



December 2013

Volume 18 # 5

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LWVAA Calendar

Sat., Dec. 7, 11:00 am, New and Prospective Members Brunch. Socialize with new members. Learn about the League. Meet other Leaguers. At the home of Judy Parken, [7917 West Rim Drive, 78731](#). RSVP helpful: japarken@aol.com.

Mon., Dec. 9, 6:30 pm, Board Meeting, League Office, 1011 W. 31st St. Open to all members.

Sat., Jan. 11, 10:00 am - 12 noon, Program Planning Meeting, Westminster Manor, [4100 Jackson Avenue, 78731](#). Open to all members.

Sat., Jan. 18, 9:30 am - 12 noon, Community Conversation in Public Education, District 5, site TBA. To serve as a facilitator or recorder, contact Nancy Oelklaus, Nancy.Oelklaus@gmail.com. Open to the public.

Wed., Feb. 5, 6:00 pm, State of the City Dinner and Auction, Green Pastures, [811 West Live Oak Street, 78704](#). Recognize the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission. Open to the public.

Sun., Feb. 23, Time and location TBA. Panel on Healthcare and Mental Health Services in Travis County. Open to the public.

March, General meeting and unit meetings TBA on U. S. Agriculture Policies and Legislation. Open to the public.

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.

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

If you received this email from a friend, click here

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to get on our list. You do not have to be a member. We will NOT give your email address to anyone else.

Board Contact List

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[Nancy Oelklaus](#)

1st VP Program

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[Anita Privett](#)

2nd VP Community

Fri., Apr. 25 - Sun., Apr. 27, LWVAA hosts the **LWVTX Convention** in Austin at the DoubleTree Hotel. All members needed to volunteer a shift.

May, Date, time, location TBA. **Annual Meeting**

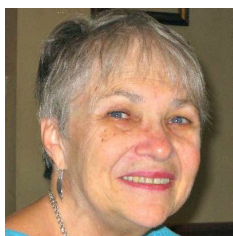
Back issues of the LWVAA *Voter* can be found at [this link](#).



Brunch for New Members



The League has been thrilled to be joined by **43 new members** over the past twelve months. In their honor, a brunch will be held this **Saturday, December 7 at 11:00 am** at my home, [7917 West Rim Drive, 78731](#).



We warmly welcome these new members: Susan Bell and John Warren, Jim and Joann Benton, Delores Block, Barbara Cambron, Kata Carbone, Shelley Chapman, June Conway, Tom Coopwood, Diane Davis, Rhonda Douglas, Carol Eckelkamp, Chantal Eldridge, Grace Elinsway, Sabine Foster, Gail Glick, Mindy Gomillion, Vikki Goodwin, Ellen Hansen, Cynthia Hintikka, Gloria Hooper, Ramey Ko, Angela Koegler, Ruth Koenig, Stacey Mather, Marilyn McCarthy, Frank Merriman, Diane Olbert, Roye Reeves, Joyce Robinson, Jade

Sheppard, Arati Singh, Linda Stanley, Denise Szymczak, Ann Teich, Whitney Thurman, Nancie Walsh, Franz Weller, Marilyn and Dennis Wills, Daniel Wilson, and Laura Yeager.

All new members and those considering joining the League are especially urged to attend. Your RSVP is helpful but not required.

~**Judy Parken**, Membership Chair, japarken@aol.com

Co-President's Letter: Austin MUST get this right next year

In the next two articles in this issue, you'll see information about our upcoming State of the City event where we are celebrating Austin's march toward a more open and participatory democracy. We're in rarefied air -- Austin is only the fourth city in the U.S. to have average citizens draw political maps. I think we have set an example, and I hope (and plan to act) to see this catch on in other Texas cities.

