Calendar

MLK Day March
Monday, January 15th, 9am
Sign-up Here

LWV-AA Board Meeting
Monday, February 5, 7:00 p.m.
League Conference Room #202
Members welcome.

IMPORTANT VOTER DATES
Feb 5th: Primary Voter Registration Deadline
Feb 20th: Early Voting Begins
Mar 6th: Statewide Primary Election

SAVE THE DATE
State of the City Dinner
Wednesday, March 7th, 6:30 p.m.
DoubleTree by Hilton
Click here for more details

Cinde Weatherby, President

Voting begins in 2018 Primary Texas election in 47 days
LWV-AA needs your help: Voter's Guide Funding & Distribution

More Texas incumbents are leaving Congress than ever before. Several State Representatives are retiring or leaving to run for higher office. Congressional District 21 alone has 18 candidates vying to replace retiring Cong. Lamar Smith. There is increased competition for all offices in 2018. A large number of candidates are competing in the primaries to carry each party’s banner. All statewide races are contested by both parties in the
Our 2018 Primary Voters Guide will include almost 200 candidates!

In this important election cycle, with so many choices to make, voters need the best nonpartisan, comprehensive Voters Guide to help them evaluate candidates more than ever.

LWV-AA is rushing to furnish you what you need, when you need it! We have the questions in hand, the contacts for each candidate, and our game plan to produce this important publication. We have a new Voters Guide Co-Editor Gretchen Otto. Gretchen is a pro at publication preparation. She founded and manages a publishing service!

We need your help with our two remaining major challenges!

First, we need more funds than ever before. With more candidates than ever before, and the loss of printing and distribution by the Austin American-Statesman, our production costs are much higher. That is why your inbox is receiving our pleas for financial support. Generous contributions have begun, but we know we need more. Donate now.

Second, we need help to distribute the Voters Guide. We are in serious need of a Voters Guide Distribution Coordinator for Travis, Williamson and Bastrop Counties. We also need a Spanish Version Distribution Coordinator to concentrate on developing a team to disseminate the Spanish Voters Guide.

Consider the impact you can make and call me at 512.560.1334 to get involved.

Yes, our Voters Guide is available on our website. And, it is also available at VOTE411.org by online query. But... phones and tablets aren't allowed in the voting booth.

The printed Voters Guide is the gold standard for informing voters. New and veteran voters alike take a marked-up version into the booth with them. Help us get this valuable tool to as many as possible throughout our community before early voting begins!

LWV-AA believes informed voters are our best hope for democracy. We know the 2018 Primary will be one of the most important in our lifetime, setting the Texas stage for the next four years. We want every eligible voter to get to the polls - and be informed.

WE ASK YOU TO NOT FORGET THESE IMPORTANT VOTER DEADLINES:

- February 5, 2018 -- Voter Registration Deadline for the primary election
- February 20, 2018 -- Early Voting Begins
- March 6, 2018 -- Statewide Primary Election

If you are new to the area or have moved, and don't know what to do - give us a call at (512) 451-6710.

Our Thanks to the Austin American-Statesman
For many years the Statesman formatted the Guide and included it in the Sunday edition the day before start of Early Voting. Our only expense was for additional copies to
distribute the *Guides* elsewhere and beginning in 2014, printing the Spanish version. If you haven’t heard, the newspaper is up for sale and those uncertainties prevent its involvement at this time. LWV-AA greatly appreciates the exposure of the *Guide* in the Sunday newspaper to hundreds of thousands over the years. We hope that the next owners will be open to resuming the tradition.

We will post details for acquiring printed copies of the March 6th *Voters Guide* on our website as soon as they are available.

Cinde Weatherby, President

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

**Google Docs/Drive Trainer:**

Are you an accomplished Google Docs user for creating, editing, and storing documents created within a group? Then we certainly could use your help in two instructional sessions in early January. Many of our ladies (and men) of a certain age aren’t conversant in Google and are having a hard time parting with Word. Sessions can be conducted at times of your choosing in the conference room of the League office at **1609 Shoal Creek Boulevard, Suite 202**.

