



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]

AUSTIN AREA

VOTER Newsletter

www.lwvaustin.org

512.451.6710

April 2014

Volume 18 # 9

Members: This issue contains three important articles about our League's current positions on Health and Mental Health Services and the proposed changes in language to positions on Health Care, Behavioral Health Care, and Wellness and Health Promotion. Your input is needed on these proposed changes at Unit Meetings on April 10 and 14 and the Annual Meeting on May 20.

~ Judy Clack, *Voter* Editor, jbclack@yahoo.com

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 after significant study and consensus is reached.

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Board Contact List

LWVAA Calendar

Mon., Apr. 7, 6:30 pm, Board Meeting, League Office, 1011 W. 31st St. Open to members.

Thurs., Apr. 9, 7:00 pm, Health Study Unit Consensus Meeting, at the home of Judy Parken, [7917 W. Rim Drive, 78731](#).

Mon., Apr. 14, 10:15 am, Health Study Unit Consensus Meeting, at Howson Library, [2500 Exposition, 78703](#).

Tues., Apr. 15, 6:30 pm, LWVAA Delegate Meeting, League Office, 1011 W. 31st St.

Sun., Apr. 20, Annual Meeting Workbook received by email or mail.

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Thurs., Apr. 24, 10:00 am - 12:00 noon, Training for Floor Committee, LWVTX Convention, [DoubleTree Hotel](#), 6505 N. IH-35, 78752.

Fri., Apr. 25 - Sun., Apr. 27, LWVAA hosts the LWVTX Convention in Austin at the [DoubleTree Hotel](#), 6505 N. IH 35, 78752. Members needed as delegates (contact Carol Olewin, c.olewin@gmail.com) and volunteers, contact Judy Clack, jbclack@yahoo.com.

Mon., May 5, 6:30 pm, Board Meeting, League Office, 1011 W. 31st. St. Open to members.

Sat., May 10, 7:00 am - 7:00 pm, Joint Local Election. No Austin elections. Elections in some area municipalities and ISDs. Early Voting, April 28 - May 6.

Tues., May 20, 6:00 pm, Annual Meeting and Potluck Dinner, Trinity United Methodist Church, 4001 Speedway.

Tues., May 27, 7 am - 7 pm, Republican and Democratic Primary Runoff Elections. Early Voting, May 19 - 23.

June 6 - 10, LWVUS Convention, Dallas, TX.

Sat., June 14, Transition Meeting, Site and time TBA.

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

Unit Meetings: Health Care Consensus

LWVAA members are strongly encouraged to attend
one of these two Unit Meetings:

either

Thurs., April 10, 7:00 pm

at the home of Judy Parken, [7917 West Rim Drive, 78731](#)

or

Mon., April 14, 10:15 am

at the Howson Library, [2500 Exposition, 78703](#)

The LWVAA approved a study at the 2013 Annual Meeting to review and update their position statements addressing health and mental health services. The proposed goal of the effort was to assess the impact of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the readiness of local safety-net providers to cope with the changes. The study committee's focus and goal changed over the course of the past year.

Study History

Texas did not expand Medicaid nor establish an insurance exchange. Instead, the Legislature appropriated a significant amount of money to match federal funds (the 1115 Waiver) for special projects designed to transform the health care delivery system. Austin and Travis County providers applied for and were awarded "1115 Waiver" grants. Because of all of this, the committee eventually made the decision to change the focus from the ACA to the profound changes taking place in the local community.

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Annual Meeting and Workbook



By April 20, members of the Austin League will receive the *Annual Meeting Workbook*, either by email or snail mail-the same way you receive the *Voter*. The report is sent one month before each year's Annual Meeting, which is scheduled for Tues., May 20, at 6:00 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 4001 Speedway.

Make sure to (print out and) save the *Annual Meeting Workbook*, and mark your calendars for the Annual Meeting. This year, we'll once

Position Updates

After a year of study, the committee developed a list of items that we felt should be incorporated in our positions statements. (See the complete list in the next block.) Concepts covered in this list include the following:

- We value health care services provided at the lowest level as possible (i.e., primary care) to all Austin and Travis County residents in order to prevent costly complications.
- We support expanding community-based integrated health care services, using prevention and crisis intervention instead of hospitalization and incarceration, and adding in-patient behavioral health beds.



The committee revised and updated the existing position statements and developed the proposed 14 position statements after intense work. Most of the original position statements are slightly reworded (but conceptually the same as the original statements) with more up-to-date, clarifying language; or they are logically combined with similar statements for the sake of brevity. In addition, a few new positions are proposed to enable the League's advocacy work in the significantly changed and changing local health care environment.

