



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
AUSTIN AREA

www.lwvaustin.org  
 lwvAustinArea  
 @lwvATX

Voter Newsletter

512-451-6710  
lwvaustin@lwvaustin.org

December, 2015

Volume 20 #5

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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 after significant study and consensus is reached.

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

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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.

## LWVAA Calendar

**Mon., Nov 30**, 6:30 pm, **Board Meeting**, League Office, 1011 W 31st., Austin. Members.

**Sat., Dec. 5**, 10:30 - 12:30 pm, **New Member's brunch**. All member are invited. Clubhouse of the North Hills Club Townhome Association, 6527 Valleside Rd., Austin 78731.

**Tues., Dec. 8**, 7:00 to 9:00 pm, **First Consensus Meeting** *Money in Politics* study, meeting at Judy Parken's house 7917 West Rim Drive, Austin.

**Thurs. Dec. 10**, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, **Second Consensus Meeting** *Money in Politics* study at Howson Library, 2500 Exposition Blvd, Austin.

**Mon., Jan 4**, 6:30 pm, **Board Meeting**, League Office, 1011 W 31st., Austin. Members.

**Sat., Jan 16**. 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, **Local Issues Group Meeting** League Office, 1011 W 31st., Austin.

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

## Holiday Brunch and New Member Recognition



All League members (and prospective members) are invited to a Holiday Brunch to recognize the new members for 2015. This is a great chance to meet other League members and see what interests our newest ones. Come join the fun. An RSVP is

## Board Contact List

[Carol Olewin](#)

President

[Mary Cullinane](#)

1st VP Program

[Cinde Weatherby](#)

2nd VP Community Relations

[Jaci Collins](#)

3rd VP Organization

[Jacklyn Williams](#)

4th VP Voters Service

[Diane Davis](#)

Secretary

[Gwen Santiago](#)

Treasurer

[Judy Parken](#)

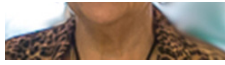
Membership

[Lea Masiello](#)

Publicity/Publications

[Frances McIntyre](#)

Advocacy and



helpful but certainly not required to [japarken@aol.com](mailto:japarken@aol.com). For questions call J. Parken at 512-502-0278.

We plan to have breakfast tacos, coffee, punch and various sweets. If you would like to bring food or something to share, please do.

**Saturday December 5**  
**10:30 am - 12:30 pm**  
**Clubhouse of the North Hills Club Townhome Association.**  
**[6527 Valleyside Rd. 78731](#) Link to [MAP](#)**  
**Between North Hills and Hart Lane just west of MOPAC.**

We warmly welcome the 44 individuals who have joined our League in 2015: **Marion Alsup, Bruce and Alicia Bogart, Kimberly Burris, Pam Bixby, Jeff Cardenas, Ruth Davis, Danielle Farmer, Jennifer Ann Fisher-household, Barbara Grajski, Jo Anne Grimshaw, Mike and Sue Heath, Julia Kirby, Kimberly Levinson, Heidi Gibbons, Sara Groff, Brenda Koegler, Liz Koslow Marcum, Jane McFarland, Kathi Miller, Karen Nafe, Julie Nitsch, Mary and David Overton, Beth Peck, Carol Peters, Anne Pericolas, Kendall Pace, Kim Sue Lia Perkes, Joan Quenan, Nancy Rowland, Joseph Santori, Cindy and Brian Schnaufenbuel, Kathleen Schneeman, Jessica Sherman, Paul Silver, Charlotte Slack, Sara Speights, Florence Symthe-Macaulay, Angelica Thomas, Melanie Walters-Mahoney, Katherine Winternitz, and Laura Yeager.**

~**Judy Parken**, Membership Chair,  
[japarken@aol.com](mailto:japarken@aol.com)

## Money in Politics National Study



In November, for the general meeting, **Joanne Richards** (and committee) put together a stellar panel covering *Money in Politics*. Panelists included **Michael Schneider** from the Texas Association of Broadcasters, **Craig McDonald**, Director of Texans for Public Justice, **Roger Borgelt**, an attorney specializing in campaign finance and election law, **Sara Smith**, an attorney with Environment Texas, and **Kirk Hildebrand**, chair of the Libertarian party. It was an enlightening and civil

conversation between leaders at several points on the political spectrum. And, surprisingly, there was a lot of common ground between all perspectives. Each of the five panelists briefly summarized his/her point of view. Then they fielded several thoughtful and thought-provoking questions from the audience. Many thanks to Joanne for an excellent meeting! Go to the [Austin Bulldog](#) (with permission) for an overview of the discussion.

