



**League of Women Voters®
Austin Area**

Voter

September 2011 Volume 16 #2

"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.

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You are cordially invited to the **LWV-Austin 2011 Fall Kickoff**

Sunday, September 18, 3:00 - 5:00 pm

at

**Congregation Beth Israel
3901 Shoal Creek Blvd**

Presentation:

***“Developing Women Leaders
with a Public/Private Partnership”***

Speaker: Jeanne Goka,

Principal -- Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders

*Catch up with friends
Learn about the League's
upcoming year*

*Refreshments served
Public invited*

Calendar for September

Unit meetings introduce us to Project Vote Smart (p 3)

Mon., Sept. 12, 1:00 p.m. Central Unit, Old Quarry Library, 7051 Village Center Dr. **Speakers: Chris Copsey and Julia Michaels** (Carolyn Baker, cbaker1@earthlink.net, 249-7012)

Tues., Sept. 20, 7:00 p.m. North Unit; home of Judy Parken, 7917 West Rim Dr. **Speakers: Dan Tessler and Chris Copsey.** (Judy Parken, japarken@aol.com), 502-0278)

Wed., Sept. 21, 7:00 p.m. South Unit, South Austin Senior Activity Center, 3911 Manchaca Rd. **Speakers: Dan Tessler and Julia Michaels.** (Anne Roussos, roussos@swbell.net, 441-3913)

October meetings:

No Child Left Behind and the Role of the Federal Government in Education.

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President's Letter

On resting up, a nice \$urprise, and showcasing women's history

Dear members:

As you know, your League takes the summer months off to rest up for the more active part of the year.



This summer's "rest" included 2 Board meetings, an all-day seminar on engaging younger voters, a pre-kickoff planning session on voter registration, a membership email discussion on issue ads run by LWV-US against sitting senators, studying (along with a number of other groups) the merits of single-member city council districts, several meetings of the committee studying the Federal Government's role in education, and several discussions about our Fall Kickoff. So we're all relaxed now...

All indications are that we will be even busier this fall, so opportunities for involvement abound:

- Ideas needed about LWV and Project Vote Smart working together (see article on p.4 and attend Sept. Unit Meetings)
- Help register voters in schools and low-turnout areas. We met recently and have some creative ideas. We can get money from LWV-US, and LWV-TX is cooking up a project, too. Call me at 345-7047
- Participate in the Consensus on the Role of the Federal Government in Education (October meetings)
- Participate in the Consensus on the LWV-Texas Water Study (Nov. meetings)
- Weigh in on the pros and cons of single member council districts (Call Frances

McIntyre at 451-1551)

There are plenty of areas where you can jump or wade in.

A former Austin Leaguer has donated \$10,000 (!) to LWV-AA's Education Fund. This person requests anonymity, and asks that the money be spent on voter education in whatever manner we see fit. Maybe you have something along these lines you'd like your League to do. Some ideas are already bubbling, and I'm interested in your thoughts on this.

Betty Williamson and I spoke with staffers at the Bob Bullock Museum a few weeks ago. The inspiration was Women's Equality Day (August 26), and what we might do to increase public awareness of our nation's first 144 years of government "by and for about half the people."

Bullock is doing a big exhibit on women's history next year and have welcomed us to help plan and provide materials and information. This is a great opportunity for AA and TX to raise the League flag. By the way, the Austin American-Statesman published my op-ed on women's equality on August 26th.

Finally, our Kickoff: We have an exciting speaker from the Ann Richards School. This top-rated AISD school educates girls from economically disadvantaged families and prepares them for leadership roles and for college. Principal Jeanne Goka is a dynamic speaker whose message will resonate with Leaguers.

Your thoughts?

- Stewart

Project Vote Smart

To kick off the new League year of Unit Meetings, we have invited speakers from Project Vote Smart, a non-partisan organization devoted to voter education. Joining us are Chris Copsey, Julia Michaels, and Dan Tessler, all full-time staffers at the organization's new legislative research center in Austin.

The center is hosted by the University of Texas in association with the Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Participation. At the center, some 15-20 interns are researching information on Congressional office holders. Project Vote Smart also has a center in Montana.

Our speakers will tell us how we can find voting information on all members of Congress. At the meetings, we'll have samples of their last voters' guide, the *U.S. Government Owner's Manual, 2010 Edition*.