Membership Input

League members will need to compare the original language to the proposed statements to see how the old language has been incorporated and updated. The League's original language is posted two blocks below this one. The membership will be voting at the Annual Meeting whether or not to accept the fourteen new proposed positions.

April Unit meetings are being held to provide members an opportunity to understand the reasons for the revisions and the added statements and to be prepared to vote on them at the May Annual Meeting. Committee members will be present at all meetings to answer questions.

~Mary Cullinane, Health Care Study Chair, mculli@sbcglobal.net

Proposed Health Position Statements for consideration at Unit Meetings and Annual Meeting

HEALTH

Health Care

We support public funding to create or expand:

1. Community-based, integrated health care services where patients can receive primary and preventive physical and behavioral health services in the same place.
2. The use of the Medical Access Program (MAP) to pay for the health care of those who are not eligible for other forms of insurance, and a sliding-scale fee schedule for the near poor.
3. Maximizing all available state and local financing mechanisms to leverage as much federal money as possible to fund local health care services. **>NEW<**
This statement was written to address the new funding schemes that were brought about as part of the Affordable Care Act. In order to access federal

again have a potluck dinner and time to socialize before the business portion of the meeting.

Your *Workbook* is your guide to the nuts-and-bolts matters that determine how the Austin League operates. It includes the Annual Meeting agenda, as well as the board-recommended program, budget, bylaws, and nominations for a slate of officers who will hold board and off-board positions. It also includes up-to-date local positions on which the League can advocate.

This year, a local Health Care Committee chaired by Mary Cullinane has been hard at work on proposals to update our health care and mental health care positions, which will be included in the *Workbook*. We will be voting on those proposals at the Annual Meeting.

Please come and help us make plans for the coming LWVAA year. This is your chance to have a say in the direction the Austin League takes next year. And **remember to print out your Workbook and bring it to the meeting.**

~ Anne Roussos, editor, *Annual Meeting Workbook*,
roussos@swbell.net

Videos Online: Austin City Government 101



Austin City Government 101 was a public two-morning forum on how our city government operates. These forums, on February 8 and

money, the community must provide a financial match.

4. Contractual agreements with cities, counties, and other governmental entities for payment of health care delivered to non-Travis County residents.
5. Recruitment, education, and training of professional staff to implement health and social service programs based on best practices.

Behavioral Health Care

We support public funding to create or expand:

6. Specialized, community-based behavioral health and substance abuse treatment services that can respond to patients at whatever their level of need (e.g., hotlines, information and referral, out-patient, crisis intervention, in-patient, long-term care/residential treatment, sobriety centers, and telemedicine), regardless of ability to pay.
7. Additional in-patient behavioral health beds in a health care facility or local hospital for crisis intervention and stabilization.
8. Programs/services (e.g., housing, transportation, employment, and other basic needs) to assist those with severe behavioral and/or physical health issues to live successfully in the community.
9. Mobile crisis outreach teams and hospital and jail diversion projects to redirect individuals into behavioral health services and away from unnecessary incarceration or hospitalization.
10. An emphasis on preventive behavioral health programs and services.

Wellness and Health Promotion

We support public funding to create or expand:

11. A system of public health and strong public health policy as a sound strategy for preventing disease, promoting health, and driving down health care costs.

>NEW<

This position statement was developed to address the critical under-funding of public health. The U.S. public health system is not adequately funded to address multiple public health threats, such as antibiotic resistance, bio-terrorism, and chronic disease.

12. Educating the public about the socioeconomic and health factors related to HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections.

13. Encouraging a healthy lifestyle that includes a balanced diet taken in moderation, exercise, and self-education in healthy living. >NEW<

This position statement was written to address personal responsibility and to stress that health promotion and health care are interactive.

14. Promotion and protection of women's access to health care, including all aspects of reproductive health. (LWVTX Statement) >NEW<

This is a position statement of the LWVTX and the committee felt that it should be included in order to support monitoring of women's health care services provided by the Community Care Collaborative and its contractors.

~Mary Cullinane, Health Care Study Chair, mculli@sbcglobal.net

22, were organized through the cooperation of the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area, KLRU, KUT 90.5 and the U.T. Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life. The purpose was to inform, educate and encourage citizen participation in Austin by teaching how to make one's voice heard at City Hall.

