



September 2013

Volume 18 # 2

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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.

If you received this email



from a friend, click here 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

Tues., Sept. 3, 6:30 pm, Board Meeting, LWVAA Office, 1011 w. 31st St.. Open to all members.

Tues., Sept. 10, 6:30 pm, Town Hall Meeting, "Voter ID Bill," 5501 Airport Blvd., Travis County Tax Office, Elections Training Room. Open to all Volunteer Deputy Registrars.

Sun., Sept. 15, 2:30 - 4:30 pm, Annual Kick-Off Meeting, "Affordable Care Act and Voter ID," Trinity United Methodist Church Sanctuary, 4001 Speedway. Open to the public.

Tues., Sept. 24, all day, National Voter Registration Day.

Mon., Oct. 7, 6:30 pm, Board Meeting, LWVAA Office, 1011 W. 31st St.. Open to all members.

Sun., Oct. 13, 3:00 - 5:00 pm, "Panel on Human Trafficking," Faith Presbyterian Church, 1314 E. Oltorf at I-35. Open to the public.

Mon., Oct. 14, 10:15 am, Day Unit Consensus Meeting on Human Trafficking, Howson Library, 2500 Exposition. Open to all members.



Board Contact List

[Stewart Snider](#)

Co-President
512-345-7047

[Carol Olewin](#)

Co-President
512-380-0088

[Nancy Oelklaus](#)

1st VP Program
512-431-4946

[Anita Privett](#)

2nd VP Community
Relations

Tues., Oct. 15, 7:00 pm, Evening Unit Consensus Meeting on Human Trafficking, at the home of Judy Parken, 7017 West Rim Dr. Open to all members.

Sat., Oct. 19, 9:00 am - 12 noon, Community Conversation in Public Education, for AISD District 4, Site TBA. League volunteers needed.

Sun., Oct. 20, all day, LWVAA Voters Guide for November Election, published in *Austin American-Statesman* and available at lwvaustin.org.

Mon., Oct. 21 - Fri., Nov. 1, 7:00 am - 7:00 pm, Early Voting.

Mon., Nov. 4, 6:30 pm, Board Meeting, League Office, 1011 W. 31st St. Open to all members.

Tues., Nov. 5, 7:00 am - 7:00 pm, General Election Day.

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



**Annual Fall
Kick-Off Meeting:
The Affordable Care
Act and YOU**



Sunday, September 15, 2:30 - 4:30 pm

Trinity United Methodist Church Sanctuary

4001 Speedway, corner 40th Street. Parking across the street.

This event is free and open to the public.



This year's featured Kickoff speaker is **Anne Dunkelberg**, Acting Executive Director for the Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPPP) and one of the state's leading experts in policy and budget issues relating to health care access. Dunkelberg will talk about the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). She will discuss the resources available in Central Texas to potential beneficiaries and answer such questions as:

- What services and benefits are available via the Affordable Care Act?
- How might the ACA improve access to health care?
- What efforts are being made to educate the public about the ACA?

In addition, a member of the Travis County Clerk's staff will provide an **update on the current status of the Texas Voter ID law** and how League members can help educate the public on what identification they will need to vote in November.



**Co-President's Letter:
More on Voter Disenfranchisement**

512-467-2674

Judy Clack

3rd VP Organization

Voter Editor

512-731-0280

Jacklyn Williams

4th VP Voters Service

773-957-5795

Peggy Stewart

Secretary

512-458-1072

Carol Olewin

Treasurer

512-380-0088

Judy Parken

Membership

512-502-0278

Jaci Collins

Member Records

512-257-9636

Mescal Evler

Publicity

512-517-0088

Ami Hooper

Web Master

512-705-2389

Eliza May

Special Events

512-358-0479



**Hearings on City
Council Districts**



The Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission is holding a series of hearings in September. The public is invited to attend as the commission gathers input prior to drawing 10 new Austin City Council districts. Anyone can sign up to speak

This has been a busy summer for political news. In June, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that several key provisions of the 1965 Voting Rights Act were invalid. Two hours later, Texas had a new voter ID requirement and perhaps a million Texas voters were suddenly disenfranchised. And during one of the Special Sessions, the Texas Legislature decided it has jurisdiction over the health and reproductive choices of Texas women. The Lege also decided that the wildly gerrymandered political district maps we used last year are just fine. Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott defended these maps, saying he has no problem with gerrymandering as long as it's partisan-based.

at the hearings for three minutes.

