Calendar

Monday, March 6, 4:00 pm, Board Meeting League Conference Room, 1011 W. 31st Street, Austin [map] Members Welcome.

Tuesday, March 7, 6:00 pm, State of the City Dinner and Silent Auction, DoubleTree by Hilton Austin Hotel 6505 I-35 North, Austin. See article below. Open to the public. [map].

Friday, March 10, 1:00 pm, Meeting with Council Member Jimmy Flannigan District 6, Conference Room 2152, Austin City Hall 301 W 2nd St., Austin. [map] Members limited attendance, requires RSVP. See Programs below.

Monday, March 13, 2:00 pm, Meeting with Council Member Delia Garza, District 2. Room to be announced. Austin City Hall 301 W 2nd St., Austin. [map] Members limited attendance, requires RSVP. See Programs below.

Wednesday, March 22, 2:30 pm, Meeting with Council Member Sabino "Pio" Renteria District 3, Conference Room 2155, Austin City Hall 301 W 2nd St. Austin. [map] Members limited attendance, requires RSVP. See Programs below.

Friday, March 24, 11:30 am to 1:00 pm Unit Meeting with Luke Metzger of Environment Texas, Cafe Express back meeting room, 3418 North Lamar St., Austin [map] Members and guests. Space limited. See Programs below.

Tuesday March 28, 1:00 pm Meeting with Ann Kitchen District 5, Conference Room 2155, Austin City Hall 301 W 2nd St., Austin. [map] Members limited attendance, requires RSVP. See Programs below.

Thursday, March 30, 10:00 am. Meeting with Kathie Tovo Mayor Pro Tem, District 9, Conference Room TBA, Austin City Hall 301 W 2nd St., Austin. [map] Members limited attendance, requires RSVP. See Programs below and further information.

Monday, April 3, 4:00 pm, Board Meeting League Conference Room, 1011 W. 31st Street, Austin. [map] Members Welcome.

It's Time for Action
The Austin League of Women Voters has always encouraged our members to participate in the political process, and most of them do. I dare say they all vote and many have been engaged in voter registration or the many other activities related to getting out the vote. Many are active in their political parties or other good government organizations. We have promoted good government at the local, state and national levels. This speaks well of this organization.

The League has fought for women's rights, civil rights, LGBT rights, separation of church and state, rights for the disabled, freedom of speech and the press, the right of people to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances, to name a few. We have been fighting for voting rights for all eligible citizens since our beginning in 1919.

Today, we sound the alarm because many of our rights are being threatened and our democracy is facing new threats. The current administration, in its first few weeks, has attacked the Affordable Care Act, our immigration status and border security, environmental protection issues, regulation of the financial institutions, and more executive orders are coming every day. Many of the President's cabinet choices may increase the assault on our rights and privileges when they are settled in to their jobs.

LWV-AA is asking, pleading, begging you to help us protect our rights, our planet, and our sanity. We are providing several informational pieces about contacting your elected representatives at the local, state and national level; where you can find information on current issues and events that will benefit from your participation. It is so very important to contact those who make decisions for us and to contact them over and over again. When you receive ACTION ALERTS from LWVUS, LWV-TEXAS or LWV-Austin Area, be sure to respond to these timely actions right away.

If you remember, it took 70 years for women to get the right to vote. Don’t be discouraged if your representative doesn't respond or agree with you. Keep up the correspondence! There will always be someone with the opposite view contacting her/him too.

We need this extra push so that this land of liberty remains for our children and grandchildren. They must not be denied their rights because we failed to act. In Senator Mitch McConnell's words: "Nevertheless, she persisted."

It's Time for Action Now!

How to contact US Senators and Representatives:
Some say that calling is the only thing that works, others believe in writing emails or letters. Others still advise that in-person contact is the only thing that carries weight. Regardless of your choice, here are some suggestions from experienced individuals.

