



West Harris County Branch

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

VOLUME XXXII | NUMBER 5

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2018

West Harris County Board of Directors

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mkar@consolidated.net

February Newsletter Deadline:

January 15, 2018

Stay Informed

Branch website:

www.aauw-whc.org

National website:

www.aauw.org

JANUARY BRANCH MEETING

Saturday, January 27, 2018 at 10:00 A.M.

Tracy Gee Community Center – 3599 Westcenter Drive

We will hear from Michelle Searles, spokesperson for B.E.A.R. (BE A RESOURCE), a fundamental program located in eight of twelve CPS offices in Harris County.

The organization stocks "Necessities Rooms" with new emergency items for children under the care of CPS. Back-to-school and graduation celebrations are part of the services provided by BEAR, as well as seeing to the children having Christmas surprises at the holiday time.

This past December, Michelle was kept very busy looking for 4800 gifts for foster children.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year to you all! After our lovely Holiday Party at Yao's Restaurant, I'm looking forward to getting back to our regular branch meetings! I hope to see many of you at our next branch meeting on January 27th at the Tracy Gee Community Center.

If you're interested in keeping up with the latest politics concerning issues that affect women, I encourage you to sign up for AAUW's free e-bulletin, "Washington Update," which comes out every Friday. You'll find the link to sign up at www.AAUW.org, under the 'Public Policy' tab.

Make sure you have April 20-22 blocked out on your new 2018 calendars, so that you've saved the dates for the AAUW Texas State Convention. Since the convention will be held in our own backyard this year – the Embassy Suites Hotel in the Energy Corridor – I hope many of you will make a point to attend. Several of our own branch members are working hard to make the State Convention a great success, so plan to go and be inspired!

And if you are looking to be inspired even sooner than April, volunteer to be a facilitator at the Expanding Your Horizons Conference on February 24th! Check out the specifics elsewhere in this newsletter. See you there!

Anne Amador, WHC Branch President

PUBLIC POLICY

AAUW Public Policy News—Voter Suppression

“Voter suppression, not fraud, looms large in U. S. elections.” Thus reads the alarming headline from a Brookings Institute website article. Voter suppression rears its head in any number of practices designed to discriminate against certain groups of voters and can range from new restrictive voting laws to reductions in early voting opportunities and the closing of polling stations, just to name a few. These restrictive measures impact African Americans, Hispanics, and women more than any other group. Since 2010 twenty states have passed restrictive Voter ID laws, Texas among them. The Texas Voter ID law of 2011 requires a government-issued photo ID, such as a driver’s license, an election ID certificate or personal ID card issued to the person by the Dept. of Public Safety, a U.S. military ID card, a U.S. citizenship certificate with a photo on it, a U.S. passport, or a license to carry a concealed handgun issued by the Dept. of Public Safety. Oddly, the law accepts handgun licenses but not student IDs or federal or state IDs. Voting rights proponents filed suit against this law, and in 2014 the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the part of the lower district court’s decision that the 2011 Texas Voter ID law discriminated against the rights of African Americans and Hispanics to vote. For many, an acceptable photo ID is too inconvenient to obtain or too expensive. The fees to purchase an official ID are reminiscent of the old “poll tax” which was declared unconstitutional in 1966. The most recent decision only softens but does not strike down the entire law. A modification allows voters to sign an affidavit at the polling station if accompanied by supporting documentation, like a birth certificate, bank statement, paycheck, or utility bill. The affidavit signee faces the possibility of “state jail felony” charges if any false information is provided on the document, even if given inadvertently. This is extremely intimidating for minority groups. The Texas Voter ID law is still winding its way through the court system and faces another ruling by the 5th Circuit Court and possibly an appeal to the Supreme Court. The possible felony charge related to the affidavit has been challenged in the courts, as well, for being prejudicial to minority voters.

In addition to African Americans and Hispanics, women are also adversely affected by voter ID requirements. According to an article on the AAUW public policy website, only 66% of women voters have proof of citizenship that reflects their current name. An exact match is required to be able to vote.