- **Wed., Sept. 4**, 6:30 pm, Anderson High School, 8403 Mesa Drive.
- **Sat., Sept. 7**, 10:00 am, Goodwill Community Center, 1015 Norwood Park Blvd.
- **Wed., Sept. 11**, 6:30 pm, Concordia University, Bldg. C, Room C238, 11400 Concordia University Drive.
- **Wed. Sept. 18**, 6:30 pm, Montopolis Recreation Center, 1200 Montopolis Drive.

~ **Frances McIntyre**, Chair, Redistricting Study Committee, mcintyre.frances@gmail.com

Honors and Memorials

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.

The League thanks the following for their donations:

- In memory of **Rose Lancaster** from **Frances McIntyre**.
- in memory of **Anne McAfee** from **Judy Parken, Frances McIntyre, and Judy Clack**.



Texas isn't alone. The North Carolina Legislature, just passed what is perhaps the most restrictive voting bill since the days of the poll tax. Ignoring the calamity in Florida that resulted when that state reduced its early voting period, North Carolina included just such a restriction in its omnibus anti-voter bill. I'm proud to report that LWV-NC has filed suit to block this measure, calling it an "unlawful deprivation of rights, privileges and immunities."

A Texas Legislator filed a bill in this past session that would have cut in half the Early Voting period in Texas. When she laid out her bill in committee, she assured members that this measure would not disenfranchise voters here because "Texas is different from Florida." Only one witness testified in favor (an officer from one of the major political parties). An army of pro-voter groups along with elections officials of both parties from all over the state testified against the bill. The filing representative, clearly embarrassed by the pushback, withdrew the bill immediately, expressing shock that so many people were opposed.

- In light of all this turmoil and as purveyors of factual information about public policy and elections, what should Leaguers be doing now?
- Has the Texas Legislature just woken up a sleeping electorate? If it has, can the LWV help keep them awake?
- Will the just-disenfranchised voters go to the trouble to get the newly required photo ID?
- Will either of the two lawsuits (U. S. Attorney General Holder's and US Rep. Marc Veasey's) lawsuit against the Texas "Voter ID" bill help increase awareness about how many Texans have been affected?
- Will these suits block its implementation for this November's elections?

I don't know, but I have this sense that there is opportunity in all the claims and counter-claims for the League to stand out as a voice of reason. This includes praising the efforts of groups who are independent of the League of Women Voters but are equally concerned about voting rights. Please read the short article that follows. And send me your comments about what LWV-Austin should do about anything you've read here. Blue-sky is fine - I like the mental stimulation that comes from idealism.

~ **Stewart Snider**, Co-President, s2snider@gmail.com, 512-345-7047

Got ID, Texas?

The sudden announcement in Texas about photo ID has sparked an effort by a coalition of groups that is working to educate Texas voters. This group has created a website called "[GOT ID, TEXAS?](#)" Or call **(866) OUR-VOTE**.

Any Texas voter can go there to read about the new requirement. This site includes a questionnaire anyone can fill out to see if s/he has been affected. The intricacies of the state law aren't so bad when aided by a system that only asks questions that are pertinent to you. If this site's logic determines that you don't have everything you

need to vote, it offers help. I highly recommend you tell everyone you know about this. And if you feel inclined to help a disenfranchised voter get an ID, this coalition is looking for volunteers to staff phones and work with affected voters. Just let me know and I'll point you to the organizers.

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

Co-President's Message

LWVAA Hosts LWVTX Convention

Our League will host the 2014 LWV-Texas Convention in Austin from **April 24 - 27, 2014** at the Double Tree Hotel, 6505 IH-35 North.

We will need the help of many of our members to guarantee a successful and enjoyable experience for the participants coming from all over Texas. Local League volunteers will be needed to help with registration, credentials, office support, silent auction, publication sales, and floor duty during the plenary sessions on Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27. Judy Clack and Judy Parken will be asking **each member** to volunteer for **one three-hour shift** from April 25 - 27.



As Convention hosts we will sponsor an evening of entertainment for out-of-town guests (and our members) on Friday, April 25. A planning committee is working on locations and transportation to provide a taste of Austin. We also must sponsor several breakout sessions during the convention and will need sponsors to fund the food and beverages during the refreshment breaks.