Even with the maps drawn, the transition to our new representation system is only just beginning. Drawing from the experience of other cities, we know that district-based representation only works well when council members collaborate with each other. It's incumbent on all civic-minded Austinites to help get this right, since the next city council's culture is likely to reverberate into future councils. Knowing well that next year's city council races will influence the new council's culture, the Austin League is already on course to aid this transition. We're assembling four sessions in February to help orient prospective city council candidates who may have never held public office. This is a fabulous idea, and I would like the League to remain engaged and to take any necessary actions to ensure that the first districted council works for all the citizens of Austin. Our organization should also work to help Austinites understand what this form

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Support the League

As we approach the end of one year and the beginning of another, it is important to think about supporting the important efforts made by the League in our community.

Voter registration, get-out-the-vote and voter ID education efforts are ongoing. The first single member district election will be held in November as well as an election that will change the Texas governor as well as other posts.

of city government can and cannot do.

Austin's long run-up to this change has pushed many residents' expectations to a high level. When the city council in Dallas went from at-large to districts, some voters expected their representatives to turn things around in a single term. On the campaign

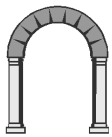


trail, many first-time council members also had idealistic expectations. During the first years of the new system, change happened much more slowly than many had hoped, and much of the Dallas electorate felt "their" council members had simply sold out. A similar perception gap may happen in Austin unless groups like ours work to facilitate frank communication between the new council and its constituents. I think the League could help get all Austinites on the "same page" with regard to the needs of the

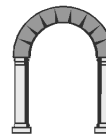
neglected parts of town as well as the pace at which historical insults could be resolved --- not necessarily by directly educating people, but by brokering honest conversation between council members, community leaders, and residents.

As Leaguers, I think we understand more than most people that districted representation only creates a platform for change. *Only with people occupying this platform* does political change occur. Our organization's long-trusted voice will be even more essential over the next few years if we use it to engage more Austinites in their city government. Never underestimate how infectious it is to hear from people who understand and trust the democratic process. Now is a good time for all of us to call on our "inner Susan B. Anthonys" and speak clearly and frequently to the need for widespread participation in our governance.

~ **Stewart Snider**, Co-President, s2snider@gmail.com



State of the City Dinner and Auction



The Special Events Committee is busy putting the plans together for the annual State of the City Dinner, a premiere League of Women Voters winter event that raises dollars for our important education fund.

Mark your calendar for what is sure to be a "do not miss" event.

Wednesday, February 5, 2014, 6:00 pm
Green Pastures, 6:00 p.m., 811 West Live Oak Street, 78704

This year's theme, "**Celebrating Democracy**," will recognize the fourteen members of the historic **Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission** who drafted the first ever 10 geographic districts for the 2015 City Council in less than 6 months, following testimony from hundreds of Austinites who exercised their democratic right to express their vision on how the new city council districts should represent their respective communities of interest. In addition, we have a special speaker in store for this memorable and civic event.



We are currently soliciting auctions items, thus if you want to contribute to this effort, please email me below. If you want to help with sponsoring this prestigious event, also contact me below. All proceeds for this event support the LWVAA Education Fund.

~**Eliza May**, Chair, Special Events, elizamay@sbcglobal.net

League *Voters Guides* for the May Primary and General Elections as well as the huge November election will be published.



Please show your support for the Austin League's *Voters Guides* and other educational and public service efforts by making a donation now.

Send your check to LWVAA, 1011 W. 31st Street, Austin, TX 78705, or go to our homepage, lwvaustin.org and click on the DONATE button to use your credit card.

~ **Anita Privett**, VP
Communication,
anita.privett@gmail.com

Honors and Memorials

Anita Privett made a donation in memory of Anne McAfee to the **Anne McAfee Memorial Student Membership Scholarship Fund**.

Judy Clack made a donation in memory of **Jacklyn Williams' brother, Wardell Bobby Boyd**.

Judy Clack made a donation in honor of **Jo Reichler's Bat Mitzvah**.

To make a donation in honor of or in memory of a League member, [click](#)

Final Austin District Maps



The Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (ICRC) has approved their final map outlining Austin's ten city council districts. Commission members heard testimony from many individual citizens and groups over the past months. They had to take into account the City's Charter Amendment requirements, the federal Voting Rights Act requirements, and neighborhoods. Here are several informative links. It takes a while for the maps to load.