Project Vote Smart was incorporated in 1988 after conservatives and liberals alike shared common concerns about the changing character and conduct of candidates and campaigns. Among the founding members were Senators Barry Goldwater and George McGovern, Congresspersons Geraldine Ferraro and John McCain, and former LWV Executive Director Peggy Lampl.

Be sure to attend one of the Unit Meetings and help us find ways to work with this organization, with whom we have so much in common.

- Anne Roussos

LWV-TX Study: Water Resources as a Commodity

Mark your calendar for the General Meeting on Sat. Nov. 5.

All members will receive Facts and Issues info from LWV-TX.

Focus: An update of our Water position to consider the competition for water in Texas, including governmental policy, public interest rights, and water resource protection.

Scope: Analyze current state regulations which govern the sale or transfer of water rights. Consider ramifications if Texas were to classify water as a commodity rather than a natural resource. Explore options such as a state-run water marketing administration.

Assess laws that would be needed for interstate or international water transfers. Assess the best use of our water (i.e., public interest concerns, environmental factors, effect on third parties and future water requirements.)

Leaguers Going Public

- Carolyn Baker, LWV-AA Speakers Bureau

Frances McIntyre, June 20, spoke to the International Hospitality Council of Austin, where she described the League, the electoral system and voter education. Her audience was English-speaking and hailed from 9 African countries.

Alison Dieter, June 30 AAS Letter to the Editor (LTE) on social programs in the U.S.

Alison Dieter, July 27 AAS LTE on "Labor and Wages." (the living wage concept).

Mary Lee Comer, June 28 AAS LTE on a city consultant studying reducing traffic on I-35.

Stewart Snider, July 20, testified on behalf of LWVAA before the Central Health Public Hearing in support of continuing public funding for primary and preventative health care.

Cheryl Hazeltine, July 14, on the KLRU program, "Central Texas Gardener."

Stewart Snider, August 26, AAS Op-Ed "Equality Still a Battle for Today's Women."

Note: if you are interested in joining our Speakers Bureau, have spoken or written in a public space, or would like more information, call Carolyn Baker, 249-7012.

Maxine's Musings

-Maxine Barkan, 231-8523



POTPOURRI

Life is a mixture of related and unrelated events or episodes. I am one of those with institutional memory which delights some and bores others. Regardless, I decided to search my memory of events or episodes that might be of interest.

I was delighted to see the Voters Guide in the Austin American Statesman. Old timers may remember we were pushed out of the AAS many years ago partly because they wanted to edit all the responses for grammar and spelling. We refused. We did get it in once with a one-time grant from the Austin Community Foundation. I hope this time it lasts.

If my math is correct, it was in 1995 that we celebrated the League's 75th anniversary (1994 for Texas). With Pat Henley at the helm we had a big event scheduled. Some of us dressed in vintage clothes and we all wore wide yellow bands from shoulder to hip. We gathered at a designated location downtown and marched up Congress Avenue with banners to the south steps of the Capitol. There we were greeted by Texas First Lady Laura Bush who gave us a warm welcoming speech. She was followed by witty Liz Carpenter. (If I am incorrect I'm sure I will hear from someone!) It truly was a nonpartisan day. I kept my yellow band for a long time.

At the 1990 LWV-US Convention, the Illinois League proposed a "not recommended" item to adopt a position by concurrence in favor of gun control based on their study. This kind of process is sure to raise hackles, not the item but on the process. During the spirited debate, our intrepid LWV-TX President, Diane Sheridan, got to the Con mike with all 10 of us delegates behind her to speak against the process, not the item. She did not get a chance to speak as time was up. As I sat down I heard someone behind me saying, "Wouldn't you know Texas would be against gun control?" Low blow.

I sort of fancy myself as a quilter, having done so for about 25 years. However, I certainly am not the best. Much to my surprise I was asked to do a wall hanging quilt for the live auction at a state LWV convention some years ago. Since I do all my quilts by hand from piecing to quilting, I said it was impossible to complete one in two to three months. It was Jeannie Lewis of San Marcos who refused to take "no" for an answer. I can't remember all the blocks that were pieced and/or appliquéd but one block was an old version of our LWV-TX state logo. Evelyn Bonavita (former state president) had the highest bid. I wonder if she still has it. For several years I made decorated jackets out of sweat shirts for silent auctions that also made money for the state League. My sister-in-law used to ask me to make them to take on her trips to Europe. My husband, Mark, was auctioneer for several League conventions which he greatly enjoyed.