Contact Debbi Voss, VP Organization, at daracobs@aol.com or 713-826-1580.

**Urgent Need for Two Outstanding Voters Guide Distribution Leaders**

Do you have a passion for getting informed voters to the polls? You may be the key to get the League’s Voters Guide into more hands. We need two outstanding Voters Guide Distribution Coordinators - one for the English version and one for the Spanish Guide. The need is NOW and will extend through mid-February, then be minimal until October. Tasks include:

- Identifying locations (offices, churches, universities, etc.)
- Recruiting and organizing volunteers (we already have a few)
- Identifying organizations that can distribute Guides (civic organizations, nonpartisan neighborhood activists or groups, etc.)
- Online contact with other groups to promote our Guide’s website link

Not up to being the organizer, but want to contribute time and ideas? We want to hear from you too!

**Time is short and this task is VERY important!**

Contact Cinde Weatherby, President, at president@LWVAustin.org or 512.560-1334.

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2018 State of the City Dinner and Auction
Please join us for our 26th annual State of the City dinner on March 7, 2018, at 6:30 p.m. at the DoubleTree by Hilton Austin Hotel. It will be a night for food, fun, and fundraising. Travis County Sheriff Sally Hernandez will be our featured speaker.

**EARLY BIRD** tickets are being sold until January 15 at $75 for each member, $85 for each non-member. The tickets include dinner, cash bar, live auction, silent auction and parking.

This is our biggest fundraiser of the year and we need your help. Please consider donating to the silent and live auctions or asking your contacts for sponsorship.

Silent and Live Auctions ↩️ Click here to help. Here are some ideas for donations.

- Gift certificates from your favorite restaurant or spas
- Premium tickets to UT sporting events
- Weekend getaway at vacation condo
- Lunch with a community leader, local celebrity, or author
- Wine tasting or cooking class package

Sponsorship ↩️ Click here to help.

- Making Democracy Work - $5,000
- Advancing Democracy - $2,500
- Celebrating Democracy - $1,000
- Honoring Democracy - $500
- Friend of Democracy** - $250

**Click here to purchase your tickets now!**

We are going to have a great time! See you there!

Elizabeth Cooper and Angela Koegler, Special Events Co-Chairs

**Sponsor the dinner as a Friend of Democracy and receive two tickets along with special recognition at the event.**

Voters Service

Joyce LeBombard, VP Voters Service

This month we accomplished two major tasks towards our goals. The League recently applied for and received two grant awards:

- 2018 Primaries Get-Out-The-Vote grant from the League of Women Voters of Texas. LWV-AA will use this, along with a prior LWVUS grant to assist voters seeking Voter IDs, to work with Go Austin!/Vamos Austin! (GAVA) in underserved parts of Austin.
- Youth Voter Registration grant from the League of Women Voters US. LWV-AA will use this funding for our First Vote! program.

LWV-AA also formed a new joint initiative with Travis County Voter Registration: **The Civic Engagement Alliance!**

The new initiative is in collaboration with Travis County Voter Registration and the goal is to increase citizen participation in our government. We will do this by making it more convenient for citizens to register to vote, and to provide them with easy access to election information in places of business and leisure. How does it work?
• We ally with public and private nonpartisan organizations to join the alliance as either a Member or Principal.
• They agree to display and distribute voter registration and voter education materials and to hold civic engagement events at their place of business.
• We provide election information and help maintain stocks of "collateral" at these organizations. We provide volunteer deputy registrars (VDR) or train them to be VDRs.

We hope to expand the Alliance to include financial sponsors and in-kind donations. Do you have contact information for someone at an organization? Do you think they may want to participate? Would you like more information? Contact JoAnn McKenzie, Register & Vote Co-chair, at voterregistration@lwvaustin.org or Melissa Crijns, Director of Development at development@lwvaustin.org.

Call for Volunteers!

There are exciting Voters Service volunteer opportunities. I invite you to check them out on the new Membership/Volunteer Bulletin Board on the LWV-AA website. We need your help to make 2018 successful. If you want to know more, please contact me, Joyce LeBombard, at VP-votersService@lwvaustin.org or 512-585-4090 (call/text).