“Voter fraud” is the most common justification used by politicians to gain public support for more restrictive voter ID laws. Although this fear-based argument is completely unsubstantiated, it has been used very successfully in recent years. As AAUW members, we believe in universal suffrage for all eligible voters, and we can support this goal by staying informed about restrictive voting trends in state legislatures, by debunking the myths of “voter fraud” and “rigged elections,” and by supporting voter registration drives for all eligible voters. Many members of our branch have already taken training to qualify as Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrars. Any members interested in becoming a Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar can find the requirements and schedule of training sessions on the [Harris County Tax Office website](http://www.harriscountytx.org/registra). Few things are more important in a democracy than being an informed citizen, exercising one’s right to vote, and supporting the rights of others to vote.

Please send any comments or suggestions to Martha Ewell, at m.ewell@sbcglobal.net.

Martha Ewell, Public Policy Chair

MAKE A NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTION TO BECOME A PART OF WHC BRANCH DECISION MAKING

The Nominations Committee for AAUW-WHC Branch positions to be elected at our March 2018 meeting is currently being formed. Melba Armstrong will chair the committee. The positions being filled are:

- **President-elect:** a one year term followed by a one year term as Branch President
- **Membership VP:** a two year term
- **AAUW Funds VP:** a two year term
- **Recording Secretary:** a two year term

The Nominations Committee will meet in early January. If you are interested in an office, know someone you think would be a good member of our leadership team, or just want more information about the available positions, contact Melba Armstrong at mkar@consolidated.net.

Don’t miss this opportunity to “shine your light” and become a part of the future of the branch.

Melba Armstrong, Nominating Committee Chair

EXPANDING YOUR HORIZONS 2017-2018



The mission of AAUW is:

"Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research."

The West Harris County Branch has for the last 25 years organized and presented Expanding Your Horizons, a one-day conference for middle school girls to inspire them in the pursuit of a career in the Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) fields. EYH has been this branch's primary project in advancing the mission of AAUW.

We are still looking for volunteers for EYH 2018 which will take place on **February 24, 2018**.

Open positions on the Steering Committee are: Assistant Chair and Presenter Training Dinner Coordinator.

We also need to train the next Registrar, currently being coordinated by Hazel Chahar. This is the job description for the registrar:

Expanding Your Horizons Registrar:

The Registrar works in conjunction with the Treasurer to take the submitted registration forms and enter them into a database where assignments are made for the conference sessions. You will work with both Microsoft Excel and Access to complete the process. Data entry assistance is possible at the front end, with helpers working from their homes on their own computers via the internet. Files are exported to Excel, cleaned and checked and then imported into an Access database, which has been loaded with Speaker names, room assignments and session numbers. Once all registrants are loaded into Access, a program will assign sessions to each adult or student based on their desired sessions – if possible. Some manual review and changes are needed. Once the data appears complete, badges are printed and school packets are compiled, to be distributed at the conference.

Lilian Care, 2018 EYH Chair

EYH NEEDS YOU....

Please consider helping with our branch's annual **Expanding Your Horizon** event as a **FACILITATOR**. It is easy and fun. We need you on **Saturday, February 24**, to assist our presenters in the classrooms. Duties include student and presenter evaluation forms, room arrangements, and keeping to our schedule. To sign up, please contact Jane Wood at jane.wood9@icloud.com or call 832.767.4146. Indicate your interest in working AM, PM, or both. For those new to this role, a training will be held at Spring Forest Middle School on **Friday, January 26** at 4pm. Details will be sent to you in a confirmation package. Thank you in advance for your support of our branch's signature event.

Jane Lehman Wood, EYH Facilitators Chair



Jane Wood and Pat Thomsen join 3 TX Master Naturalists and others on a Buffalo Bayou hike Saturday Dec 16 a.m. near downtown Houston.

January 2018 Activities and Interest Group News

BOOK GROUPS



Afternoon Contemporary Literature

Wednesday, January 3, 1:30 p.m.

Hillbilly Elegy by J.D. Vance

Hostess: Margaret Wittenmyer, 12507 Queensbury Lane
713.468.4970

Contemporary Readers

Wednesday, January 3, 1:00 p.m.

Commonwealth by Anne Patchett

Hostess: Beth Leachman, 2855 Westminster Plaza Dr., #2239
281.679.1028

Enjoying History

Monday, January 8, 1:30 p.m.

Jewels, A Secret History by Victoria Finlay

Hostess: Melba Armstrong, 22423 Tullis Trail Court
281.392.3190

Monday Evening Contemporary Literature

Monday, January 8, 5:00 p.m.

The Wright Brothers by David McCullough

Meeting Place: Los Tios – Kirkwood & Memorial

Mystery

Tuesday, January 16, 1:30 p.m.

