



**League of Women Voters®  
Austin Area**

**Voter**

January 2010      Volume 14 #6

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

**January Meetings**

**General Meeting:** The Austin League is hosting a forum called "Census 2010: What is in it for US?" (See p. 4)

- **When: Sunday, January 17, 2:15-3:30 p.m.**
- **Where: First United Methodist Church Family Life Center, downtown at 13th and Lavaca**

Note location and time change from last month.

**Unit Meetings:** Frances McIntyre will lead our discussions on state and national program planning. From these meetings will come our advocacy ideas that may be presented at the State League convention, April 23-25, 2010 in San Marcos and/or at the National League convention, June 11 -15, 2010 in Atlanta, GA.

- Monday, January 11th: Central Unit - noon - Old Quarry Library -7051 Village Center Dr.
- Tuesday, January. 12: North Unit - 7 pm - Home of Judy Parken, 7917 West Rim Drive. Note location change from last month.
- Wednesday, January. 13: South Unit - 7 pm - South Austin Senior Activity Center, 3911 Manchaca

**Save the date** for LWVAA's State of the City dinner on February 17th. (See p. 5)

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**January Calendar**

<b>Sun. Jan. 17, 2:15pm</b>	<b>General Meeting</b>	First Methodist Church, 13th & Lavaca
<b>Mon. Jan. 11, noon</b>	<b>Central Unit</b>	Old Quarry Library, 7051 Village Cnter Dr.
<b>Tue. Jan. 12, 7pm</b>	<b>North Unit</b>	Judy Parken's, 7917 West Rim
<b>Wed. Jan. 13, 7pm</b>	<b>South Unit</b>	S. Austin Sr Activity Ctr, 3911 Manchaca
<b>Fri. Jan. 29, 11am</b>	<b>Mailout Social</b>	League Office, 1011 W. 31st

### President's Report

Here we are at the beginning of 2010. **Happy New Year to you all!**

This is the year of the Census, a Primary election in March, and a General election in November, to name just a few important events. The Austin League will be busy with programs on the Census, Air Quality and Austin Energy, as well as discussions on LWV-US and LWV-Texas program planning and the Austin Comprehensive Planning process. Don't forget our annual State of the City dinner — this year on February 17th. Mayor Lee Leffingwell will let us know how and what Austin is doing.

We had a lively discussion in December on program planning for the Austin League (never enough time, as always). Thanks to all who attended and came up with such good ideas. The Board will study those suggestions and we will vote on new programs at the Annual Meeting in May. This month at our Unit meetings, we will be reviewing positions and suggesting new programs for LWV-Texas and LWVUS. You can review the current positions at [lww.org](http://lww.org) and [lwwtexas.org](http://lwwtexas.org) under "issues we support." There are a few program changes proposed to the State League in the areas of Health Care, Gubernatorial Term limits and Capitol Punishment Reform, as well as instructions to the State Board regarding advocacy on measures that would provide public campaign financing money.

At the National level, there are suggestions from other Leagues for a new study on "The Federal Role in Public Education" and a request for advocacy on the Fair

Elections Now Act (which would provide public money for Congressional campaigns). We will decide if we want to support the suggestions from the other Leagues and add our suggestions to them. Our suggestions will be forwarded to the State and National Leagues to be considered along with those of other leagues. The delegates to the State Convention in San Marcos in April will decide which programs will be studied, changed or updated. I hope many of you will attend this event. It is an opportunity to see the League in action and meet Leaguers from all over the State. We have a special interest in this year's convention because our long-time member, Maxine Barkan, is being honored for her many years of dedication and service to the League on the state and local levels. We will have more information on the convention as the time nears.

Preparations for the Voters Guide for the Primary election in March are under way, and we can use some help this year. Please let me know if you are available for a few hours this month and next. Thanks.

The National League has approached the Austin League to participate in a High School Voter Registration research program which will probably culminate in a publication for high schools containing effective ways to register students. We will let you know more as we learn about it. I look forward to a bright beginning of 2010 as we tackle program planning and census. See you there.