- I am regularly frustrated with busy phone signals and full voicemail boxes. However, I have had success with emails. I write to seven of my elected officials every single morning with a short, one-topic message. Senators Cruz and Cornyn and my US Congressman usually get the same message. Governor Abbott, Lt. Gov. Patrick, my Texas Senator and Representative get another. I use their individual online email forms on their legislative websites. I keep the sites bookmarked, so it doesn’t take too long. I never sign an email petition.
- You should NOT be bothering with online petitions or emailing. The best thing you can do to be heard and get your Congressional member to pay attention is to
have face-to-face time. If they have town hall meetings, go to them. Go to their local offices. When you go, ask questions. A lot of them. And push for answers. Those in-person events don't happen every day. So, the absolute most important thing that people should be doing every day is calling.

- Calls are what all the members of Congress and staff value. Every single day, the senior staff and the member get a report of the three most-called-about topics for that day at each of their offices (in DC and local offices), and exactly how many people said what about each of those topics. They're also sorted by zip code and area code.

**Tips for Phone Calls**
When calling a DC office, ask for the staff member in charge of whatever you're calling about ("Hi, I'd like to speak with the staffer in charge of Healthcare, please") - local offices won't always have specific ones, but they might. Don't leave a message (unless the office doesn't pick up at all - then you can...but it's better to talk to the staffer who first answered than leave a message for the specific staffer in charge of your topic).

- Give them your 9-digit zip code, that's the only way they will be sure you are a constituent. Extra points if you live in a zip code that traditionally votes for them, since they'll want to make sure they get/keep your vote.
- If you can make it personal, make it personal. "I voted for you in the last election and I'm worried/happy/whatever."
- Pick one-two specific things per day to focus on. Don't go down a whole list. They may get to know your voice/get sick of you - it doesn't matter. The people answering the phones generally turn over every 6 weeks anyway, so even if they're really sick of you, they'll be gone in 6 weeks

**Resources**
There are now many resources available to get information on topics or ways to take action at the federal, state or local level. Below are web links to a few of these. If you discover others you want to share, please share them with me.

- **Progress Texas** - Rapid response media and digital strategy promoting progressive ideals in Texas
- **March On Texas** - Next steps after the Women's March on Austin
- **Common Ground for Texans** -- Advocating positive solutions through civil engagement
- **LWV US** - League of Women Voters of the US
- **LWV Texas** - Texas Capitol LWV advocacy
- **LWV Austin Area** - Austin Area advocacy
- **Project Indivisible** -- Former congressional staffers reveal best practices for making Congress listen
- **Left Up To Us** - Calling for progressive political revolution through community engagement; posts weekly calendar of events
- **Pantsuit Austin Facebook** - Closed Facebook account, request participation
- **Activate ATX Facebook** - Aggregator of local Austin area action events
- **LWV Austin Area Facebook** - Watch for action alerts and share success stories
- **LWV-TX Facebook** - Watch for alerts
From the President
Cinde Weatherby, President

A Time to Lead

Leadership is a subject often on my mind of late. Serving as the League’s President, as the leader of our organization’s leaders, is challenging but with wonderful rewards!

Today’s political landscape reminds us what we personally look for in a leader. When we see leaders modeling behavior that is unacceptable, we must be inspired to be better at meeting the mark ourselves. I am comforted knowing that the League of Women Voters is led by women and men who maintain remarkable goals and strive towards them with dignity and respect.

A number of our seasoned Board leaders are rotating off of our Board at the end of May that we will sorely miss. However, it provides an opportunity for others wishing to step up. I feel certain there are League members ready to take the next step and live up to the high bar of service. Are you one of them?

If you have a renewed spirit for Making our Democracy Work better tomorrow than it is today, please run to your computer (or phone) now and contact our Nominating Committee Chair Margit Orange at m.orange@utexas.edu. Submit yourself for consideration to fill one of the following leader positions, (or recommend a friend you believe could be a worthy candidate). Each of these positions lead and further develop a volunteer structure supporting the subject. With a pool of more than 310 members (one-third new in the past year), you have tremendous talent to call upon to further your mission. Contact Margit soon! The Nominating Committee must complete its mission by the end of March. The slate is then presented to the full membership at the May Annual Membership Meeting.

These very important open Board officer and member positions include:

**Vice President of Community Relations** - Oversees the internal and external communications of the organization. Reporting to the VP are the Communications/Publicity Director, Development Director, the VOTER Editor, Development Director, Special Events Chair, Speakers Bureau, and Advocacy Director.