Four videos, two from each day, are posted at the top of the LWVAA homepage (lwvaustin.org) or directly [at this link](#). We hope to have Spanish translation of the videos as well as CDs and DVDs to loan to community groups in the future.

~ Anita Privett, VP Community Relations, anita.privett@gmail.com

Honors and Memorials

In Memoriam: It is with great sadness we note the passing of **Eleanor Jo Smith** on March 25. "Jo" was a long-time, active member of our League who served as co-chair of the day unit. She will be deeply missed.

Thanks to **Joan Harmon** for her gift in honor of past president, **Maxine Barkan**.

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.

"Like" Our League on Facebook

It's so easy to follow our League on Facebook. With thanks to member Brigid Hall for these instructions:

1. Go to facebook.com and login to your existing account or create a new one.

Current Health and Mental Health Services Position Statements

How They're Incorporated in the New Ones Above

HEALTH (~ 2003)

1. Support for the city and county medical assistance program qualifications to be adjusted to 150% of the poverty level.

Transferred to proposed position statement #2 without specifying 150% of the poverty level.

2. Support of sliding-scale payments for health care for the near-poor.

This is the current policy of the Medical Access Program (MAP) Program and was combined with the previous statement in #2.

3. Support for neighborhood clinics as the instruments for primary and preventive health.

Elaborated and becomes position statement #1.

4. Support the establishment of a taxing health care district (hospital district) to provide care to indigent people of Travis County

- Support a single county or multi-county health care district
- Support the use of a property or sales tax to finance the district.
- Support either an appointed or elected board.

The goal of the preceding statements relating to the establishment of a taxing health care district was accomplished in 2004. They remain position statements supported by the LWVAA. However, for the sake of brevity, the committee proposes that they not transfer to the proposed slate of position statements.

5. Support of contractual agreements with cities and other government entities for health care delivery to non-Austin residents.

Transferred to proposed position statement #4 with the addition of "counties." In order to bring this about, action is required by the state Legislature.

6. Support for local government to educate the public in the socioeconomic and health factors relating to HIV/AIDS.

Revised and transferred to proposed position statement #12. It now includes Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) since they are a significant risk factor for the acquisition of HIV.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (2008)

1. Support of public funding to create, evaluate or expand:

- First responder programs including law enforcement teams, mobile crisis teams, and hospital staff with specially trained personnel. *This becomes part of proposed statements #6, 9, and 10.*
- Additional in-patient beds in a health care facility or local hospital for crisis intervention and stabilization. *Transferred and becomes position statement #7.*
- A mental health hotline and referral service to facilitate access to all

2. Search for "League of Women Voters of the Austin Area" in the search box at the top of the page.

3. Facebook will show you possible matches to your search terms as you type. Simply click on the box with our logo and title.

4. Once you get to our page, there will be a button that says "Like" and has an image of a "thumbs up."

5. Click on that button. Now you are subscribed to our page and will see our news stories on your Facebook homepage.

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 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 LWVAEF.

After you've added the League, please email the Austin League office at

levels of mental health services regardless of ability to pay. *This becomes part of proposed statement #6.*

- An outpatient program that would provide counseling and assertive case management with assistance for housing, transportation, employment and other basic needs for recovering and chronic mental health patients. *This becomes part of proposed statements #6 and 8.*
- Long-term care for individuals requiring continued residential treatment. *This becomes part of proposed statements #6 and 8.*
- Recruitment of professional staff and training to implement programs based on best practices. *Transferred as revised and becomes position statement #5.*
- Emphasis on prevention programs and services. *Revised and becomes position statement #10.*

~Mary Cullinane, Health Care Study Chair, mculli@sbcglobal.net

We Need YOU - LWVTX Convention

LWVAA is hosting the biennial LWVTX Convention in Austin, Fri., April 25 - Sun., April 27 at the [DoubleTree Hotel](#), 6505 North IH-35, on the access road near 183 and 2222.

Volunteers:

We need YOU to volunteer. Scores of our members are needed to serve as volunteers. Two-hour and four-hour slots are required throughout those three days. **Only half of our slots are filled. We need your help.** Please sign up for at least one shift. [Click on this link](#) to see all the available shifts and tasks. If you have questions or problems with signing up, call or email Judy Clack, jbclack@yahoo.com or 512-731-0280 or Judy Parken, japarken@aol.com or 512-657-4474. Volunteers do not pay a registration fee but can sit in on all meetings as an observer when they are not working.