If you'd like to participate in the planning and hosting of the 2014 LWV-TX Convention in Austin, contact Carol Olewin at c.olewin@gmail.com or call **512-380-0088**. We hope to see many of you at Convention and help us put forth a good show for our guests as well as provide a good learning experience for us all. If you'd like to be a presenter at an informational session, let Carol know about that too.

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



LWVTX Study: Human Trafficking

LWVTX adopted a study of Human Trafficking and all Leagues in Texas are encouraged to participate in it. The League's study and the consensus questions are divided into three areas: Prevention, Prosecution, and Protection.

Our League has begun to hold regular study group meetings in preparation for our October general and unit meetings on Human Trafficking. Contact me if you are interested in being a part of the human trafficking study group: elizamay@sbcglobal.net. All members are welcome.

LWV-TX has released its *Facts & Issues: Human Trafficking in Texas* for this statewide study. It is [available here](#) for all to read and study. League members are encouraged to do so prior to the October panel and consensus meetings.

All members and the public are invited to attend our general meeting on Sunday,



October 1: Health Insurance Exchanges



It is estimated that more than 200,000 people in Travis County will be potentially eligible for qualifying healthcare benefits and can enroll in the Health Insurance Exchange starting October first. This virtual marketplace will offer side-by-side comparison of private insurance options for individuals, families and small businesses.

A community forum will be held on **Tuesday, Sept. 17 11:30 AM - 1:00 pm** in the Large Training Room **1700 S. Lamar, 78704**

Austin Travis County Integral Care and Central Health will be providing information on the local impact of this important federal initiative as it relates to the people who receive local services.

The meeting is free but reservations are required. [Click here](#) to reserve your spot. A light lunch will be served.

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

Randall's Donations

October 13 at which a panel will present information on the 3 P's of Human Trafficking: Prevention, Prosecution, and Protection. Two unit meetings for consensus are scheduled, one in the daytime and one at night. Members should make every effort to attend one of these meetings.

Schedule of Human Trafficking General and Unit Meetings

Sun., Oct. 13, 3:00 - 5:00 pm, "Panel on Human Trafficking," Faith Presbyterian Church, 1314 E. Oltorf at I-35. Open to the public.

Mon., Oct. 14, 10:15 am, Day Unit Consensus Meeting on Human Trafficking, Howson Library, 2500 Exposition. Open to all members.

Tues., Oct. 15, 7:00 pm, Evening Unit Consensus Meeting on Human Trafficking, at the home of Judy Parken, 7017 West Rim Dr. Open to all members.

~**Eliza May**, Chair, Human Trafficking, elizamay@sbcglobal.net



Local Study Group: Health and Mental Health Services

There has been a lot going on in Austin with the Community Care Collaborative (CCC), behavioral health services, and the new medical school/teaching hospital. Members of the Healthcare and Mental Health study committee have attended community meetings to glean information that is relevant to our health care study.



Our **League's Kick-Off** meeting on **Sun., Sept. 15** with speaker **Anne Dunkelberg** will substitute for our committee's September meeting. Dunkelberg will explain how healthcare exchanges work, the different plans, information about subsidies, what the non-expansion of Medicaid means for Texas, etc. Her presentation will be extremely comprehensive and clear and will give us all a better understanding of the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

At our October committee meeting, we will start directing our energies to learning more about the local scene - Seton, CCC, Community Health, and the med school/teaching hospital. Date of the meeting will be determined soon. Also, committee member, **Grace Chimene**, is preparing an ACA 101 fact sheet.

If you would like to be involved in this study group, please contact me.

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

Public Education Study Group

The AISD DIstrict 4 Community Conversation about public education will be held on Saturday morning, **October 19**. The place has yet to be determined. Helpers are needed for registration, hospitality and facilitation. We also need some poster makers in advance of the event. For more information or to volunteer, email NancyOelklaus@gmail.com.

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.



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



The LWVAA Education Study Group has been meeting since early this year to determine how best to respond to findings from the Community Conversations held last year. Since **community unity is our foremost need**, we are proposing that we support the E3 Alliance campaign to **increase school attendance**--that the League engage in a yard-sign campaign that encourages school attendance, especially in the months when most absences occur--January and March. If you're interested in helping with this project or would like to join

this study group, email NancyOelklaus@gmail.com.

