October 2014

**Voters Guide** Available in English and Spanish
Sun., Oct. 19 in *Austin American-Statesman* and at [lwvaustin.org](http://lwvaustin.org) and **Ahora si!**

**Table of Contents**

- AISD Board of Trustees Candidate Forums: Oct. 9, 14, 16
- League Calendar
- Notes from the President
- Reflections on the Eleven City Council and Mayoral Candidate Forums
- Voter Engagement: Get Out the Vote (GOTV) Social Media Efforts
- Study of Poverty and Safety Net Services
- Voter Registration Drives
- Voters Guide Fundraising Appeal Overwhelmingly Successful
- League Testimony: Health Department Budget
- Membership Report
- Board Contact List
- Update from the Webmaster
- Honors and Memorials
- Accolades
- Other Comments on the League's City Forums
- "Like" Our League on Facebook
- "Follow" Our League on Twitter
- 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 **Join Our Mailing List!** to get on our list. You do not have to be a member. We will NOT give your email address to anyone else.

**Board Contact List**

- **Carol Olewin**
  President
- **Mary Cullinane**
  1st VP Program
- **Stewart Snider**
  2nd VP Community Relns
- **Judy Clack**
  3rd VP Organization and Voter Editor
- **Stacey Mather**
  4th VP Voters Service
- **Peggy Stewart**
  Secretary
- **Gwen Santiago**

**AISD Board of Trustees Candidate Forums: Oct. 9, 14, 16**

The Austin League of Women Voters is sponsoring and moderating a series of forums for the AISD Board of Trustees to which all candidates have been invited. The Austin Council of Parent Teacher Associations is co-hosting these events. The forums are non-partisan events, free and open to the public.

*League members are needed* to help with set up and to
serve as hosts and monitors at the door. Please arrive by 5:30 pm. Email me at which forum you’ll be assisting.

Districts 1 and 4 (North Austin)
Thursday, October 9; 6:30 - 7:30 pm
McCallum High School - Cafeteria
5600 Sunshine Drive

Districts 6 and 7 (South Austin)
Tuesday, October 14; 6:30 - 7:30 pm
Crockett High School - Performing Arts Center
5601 Manchaca Road

At Large Position 9 (All Austin)
Thursday, October 16; 6:30 - 7:30 pm
Martin Middle School - Cafeteria
1601 Haskell Street

~ Laura Sheridan, AISD Forum Chair and Education Chair, lasheridan@sbcglobal.net

LWVAA Calendar

Mon., Oct. 6, Last Day to Register to Vote for November Election.

Mon., Oct. 6, 10 am - 10 pm, Voter Registration at all area ThunderCloud Subs locations. Open to Volunteer Deputy Registrars. Sign up here.

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

Thurs., Oct. 9, 6:30 pm, AISD Candidate Forum, Districts 1 and 4, McCallum High School Cafeteria, 5600 Sunshine Drive. Public.

Tues., Oct. 14, 6:30 pm, AISD Candidate Forum, Districts 6 and 7, Crockett High School, Performing Arts Center, 5601 Manchaca Road. Public.

Thurs., Oct. 16, 6:30 pm, AISD Candidate Forum, At-Large District 9, Martin Middle School, Cafeteria, 1601 Haskell Street. Public.


Sun., Oct. 19, 2 - 4:00 pm, Education Committee meeting, at the home of Laura Sheridan, 4400 Knob Oak Lane. Members.


Mon., Nov. 3, 6:30 pm, Board Meeting. League Office, 1011 W. 31st. St. Members.

Tues., Nov. 4, 7 am - 7 pm, Election Day. Travis and Williamson County residents can vote at any polling place.

Sun., Nov. 16, League Meeting on Education, Topic, Time, Site TBA. Public.

Treasurer
Judy Parken

Membership
Jaci Collins

Member Records
Frances McIntyre

Advocacy and Voters Guide Editor
Cinde Weatherby

Development
Mescal Evler

Publicity
Eliza May

Special Events
Hal Jennings

Webmaster

Update from the Webmaster

My first month as Webmaster has been an eventful one. Our annual Kickoff event, the Austin City Council candidate forums, and the upcoming elections, in general, created a lot of activity and interest on our website.

We posted eleven news items, updated several web pages, and created one new web page, which supported the Austin City Council candidate forums. This new web page provided the candidate forum schedule and made it easy to access live or recorded video of the forums. Click here to see any of these forums.