Warm thanks to those who have already signed up. **We need to double this number!**

Maxine Barkan, Delores Block, Judy Clack, Anne Clark, Mary Lee Comer, June Conway, Chantal Eldridge, Barbara Frandsen, Anita Garcia, Karen Haschke, Hal Jennings, Ruth Koenig, Amy Lloyd, Eliza May, Sheila Milner, Judy Moore, Nancy Namis, Nancy Neavel, Nancy Oelklaus, Arnold Orange, Margit Orange, Judy Parken, Donna Pauler, Anita Privett, Karen Rankin, Suzy Reid, Joyce Robinson, Anne Roussos, Gwen Santiago, Betsy Singleton, Peggy Stewart, Cinde Weatherby, and Dianne Wheeler.

Delegates:

We need YOU to be a delegate. This is a unique opportunity to learn about the League and to represent LWVAA in the selection of new statewide programs of study. The Austin League is allowed 21 delegates and there are still scholarships available. So if you are interested in attending as a delegate, [click here](#) complete and return the registration form to LWVTX, and then send Carol Olewin an e-mail (c.olewin@gmail.com) telling her that you have registered and you'd like to apply for a scholarship. We will have a **delegates' meeting** on Tuesday, April 15, 6:30 pm at the LWVAA office, [1011 W. 31st St.](#), to go over the delegates' role at the Convention.

Sponsors:

lwvaustin@lwvaustin.org so we can list you as a member of our Love-Your-League Legacy Society.

Randall's Donations

Randall's Good Neighbor 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.

The League of Women Voters of the Austin Area is indebted to the following donors for being sponsors of the LWVTX Convention. Through their generosity, breakfast on Saturday and Sunday, and snacks for each break are being provided for all delegates and volunteers. Please thank these donors and support their businesses.

Platinum Sponsors, \$500

Bob Gregory, Texas Disposal Systems
Julia Marsden, Member LWVAA
Buck Wood, Ray and Wood Law

Gold Sponsors, \$250

Anonymous, Member LWVAA
Jim Bailey CFP, Ameriprise Financial Services
Maxine Barkan, Member LWVAA
John Evler, Evler Healthcare Consulting

Silver Sponsors, \$100

Judy Clack, Member LWVAA
Karen Haschke, Member LWVAA
Raymond Chan, Chan and Partners Engineering
Jim and Carolyn Kerr, friends of LWVAA
Janet Reed, Member LWVAA
Susan Reid, Member LWVAA
Greg Van Wyk CFP, Austin Asset Management

Nominees:

Three members of our local League have been nominated for the LWVTX Board of Directors for 2014-2016.

Congratulations and thanks to **Grace Chimene, Susan Morrison, and Jacklyn Williams**. If you serve as a Delegate, you can vote these candidates into office!



Friday Dinner Cruise:

Space is still available on the Dinner Cruise that LWVAA is sponsoring on Friday, April 25. We would like more LWVAA members to attend to host our out-of-town colleagues. [Click here](#) for detailed information. [Click here](#) to make your reservation. Transportation, cruise and dinner are provided.

Friday Workshops, Saturday Luncheon, and Saturday Banquet:

Two special guests will speak at the Saturday luncheon: LWVUS president, Elisabeth MacNamara and election expert, Ann McGeehan. The banquet will honor the Hobby family: former Lt. Governor Bill Hobby and his Oveta Culp Hobby, as past president of LWVTX and first U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. [Click here](#) for detailed information on each workshop and meal. [Click here](#) to register to attend the Luncheon or the Banquet.

~ **Carol Olewin**, Co-President and Austin Convention Chair, c.olewin@gmail.com

**Candidates, Candidate Forums,
and Voter Registration**

City Council Candidate Forums:

LWVAA has been invited again this year by the City of Austin Ethics Review

Commission to conduct the 2014 City Council election candidate forums beginning in September/October. This year we are expecting 30-50 candidates because of the new 10-1 system. We are planning to conduct approximately 6 forums for the City Council combining several districts and holding a separate one for the Mayoral race. We will need quite a few volunteers to conduct these forums as a site coordinator, moderator, and timekeeper for each location. Members of the Voters Service committee and others interested may participate. Please let me know if you are interested: jacklyncw.jcw@gmail.com. The forums will mostly be located in city facilities where they can be televised on ATXN Channel 6. If there is a runoff after the November 4 election, another forum will be organized for all candidates in the runoff election. Planning is underway to finalize all the details.

City Council District and Candidate Information:

The City of Austin has posted a lot of information on its "10-one" website. To find the district in which you live and details about candidate filing and candidate deadlines, [click here](#) or go to <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/10-one>.