There is another national study for 2015 that is associated with *Money in Politics*. It has to do with amending the Constitution in order to address the US Supreme Court decisions handed down since 1976 that have weakened regulation of spending and giving to political campaigns.

There are several ways to approach regulating money in politics. There are **actions Congress can take** such as expanding disclosure laws, adopting public funding for all candidates, prohibiting members of Congress from fundraising from the interests they most directly regulate, and using or expanding state corporate laws to regulate the behavior of corporations.

**Voters Guide Editor**  
[June Conway](#)  
**Voter Registration**  
[Hal Jennings](#)  
**Webmaster**  
[Donna Pauler](#)  
**Voter Editor**

## Plan for February General Meeting



Planning for the February general meeting about poverty, inequality, and ladders of opportunity begins in December. If you would like to participate with the planning committee, please contact ~**Mary Cullinane**, 1st VP Programs  
[culli@sbcglobal.net](mailto:culli@sbcglobal.net)

## Volunteer Deputy Registrar Training



**Volunteers needed to become Volunteer Deputy Registrars.** VDRs help register eligible citizens to vote by distributing, reviewing, and accepting completed voter registration applications. This training must be repeated every two years. Starting January 1, 2015, all current VDRs and those wishing to become VDRs must get trained. Your term will be January 1, 2015 - December 31, 2016.

There are **regulatory approaches** such as better enforcement of existing campaign finance laws, adopting rules governing corporate political spending, and strengthening and enforcing the IRS rules applicable to 501(c)(4)s.

**Other approaches** include overturning *Citizens United* and other rulings by the Court (e.g., bringing a case that would provide justification for broadening the definition of corruption). Changing or waiting for the ideological makeup on the Court to change may lead to overturning the closely divided decisions of the recent court.

And finally, there is the **option of amending the U.S Constitution** to overturn Court rulings. Possible amendment resolutions contain provisions that fall into the following categories:

- Restore the authority of Congress and the states to limit campaign spending.
- Assert that the rights protected by the Constitution are those of natural persons only.
- Forbid...construing the expenditure of money as protected speech;
- State that nothing in the amendment shall be construed as limiting freedom of the press.

This is a complex study and can be found on the national website. The Austin Area League did not participate in the Constitutional Amendment Study consensus process, but one can find material the national League has composed as well as articles written by other scholars at <http://forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/our-work/constitutional-amendment-study>. LWVUS will finalize its consensus and position (if any is taken) at the January Board meeting.

As a follow-up, don't forget to attend one of these consensus meetings. Everyone is encouraged to attend at one of these meetings.

**Tuesday Dec 8, 7:00-9:00 pm. First consensus meeting** at Judy Parken's house 7917 West Rim Drive, Austin ([map](#))

**Thursday Dec 10, 10:00 AM - 12:00 pm. Second consensus meeting** at Howson Library 2500 Exposition Blvd, Austin ([map](#))

~**Mary Cullinane** 2nd VP of Programs  
[mculli@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mculli@sbcglobal.net)

## From the President



**Voters Guide Electronic hits:** In the November election 20% of voters looked to the LWV for ballot information. We had 12,750 *Voters Guide* hits on our web site for the Nov 3, 2015 Constitutional Amendment propositions and over 6,000 hits on the Travis County Bond proposition. In addition, we distributed 3,000 print copies. This indicates that of the 75,124 ballots cast, 20% of voters looked to the League of Women Voters for ballot information. What a wonderful product and service the League of Women Voters provides our community!

I received several e-mails during the election time, from neighborhood organizations, referring people to the LWV *Voters Guide*. Thank you to all the donors and volunteers that made the *Voters Guide* available to the public.