Four of the news posts include photos from the Kickoff meeting. If you haven't seen them yet, take a look at these three links, or on our Facebook page. You may see yourself!
Notes from the President

Transportation Bond: LWVAA Board voted to not to take a public position on Proposition 1, the $1 billion Transportation Bond for roads and rail. The Board had a split vote of 3:5:2 on taking a public position on the Transportation Bond. Three supported the bond, five opposed and two abstained.

Although the Austin League has a Transportation Position, the majority of the Board felt our neutrality was in the better interest of the League. As the Austin League is putting out a Voters Guide that lists the Pros and Cons of the Bond Proposition, we would maintain our credibility as a fair and balanced organization dedicated to voter education on the topics on the ballot. Each person is encouraged to research the Pros and Cons and vote according to their beliefs.

LWVUS President in Austin: Elisabeth MacNamara, LWVUS President, will be visiting in Austin on the afternoon of October 14 and the morning of October 15. A longtime Dekalb County, Georgia resident, Ms. MacNamara was reelected as national League president in Washington, DC during the U. S. League's 50th Biennial Convention in Dallas in June. Ms. MacNamara joined the League in 1983 and has assumed many leadership roles at all levels - local, state (Georgia) and national - serving as president at each level. Throughout her time in the League, Ms. MacNamara has focused on her deep interest in juvenile justice. Professionally, Ms. MacNamara is an attorney, recently retired as deputy chief assistant district attorney in charge of the office's juvenile court division in DeKalb County, Georgia. Jacklyn Williams (jacklynwilliams@aol.com) will be coordinating Ms. MacNamara's visit.

Voting Statistics for Austin: Getting Out the Vote (GOTV) has become as important an issue for the League of Women Voters as voter registration. It's important for every eligible citizen to register to vote and it's just as important that every registered voter vote.

What motivates people to vote? The Presidential elections always draw a lot of voters, but local elections don't seem to garner as much attention by the voters. Here are some voter turnout percentages from recent elections:

- November 6, 2012 Presidential, Federal, State, County & City Propositions elections, 62% voted.
- May 11, 2013 Austin ISD Bond elections, 10% voted.
- November 5, 2013 City of Austin bond propositions and Texas Constitution Amendments, 14% voted.
- March 4, 2014 primary election, Democratic 8%; Republican 6% voted.
- May 27, 2014 primary runoff elections, 3% voted.

Politicians look at these numbers to plan their campaign strategies, and so should we. Are you part of the 10% minority that makes the decisions for our community, or are you part of the 90% silent majority that lets the 10% form your community government? This November, with geographic representation for City Council, the League is hopeful that the turnout will be large.

Get active and help your family, friends and neighbors get out to vote. Make a social event and met for coffee and then go vote. Pick someone up, go vote, then

Honors and Memorials

We report with great sadness the death of John "Jay" Elver III, husband of League Board member Mescal Evler.

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.

Accolades

Grace Chimene
In a Letter to the Editor, Grace encouraged everyone to be informed, attend a candidate forum, and read the League's Voters Guide in English or Spanish.

Jaci Collins
Jaci led a League team that succeeded in receiving responses from 84% of the candidates in opposed races for the League's five-county Voters Guide.

Donna Pauler
Donna got 48 pages of text for the
go shopping or out for a meal. Encourage everyone you know to go out and vote.

Also, there is a need for workers at the polls on Election Day. Click on this link to learn about being a Travis County Election worker.

Texas Tribune Festival: Wow, what a weekend for political junkies! Sixteen League of Women Voter members attended the annual Texas Tribune Festival on Sept 19-21 to hear from political leaders and public servants about issues that effect Texans. Keynote interviews were held with Dan Patrick, Leticia Van de Putte, Joe Strauss, John Cornyn, Ted Cruz, and Wendy Davis. Participants could also select from discussion tracks including Immigration, Open Government, Public Education, High Education, Justice, Transportation, Health Care, Environment, and Energy.

My personal favorite discussion track was the Justice track where I met seven of the nine Texas Supreme Court Justices and heard their perspectives of their jobs and role in our political structure. Although the Justices are elected officials, five of the nine are current appointments by the Governor. When asked about the election process, campaigning and fund raising, they agreed it was not perfect, but citizens still wanted the power to elect their Supreme Court Justices over political appointments. The Justices feel it is their responsibility to see that justice is passed out fairly and equally across the state and no one part of the sate has a different ruling from another part of the state.