**Vice President of Organization** - Coordinates office operations and day-to-day management. Reporting to the VP are the Membership Chair, Roster Manager, Office Corps Chair, and Annual Workbook Chair.

**Vice President of Voters Service** - Coordinates the outreach programs related to voter education (including school programs, partner development with other organizations, and general voting information) and voter registration efforts. Reporting to the VP are the Voter Registration Director, Candidate Forum Chair, and Voters Guide Editor.

**Voter Registration Director** - Guides our voter registration efforts.

Your League needs you, and I personally need you on my fantastic team!

Funding Leadership
To effectively lead takes vision and planning, but it also requires the funding to implement those worthy plans. The League’s main fundraising activity -- the State of the City Dinner -- is Tuesday, March 7th. The speaker at this year’s enjoyable evening is Ms. Susan Dawson, founder and President of the E3 Alliance. See article below.

We also will honor the Alamo Drafthouse Cinema, ThunderCloud Subs and TechVotes with our Making Democracy Work Award for facilitating voter registration and encouraging civic engagement. Many more details about the event are on the League’s homepage at lwvaustin.org.

It is not too late to reserve your seat, but do it soon! Like many events these days, it is already close to a sell-out. Go to lwvaustin.org and you will immediately see how to purchase your seat. If unable to use the computer, you can call the League office at 512.451.6710. Mailing a reservation at this late date is not recommended, but payment can be taken at the door if you reserve your seat in advance.

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**State of the City**

Elizabeth Cooper, Special Events Chair

**It's not too late!**

**Register now** for the State of the City Dinner

Please join us for our 25th annual State of the City dinner, Tuesday, March 7, at 6:00 p.m. DoubleTree by Hilton Austin Hotel.

Our speaker is Susan Dawson, founder and leader of E3 Alliance (for Education Equals Economics), a regional collaborative to increase economic outcomes by aligning our education systems to fulfill the potential of every student. E3 Alliance has been recognized across the country for its innovative work in systemic change for education.

We will honor Alamo Drafthouse Cinema, TechVotes, and ThunderCloud Subs with our Making Democracy Work award for all their support and efforts to promote voter registration in 2016.

Tickets are $65 for each member, $75 for each non-member. For premium seating, you can reserve your own table of 8 members for $650 or 8 non-members for $800. Sponsor the dinner as a Friend of State of the City for $250 and receive two tickets along with special recognition at the event. The tickets includes dinner, cash bar, live auction, silent auction, and parking. Be sure to purchase tickets today online.

I look forward to seeing you at the dinner!
Upcoming League Programs
Lea Masiello, 1st VP Programs

We had a fantastic meeting with Luke Metzger from Environment Texas February 16th at Judy Parken's house. We learned a great deal from Luke.

Some of the topics Luke discussed included the plight of bees, and how we can help; updates on renewable energy sources (wind and solar, in particular); the future of electric vehicles; testing for lead in AISD schools--and the fact that the City has not released the findings--and how we can help; current bills in the state legislature (more coming on that next month); and their clean air campaign. We also had a lively conversation about our own choices in energy use that affects climate change.

Luke will meet with us again to talk about the work of Environment Texas and current legislative priorities, as well as ways the League can contribute to helping protect our water, earth, and air. He will discuss similar topics at the day time Unit meeting on March 24th. See information below.


Friday, March 24, Cafe Express-smaller back room, 3418 North Lamar St. 11:30-1:00. Please come early so that you can order lunch or a snack. Note: Meeting rooms at Cafe Express are no longer free. They now have a policy of requiring food purchase. As a result, please come with the intention to purchase something. If you are not going to purchase food, there will be an $8.99 charge added to my bill per person (though you do not need to purchase $8.99 worth of food) . Please RSVP to leamasiello@gmail.com. There will be room for about 20 LWV Austin members and their guests.

Meetings with City Council Members. Attendance limited. LWV-AA members only. RSVP to Lea Masiello leamasiello@gmail.com.

Due to the limited amount of space available in City Hall conference rooms, meetings with City Council Members are limited to LWV Austin members only. Please come early to get a seat at the table. Council Members would like us to limit attendance to ten people only. Please let me know your interest in attending at leamasiello@gmail.com. After I have received ten reservations, participation with be closed. It is very important that we follow the requested protocol. If you wish to attend, you must RSVP to Lea Masiello.