The Daughter of Time by Josephine Tey

Hostess: Pat Dach, 6014 Ballina Canyon Lane
713.849.2679

Outstanding Literature Group

Tuesday, January 9, 9:30 a.m.

Hiroshima by John Hersey

Meeting Place: The Egg and I, Bunker Hill location.

BRIDGE GROUPS – Various



Current Bridge Groups:

1st Thursday (7:00 p.m.), Marcia Lindsey, 713-828-8267

3rd Thursday (10:30 a.m.), Peg McNealy, 281-679-7299

3rd Monday (10:00 a.m.), Melba Armstrong, 281-392-3190

2nd & 4th Thursdays (10:00 a.m.), Betty Shropshire, 281-496-6457

If you are interested in subbing for a particular group, please contact the group coordinator listed above.

January Bridge Workshops at St. Martin's January 2, 9, 16, 23

Tuesdays from 10-12

Improving Your Judgment: Opening the Bidding

Tuesdays from 1-3

Play of the Hand

To enroll go to stmartinsepiscopal.org and click on the magnifying glass upper right. Follow prompts. Questions: jryan9620@sbcglobal.net, 713.301.0624.



BYWAY BIRDERS

On **January 13, 2018**, the Byway Birders will go to Brazoria and San Bernard National Wildlife Refuges to see ducks and other birds. We will leave the parking lot on Barryknoll across from Memorial City mall at 8:00 am. Please bring money for lunch as we plan to eat lunch in a restaurant. Please bring sunscreen, bug repellent, binoculars, hat and anything else you need. New birders are welcome. Please let Miriam Vyles know if you plan to go on this trip and if you are meeting her (Mvyles@att.net or 713.461.2108).

GARDEN DIVAS



The Divas have a great opportunity to learn more about bonsai. Hurley Johnson, ex-president of the Bonsai Society of Houston, will give us a tour of **Timeless Trees** in Rosenberg. After the tour, you will have an opportunity to purchase bonsai supplies. Classes are offered on Saturdays throughout the year. Timeless Trees offers one-on-one training through intensive bonsai classes and workshops. Classes teach you how to care for your bonsai and keep them healthy and looking beautiful. Their instructors are some of the best and most knowledgeable in the country. Timeless Trees is located in Rosenberg, Texas, just 30 miles southwest of downtown Houston, just a short drive down HWY 59 South. The retail and training facilities are located less than two miles off 59 (the Southwest Freeway). Take Exit 36 off Hwy 59 in Rosenberg.

We will visit Timeless Trees on **Friday, January 5**. We will meet at the Memorial City satellite parking on the South side of the mall at 9:00 to carpool. Please let me know if you prefer to meet us in Rosenberg. After our tour, we will have lunch at Another Time Soda Fountain and Café, 800 3rd Street, Rosenberg, TX 77471.

Please note that we WILL NOT be able to plant our own bonsai this outing. Also please note that the date has been moved to **Friday, January 5** due to Timeless Trees' schedule.

Please contact samboone@gmail.com if you are interested in going on our January outing. **I will need your RSVP by January 3 to make reservations for lunch.**

GIRLS' NIGHT OUT...



The Girls' Night Out group will gather for its first dining experience of 2018 on **Wednesday, January 17** at Rattan Pan-Asian Bistro located at 1396 Eldridge Parkway. Our hostess for the evening will be Diane Statham. Please contact her at 281.497.6259 or Distatham@msn.com by Saturday, January 13, to reserve your place at the table.

All members are invited to attend GNO dinners which are scheduled for every other month on the second Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. If you would like to add your name to our GNO mailing list, please contact Janis Groves, coordinator of the Girls' Night Out Group.

Note: We still need a hostess for March 14 and May 9. If you will volunteer for either of these dates, please contact Janis Groves at 281.497.2295 or jamgroves@aol.com.

GOURMET DINING



Classic Gourmet

Please join us **Saturday, January 13, 2018**, at 7:00 p.m. for our third dinner in this year's series – A trip through Italy by region. Our third stop will be Campania. Contact the coordinators: Barbara Cook 713.705.7832 or Tina Simpson 281.558.1031 to be included

Nouveau Gourmet

The Nouveau group's first dinner of the new year will be on **Saturday, January 20**, hosted by Laura Cahill. Please contact her (832.755.3753 or Laura.Cahill@hctra.org) to indicate that you will attend the dinner and to get additional details about the menu.