~ Carol Olewin, President, c.olewin@gmail.com

Reflections on the Eleven City Council and Mayoral Candidate Forums

When the League supported the 10-1 geographic district concept last year and it was approved by the voters, we knew there would take a lot of work to prepare the voters for this change in governance. Our League has been hard at work in many ways to prepare and inform the public. Many volunteers have given a great deal of time and talent to this endeavor.

One of the tasks we took on was to hold forums for the 10 districts and the at-large mayoral election. As usual, we worked with the Austin Ethics Review Commission and during the month of September through October 1, we held forums for each district. The city obtained the venues, set up each place with a stage for the candidates, microphones for everyone, cameras from ATXN (formerly Channel 6), places for us to ask questions and time the candidates. It was impressive how well it all worked. The forums were broadcast live, streamed live and videoed to be seen later at any time. There were Spanish and American Sign Language interpreters at each forum.

The League moderated the forums. League members gave opening remarks, rules of the forum, questions relevant to the districts that were represented, and closing remarks which included pleas to vote and read the Voters Guide in English or Spanish. League volunteers researched all questions we asked, studying each district to find out what their concerns were. In addition to that, we came up with city-wide questions and had input from numerous organizations and individuals to make a total of approximately 175 questions that we could use. The questions were all issue oriented and it is amazing how

Voters Guide ready for publication. This is the largest Guide ever.

Stewart Snider
Stewart kicked off the first statewide Disabilities Forum highlighting the urgency for all attendees to vote and to be politically involved.

Dianne Wheeler
Dianne mentored a Volunteer Deputy Registrar who was organizing a series of high school voter registration drives.

Other Comments on League's City Forums

"All the candidates, again, knew what they were talking about and responded very well to the questions."

"It was very touching to hear about representation at last, especially for District 4. Mary Cullinane said at times their responses brought tears to her eyes since these first-time candidates did so well."

"Professional, firsts class, with questions that were germane to the district and topics that were relevant city wide."

"The League did a great job of filling the room with interested voters and the attendance was the best at a forum so far!"

"It was one of the most well organized forums I have attended."

"It was a joy to see the diversity of candidates running: many women and many minorities. They took this task seriously and were well prepared."

"Like" Our League on Facebook
many candidates were engaged enough to have no trouble addressing them. We have a wealth of people in Austin who are caring, willing to serve the public and are very well informed. The number of candidates in the districts varied from 3 to 12 (most having 6-9 candidates). So, there were 78 candidates vying for 11 places. No one can tell me that Austin is not a participatory city.

The League has been complemented many, many times for the way we run forums. Of course we have been doing this for a very long time, but I think our influence on civic engagement has increased exponentially in Austin. There were many organizations that requested the League’s guidelines for forums and found them very helpful. All this interest is exciting to me, as is the district representation. I have never seen the engagement of citizens at a higher level. At our forums we had great attendance. I don't have the final figures, but it will probably be in neighborhood of 1,500 people who attended a forum. We still have runoffs forums to go in December.

I cannot thank enough the many volunteers who helped with this effort, from forming questions to helping with the 11 forums as questioners, time keepers, moderators and greeters. These folks are the public face of the League and each and everyone of them were impressed themselves with the forums, the candidates and this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Thanks to Jacklyn Williams, Nancy Bene, Carol Eckelkamp, Judy Clack, Cinde Weatherby, Mary Cullinane, Stacey Mather, Anne Clark, Karen Haschke, Maria Johnson, Harriett Harrow, Barbara Werth, Jo Reichler, Judy Parken, June Conway, Lucy Gibbs, Kara Lee Hall, Anne Roussos, Dianne Wheeler, Jeanie Stanley, Nancy Neavel, Tedra Robertson, Joanne Richards, Helen Garman, Betty Williamson, Cindy Hintikka, Maxine Barkan, Sonja Suessenbach, Gwen Santiago, Lisa Harris, and Nan Clayton.

I hope I have not left someone out, but my heart is buoyed by the dedication of League members. Thanks.