- City Council candidate packets will be available beginning Mon., May 5.
- Dates for candidate filing are Mon., July 21 - Mon., Aug. 18.
- Voter registration is from now through Mon., Oct. 6.
- Early voting is Mon., Oct. 20 - Fri., Oct. 31.
- Election Day is Tues., Nov. 4.



Voter Registration:

Between now and Mon., October 6, LWVAA will hold a lot of registration activities. Thank you to members who registered voters at the First Annual Women's Empowerment Conference March 22-23, and especially to Cinde Weatherby and Nancy Namis for organizing our deputy registrars to participate. It was a great way to kick off this election season.

If you are a deputy registrar, review your training materials and get ready for a busy season between now and October 6. If you would like to attend a one-hour training to become a deputy registrar, contact me. If you have any ideas for voter registration sites or projects please also share them with me.

The group, Common Ground for Texans, invited me to participate in a panel discussion on March 1 where I spoke about Voter Registration.

~ **Jacklyn Williams**, VP Voters Service, jacklyncw.jcw@gmail.com

LWVUS Agriculture Study



Over thirty-five League members and the public were treated to two very informative presentations on Sunday, March 9.

Dr. Kent Stewart spoke on "Genetically Modified Organisms" and **Julie Z. Ansley** talked about "Agricultural Agencies" and about "The Beef Industry." The rapt audience asked lots of questions of these knowledgeable speakers.

A work group of devoted League members tackled the LWVUS study materials on the LWVUS Agriculture update. Here is the report that they submitted to LWVUS.

"For the first time in our history, the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area declines to participate in a national consensus. The following reasons for our not responding to the agriculture study are offered with the hope that they might be considered as future studies are planned.

1. The advance information we had about this "narrowly focused" study looked manageable, but when we received the consensus questions and backup information in early January, we determined that the magnitude of the work would have been overwhelming.
2. The short timeline left us unable to schedule expert speakers for every topic the study covered. One USDA official who declined our invitation told us it would be necessary to talk about the Farm Bill, which he could not do because he hadn't yet received the detailed information needed to speak publicly.
3. Since the next farm bill won't be considered for another 5 years, we did not understand the urgency of this study/consensus.
4. Our committee was very uneasy with the consensus questions. We found them to be quite broad and they seemed to beg a "yes" response.
5. The informational materials were not well organized. While we appreciated the attempt in the leader's guide to code the readings to the questions, we found the match often confusing or off the mark.
6. We noticed there were no materials from the Farm Bureau, a major agriculture organization, which made us wonder about bias in the materials selected.
7. This study could have been broken into at least 3 sections, to be considered separately."

~Nancy Oelklaus, VP Program, NancyOelklaus@gmail.com

Membership



Many thanks to **Cinde Weatherby** and **Nancy Namis** for their skill and work in organizing League members for the WeCon (Women's Empowerment Conference). Volunteers at our table Saturday and Sunday afternoon included **Judy Moore, Belia Nichols, Stacey Mather, June Conway, Nancy Neavel, Mary Cullinane, Ruth Koenig** and **Diane Davis**. Thanks to all for promoting the League of Women Voters and registering voters.

New Members: Five have joined our ranks as new League members: **Samantha Akins, Jules Caplan, Lacey Merritt,** and **Mike Mullen and Susan Seymour**. A warm welcome to each of you. As a member of the Austin League, each of 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, \$53 goes to the LWVTX and the LWVUS, and only \$7 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.

Thank You, Sustaining Members: Special thanks to this month's sustaining members: **Cecelia Burke, Karen Hayward, Cheryl Hazeltine, Janet Reed,** and **Dianne Wheeler**. We are grateful for your additional financial support for our local League's activities.

Thank You, Renewing Members: Many thanks to the following members who also renewed this month: **Terrell Blodgett, Kathleen Hackett, Eliza May, Anita Privett, Mary Ann Rivera, Joyce Robinson, Susan Shelton,** and **Virginia Stotts**. We depend on your support and appreciate your renewals.

New Membership, Renewal Dues Payment, Address Changes: Please mail 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.

Here is the schedule of dues amounts:

	Individual	Household	Student
Sustaining Dues	\$ 100.00	\$ 150.00	
Regular Dues	\$ 60.00	\$ 90.00	\$ 20.00

Contact me anytime with your League questions.
~**Judy Parken**, Membership Chair, japarken@aol.com , 512-502-0278.

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