Position Statement Reviews to Gear Up in Coming Months
Lea Masiello, VP Programs and Mary Cullinane, Program Director

Six groups of dedicated members are reviewing LWV-AA position statements related to criminal justice, health care, transportation, environmental quality, education and affordable housing issues. Position statements are the foundation of our advocacy work and need to be updated periodically in order to reflect current circumstances in our community. If you want to contribute to these efforts but find it difficult to attend regular meetings or you don’t like to drive after dark or you are busy with caretaking at home, there are still ways to contribute to this effort. All of the committees are looking for people to do research or to observe meetings in the community that relate to these issues and then briefly report their findings. The vast majority of research can be done online and meetings can be attended in person or they can be viewed via live stream or archived editions.

For example, related to the work on affordable housing and health care...

Austin Public Health is seeking community input about services at the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH). The ARCH has operated as an emergency shelter and resource center, with co-located partner agencies since 2004. Forums will begin with a brief presentation, followed by an interactive format where participants can learn about the history and purpose of the ARCH and offer ideas about services for individuals experiencing homelessness in Austin/Travis County. Join Austin Public Health for one of the forums below:

**Tuesday, January 9, 2018**
5:30 - 7:30pm
Virginia L. Brown Rec Center
7500 Blessing Avenue
Conf Rm B

**Friday, January 19, 2018**
1:30 - 3:30pm
R-Z Neighborhood Ctr Gym
2800 Webberville Road

If you can attend one of these meetings, please let Amanda Boudreault, Chair of Affordable Housing (boudreault.amanda@gmail.com) or Mary Cullinane (mculli@sbcglobal.net) know. Unfortunately, these meetings will not be live streamed.
City Council committees that are holding meetings related to these positions are Health and Human Services, chaired by Councilwoman Ora Houston, Judicial, chaired by Councilman Jimmy Flannigan, and Mobility, chaired by Councilwoman Ann Kitchen. These meetings are live streamed and can be watched on your computer. The meetings are at City Hall if you want to attend in person.

Health and Human Services - February 14 and April 11 at 2pm
Committee Contact - Bob Corona, 512-974-5002
Judicial Committee - January 22, February 5, and February 22 at 2pm
Committee Contact - Monica Miranda, 512-974-4692
Mobility Committee - January 25, Boards and Commissions Rm. at 3pm
Committee Contact - Marisa Monroy, 512-974-6584

Please! It takes a village....Everyone is busy. If you can spare an hour or two to help with committee research, it will be much appreciated.

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**Membership Report and Interest Survey**
Brenda Koegler, Membership Director

**Welcome New Members!** Hope you have had the chance to attend one of our new member monthly coffees. We hold new member coffees to serve as a mini-orientation to help you get involved as soon as possible. If you have not had a chance to attend one or would like another opportunity to learn more about the League, please let me know. And a special thank you to this month’s Renewing and Sustaining members! We are grateful to Sustaining Members for their additional financial support for our local League.

**Welcome, New Members:**
Karen and Gordon Bishop, Karen Carpenter, Chauncy Cay Ford, Susan Greene, Ellen and Chester Martin, Susan Meriwether, Eric Schenk, Benny Souder, Stacy Suits

**Thank You, Sustaining Members:**
Karen and Gordon Bishop, Allison Dieter, Barbara and Chris Frandsen, Lucy and Gary Gibbs, Harriet Harrow, Joyce Jackson, Carol King, Joyce LeBombard and Benny Souder, Jane McFarland, Julie and Jodie Moore, Susan Morrison, Chrsy Nanton, Liz Nielsen, Mary and David Overton, Otis Schmidt, Susan and John Theiss

**Thank You, Renewing Members:**
Davida Bilgrad, Diane Budy, Dixie Davis, Jane German, Elizabeth Heard, Charlotte Herzele, Lea Masiello, Jan Soifer, Janet Whitehead

As a member of the Austin League, each of you is also a member of the national and state leagues. See the links below 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)

**Member Interest Survey:** We very interested in seeing what in particular interests you and why you joined the League. Click on Select Your Action Involvement to complete the survey. Please fill it out and hit submit. We will then connect you to the appropriate League leaders.

