League Calendar

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Shop at Randalls and Support LWVAA
Open Compass Bank Account and Support LWVAA
Leave a Legacy to Your League

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**

Mon., Jan. 5, 6:30 pm, **Board Meeting**, League Office, 1011 W. 31st St. Members.

Tues., Jan. 6, 10:30 am, 12:30 pm, or 6:30 pm, **Volunteer Deputy Registrar Training**, Travis County Voter Registrar's office, 5501 Airport Blvd, Austin, TX 78751.

Fri., Jan. 9 - 10:00 to 11:00 am. **Capitol Corps Training**, LWV-TX Office, 1212 Guadalupe Street, Suite 107.

Thurs., Jan. 15, 2:00- 6:00 pm, **Travis VDR Recognition and Training**, LBJ Library, 2313 Red River. Registration required.

Wed., Jan. 21, 6:30-9:30 pm, **Pay 2 Play** documentary, Alamo Drafthouse, Village Shopping Center, 2700 W. Anderson Lane, Austin.

Sat., Jan. 24, 9 am - 12 noon, **LWVAA Local Program Planning**, Trinity United Methodist Church, 4001 Speedway, 78751. Members only.

Mon., Feb. 2, 6:30 pm, **Board Meeting**, League Office, 1011 W. 31st St. Members.

Tues., Feb. 3, 10:30 am, 12:30 pm, or 6:30 pm, **Volunteer Deputy Registrar Training**, Travis County Voter Registrar's office, 5501 Airport Blvd, Austin, TX 78751.
Wed., Feb. 4 (Tentative) 5:30 - 7:00 pm, **Elected Officials Reception** for Austin City Council and Travis County Commissioners Court. Austin City Hall. Open to the public.

Mon. - Tues., Feb. 23 - 24, **LWVTX Lobby Days** at the State Capitol. $10 registration fee. Members only.

Mon., Mar. 2, 6:30 pm, **Board Meeting**, League Office, 1011 W. 31st St. Members.

Tues., Mar. 3, 10:30 am, 12:30 pm, or 6:30 pm, **Volunteer Deputy Registrar Training**, Travis County Voter Registrar's office, 5501 Airport Blvd, Austin, TX 78751.

Tues., Mar. 10, 6:00 - 10:00 pm, **State of the City Dinner and Auction**, Green Pastures. Open to the public.

Sun., Mar. 15, Afternoon, **2015 Texas Legislative Update**, Time and Location TBA. Open to the public.

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

**Capitol Corps Needs YOU!**

With Stewart Snider’s departure from Austin, the League of Women Voters has lost its longtime Capitol Corps coordinator. I’m honored to step in as the Vice President of Community Relations and take on that responsibility for the remainder of his term.

New LWVAA members may not know the Austin League is called on to voice the positions of the League of Women Voters of Texas (LWV-TX) in the Capitol. In the 84th Legislative Session beginning January 13, Grace Chimene will serve as the LWV-TX Legislative Director. Grace, an LWVAA member and a LWV-TX Board Members, will work to coordinate testimony. All testimony is drafted by a LWV-TX Issue Chair and is fully vetted before any Capitol Corps volunteer presents testimony or registers positions on bills under consideration in House and Senate Committees. Please consider volunteering in the Capitol Corps.

This will be a challenging session, with mostly all new leadership and many new legislators. As Grace mentioned at our December Membership Reception, neither Grace nor I can do this job alone. With more Capitol Corps volunteers, informed on the Legislative processes and standing ready to act, the greater our possibilities for success.

One subject ripe for action this session is online voter registration. It now seems to have bipartisan support and with a concerted effort by the LWV-TX and other like-minded organizations, we think it can become reality.

**All Capitol Corps volunteers will be gathering for training**

10-11 am, Friday, January 9, 2015

LWV-TX Office

1212 Guadalupe Street, Suite 107

**Immediate Need for Interviewers:** In addition to general Capitol Corps involvement between January 13
and June 1, the Austin League also needs members to step up right away to help interview each of the House and Senate members from our area. This three-question survey is short and easy and should be administered by two LWVAA members. The time in which this is needed to be completed is also short. Ideally, all interviews would be conducted and documented by Friday, January 9, 2015. Realistically, that may be a reach for the newly organized Corps, but one I want to strive to meet.

At our recent Member Reception, we four volunteered for the Capitol Corps. Thank you to each of them, but we absolutely need more! As the new coordinator of the League’s Capitol Corps, I will definitely benefit from involvement by LWVAA members who have undertaken this mission previously.