ICRC Homepage: austinredistricting.org

[Final Map](#)

[Interactive Final Map](#)

This final map will be used to elect 10 district representatives as well as a mayor elected at large in November 2014. Residents will vote for one city council member plus the mayor. Per the [City Charter](#), candidates have these eligibility requirements:

"A candidate for city council from a council district must meet all eligibility requirements of state law and must have resided continuously in the state for 12 months and in the council district from which the member is seeking election for six months immediately preceding the regular filing deadline for a council candidate's application for a place on the ballot."

The League of Women Voters of the Austin Area is planning training forums on Saturdays in February for anyone considering running for these eleven offices.

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

Healthcare and Mental Health Study Group

Our League conducted studies of healthcare topics in the past. Our current position statements having to do with health care and mental health services were last written in 2008. Based on the League's current committee's research of the current state of health care in Austin and Travis County, we may be proposing changes to those position statements for the League membership to consider adopting to use in future advocacy work. We have a long way to go in our understanding and analysis of this complex topic before we'll be ready to bring these proposals to the membership.



The committee has listened to overviews of Central Health, Austin Travis County Integral Care, and the Community Care Collaborative. They have looked at the many opportunities opening up because of changes in funding and relationships between Central Health, Seton, ATCIC, other community providers, and the future teaching hospital and medical school.

The cost of medical care across the nation is no longer sustainable. **Dr. Phil Huang**, Travis County Medical Authority will meet with the Health Care Committee on Tues., Dec. 3 to review public health efforts to prevent disease and drive down health care costs in Austin.

There will be a **general meeting Sun., Feb. 23** where our membership and the public will be able to hear the organizational leaders of Central Health, ATC Integral Care, and

[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.
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.

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**.

ATC Health Department discuss the extraordinary changes our community health care system is undergoing.

If you'd like to join the LWVAA Health Care study group, contact me.

~Mary Cullinane, Study Chair, mculli@sbcglobal.net, 512-623-9194

Public Education Work Group



250 signs encouraging school attendance have been distributed to six AISD schools in areas that most need to increase attendance. Many of the attendees of the last Community Conversation also took signs for their yards. This project is in support of the E3 Alliance campaign, "Miss School/Miss Out." League funds and donations from League members were used to purchase these yard signs.

District 5 Community Conversation is scheduled for Saturday morning, **January 18**, from 9:30 am - noon. Trustee **Amber Elenz**, who is actively involved in the planning, represents District 5. If you would like to serve as a facilitator or recorder at this event, contact me below.

Program Planning is set for Saturday, **January 11**, from 10:00-12:00 at Westminster Manor, 4100 Jackson Avenue. Members will brainstorm ideas for topics they'd like to see investigated on the three levels of the League: local, statewide, and national.

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

Volunteers Needed for LWVTX Convention in Austin



The LWV Texas Convention will be in Austin, Friday, April 25 - Sunday April 27, 2014 at the DoubleTree Hotel, 6555 N. IH 35. This is a great opportunity for all Austin League members to learn more about the League's operations and get involved in all the activities. Put these dates on your calendar and plan to attend the Convention.

We need League members to help with all the duties that are needed when we host the State convention. If you can help with soliciting sponsorships and auction items, or if you'd like to be a sponsor for the Convention, contact Carol Olewin, Chair, at c.olewin@gmail.com or 512-380-0088.

We'll also need many League members to help as registrants, convention door keepers, time keepers, microphone attendees, president's attendant, media assistant, food monitor, auction room attendants, and many more logistical duties. Contact Judy Clack (jbclack@yahoo.com) or Judy Parken (japarken@aol.com) if you can give two or three hours during the convention. A sign-up chart is being created so that you can volunteer for a specific task in a specific time slot on a specific day.

On Friday evening, the Austin League will be hosting an evening of entertainment for our out-of-town guests with a river cruise and dinner aboard the Lone Star River Boat.

This is an exciting event for the Austin League and we look forward to seeing you at the

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 LWVAAF'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

Convention either as a delegate representing the Austin League or as a volunteer to make the Conference a success ... or both!