Meeting with Council Member Jimmy Flannigan District 6 and Kate Messer communications director 1:00 to 2:00 pm Friday, March 10. Conference room 2152.

Meeting with Council Member Delia Garza District 2, 2:00 to 2:30 March 13. Place to be announced. Look for an e-blast for more details.

Meeting with Council Member Sabino "Pio" Renteria District 3, 2:30 to 3:00 pm, Wednesday, March 22. Conference room 2155.

Meeting with Council Member Ann Kitchen District 5, 1:00 to 1:30 pm, Tuesday, March 28. Conference room 2152.

Meeting with Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo Mayor Pro Tem, District 9, 10:00 to 10:30 am, Thursday March 30. Location to be identified. Ms. Tovo's constituent liaison has requested that we follow this protocol for this meeting:
We will be unable to access the conference room without an escort. Guests will check-in at the 2nd floor lobby. The receptionist will call to let Ms. Huff know that we are here and she will escort us to the conference room. We must email Ms. Huff with the list of attendees prior to the meeting. The conference will hold 8 guests in addition to MPT Tovo and one her policy aides.

There is parking in the City Hall garage in any non-reserved spots. The entrance is located on Guadalupe between 2nd and Cesar Chavez. Take the steps or elevator to the ground floor. Once in City Hall, MPT Tovo’s office is located on the 2nd floor. The receptionist will call and let Ms. Huff know when we are at Ms. Tovo’s office. If the receptionist is not there, use the courtesy phone in the waiting area and dial x82109. Please bring your parking ticket and the receptionist will validate it.

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**Voter Services**

Jacklyn Williams, 4th VP of Voters Service
June Conway, Director Voter Registration

The Voter Train will soon be running at full throttle, thanks to a bumper crop of new members who are on board and ready to roll. At our two February meetings, committees were formed for First Vote (targeting high school seniors), chaired by JoAnn Furner; Education, chaired by Elizabeth Ackley; Voter Registration (chair to be filled) and Get Out The Vote, chaired by Mollie Snow.

Our next meeting will be in the evening for those who are not free on weekdays with individual committee meetings to follow. So pay attention to your Shout Out emails and e-blasts. If your talents include communication, graphic or technical skills we need them as well. We want every phase of our Voters Service campaigns to be up-to-date, accurate and snazzy which will take an ongoing effort.

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**VDR Training**

June Conway, Director Voter Registration

VDR training for everyone occurs on Tuesday, March 7th and every first Tuesday thereafter at 10:30 am, 12:30 pm, and 6:30 pm at the Travis County Tax Office, 5501 Airport Blvd. [map]

**Reminder:** Even if you have been a VDR in 2014-16 you must re-up again to continue as a VDR in the future.

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**A Program of Possible Interest to our Membership**

*Hosted by Common Ground for Texans*

Joanne Richards, Common Ground

Are you having trouble relating to your friends and relatives on "the other side"? Do you wish you could find some way to get through, to convince them to see the way you do?
You're not alone. At our next meeting, Common Ground for Texans will host a conversation on this topic: "The Art of Persuasion in a Partisan Environment" with:

- Anna Graybeal of Citizens' Climate Lobby on her group's success in persuading Republican and Democratic legislators to talk with one another about reducing carbon emissions
- Dr. Art Markman of the UT Austin Department of Psychology (and KUT's Two Guys on Your Head) on the psychology of persuasion
- Mike Ignatowski on his experiences leading the Austin Conversation Cafe

**Topic:** The Art of Persuasion in a Partisan Environment  
**When:** Saturday, March 4, 2:00 to 4:00 pm.  
**Where:** Yarborough Branch Library, 22200 Hancock Drive, Austin, [map]

Hope to see you there!

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**Motherhood and Voting Rights**  
Sara Groff, Director Development

There are many famous mothers of the suffrage movement. We have all heard of and read much about the main mothers, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and the League's founder Carrie Chapman Catt. These women all fought in amazingly powerful ways for many years to bring the right to vote to women. There is only one mother; however, who is credited for saving the suffrage movement. She didn't use the power of protest or organizing to do this. She simply used her power as a mother.