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

Voter Registration; Voter ID Education

Voters Service Committee

The Voters Service Committee needs your help this year to accomplish our upcoming work. We have goals to

- increase the number of citizens we register to vote
- assist those needing help obtaining a photo ID to vote
- provide training to those wanting to run for elected office



The 2013 and 2014 election seasons are around the corner and we want to be prepared to serve the citizens in as many ways that we can. We need your ideas and your participation. If you would like to join the Voters Service Committee to work on these goals, email me at jacklyncw.jcw@gmail.com.

Volunteer Deputy Registrars

The League of Women Voters of the Austin Area is committed to helping Bruce Elfant, Travis County Voter Registrar, register 200,000 eligible voters before the next major election in November 2014. We will need a lot of help and a lot of volunteer deputy registrars. To register people to vote, you must first get deputized. It takes a little over an hour of training. Although there are new requirements for voting (photo ID), there have been no changes to the voter registration process.

Have you done the training for the new term (Jan. 1, 2013 - Dec. 31, 2014) to become or be reinstated as a Volunteer Deputy Registrar? **If so, I need to know.** Please email me (jacklyncw.jcw@gmail.com) your name, phone number and email address. If not, **inform me** as soon as you have completed this training so I may notify you of registration opportunities. Thank you.

Here are times that Volunteer Deputy Registrar trainings will be held:

Travis County holds training **every first Tuesday of the month** at their main office at 10:30 am, 12:30 pm, and 6:30 pm. All sessions are held in Elections Training Room, Travis County Tax Office, [5501 Airport Blvd.](http://5501AirportBlvd.com), between 51st and 2222. Contact: Cheryl Reese, CherylReese@co.travis.tx.us.

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

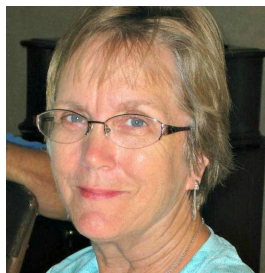
Observer Corps:

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

Travis County Commissioners Court:

Editor's note: This is a summary of the main points reported by Joann Robison from her attendance at the July 23 and August 27 meetings of the Travis County Commissioners Court.



Commissioners were closely following the discussion in the Special Sessions of the Legislature regarding funding for transportation. Since money from the Rainy Day fund would be allocated to transportation, this would require voter support in November via a constitutional amendment.

Despite some rain in July, it was felt that consistency was best and the burn ban was left in place.

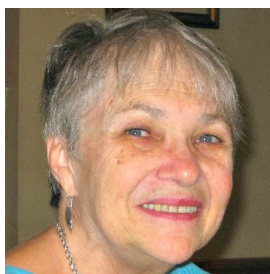
Regarding the development of a new civil and family courthouse, the Commissioners compared the timeliness, design, competition, cost certainty, and value for money of various funding methods. They tended to favor a private-public partnership. However, a later newspaper article reported that the commissioners decided to continue the traditional process of the county owning and maintaining their own building and procedures.

A major item of discussion dealt with the budget in preparation for budget mark up sessions that begin on Sept. 4 with public hearings scheduled on Sept. 17 (during TCCC) and Sept. 20. More income is projected in 2014 coming from new resources and from a rollover in unspent income from 2013. This money could be used to cover unmet needs.

The Commissioners are looking for money to cover the loss of District Attorney funding caused by Gov. Perry's veto. Possible funding repurposing opportunities include up to \$1,763,000 in possible savings by delaying new full time hires, eliminating some vacant positions, financing equipment with short term debt rather than general fund resources, and reducing funding in the DA operating costs.

~ Joann Robison, Observer Corps, gatorgunk@gmail.com

Membership



I look forward to seeing many of you at our Kick-Off meeting on Sunday, September 15. I especially want to greet those of you who have joined in the past year.

Welcome New Members: A warm welcome to each of this month's new League members: **Delores Block, June Conway, Stacey Mather, and Denise Szymczak.**

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: **Robbie Ausley, Grace Chimene, Hal and Judy Jennings, Janet Martin, Judy Moore, and Nancy Oelklaus.** 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: **Joan Edmonds, Louisa Hoberman, Polly Street, and Kathie Tovo.** We depend on your support and appreciate your renewals.

New Membership, Renewal Dues Payment, Address Changes: Please send 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	\$60.00	\$90.00	\$20.00
Sustaining	\$100.00	\$150.00	

Contact me anytime with your League questions.

~**Judy Parken**, Membership Chair, japarken@aol.com , 512-502-0278.