Please email or call ASAP to sign on as a Capital Corp volunteer:

Grace Chimene, Legislative Director - LWV-TX,
Grace: gchimene@lwv@gmail.com - 512-940-9948
or
Cinde Weatherby, LWVAA VP Community Relations,
Cinde: cindeweatherby@gmail.com - 512-560-1334

Resources for Capitol Corps members:

- To review stated LWV-TX issue positions.
- To view the LWV-TX Program Perspectives, information about advocating for issues.
- To learn more about providing testimony before House of Representative committees

~ Cinde Weatherby, 2nd VP Community Relations and Development Chair, cindeweatherby@gmail.com

Want Input into Future LWVAA Local Programs?

Although Austin's prosperity has been good for most individuals in our community, some of our fellow residents have been left behind. Are you concerned about income inequality, homelessness and housing affordability, hunger, lack of health care, and other realities some Austin residents face daily? At the February 2014 program planning meeting, League members voted to study issues that prevent some people from advancing economically in our community. Our next program planning meeting will be as follows:

Saturday, January 24, 2015  
9 am-12 pm  
Trinity United Methodist Church,  
4001 Speedway

All League members are welcome to come. We will be looking at poverty issues again, but, if you have other concerns or ideas for League programming, please come and share those as well. Current League position statements can be found in the 2014 LWVAA Workbook that was prepared for the Annual Meeting in May.

Voters is the first step to improving voter turnout”.

Most recently, Bruce’s office has organized a VDR Recognition and Training Event at the LBJ Library on January 15 in recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the National Voting Rights Act. See separate announcement about this event.

Recognize Voters Guide Committee -  
Frances McIntyre, Jaci Collins, and Donna Pauler worked to produce a 56-page Voters Guide for the November 2014 election that was published in the Austin American-Statesman. Jaci set up the fields in Vote411 and lead the effort contacting and getting information from over 300 candidates, which is no small job. The data collected from the candidates was downloaded from Vote411 and prepared for submission to the Statesman by Donna. Frances coordinated between the Statesman, the League and other entities, as well as overseeing all the proofreading. All three worked together many, many hours to produce the Guide, which is what the League is known for to much of the public. We appreciate the outstanding job you three, Frances, Jaci and Donna, did to produce the Voters Guide.

Cinde Weatherby was the driving force behind the fund raising to produce our first Spanish translation Voters Guide and raised $8,000 to cover the cost of the translation. Frances, Jaci, Donna and Cinde had help from other League members, but these four made it all happen. So we would like to recognize them for their outstanding contribution.
Celebration and Training for Volunteer Deputy Registrars

Citizens may get trained and sworn in as 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.

Monthly Trainings: 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 held at the Travis County Voter Registrar’s office located at 5501 Airport Blvd, Austin, TX 78751. Upcoming dates are Tues., Jan. 6; Tues., Feb. 3; and Tues., Mar. 3.

Bruce Elfant and Cheryl Reese
Office of the Travis County Voter Registrar
Invite Current VDRs to a
Special Recognition, Celebration and Retraining
Thursday, January 15, 2 - 6:00 pm
at the LBJ Library

The celebration will highlight Dr. Martin Luther King’s birthday, the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Voting Rights Act, presentation of outstanding achievement awards by volunteers, and a keynote address on civic participation - as well as retraining. Current VDRs must register to attend. There is still space available. To register for the January 15 event, go to this link. Click "Sign Up" at the bottom of any one group of reservation names. Click "Sign Up/Submit" at the bottom of the page. Enter your name and email address on the next page. Click "Sign Up Now."

~ Judy Clack, Asst. Voter Editor, ibclack@yahoo.com

Pay to Play: Money in Politics

The documentary, Pay 2 Play, investigates the role of money in politics since the recent Supreme Court Citizens United decision. A special showing of the film will be hosted on January 21, the anniversary of the Citizens United decision, by a group of area organizations including the Austin League of Women Voters, Public Citizen Texas, Move To Amend, Texans for Public Justice, Texas Public Research Group, Common Cause Texas, Common Ground for Texans, and Wolf-PAC. Following the showing of the film, a panel of local experts will discuss it: Tom "Smitty" Smith, Public Citizen Texas; Craig McDonald, Texans for Public Justice; Sarah Smith, Texas Public Interest Research Group (TexPIRG); Todd Jagger, Wolf-PAC; and Caroline Homer, Move To Amend.

Pay 2 Play
Wed., Jan. 21, 6:30-9:30 pm
Alamo Drafthouse in the Village Shopping Center
2700 W. Anderson Lane, Austin
$10 donation at the door.
Or, purchase in advance for reserved seating.

~ Mary Cullinane, VP Program, mculli@sbcglobal.net

From the Webmaster

December was a calm month for the Austin LWV web site compared to November. We continued to have some downloads of the Voters Guide leading up to the runoff election, which brings the total downloads of the Voters Guide from our website to over 23,000!