The 19th Amendment was introduced to Congress in 1878 by Sen. Aaron A. Sargent of California, and it took 41 years for the amendment's ratification. On June 4, 1919, the bill was passed by the US Senate and finally sent out for ratification. At this point in our history 36 states needed to ratify the amendment for it to become law. Between June and August of the following year, 35 states ratified the amendment. The states that remained were largely anti-suffrage states. With time running out, the path to suffrage fell squarely on Tennessee's shoulders and the future did not look bright.

On the morning of August 19, 1920 there was a flurry of activity outside of Tennessee's state capitol. Women in large numbers turned out to protest for and against passage of the 19th Amendment. Legislators wore roses in their lapels to show their stance on suffrage; red against and yellow for. It was obvious there were more red roses than yellow. The state legislature had hoped to avoid voting on the amendment by tabling it until their next session, which would have resulted in the amendment dying. The vote for tabling ended in a tie 48-48. A recount was done; another tie. This prevented tabling the amendment and moved it for a vote. This was troubling to Harry T. Burn, the youngest lawmaker in the Tennessee legislature. He wore a red rose in his lapel and voted to table the amendment but was torn on how he would vote. Luckily for all women, in his jacket pocket was a letter...
Phoebe Burn, an educated widow who followed the suffrage movement closely, knew her son's district was strongly anti-suffrage. Dismayed by the anti-suffrage rhetoric coming out the state capitol she knew she had to act. In the seven-page letter she sent her son, she wrote about what was happening in the family, the weather, and how much she missed him. She ended her letter with this, "Dear Son, ... Hurray and vote for Suffrage and don't keep them in doubt. I noticed Chandlers’ speech, it was very bitter. I've been waiting to see how you stood but have not seen anything yet.... Don’t forget to be a good boy and help Mrs. Catt with her "Rats." Is she the one that put rat in ratification, Ha! No more from mama this time. With lots of love, Mama."

When it was Mr. Burn's turn to vote he was torn between the wishes of his anti-suffrage constituents and the wishes of his mother. The clerk called his name and he voted a resounding "Aye". The amendment passed 49-47. Thanks to Mrs. Burn's power of 'momsuasion' her "good boy" cast a vote that forever changed the history of America.

In our April newsletter we honor the mother of the League of Women Voters. Many League moms continue to provide a strong foundation in civic engagement to their offspring. In May, we will offer a way for these sons and daughters to honor their mothers this Mother's Day. For more information or to view my sources please visit http://www.teachtnhistory.org/File/Harry_T._Burn.pdf

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**Giving to the League**

**Honors, Memorials and Donations**

Carol Ahlgren made a donation in memory of Dorothy R. Pershon. Harper Valentine made a donation in honor of Susanne Valentine and all the women of the world.

Gloria DeVere and Jane McFarland made donations to the Education Fund for the Voters Guide. Additional donations were made by Fredrick Pestorius and Rachel Union.

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 Education Fund (LWVAAEF) in your will is the easiest way to offer support of the LWVAAEF's work for years to come. Learn how to leave your legacy and become a member of our League's Legacy Society on our webpage.
"Voting should be the easiest thing you do as a citizen," says Dixie Davis, one of the Austin League of Women Voter's newest members and a key player in our online voter registration efforts. Dixie is helping to boost the issue's presence through website development and by spreading the word on social media.

A native of Corpus Christi, Dixie moved to Austin in 2005 to study radio, TV, and film at the University of Texas. Like many Austinites, she found her way into a tech startup, but soon Dixie moved on to develop a career that reflects her true passion: sewing. As a seamstress, sewing blogger, and pattern designer with customers all over the world, Dixie combines her knowledge of technology with her love of traditional craft. In her free time, she even designs her own historical costumes from the 18th and 19th centuries.

Like many new members, Dixie joined the League after the 2016 presidential election. While she'd worked polls and registered voters in the past, she felt ready to do more. "Many want to be more active in politics and government but don't know how," said Dixie. "With its history, reputation, and experience, the LWV can be a great guide for new activists."

With the League, Dixie hopes to help build upon the momentum of the last legislative session while creating a better online presence to educate the public about online voter registration. She hopes this will be the year that Texas joins 32+ other states in offering online voter registration as a more secure, cost-efficient and convenient way to register to vote.