*-Frances*

#### Honors & Memorials

The Austin League provides the opportunity for donations in honor of, or in memory of, League members who will be mentioned in this space. Please honor someone soon!

#### Randall's Donations

Randall's good Neighbor Program gives the Austin League a percentage of sales from members who have the League linked to their Randall's "Remarkable" cards. Our account number is 465. This is a great way to help the League.

## Membership

If we do not have your current email address, PLEASE notify Jaci Collins at [jacic@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jacic@sbcglobal.net). We try to communicate electronically if possible to save trees and postage.

## Welcome New Members

We cordially welcome Glenda Goehrs to the Austin League. We are delighted you have joined us. Your membership includes the national (LWVUS), state (LWVTX) and local (Austin) Leagues. We study and advocate issues at all three levels. See these websites to learn more about the League:

- National: [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)
- State: [www.lwvtexas.org](http://www.lwvtexas.org)
- Local: [www.lwvaustin.org](http://www.lwvaustin.org)

If you want to talk with a person, Judy Parken is happy to talk with you and answer questions (512-502-0278).

## Thank You Renewing Members

Jane Basey, Carol Olewin, Sandra Fox, Nancy Hoffman, Louise Hasty, Bryson Smith and Janet Whitehead. We look forward to seeing you in 2010. We also appreciate all 250 plus members who have renewed this year. You are crucial to our existence.

*-Judy Parken (502-0278) and  
Susan Morrison, Membership*

## In Memoriam

George Hasty, Austin League member, died December 4, 2009. He is survived by his wife, Louise.

Beulah Hodge — community activist, television personality and longstanding Austin League member, died on November 28, 2009. We offer our heartfelt condolences to the Hasty and Hodge fami-

## Keeping in Touch

Patricia Henley, past LWV president and good friend to many of us, has moved to the Chicago area. Pat informs us she is suffering from Parkinson's. I know she would love to hear from her League friends in Austin.

Please call me for her address and phone number.

*- Phyllis Portnoy 280-7730*

## Volunteers Wanted

**Beginning in January, you can help save your League over \$150/month by helping fold and sort Voter newsletters. A few people could knock this out in a couple of hours. Bring lunch — this is also a chance to catch up with some of your fellow League members.**

**Join us on Friday, January 29, 2010 at 11:00 am for our first monthly mailout social. It will be at the League office on 31st near Lamar. RSVP to Jo Reichler ([joreichler@gmail.com](mailto:joreichler@gmail.com)) 479-4003.**

**Contact Anita Privett 467-2674 or [anita.privett@gmail.com](mailto:anita.privett@gmail.com) if you can help with the next job:**

**Data Entry — This one you can do from home if you have Internet access. The League needs a few people to enter data from election inspector reports we acquired from the Secretary of State's office. We'll be entering the data into a web survey form that the House Elections Committee will use when considering election reform bills.**

## January General Meeting

The Austin League is hosting a forum called "Census 2010: What is in it for US?" The moderator will be Bruce Elfant, Travis County Constable. Panelists will be Anna Alicia Romero of MALDEF; Deece Eckstein of Intergovernmental Relations, Travis County, and Meg Poag, Executive Director of The Literacy Coalition of Central Texas.

We have invited other organizations to send representatives who will reach out to their constituencies, stressing the purpose and importance of the Census.

The forum will cover:

- How data affect funding for schools, transportation and medical care.
- How certain retailers use the data.

- How the population increase in Texas will affect state and national political districts (we expect to gain 3 Congressional seats).
- The ease and safety of returning the completed census form.
- The protection of privacy (Immigration Services cannot access the census data and it is a violation of US law for a census worker to reveal information about an individual or household who returns a census form).

**This forum will be held on Sunday, January 17, 2:15pm at the First United Methodist Church, Family Life Center, downtown at 13th and Lavaca.**

## Travis County Commissioners Court: Observer Corps Report

December 8, 2009 —

Item 1/ Travis County Housing Finance Corp. (TCHFC) Item 2: Commissioners Court approved \$135,000 for an audit and systems analysis mandated by HUD.