Those who have been League trainers, now known euphemistically as facilitators so we don't scare anyone, might enjoy my experiences. I first met Edie Jones when she and I partnered in training (facilitating?) the Brazos County League board. It took place in one of the member's home who had a large gym-like room. Before we began, the host insisted we all limber up by doing the latest craze, the Macarena. I had two left feet but we were limbered! Edie was fun to work with. I have been to many parts of the state from far East Texas to West Texas, to the Panhandle, the Gulf Coast, and the Rio Grande Valley. The only exception was El Paso.

As a newly minted League member in the early 50's I had read many times that early Leaguers were also members of the WCTU. When I attended the Ohio League's state convention as a delegate, imagine my shock when all my fellow roommates opened their suitcases, each held a bottle of Scotch or Bourbon! Mine only held clothes!

~Maxine

President's note: Maxine is a past LWV-AA president who escorted First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt around Columbus, Ohio when she was president of that League.

Join Our Study: The Privatization of Federal Government Functions

LWVUS will soon be providing study materials. Our committee could use your help researching this topic. The consensus meeting for this study is scheduled for March.

Scope:

The purpose of this study is to identify those parameters and policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer federal, state or local government services, assets and/or functions to the private sector. It will review the stated goals and the community impact of such transfers and identify strategies to ensure transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good.

Organization:

The LWVUS committee will provide a history and background of privatization, a glossary of terms, legal issues to be considered when privatizing at different levels of government, current state regulations on privatizing and case studies on successful and unsuccessful privatizing efforts. Finally, the committee will provide suggested policies and parameters to be considered when privatizing.

Please contact Frances McIntyre at 512-451-1551, or sign up at the Kickoff meeting on September 18th.

Honors and Memorials

To make a donation in honor of, or in memory of, a League member, mail with your donation to LWV-AA Office, 1011 W. 31st St., Austin, TX 78705. Include name and address of those to be notified of your donation.

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**.

Membership - Judy Parken



Welcome, New Members

We cordially welcome Sylvia Kauffman, Joann Richards, Joyce Ann Rodgers and student member Annette Robinson to the Austin League. We are delighted you have joined

us. As a member of the Austin League, you are also a member of the national (LWVUS) and state (LWVTX) leagues. Call me with your League questions anytime. 502-0278.

Thank You, Renewing Members

Many thanks to those who recently renewed: Robbie Ausley, Mary Blackstock, Kathy Carvell, Joan Edmonds, Kathleen Hackett, Beverly Kimbrough, and Betty Williamson. We truly depend on your support and appreciate your timely renewals.

Thank You, Sustaining Members

From a membership vote at our annual meeting in May, we now have a NEW membership category we've named "sustaining." For individuals it is \$100 and for households it is \$150. You can still renew at \$60 or \$90, but the sustaining dues greatly benefit the Austin League because the extra money stays in Austin (of your regular dues, \$28 goes to LWV-TX and \$30 to LWV-US).

We will show our appreciation for sustaining members with special recognition in this column of the Voter. I am happy to announce we already have 3 members who renewed at this level: Joann Lovelace, Janet Reed and Donna Howard. Thank you SO much!

Register Student Voters...

...at Austin Community College's **Constitution Debate Day Celebration**, where ACC students examine their knowledge and beliefs about the U.S. Constitution and reflect on the state of their rights. This is a great opportunity to talk about the League with civic-minded students.

When: Thursday, September 22, 2011

Where: Palmer Events Center

Time: 5:30-8:30 pm

Call Stewart (345-7047) if you're interested.

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE AUSTIN AREA**
1011 West 31st Street
Austin, TX 78705
(512) 451-6710

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 or at 257-9636.

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) _____ (Cell) _____

Email _____

___ I'm an existing member and this is a change to my information.

	Individual	Household	Student
Regular membership	\$ 60.00	\$ 90.00	\$ 20.00
Sustaining membership	\$ 100.00	\$ 150.00	
Additional Donation	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

You can also use PayPal and your credit card to pay your dues at
lwvaustin@lwvaustin.org
Click on Membership.

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