funds are earned through hunting licenses. With the lease up Dec. 31, the Commissioners must

Program gives the Austin League a percentage of sales from members who link the League to their Remarkable cards. Our account number is 465.

Compass Bank Donates to LWVAA

Have you opened an account at BBVA Compass Bank in the last 12 months? If so, they will make a \$50 contribution to the Austin League of Women Voters. Just email your name (no account numbers) to our treasurer, Carol Olewin, c.olewin@gmail.com.

Compass Bank also pays the League a small percentage for Internet and phone transactions. For information, contact Paul Sicotte at Compass Bank, 512-421-5741.

Leave a Legacy to Your League

Making a legacy donation to the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area Education Fund in your will is among the easiest ways to offer support of the LWVAEF's work for years to come.

We suggest the following language to include the Austin League Education Fund as a beneficiary of a will or trust:

" I give, devise, and bequeath to the League of Women

decide on the best financial use of land: the value if sold versus the actual revenue to education.

The Court wants to create task force to identify ways economic development and procurement policies can improve wages and working conditions in construction. They recommend having seven members, including the green building community as well as small business with Travis County Attorney ex officio. Action was postponed one week while commissioners Davis and Eckhardt try to coordinate efforts, and establish size of task force.

In State legislative matters, the Court was concerned about bills that limit the amount of revenue counties can raise with arbitrary caps imposed by the state.

~ **Joann Robison**, Observer Corps, jorobison46@gmail.com



March 26, Karen Rankin

The burn ban, which is usually extended week by week, was extended for 4 weeks due to the expected continuation of dry conditions.

In a possible sign of improving economic conditions, the Transportation and Natural Resources department submitted an unusually lengthy list of building and development activity in the county. Included was a request for approval of a 228-unit apartment building in the Bee Cave ETJ (Extraterritorial Jurisdiction) on RM 620. An area resident who objects to the plans for the new development presented aerial photos and raised several questions. Commissioners agreed that there may be aspects of the complex that need to be reviewed, and they postponed action until after a hearing by the City of Bee Cave in April.

~ **Karen Rankin**, Observer Corps, karenrankin@austin.rr.com

Membership

Welcome, Two New Members!

We cordially welcome two new members to the Austin League: **Ramey Ko** and **Faye Rozmaryn**. We are delighted you have joined us. As a member of the Austin League, you are also a member of the national (LWVUS) and state (LWVTX) Leagues. See these links for an abundance of educational information.

www.lwvaustin.org www.lwvtexas.org www.lwv.org

Regular and Sustaining Memberships: Of your \$60 in regular dues, \$52 goes to the LWVTX and the LWVUS, and only \$8 is left to support our Austin League. Paying at the sustaining level greatly benefits the Austin League because the extra money stays in Austin and supports our local League's activities. The entire amount is paid to LWVAA and not to the Education Fund.

Thank You, Sustaining Members: Special thanks to this month's sustaining members: **Carol Whitcraft Fredericks** and **Anita Privett**. We are grateful for your

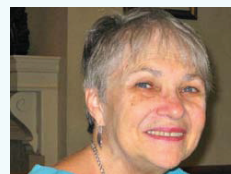
Voters of the Austin Area Education Fund, a charitable organization formed in the State of Texas, with offices at 1011 W. 31st St, Austin, Texas 78705, (the sum of \$___ } {___ percentage of my residuary estate)." If you already have a will, you can have your attorney add a codicil to include the LWVAAEF.

After you've added the League, please email the Austin League office at lwvaustin@lwvaustin.org so we can list you as a member of our Love-Your-League Legacy Society.

Charitable Giving

IRA Charitable Distributions
Persons aged 70½ or older can again enjoy tax savings by making charitable gifts directly from their Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) to the LWV Education Fund. Contact Lauren Frank of LWVUS at 202-263-1355 or lfrank@lwv.org for additional information.

Gift to League at All Three Levels!
By making a gift of cash or securities of \$5,000 or more to the League of Women Voters Education Fund Pooled Income Fund, you can receive an immediate income tax deduction for a portion of the gift's value and continue earning a quarterly return on the interest earned for life. You can name your local League, along with the LWVEF, to benefit from the residual funds when you're



additional financial support for our local League's activities.

Thank You, Renewing Members: Many thanks to the following members who also renewed this month: **Lenora DuBose, Toye Goodson-Collins, Ann Stalnaker,** and **Paula Wiesner.** We depend on your support and appreciate your timely renewals.

New Membership, Renewal Dues Payment, Address Changes: Please send your name, address, phone number, email address, household member (if applicable), along with your dues payment and/or any changes to the LWVAA office, 1011 W. 31st, Austin, TX 78705. Checks may be made out to the LWV of the Austin Area. Choose an amount below. Or you may instead [click here](#) to pay your annual dues online by credit card via PayPal while providing all the above information.

You may renew or join, using PayPal by clicking on the amount that applies to you.

	Individual	Household	Student
Regular Dues	<u>\$60.00</u>	<u>\$90.00</u>	<u>\$20.00</u>
Sustaining	<u>\$100.00</u>	<u>\$150.00</u>	

Contact me anytime with your League questions.

~**Judy Parken**, Membership Chair, japarken@aol.com , 512-502-0278.

gone. Contact the LWWUS Development office at 202-263-1355 or plannedgiving@lww.org.