~ Frances McIntyre, City Forum Chair, mcintyre.frances@gmail.com

Voter Engagement: Get Out the Vote (GOTV) Social Media Effort

The LWVAA is working on an exciting get-out-the-vote (GOTV) effort that will utilize social media. Members and the public will be asked to take a pledge to vote in the November elections by completing a form on our website. They will then receive a profile picture and text that can be posted to their social media pages. The goal is that those who post this information will then encourage people within their networks to also take the pledge and vote. Anyone completing the pledge will also receive periodic emails from the LWVAA to remind them of important voting deadlines and links to the LWVAA Voters Guide and candidate forum recordings. We hope to partner with other local groups and plan to especially target groups with members under 40. More information will be available soon on this effort. If you have any questions or would like to assist, please contact me.

~ Stacey Mather, VP Voters Service, staceym80@gmail.com

Follow Our League on Twitter

It’s so easy to follow our League on Twitter. Thanks 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
Local Study: Poverty and Safety Net Services

The Poverty and the Safety Net Study Group held their first meeting in September to select the initial topic to be studied by the group. The committee decided to begin by studying housing and transportation accessibility (as it relates to housing affordability). An October General Meeting will provide an overview of the current status of poverty in the Austin area. Speakers are in the process of being confirmed and more information will be broadcast shortly. Monthly committee meetings will delve more deeply into specific topics. If you have any questions or would like to join the committee, please contact me.

~Stacey Mather, Poverty Study Chair, staceym80@gmail.com

Voter Registration Drives

Starting with National Voter Registration Day on September 23, League members registered voters at many locations through October 6: three locations of Foundation Communities, the Travis County Tax Offices, the Coalition of Texas Disabilities Forum, the Austin Public Libraries, Thundercloud Subs, and a UT Coop.

Twenty League members volunteered for these voter registration efforts: Nadine Barth, Delores Block, Judy Clack, June Conway, Mary Cullinane, Diane Davis, Jan DeVault, Helen Garman, Cindy Hintikka, Ruth Koenig, Barbara Myers, Judy Moore, Julie Moore, Judy Parken, Mary Patrick, Karen Rankin, Joanne Richards, Polly Street, Cinde Weatherby, and Dianne Wheeler.

Please let us know if we left off anyone's name.

~June Conway, june_cnwy@yahoo.com and Judy Parken, japarken@aol.com

Voters Guide Fundraising Appeal Overwhelmingly Successful

League members and friends generously responded to the call for underwriting the Spanish translation of the entire Voters Guide, the print publication of this Spanish Voters Guide, and the increased distribution of the English Voters Guide. Development team members are overwhelmed by the response and support. As of September 29, $8,100 has been received.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Texas made a $2,500 donation to this Voters Guide endeavor. Charles Stuart, BC/BS Vice President of Government Relations, presented the check to the LWVAA at our Kickoff meeting on September 7.

Special thanks go to the following individual and organizational contributors: Austin Monitor, Maxine Barkan, Nancy Bene, Steven and Vicki Blachman, Mary Blackstock, Terrell Blodgett, Pamela and Jeffrey Brown, Central Texas OB/GYN Association, Judy Clack, June Conway, Mary Cullinane, Amber Elenz, Kristin Fine, Barbara Frandsen, Leif Fredin, Heidi Gibbons, Vikki Goodwin, Kara Hall, 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
Patty Jantho, Maria Johnson, Melissa Jones, Julia Kirby, Susan Kleinman, Regina Lawrence, Ellen Loeb, Rosemary Morris, Catherine Nall, Carol Olewin, Arnold and Margit Orange, Ham and Joanne Richards, Lynda Rife, Sara Robertson, Mary Sue Rose, Anne Roussos, Gwendolyn Santiago, Kay Taebel, Carrie Tilton-Jones, UT Votes, Cinde Weatherby, Dianne Wheeler, and Carol Wood.

Contributions of $200 or more will also be recognized in the Voters Guide, to be inserted in the Sunday, October 19, edition of the Austin American-Statesman and online at the Statesman, Ahora Si!, and www.lwva.org websites.

LWVAA wishes to distribute the Voters Guide as broadly as possible for this historic November 4 election. More than the normal number of copies will be available, with copies in Spanish for the first time as well. Anyone wishing to receive bulk copies of the Voters Guide, should contact Frances McIntyre at mcintyre.frances@gmail.com for details. Volunteers are needed to assist with distribution to the typical locations as well as broadening distribution locations. Please email Frances that you can help.

