

Voter

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE SAN ANTONIO AREA

Member Spotlight

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



Rita Freitag Burnside. Just mention recycling and Rita Freitag Burnside's eyes sparkle and she becomes even more vivacious. Her pretty earrings, made from recycled soda pop cans, bob as she passionately tells about her many recycling projects. Rita, a 10-year member of the League of Women Voters of the San Antonio Area, became involved in the League when local elections were close and she wondered, how do we know who to vote for? And so Rita and Chris Riley, now Mayor of Leon Valley, organized the first Leon Valley candidate forums. She was attracted to LWV by the idea of women organizing to give back and to champion fair and just elections.

Rita is one of the founders and Co-Chair of the annual Leon Valley Earthwise Living Day event that features environmental experts discussing earth-friendly ways to live. Passion for environmental responsibility has led her to conduct frequent presentations on the benefits of recycling at area schools, businesses, and other organizations. She practices conservation and recycling in her daily life. For example, Rita line-dries her laundry, creatively finds multiple uses for products, and uses consumer products made from recycled goods.

Rita headed the petition for an award-winning curbside collection service and chaired the Recycling Committee. She organized the first Leon Valley Be Kind to Animals Children's

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November League Meeting

The November Meeting of the San Antonio League of Women Voters will be held at the First Unitarian Universalist Church, 7150 IH-10 West, from 2-4 p.m on Wednesday, November 11.

This is a concensus meeting on voting rights and procedures. Items for discussion are: internet voting; instant runoff voting; election day centralized voting; voting by mail; and election day registration. These are critical voting rights issues. Arlis Olson and Rowena Rodgers will facilitate. This meeting is open to the public but only members may vote. We will have a copy of all published material but it would be helpful if you reviewed the information prior to the meeting. Go to www.lwvtexas.org, and click on issue studies.

For directions to the church, go to www.firstuusanantonio.org or call Arlis Olson, 661-0841 prior to the meeting. If you need directions on the meeting day, call Arlis on her cell: 535-7819 or the church office at: 344-4695.

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League of Women Voters Texas Education Fund

What is LWV-TEF?

The League of Women Voters of Texas Education Fund (LWV-TEF) was established in 1966 as a publicly supported trust under Texas law. Contributions and bequests to the Education Fund may be deducted for income tax purposes. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) classifies the Education Fund as a 501(c) (3) organization. The Education Fund operates exclusively **for educational purposes in the general area of government and public policy** in Texas. It must carry out its purposes through research, publication of educational materials, and other appropriate nonpartisan informational projects.

Relationship of LWV-TEF to LWV-TX

The League's Education Fund is governed by a board of trustees whose members serve concurrently as the board of directors of the League of Women Voters of Texas. The trustees have an obligation to ensure that contributions to LWV-TEF are managed according to IRS requirements and LWV-TEF policies. Failure to comply could jeopardize LWV-TEF's 501(c)(3) status and the ability of local Leagues to accept tax-deductible donations.

The **League of Women Voters Education Fund** is a non-partisan public policy educational organization which builds citizen participation in the democratic process, studies key community issues at all government levels in an unbiased manner, and enables people to seek positive solutions to public policy issues through education and conflict management.

Criteria for Education Fund Projects

- *The project must be in a government or public policy area of concern.*
- *The project must be purely educational in nature. If it focuses on an issue, e.g. Health Care, Juvenile Justice, etc., all major sides of the issue(s) must be presented fairly.*
- *The project must be factual, with no conclusions drawn from the facts.*
- *The project must not duplicate the efforts of another organization.*
- *The project must be of value to others besides League members.*

Texas Education Funds are in short supply. We would be most grateful for any contribution. Make checks payable to the LWV of Texas Education Fund. Send the check to: LWV, 1809 Blanco, San Antonio, TX 78212.

Concurrence Form

For those of you who may not be able to attend the November 11th concurrence meeting (See announcement on page one), Go to www.lwvtexas.org, and click on Issue Studies. **Voting Procedures to Increase Voting Participation:** *Vote by Mail, Election Day Registration, Election Day Centralized Voting, Instant Runoff Voting, Internet Voting.*

Instructions for Completing Form

The concurrence statement has been broken into sections to allow more choices than a simple up or down vote. (See intact statement in Leaders Guide, pages 3-4.) After the introductory statement are nine voting procedures to discuss. Though the study covered five main topics, some topics include more than one option. Questions 2-5 describe four vote-by-mail options. Questions 9-10 describe two Internet voting options. Your League may support any, all, or none of the options.

For each of the ten sections of the concurrence statement, mark one of the three options: **Concur**—our League supports the voting procedure, worded as is, **Do not concur**—our League does not support this proposed voting procedure, or we could not reach agreement, **Could concur only if**—cannot support the procedure as is, but would if certain conditions were met or under certain circumstances.

Email your response to arlisolson@att.net. Also available for questions. Mail to LWV, 1809 Blanco, San Antonio, 78212

Introductory statement: The League of Women Voters of Texas supports election laws that facilitate citizen participation and voter convenience, as well as voting procedures that may increase voter participation. *Our support includes, but is not limited to, the following:* (Italics to be added to our current Election Laws and Voting Rights position)

_____ Concur _____ Do not concur _____ Could concur only if the statement were changed as follows:

Voting by mail statewide (mandatory in all elections)

_____ Concur _____ Do not concur _____ Could concur only if (explain):

Unlimited access to vote-by-mail with no restrictions _____ Concur _____ Do not concur

_____ Could concur only if (explain):

A permanent vote-by-mail list on which any voter may request to be placed

_____ Concur _____ Do not concur _____ Could concur only if (explain):

The establishment of guidelines which would allow jurisdictions to conduct all vote-by-mail elections

_____ Concur _____ Do not concur _____ Could concur only if (explain):

Election day registration _____ Concur _____ Do not concur _____ Could concur only if (explain):

Election Day centralized voting _____ Concur _____ Do not concur _____ Could concur if (explain):

Instant runoff voting _____ Concur _____ Do not concur _____ Could concur only if (explain):

Poll-site Internet voting _____ Concur _____ Do not concur _____ Could concur if (explain):

Remote Internet voting _____ Concur _____ Do not concur _____ Could concur only if(explain):

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Member Spotlight - Continued

Pet Parade and the first free Concert in the Center. These efforts resulted in Rita winning the 1995 Women in Communication Headliner Award for Volunteer Service. In 2004, she was awarded The Time Warner Cable Hometown Hero Award for Leon Valley in recognition of her volunteer work.

What's ahead? In order to increase the scope and quantity of affordable recycled consumer products, including clothing, Rita, on behalf of the *Leon Valley Earthwise Living Committee*,

is teaming up with San Antonio Environmental Services representatives to spread the **RECYCLED/BUY RECYCLED** message.



Membership Updates

Expect a Phone Call

The LWV San Antonio Board of Directors will be calling the entire membership in the next few weeks. We want to find out if you are interested in becoming more involved with the League, and in what areas you might like to assist us. For instance, we need help finding monthly meeting places. We appreciate any suggestions you have. ~Jean Aratingi, Director

UPCOMING MEETINGS (More info to follow)

December meeting: Our Annual Planning meeting

January meeting: Undecided

February meeting: The LWV will participate in the **Water Symposium** at Trinity University. We will sponsor a panel on "Who Controls Your Water" made up of representatives from elected boards, San Antonio River Authority, Edwards Aquifer Authority, Bexar Met Water District, Trinity Glenrose Ground Water District, and any others that are pertinent. 