We only posted one news item through December 20th, though others will be posted in January. Facebook has been where much of the activity centered with six posts. We encourage you to "like" or "share" our Facebook posts to help expand the reach of these announcements to reach all of your friends. See procedure below.

~ Hal Jennings, Webmaster, hal@jenningsweb.us

Accolades:
ThinkVoting

Our Voters Guide partners at ThinkVoting updated their Voting App to cover the December Runoff Elections in the Austin area. The Voting App - Austin Edition Version
Panel discussion follows film.

The issue of money in politics has been a growing concern for many years but has taken on new urgency with recent Supreme Court decisions. Has our democracy become a "Pay 2 Play" system? Filmmaker John Ennis, driven by the most basic of human motives - to make the world better for his baby girl - pieces together the cycle of pay-to-play politics that rules America and finds some solutions along his surprising journey.

The "great American" board game "Monopoly" is used as a symbol of our money culture and is a recurrent motif throughout the film. Ennis looks to find a way out from under a system where politicians reward their donors with even larger sums from the public treasury -- through contracts, tax cuts, and deregulation. When insiders control the game, how can an outsider have a voice? Inevitably he must confront the infamous Citizens United decision in which the Supreme Court, determining that money is speech and that corporations are persons, allows unlimited contributions to political ads with very few regulations. Interspersed throughout the film are interviews with ordinary Americans as well as commentary and analysis from a long list of well known luminaries in the social justice field. Ennis' film serves as a layman's guidebook to taking back our democracy.

~ Joanne Richards, phjfr@swbell.net

Honors and Memorials

Liz Shelby made a donation to the League in honor of long-time member Anne Shelby Clark.

To make a donation 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.

"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 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.

Follow Our League on Twitter

1.2 was available for free download for iOS at Apple iTunes. They were working on the Android version. ThinkVoting plans to expand beyond Austin for both Apple and Android smartphone platforms for future elections. Send comments to this email: info@thinkvoting.com

Holiday Brunch and New Member Recognition

The League's New Member Brunch on December 13 was attended by over 40 members and guests. After opening remarks by our President, Carol Olewin, Bruce Elfant, our Travis County Tax Assessor Collector and Voter Registrar was recognized by Judy Parken and Carol Olewin for his public service and his dedication to registering voters and deputizing Volunteer Deputy Registrars (VDR’s). In addition to the normal VDRs trainings that Bruce did in the last two years, he committed every Saturday morning for 18 months to provide weekly VDR trainings to residents of Travis and surrounding counties. The Saturday morning trainings were hosted by Mary Patrick and the First Unitarian Universalist Church. Bruce and Mary are both League members.

Also recognized were Frances McIntyre, Jaci Collins and Donna Pauler for their work on the 56-page Voters Guide published in the Austin American-Statesman. In addition we also recognized Cinde Weatherby for spearheading a project of raising funds for the first-ever Spanish translation of the Voters Guides. Over $8,000 was raised which was slightly less than the cost of translation and printing.

We managed to surprise Judy Clack with a beautiful bouquet to honor her for all the work she does for the League. She will be moving out of state this Spring and it will take four or five of us to carry on with her work.

We will recognize Cinde Weatherby for her fundraising efforts.

All thirteen new members introduced themselves individually and told us a little of their background and motivation to join the League. Some common threads.
were participation in the candidate forums for City Council, moving to Austin from Houston, and working for State government before retirement.

Thanks to Dianne Wheeler, the meeting at the North Hills Clubhouse was free to the League and was a lovely setting for this event.

~ Judy Parken, Membership Chair, japarken@aol.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:** Four more individuals have joined our ranks as new League members: Brenda Koegler, Beth Peck Kathleen Schneeman, and Sara Speights. A warm welcome to each of you. 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  www.lwvtexas.org  www.lwv.org

**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.

**Thank You, Sustaining Members:** Special thanks to this month's sustaining members: Barbara Cambron, Mescal Evler, Larry and Sandra Fox, Brenda Koegler, Kathleen Schneeman, Jan Soifer, and Anne Elizabeth Wynn. 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, Alison Dieter, Chantal Eldridge, Louisa Hoberman, and Joanne Richards. 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 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 amounts:**

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<th>Individual</th>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Student</th>
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<tr>
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<td>$ 150.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Dues</td>
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<td>$ 90.00</td>
<td>$ 20.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact me anytime with your League questions.

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

1. Go to 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.

**Shop at Randalls and Support the League**

Randalls 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 Randalls store to join the Good Neighbor Program and help our League.

**Compass Bank Accounts Support 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, Gwen Santiago, gsantiago@austin.rr.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 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, so we can list you as a member of our League’s Legacy Society.