In addition to working to promote online voter registration, Dixie has joined the Capitol Corps and is looking forward to helping share the League's opinions and concerns with our legislators. She's impressed with the enthusiasm and dedication of the League's leadership, as well as the positive energy of fellow members, new and old alike.

The League is thrilled to have Dixie on board. As Austin LWV President Cinde Weatherby says, "Dixie is a terrific example of how a new member can immediately begin contributing. She is offering her skills and knowledge in electronic media, while learning more about important voting issues. This is what the League is all about - educating ourselves and educating others while striving to make democracy work for us all".

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**Membership Report and Interest Survey**
Welcome New Members! 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:**
Kassie Barroquillo, Sherry Blyth and Mark Craig, Mary Jane Burson, Melissa Crijns, JoAnn Furner, Bonnie Garner, Melanie Guest, Kelly Hochanadel, Nancy Laussade, Joyce LeBombard, Nargis and Omar Kadir, Caroline Knight, JoAnn McKenzie, Amy Miley, Regan Parks, Christopher Paton, Anne Rioux, Janis Snow, Ellen Sullivan and Michele Thompson.

**Thank You, Sustaining Members:**
Sherry Blyth and Mark Craig, Melissa Crijns, Nancy Dittmar and Maxwell Stout, Bonnie Garner, Gary and Lucy Gibbs, Bill Hamilton, Emma Hampton, Gayle and Mike Heath, Nargis and Omar Kadir, Caroline Knight, Joyce LeBombard, Nancy Laussade, JoAnn McKenzie, Donna Pauler, Anita Privett, Kathy Rider, Diane Radin and Jeanie Stanley.

**Thank You, Renewing Members:**
Nancy Bessent, Pamela Bixby, Sheryl Cole, Sonia Colorito, Barbara and Chris Frandsen, Yvonne Khouri, Ethel Kutac, Dawn Lewis, Tim Mahoney and Melanie Walters-Mahoney, Frances McIntyre, Kathleen Miller, Rosemary and Beverly Morris, Kendall Pace and Karen Rankin.

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  
www.lwvtexas.org  
www.lwv.org

**Member Interest Survey:** If you have time to volunteer for the League (either regularly or occasionally), please complete this Member Interest Survey. This information will help us identify your skills and interests, and help us connect you to committee chairs.

**Need more information?** Visit our webpage of more information on new memberships and membership renewals.

Regular and Sustaining Memberships: Of your $60 in regular dues, $54 goes to the LWV-TX 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.

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**Communications**
Charlotte Slack, Director Communications

Welcome to our new format for the VOTER! Thanks to Chrissy Nanton, Donna Pauler and Hal Jennings for making it happen.

About 40% of our members open their VOTER and LWV eblasts
on their phones. This new format should make that experience easier.

We've had 1,403 "likes" on Facebook, up from 800 in late July. Be sure to "like" our page on Facebook.

We're sending about seven eblasts per month. Each one is important in this important legislative session and as we prepare for the State of the City event on March 7.

**Laurie Filipelli** wrote our first member profile of **Dixie Davis** for the launch of our new format. Among other things, she's our new assistant webmaster and has been a key to the League's online voter registration efforts. Watch for profiles of more of our terrific members in future months. If you know someone who might be the subject of a profile article, let me know at communications@LWVaustin.org

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**Board of Directors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lea Masiello</th>
<th>Vacant</th>
<th>Jaci Collins</th>
<th>Jacklyn Williams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st VP Programs</td>
<td>2nd VP Community Relations</td>
<td>3rd VP Organization</td>
<td>4th VP Voters Service</td>
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<td>Debbi Voss</td>
<td>Gwen Santiago</td>
<td>Judy Parken</td>
<td>Francis McIntyre</td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Brenda Koegler</td>
<td>Advocacy and Voters</td>
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<td>Membership Co-Chairs</td>
<td>Guide Editor</td>
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<td>Charlotte Slack</td>
<td>June Conway</td>
<td>Donna Pauler</td>
<td>Sara Groff</td>
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<td>Communications</td>
<td>Voter Registration</td>
<td>Voter Editor</td>
<td>Development</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.*

*The VOTER is partially funded by the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area Education Fund.*

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