**Need more information?** Visit our webpage for more information on new memberships and membership renewals.
In Memory

Patricia "Pat" Partridge Henley passed away peacefully on August 17, 2017, in Asheville, NC, surrounded by her loving family. Her retirement years were lived in Austin, TX, and later, to be closer to family, in Cleveland, TN, Glen Ellyn, IL, and Asheville, NC. Known for her graciousness, integrity, and commitment to service, Pat worked for the American Red Cross and volunteered throughout her life with the League of Women Voters, serving as President and Director of the Austin chapter. She was also a long-time member of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin. A memorial service will be held next spring in the Texas Hill Country when the wildflowers that Pat loved so much are in bloom.

Published in Austin American-Statesman on Dec. 17, 2017

Thank you for supporting the League!

Memorial/Honorary:
In honor of Jaime and Oralia Guerra, from Adriana Guerra
In honor of Beth Schrader, from Rachel Walker

Donations:
Frances McIntyre, Guadalupe Sosa, Barbara Frandsen, Gloria DeVere, Davida Bilgrad, Hal Jennings, Joyce Jackson, Dorothy R. Murray

Voters Guide:
Dimi and Louis Mestier, Jo Reichler, Martha Rogers, Joyce Jackson, Kathi Miller, Angela Philley, Lea Masiello, Mark Sanders, Melissa Crijns, Deborah Voss, Nancy Bessent, Sarah Carriker, Lowell Vaughn, Bishop Family Trust, Carole Buckman, Diane and Charles Radin

YouthCam PSA Program:
One Gas/TX Gas, Mark J and Linda M Williams, Elliott Naishat Campaign, Stacy Suits

Randall's Good Neighbor Program gives the Austin League a percentage of sales from members who link the League to their Remarkable Cards. Complete this document and return to any Randall's store. Our account number is 465.

Making a legacy donation to the League of Women Voters Austin Area in your will is the easiest way to offer support of the League's work for years to come. Learn how to leave your legacy and become a member of our League's Legacy Society.

Common Ground for Texans Meeting Set

Common Ground for Texans asks us to inform you of their first meeting of 2018 Saturday, January 6th at 2 p.m.

They will explore something deeply embedded in American democracy: separation of church and state. In recent months religion has entered the political spotlight in several ways, such as in the consideration given to repealing the 1954 Johnson amendment, which prohibits churches from endorsing or opposing candidates for office.

What is the importance of the Johnson amendment today, and what would be the consequences of its repeal? Should church donations be tax-deductible at all? When religious beliefs clash with partisan loyalties, how do we resolve the conflict?
The panel will consider these and other questions. They include:

- Rev. Brian Ferguson, Wildflower Unitarian Universalist Church
- Rev. Mary Wilson, Church of the Savior
- Rabbi Neil Blumofe, Congregation Agudas Achim
- Sheikh Yassir Fazaga, Islamic Center of Brushy Creek
- Moderator: Mike Ignatowski

**Topic:** Endorsed by God? Blending Religion and Politics  
**When:** Sat, Jan 6, 2018, 2:00pm - 4:30pm  
**Where:** Old Quarry Library, 7051 Village Center Dr, Austin TX 78731  
**PLEASE NOTE the new location!**

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**Board of Directors**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lea Masiello</td>
<td>VP Programs</td>
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<td>Mary Jane Burson</td>
<td>VP Community Relations</td>
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<td>Debbi Voss</td>
<td>VP Organization</td>
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<td>Joyce LeBombard</td>
<td>VP Voters Service</td>
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<td>Gina McCool</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
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<td>Gwen Santiago</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
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<td>Brenda Koegler</td>
<td>Membership</td>
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<td>Frances McIntyre</td>
<td>Advocacy &amp; Voters Guide Editor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cindy Schaufenbuel</td>
<td>Communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Melissa Crijns</td>
<td>Development</td>
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<td>Chrissy Nanton</td>
<td>VOTER Editor</td>
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<td>Mary Cullinane</td>
<td>Program Director</td>
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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._