Please note the change of date for dinner.

GREAT DECISIONS



Great Decisions is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. The program model involves reading the Great Decisions Briefing Book, watching the DVD, and meeting in a Discussion Group to discuss the most critical global issues facing America today. **The groups meet twice a month from February to May.**

The 1st and 3rd Thursday afternoon group, chaired by Martha Ewell, meets from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The two discussion topics for February are "The Waning of Pax Americana?" and "Russia's Foreign Policy." The first meeting will be **February 1, 2018** at the home of Martha Ewell. For further information, please contact Martha at 713.782.2084.

The 1st and 3rd Thursday evening group has been discontinued.

The 2nd and 4th Wednesday evening group, chaired by Willette Norman, meets from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM beginning February 14, 2018. The first meeting will be at the home of Willette Norman. The discussion topic will be "The Waning of Pax Americana." "Russia's Foreign Policy", the second discussion topic will be on **February 28, 2018**. At this point, this Great Decisions group is closed for new members. For further information call Willette at 281.497.3626.

HIKING HONEYS



Come join the Hiking Honeys on **Thursday, January 18** at 9 a.m. near Memorial City in the bus pickup parking lot off Barryknoll to carpool to **Arthur Storey Park**, west of Beltway 8 between Bellaire and Beechnut, 7400 W. Sam Houston Pkwy. South. If you live close to the park, you might want to join us at the park entrance at 9:30 a.m. We will hike a trail that circles a pond and is 1.77 miles in length, mostly flat.

Lunch will follow afterward at The Golden Dumpling at 9896 Bellaire Blvd. Ste. C-1 in Sterling Plaza.

LET'S GO TO THE MOVIES



Again this year, Barb and John Hopkins are coordinating a group of members who enjoy seeing a good movie with friends.

The schedule of movie events will be dictated by the release of "good" movies that will be shown at the Memorial City Cinema. If you are interested, contact Barb and John at BJHopkins238@gmail.com to add your name to the list to be contacted about the date and time of each movie experience on either a Monday or a Tuesday afternoon.

MAH JONGG MAVENS



The Mah Jongg Mavens meet every first and third Fridays from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Road. The group is informal and verifies who will attend the day of play via email. We play with one or multiple tables of 3 or 4 players as dictated by attendance. If you would like to spend a pleasant 3 hours with congenial "clickers," please join us. To get on the mailing list, contact Mary Kain at mlkain@hal-pc.org.

VICARIOUS VOYAGERS



An interest group for travelers

Coordinator: Diana Guarniere, guarniered@gmail.com

Thursday Morning, January 25, 2018 – 10 AM

Let's escape with our virtual host, Rick Steves, to Italy's Riviera and Veneto.

Bring something to share for a potluck brunch.

Please RSVP our hostess for the day which has been changed to:

Diana Guarniere
13814 Kimberley Lane
Houston 77079
281.493.-2997
guarniered@gmail.com

WINE, WOMEN & WISDOM



The Wine, Women, & Wisdom group will not meet in January, 2018.

Our next meeting will be **Monday, February 5, 2018** at McCormick & Schmick in City Centre. Please contact Marie Helmy at oolit3@aol.com or at 281.787.6396 for more information or to add your name to the contact list.

WISE...



Women in Stem, Entertainment, Enrichment and Education

Please join us **Monday, January 22**, around 4:00 at the home of Pat Farnell, 12531 Piping Rock, for wine, cheese and conversation. We will continue our book study on "Hidden Figures" to scale WISE ideas in schools. Please come share your ideas on how to expand the inspiration that our conference brings and recruiting middle school girls and volunteers for Expanding Your Horizons. Contact Karen North knorth@me.com to join the mailing list, or tweet #aauwwsf and see aauwwsf.edublogs.org.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES



January -- "From Faux Food to Fine Food"

On **Wednesday, January 31, 2018**, we'll be kicking off the New Year with a fabulous culinary arts event designed for those who appreciate fine food. Our day will begin with a visit to the studio of well-known artist Henri Gadbois, a painter now in retirement and making faux food for presentation on tables such as that at Bayou Bend. We'll then move on to tour the LeNotre Culinary Institute, the school for advanced chefs featuring fine French food. While at LeNotre we'll not only enjoy a two-course luncheon, but also watch it being prepared. Our day will end with a visit, delayed from last year, to "Somebody's Mother's" where owner Lynn Lasher will share the story of the development of her delicious chocolate sauce company and treat us to samples of each of her many varieties.