### Nov. 2015 Voter Guide Downloads

File		Oct.	Nov.	Total
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Citizens interested in becoming a VDR or renewing their eligibility may attend a one-hour training session held the first Tuesday of each month at 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Training is at the Travis County Voter Registrar's office located at [5501 Airport Blvd](#), Austin, TX 78751. Upcoming dates are Tuesdays December 8, 2015 and January 5th, 2016.

**Bruce Elfant**, our Travis County Voter Registrar, is offering extra Volunteer Deputy Registrar (VDR) training the second Saturday of each month from 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (usually ends at 11:15 a.m.). The next sessions will be December 12, 2015 and January 9, 2016. First Unitarian Universalist Church, [4700 Grover](#), Austin. Space is limited. Sign up at this [link](#).

~ **June Conway**,  
Voter Registration Chair  
[june\\_cnwy@yahoo.com](mailto:june_cnwy@yahoo.com)

### [website](#) **Master Report**



The final count of the *Voter Guide* (VG) downloads shows just how much voters depend on the League of Women Voters. See the President's message about the number of downloads.

At least eight percent of the Travis County voters came to our website and downloaded the VG. Just over half of the people who downloaded the state VG were from other counties or were from Travis County and didn't choose to download the Travis-only file. Other voters accessed printed copies of the VG in libraries and other venues.

TX-English	7,042	5,708	12,750	
TX-Spanish	101	22	123	1.0%
Travis-English	2,935	3,086	6120	
Travis-Spanish	83	17	100	1.6%

**Voter Turnout.** 75,124 of the 644,934 registered voters in Travis County cast ballots in the Nov. 3, 2015 Joint General & Special Election, for a turnout of 11.7% The Travis County bond package was defeated by 1,064 votes. Final vote was 36,058 for the bond, and 37,122 against the bond.

Although all 7 constitutional amendments passed statewide, Travis County voters voted against Proposition 3, which repealed the requirement that state officers elected by voters statewide reside in the state capital. Travis County voted 33,049 for, and 40,231 against, Proposition 3.

**Advocacy.** The Austin League participated in a press conference supporting a climate change resolution that will be presented during the December 2015 U.N. Climate Change Conference in Paris, France. We are one of over 200 local Austin organizations that signed the resolution encouraging our President and Congress to protect the health and futures of our citizens by leading the world in the fight against climate change.

The Austin League attended the City of Austin Audit & Finance Committee meeting and thanked the committee and Councilwoman Leslie Pool for their work on the Lobby Reform Resolution. The Resolution would provide for transparency and delineates who would need to register as a lobbyist when conducting business with city policy and ordinance makers.

~Carol Olwin, President  
[c.olewin@gmail.com](mailto:c.olewin@gmail.com)

## LWV Austin Joins Alamo Drafthouse for Successful Event



A big League "Thank You" to all who contributed to the success of the **Alamo Drafthouse's** community event November 14th following the showing of the movie "**SUFFRAGETTE!**" Every seat was sold and the Alamo's generous donation of a percentage of the proceeds to the LWV Education Fund is very appreciated.

Special thanks to **Amy Averett**, the Alamo's Community and Family Events Director, for engaging LWV in planning the event and allowing our members to register voters on Nov. 13th and 14th at the South Lamar location. **Kim Sue Lia Perkes** of the Travis County Tax Office (and a League member) also contributed to the event's planning.

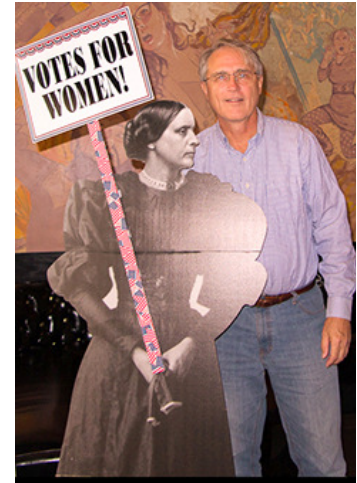
LWV Austin's Voter Registration Director **June Conway** organized a great crew of Volunteer Deputy Registrars (VDRs). Appreciation goes to **Julie Moore, Joan Quenan, Anne Peticolas, Hal Jennings, Mary Cullinane, Jaci Collins, Donna Pauler, Cinde Weatherby** and **Julie Nitsch**. Our volunteers registered more than 75 individuals!