Item 31/Travis County Health Facilities Development Corp. (TCHFDC) Item 2: Details of revenue bonds to be issued by TCHFC were discussed. There will be no liability to the County resulting from revenue bonds to be used by Westminster Manor for adding new apartments, updating existing apartments and expanding the health facility there. Work is to be completed in approximately three years.

Citizens Communication: Several residents of a neighborhood near Zavala Elementary school, along with a representative from Sierra Club, expressed their concern regarding Pure Castings Co., a metal foundry, which allegedly emits twelve known carcinogens from their location across from the elementary school. TCEQ has determined that none of the emissions

levels is high enough to be considered dangerous. Parents have observed, however, that area children have exhibited respiratory symptoms, and they feel that the combination of so many low-level emissions does create a health risk. The delegation asked for the County's help in getting the plant moved.

Item 19: A large group of representatives of several organizations which deal with people who are leaving jail or prison and returning to Travis County, described the work they do to assist these individuals. (Travis County contributes \$1.2 million per year toward these efforts.) Quantitative results were not available from most groups, but the few that did have statistics showed no impact on the rates of recidivism. Commissioner Eckhardt expressed her disappointment, but stated that efforts should not cease. Group representatives assured the Commissioners that they are adjusting their programs to achieve better and more measurable results.

*-Karen Rankin*

## State of the City Dinner and Auction

This will be the Austin League's 18th annual State of the City dinner. We have invited our new Mayor, Lee Leffingwell, to be our speaker. He will give his perspective on the current state of our city and the prospects for the future. Bring your friends and neighbors. It is always a lot of fun with a good dinner, lots of Q & A, and time to visit with friends.

The tickets are \$47 for members and \$52 for nonmembers. (Our costs have increased this year.) Please RSVP by check or PayPal by February 12th; PayPal to lwvaustin@lwvaustin.org or send your check to LWVAA, 1011 W. 31st St., Austin TX

78705. Please note: your check is your reservation. Parking (in the garage across the street ) is included with your ticket.

- **Location: UT Club, 2108 E. Robert Dedman Drive, 6th floor**
- **Time: 6:30**
- **Ticket Price: Members - \$47.00; Non-members \$52.00**
- **Speaker: Mayor Lee Leffingwell**
- **Auction MC: Mary Gordon Spence**

## Public Hearing On Funding of Abortion Services

*(Editor's note: This testimony was presented to the Travis County Healthcare District on December 10, 2009)*

Good evening. I am Frances McIntyre, President of the Austin League of Women Voters. The League, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The Austin League has approximately 300 members.

I want to thank the Board for holding this public meeting. It is an opportunity for citizens to participate in their government and offer their opinions.

I am here today to offer the Austin Leagues' support of the staff recommendation of funding for reproductive health services for women through the Austin Medical Assistance Program (MAP).

The League of Women Voters believes that public policy in a pluralistic society must affirm the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

The Healthcare District serves those who have no financial means. It is Travis County's, (OUR) effort to help those in need—an honorable endeavor. These health services, including abortion procedures, are not illegal and are available to those who can afford them. It is incumbent on us to provide the same services for those women of all ages who have no assets and nowhere else to turn.

Travis County now serves only a small portion of those in need of subsidized reproductive-health services and to deny these women their rights is unconscionable. These clinics should be funded to continue providing family planning services, including pregnancy termination and birth control.

It is only fair to provide legal healthcare services to women with no means, since it is available to those women with means. We encourage the Travis County Healthcare District (Central Health) Board to accept their staff's recommendation regarding this matter.

Thank you.

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

Are your dues paid?

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

**For new and renewing members and for address changes:**

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_

Name of household member (if applicable)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_ (Fax) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like to receive the *Voter* newsletter via email.

	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Household</b>	<b>Student</b>
<b>Dues</b>	\$ 60.00	\$ 90.00	\$ 20.00
<b>Additional Donation</b>	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
<b>Total</b>	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

I'm an existing member and this is a change to my information. You can also PayPal dues to [lwvaustin@lwvaustin.org](mailto:lwvaustin@lwvaustin.org)

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

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