We'll travel via our Precinct 3 bus leaving from our usual spot on the south side of Barryknoll between Gessner and Memorial Way, directly across from the Cinemark Theater in Memorial City Mall. Departure will be promptly at 9:30 a.m. We expect to return by about 3:00 p.m. with senses stimulated and well-satisfied.

Cost for this culinary day will be \$32.50 which will cover lunch with tax and tip. For reservations and more information contact our leader, Cindy Hickok at 713.493.2525 or cynthiahickok@sbcglobal.net. Then send a check in that amount made out to Cynthia Hickok to her at 523 Briar Path, Houston TX 77079. An additional \$1 will be collected at the bus to provide lunch for our driver.

February -- "House of Worship Exploration – Baha'i & Zoroaster"

You'll also want to save **Tuesday, February 6, 2018** as we visit the local Baha'i and Zoroastrian Centers and learn all about the world's oldest and youngest religions. We're hopeful that this will draw enough interest that it will become just the initial phase of what is intended to be our extended exploration of unusual religions represented in Houston over the next few years.

Since both of these religions started in Persia/Iran, our lunch will be at a Persian restaurant. And, as a note of interest, it is important to know that while both of these religions are persecuted in their native country, both are thriving in Houston.

Our Precinct 3 bus will leave our usual spot on the south side of Barryknoll between Gessner and Memorial Way, promptly at 10:00 a.m. We plan to be back about 3:00 p.m.

To reserve your seat on the bus, contact Pat Farnell at 832.867.2908 or farnelpat@gmail.com. This may be one of our most enlightening cultural excursions to date!

DIRECTORY UPDATES

We welcome the following new WHC members. Please update your directories with their information.

Bowen, Ginger

1601 S Shepherd Drive, #169
Houston, TX 77019
Cell Phone: 832.260.1174
Email: gingerbowen@gmail.com
Birthday: 06/11
Our Lady of the Lake University, MBA, Business
Texas State University, BA, Business

Kulkorni, Anuradha (Jyoti)

510 Sandy Port
Houston, TX 77079
Home Phone: 281.589.6939
Cell Phone: 713.851.8263
Email: jyotipk@aol.com
Birthday: 07/31
Spouse: Pramod
University of Houston, MBA, Personnel Management
Karnatak University, MSW, Personnel Management

Rossi, Deborah P. (Debbie)

12515 Deep Spring Lane
Houston, Texas 77077
Cell Phone: 713.248.7520
Email: drossi1584@gmail.com
Birthday: 10/26
University of Maryland, BA/BSN, Sociology/Psychology
Nursing

Tvagi, Ami

30 Chalice Trail
Sugar Land, TX 77498
Cell: 512.289.9549
Email: ami.atut@gmail.com
Birthday: 12/02
Spouse: Kashyap Patel
University of Texas, BS, Chemical Engineering



Please update directories with the revised information for our current members below:

Buckner, Elisha A. (Lisa)

9850 Pagewood Lane, #909
Houston, TX 77042
Home Phone: 713.782.5070
Cell Phone: 713.252.9665
Work Phone: 713.496.4256
Email: lisaag84@aol.com
Birthday: 02/25
Spouse: TJ
University of Houston, MS, Geophysics
Texas A&M University, BS, Geophysics

Helmy, Marie

8300 Queenston Blvd, Apt 228
Houston, TX 77095
Home Phone: 281.463.8842
Cell Phone: 281.787.6396

Kelly, Mary Lou

201 Amarillo Terrace #127
Houston, TX 77077

To insure you do not miss any communications from the Branch, if you have a change in your contact information, please inform **Margaret Carlson** at AAUW.Margaret.Carlson@gmail.com.

Member News Notification

*Please notify **Jo Glidewell**, Corresponding Secretary, about any member news that is important to share with the membership and has been authorized to share by the member involved. Contact her at wcglide@gmail.com.*

WHC Branch Board Meeting January 8, 2018

The next branch board meeting will be at the First Congregational Church, 10840 Beinhorn Road at 5:30 p.m. All members are welcome. Please RSVP your attendance to anamador@earthlink.net.