Following the showing of this outstanding movie documenting the bravery of UK suffragettes in the 1920s as they sought voting privileges, **Averett** moderated a panel discussion



We encourage you to "like" or "share" our Facebook posts to help expand the reach of these announcements to all of your friends. See procedure below.

~ **Hal Jennings**, Webmaster,  
[hal@jenningsweb.us](mailto:hal@jenningsweb.us)



### "Like" Our League on Facebook



It's so easy to follow our League on Facebook. Thanks to **Brigid Hall** for these instructions:

1. Go to [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) and login to your existing account or create a new one.
2. Enter "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.

that included pioneer voter **Ms. Susie Sansom Piper**, Travis County Clerk **Dana DeBeauvoir**, Travis County Tax Assessor-Collector, Voter Registrar **Bruce Elfant** and State Representative **Donna Howard**.



LWV member **Sara Groff** produced a one-page brief summarizing the Texas fight for suffrage, made available at the event. It's posted on our Facebook page. Be sure to "like" the Facebook page "lwvAustinArea" and follow us on Twitter "@lwvATX". A life-size cutout of Ms. Susan B. Anthony, America's leading suffragette, was at the theater to call attention to LWV activities. See below for details on how Susan B. could be buying your dinner at our annual State of the City event! [Hint: *You need to have a Facebook or Twitter account to win. Using social media you help us further our reach into the community through your friends, and you can easily keep up with LWV Austin activities and stay in the know on voter-related news.*]

~**Cinde Weatherby**, 2nd VP of Community Relations  
[cindeweatherby@gmail.com](mailto:cindeweatherby@gmail.com)

## Picture Yourself a Winner! Take a Selfie and Send it to Us!



If you were at the Alamo Draffthouse November 13-14 and took a picture with Susan B Anthony, don't forget to post it on Facebook or Twitter with the hashtags #LWVATX and #SusanBSelfie before February 1, 2016. All those posting photos will be entered into a drawing for two free tickets to the annual LWV State of the City Dinner and Silent Auction scheduled for March 9, 2016.

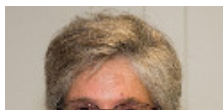
Watch for additional opportunities to take your photo with Susan B. at other LWV activities and League supported voter registration sites.

**Ginny Booton**  
**Monica Blackwell**  
**Kim Sue Lia Perkes**  
**Rebecca Davio**  
sharing time with  
Susan B. Anthony.



~**Cinde Weatherby**, 2nd VP of  
Community Relations  
[cindeweatherby@gmail.com](mailto:cindeweatherby@gmail.com)

## From Philadelphia Cobblestones to the Alamo: League Values in Action



I can still remember how the old cobblestones felt under my feet as I walked down Elfreth's Alley in Philadelphia ([www.elfrethsalley.org](http://www.elfrethsalley.org)). On a field trip from my elementary

## Follow Our League on Twitter



It's so easy to follow our League on Twitter. Thanks to **Brigid Hall** for these instructions:

1. Go to [twitter.com](https://twitter.com) and login to your existing account or create a new one.
2. Search for **lwvatx** in the search box at the top of the page.
3. On the left hand side of the page, under "People" click on our logo.
4. Click on the "follow" button and then you will be subscribed to the LWVAA page and get updates on any of our posts.

## Honors and Memorials

**Donations are continuing to be accepted** in honor of or in memory of a League member. [Click here](#) to download the form. Then mail with your donation to the LWVAA Office, 1011 W. 31st St., Austin, TX 78705.

## Shop at Randalls and Support the League

**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**.

[Click on this link](#) for a document to complete and return to any Randall's store to join the Good Neighbor Program and help our League.

## Leave a Legacy to Your League



school, we were experiencing living history, and I was enchanted. All the old buildings, which carried history lessons inside their walls, were like portals back to the early colonial and republic days of our country. From these visits to places where people actually lived and worked, I gathered courage and identity and a strong connection to values.