~ **Carol Olewin**, Co-President, and Local Chair of the LWVTX Convention,
c.olewin@gmail.com

Maxine's Musings: LWV Pamphleteers



When I was working my shift at the League office recently, I idly glanced at the pigeon-holed cabinet across the room from the desk, a structure I have seen for years in whatever room we had our office. I always knew it held pamphlets or brochures, but on that day, I noticed that some of the slots held a large quantity of them. I thought it might be interesting to take a look and determine how they might be used. I am also interested in brochures we used to have but that are no longer available or updated. Pamphlets or

brochures are part of LWV's mission of public education and are funded by the Education Fund.

When I was active as an Issue Chair for the League of Women Voters of Texas and in the Capitol during Legislative sessions, one of the most popular of the brochures was [*When You Go to Austin*](#). This was and is an informational treasure that contains everything you want to know about the current legislative session and the Capitol building. I used to come in the East entrance where there was a receptionist in the lobby who provided information to the public. We became acquainted and every time I was there I would stop by her desk and chat a bit. She told me that of all the materials she handed out to visitors, *When You Go to Austin* was the most popular and had the best information of all the pamphlets she had. She even made some suggestions for improvement that I passed on to the LWV-TX office that would make it even better. I remember the time she ran out of our brochures and asked me to get more; or at the start of the legislative session when she asked me when they would be available as she needed them ASAP!

I still have copies of older pamphlets that date from 2003. One I am very proud of that I worked on when I was state Issue chair for Judicial Selection is [*The Texas Judicial System*](#). This was developed with a grant from the Program on Law & Society of the Open Society Institute and processed through LWVUS. It was printed in both English and Spanish. The information was distilled from the *Facts & Issues of 2002, Judicial Selection in Texas: Nothing's Perfect*. Since then, despite all the League's efforts, nothing has changed in the way we select our judges so the brochure is still current. It is still [available online](#) and in the LWV-TX web site under Publications.

[*How to Write Government Officials*](#) published in 2003 gave valuable information on what language to use in writing to government officials and the correct way to address them. Since we are often asked to write our representatives, it would be nice if this brochure was brought up to date and available. I did not see copies of directories of local government officials in Austin and the nearby areas we called the *Voter's Key*. It is on the LWVAA web site and can be read on the monitor or printed. Of all the similar directories brochures I have seen from other Leagues, ours was the most colorful and attractive but did cost a lot to produce.

There used to be a pamphlet from LWVUS called *Simplified Parliamentary Procedure* last published as far as I know in 2006. I have given some to new presidents or chairs in other organizations and only have about one left. The information is available for viewing or printing on the LWVUS web site but being able to hand out a copy usually was gratefully received by the recipient.

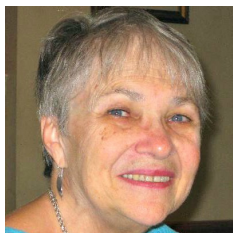
attorney add a codicil to include the LWVAAEF.

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.

Guides to registration, step-by-step voting in Texas, and how to join the League of Women Voters are kept up to date and are very colorful to attract public notice. In my time, we used to have tables with our brochures at public events when this was permissible. Sometimes, we wore straw hats replicas from the 1920's and '30's trimmed in red, white, and blue typical of that era of getting people to vote. There are many more pamphlets and brochures. Take a look and take them to events you attend where it is appropriate.

~ **Maxine Barkan**, Office Corps Member, Past President, mbarkan@austin.rr.com

Membership



New Members: A warm welcome to our two new members, **Barbara Cambron**, and **Linda Stanley** . 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 (\$100) 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: **Shay Blankenship, Barbara Cambron, Lucy Gibbs, Joann Lovelace, Chalda Maloof and Russell Zears, Joann Robison, Linda Stanley, and Doris Wilhite.** 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: **Kathy Akers, Emma Hampton, Maria Johnson, Betty Owen, Joanne Richards, Otis Rhea Schmidt, Laura Sheridan, Ed Silha, Sonja Sussenbach, Karen Swenson, Amy Taylor, and Janet Whitehead.** 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.

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.