League members and the public are encouraged to share information about the Voters Guide availability through their own social media accounts and circle of business and personal contacts.

~ Cinde Weatherby, Development Director, cindeweatherby@gmail.com

League Testimony at Austin City Council Budget Hearing for the Austin-Travis Health Department

"The LWV supports...public health and strong public health policy as sound strategies for preventing disease, promoting health, and driving down health care costs. We support all of the budget requests of the Health and Human Services Department because they address these overall goals. These requests include:
1. An increase in the number of sanitarians who conduct restaurant inspections. The number of sanitarians has not kept pace with the explosive growth of restaurants and trailers we have witnessed in the last few years. Preventing food-borne illness is a cornerstone of public health and our local food industry would not be as vibrant without it.

2. Partnering with the county's Parents in Recovery Program, a comprehensive residential substance abuse treatment program for women, the goal of which is to enable them to keep their children and obtain stable housing.

3. Expanding social worker support to homeless persons or those displaced due to the Halloween flood or unsafe housing. Lack of safe and stable housing makes accessing medical care and following treatment plans difficult if not impossible for people with chronic disease.

4. Neighborhood-based assistance for eligible persons to take advantage of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and policies 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.
and to incentivize local farmers to sell their produce to SNAP program participants. Unprocessed, fresh food is a critical component of a healthy diet and may be out of reach for many people because of cost or because no one sells it in their neighborhood.

5. And replace the federal funding for the Chronic Disease Program.

The leading causes of death in Travis County - lung cancer, heart disease, diabetes and stroke are largely preventable.

The Community Transformation Grants (CTG) awarded to Austin from the CDC ended August 31. These grants enabled our community to design and implement programs that make healthy living easier and more affordable wherever people work and live.

Austin was supposed to receive $1.1M a year for five years but Congress cut the CTG and, after only three years of funding, the money dried up last week.

Cuts like these undermine the progress we could make to address the significant health disparities seen among minority populations - many of whom are uninsured and disproportionately affected by chronic disease.

Uncompensated care costs exceeded a staggering $1B in 2012 in Travis County acute care hospitals.

Without community investment in prevention and public health programs, we will never be able to contain the rate of growth in private and public health care costs.

Austin's sustained and adequate support of the health department is needed now more than ever.

~ Frances McIntyre, Advocacy, mcintyre.frances@gmail.com

With thanks to Mary Cullinane, Health Chair, for the text, and Carol Olewin for editorial help.

**Membership Report**

September was the **best-ever month for membership** with a record number of new members joining our League as well as current members renewing - **a total of 43 individuals**! We are thrilled with all our newcomers as well as with the recommitment of continuing members. Please check the expiration date of your membership in the top section of your Voter. Send in your dues if your date is past or approaching. Thank you.

**New Members:** Fourteen have joined our ranks as new League members: Nadine Barth, M. Dorsey Cartwright, Leslie Castelan, Catie Cryar, Jan deVault, Mary Hannah Duhon, Jane German, Brenda Hanson, Rachell Jackson, Dawn Lewis, Aileen McMurrer, Leslie Pool, Brigid Shea and Jane Von Alexander. 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.
Regular and Sustaining Memberships: Of your $60 in regular dues, $53 goes to the LWVTX and the LWVUS, and only $7 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 19 sustaining members: Barbara Andre, Helen Carvell, Sarah Eckhardt, Karen Haschke, Martha Hudson, Maria Johnson, Ellen Loeb, Sheila Milner, Judy Moore, Pat Oakes, Barbara Myers, Nancy Neavel, Belia Nichols, Bill and Suzy Reid, Dorothy Richter, Barbara Ruud, Sonja Suessenbach, and Kay Taebel. We are grateful for your additional financial support for our local League.

Thank You, Renewing Members: Many thanks to the following 11 members who also renewed this month: Carole Buckman, Tom Coopwood, Joan Edmonds, Donna Howard, Barbara Kimbrough, Vicki Kullberg, Patricia LaCombe, Margit and Arnold Orange, Roye Reeves, and Anne Roussos. 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 renewals (or 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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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Sustaining Dues</td>
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<td>$150.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Dues</td>
<td>$60.00</td>
<td>$90.00</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact me anytime with your League questions.
~Judy Parken, Membership Chair, japarken@aol.com, 512-502-0278.