Membership in The League of Women Voters continues that connection to my early identity and values formation. As I learned that there were many other women involved in shaping our nation, my view of what women can do expanded. Could I be like Susan B. Anthony? Lucretia Mott? Those would be challenging role models. At the Alamo Drafthouse November 14, I stood beside Susan B. for a photo op and smiled broadly. Here I was again, full circle from Pennsylvania to Austin, Texas, to keep the fires for justice, equality, freedom, and education alight. Talking with moviegoers as they stopped by the League's table to check out voter registration and information materials, I tried to collect as many stories as possible-listening to people talk about what movie they were on the way to see, why they chose that movie and why voting matters to them.

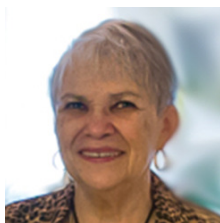
Voting does matter to us, and we sometimes forget that. When we stand in front of a table drape with our banner announcing our values, we League members help people remember why they should update their voter registration, how to gather information about elections, and how to inspire people in their worlds to get out to vote.

Although we feel discouraged that our voter turnout is shockingly low in Austin and Texas and the United States, it does matter to keep standing there with our banner and forms. Susan B. takes everyone back to those key historical moments when people took action to support their values. We registered a lot of people at the Alamo Drafthouse that day, but I also know that lots of other people noticed Susan B., and I'm sure she spoke her mind again to them.



~Lea Masiello, Publicity and Public Relations  
[leamasiello@gmail.com](mailto:leamasiello@gmail.com)

## Membership Report and Interest Survey



### Member Interest Survey:

If you are either a new member or a member who may have a **bit of time to volunteer** for the League (either regularly or occasionally), please complete this [Member Interest Survey](#). This will help us identify your skills and interests. A few new members have filled this out already, but most of our members have not. We especially need to hear from all members who have a little time to help us. Thank you for [doing this now](#).

### New Members:

New members **Jennifer Ann Fisher-household, Julia Kirby-household, Liz Koslow Marcum** and **Jessica Sherman** joined our ranks this past month. As a member of the Austin League, each of you is also a member of the national (LWVUS) and state (LWVTX) Leagues. See these links for an abundance of educational information.

[www.lwvaustin.org](http://www.lwvaustin.org) [www.lwvtexas.org](http://www.lwvtexas.org) [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

**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 LWVAAEF'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 LWVAAEF.

After you've added the League, please email the Austin League office, [lwvaustin@lwvaustin.org](mailto:lwvaustin@lwvaustin.org), so we can list you as a member of our League's Legacy Society.

### League Lingo

#### Concurrence:

Agreement of the League members with a position reached by a small group or another League.

#### Consensus:

Collective opinion of League members on a particular subject.

#### Household member:

Refers to households in which there are two members or more members. The PMP for the each additional household member is assessed at half the PMP rate at state and national levels. Local dues may or may not follow this pattern, based on decision at the local level.

#### PMP:

Anonym for per member payment; the amount of dues paid to state and national on behalf of each member. The amount of PMP is determined by delegates to state and national Conventions and is assessed based on the membership count as of January 1st of each year.

#### Position

**Regular and Sustaining Memberships:** Of your \$60 in regular dues, \$54 goes to the LWVTX and the LWVUS, and only \$6 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.

League's point of view, arrived at through member study and consensus (or concurrence).

**Thank You, Sustaining Members:**

Special thanks to this month's sustaining members:

**Barbara Cambron, Bob Gregory, Donna Howard, Liz Koslow Marcum, Frances McIntyre, Barbara Myers, Carol Olewin, and Jessica Sherman.**

We are grateful for your additional financial support for our local League.

**Thank You, Renewing Members:** Many thanks to the following members who also renewed this month:

**Kata Carbone, Dorsey Cartwright, Ruth Koenig, Elizabeth & Ryan Nielsen, Joanne Richards, Kathy and Kent Rider, Shannon Sutherland-student, 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 for renewals](#) (or [click here for new memberships](#)) to pay your annual dues online by credit card via PayPal while providing all the above information.

**Here is the schedule of dues:**

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

Contact me anytime with your League questions.

~**Judy Parken**, Membership Chair, [japarken@aol.com](mailto:japarken@aol.com), 512-502-0278.