



West Harris County Branch

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

VOLUME XXXII NUMBER 8

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2018

West Harris County Board of Directors

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May Newsletter Deadline:

April 14, 2018

Stay Informed

Branch website:

www.aauw-whc.org

National website:

www.aauw.org

AAUW TEXAS STATE CONVENTION EMBASSY SUITES HOUSTON ENERGY CORRIDOR

**11730 Katy Freeway
Houston, TX 77079**

April 20 – 22, 2018

The West Harris County, North Harris County and Fort Bend County branches of AAUW are co-hosting the 48th AAUW Texas Biennial State Convention at the Embassy Suites Houston in the Energy Corridor. Registration onsite (if you have not already registered) is on Friday, April 20, from 1:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Early bird registration closed on March 23. Full registration which includes Friday evening reception, Saturday meals (lunch and dinner), convention packet, and workshop materials is \$225 through April 10. Late registration after April 10 is \$250. Registration for Saturday only is \$150.

Send your payment via check made payable to AAUW Texas 2018 Convention to Nancy Guilloud, 11110 Tupper Lake, Houston, TX 77042.

Come to the AAUW Texas Convention and see how HOUSTON Strong we are!!!



SPRING STYLE SHOW

The annual Style Show will be on Sunday, May 6. Don't miss the fun! It will be held at Talbots in Town & Country from 6:30 – 8:30 PM. The event will benefit the AAUW Educational Opportunity Fund (4336). Tickets are \$15. If you missed getting your ticket at the March meeting, tickets will be available at the convention. Tickets are also available from co-VP Funds Chairmen: Hazel Chahar, 713-294-0784 or Nancy Ennis, 281-468-8564 and are available at the door the night of the show. Checks should be made payable to AAUW-WHC.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

When my mother graduated from college, married women weren't permitted to teach in public schools. By the time I was a student in Texas public schools, I had plenty of married women as teachers, but women weren't permitted to be principals even by the time I graduated from high school. Girls also weren't allowed to wear pants to school until I was in the seventh grade. My daughter is graduating from college in May; she had some excellent women principals growing up as well as non-gender-specific wardrobe freedom in school. What she will still be facing as she enters the workforce, though, is gender-based salary inequality. AAUW has been empowering women since 1881, and great progress has been made in gender equality in the last 137 years, but we still have work to do! AAUW remains relevant in addressing and finding solutions for the problems facing women today, and my hope is that in the not-too-distant future young women graduating college will say, "Did you know that in the old days women used to be paid less than men for doing the same job? How crazy is that?"

Anne Amador, WHC Branch President

AAUW National Dues Increase

Many of us already know that there is a \$10 dues increase this year, with national dues increasing from \$49 to \$59, for a total of \$83. So I am asking:

What do you want from AAUW?

What do you expect from AAUW?

What are you willing to give back?

AAUW promotes goals of equity and fairness for you, for me, and for all women. Do you believe in social justice, human rights, equal pay for equal work, higher education for women, and freedom from sexual harassment?

Some of us joined AAUW for the many social and cultural opportunities our branch provides. We are happy that so many members are also working for the higher goals of education, empowerment, and equity. Activism is easier with an effective community behind us, and AAUW provides that support, advice, guidance, and assistance.

It costs money to run an organization, and it costs money to defend the best interests of women and our membership.

If you would like to see the details behind the decision of the national AAUW organization for the dues increase, click [here](#) for more information.

Diane Roberts, Finance Officer

ATTENTION NEW MEMBER SPONSORS

As you may know, **effective March 16, 2018**, our new AAUW membership dues go into effect as follows:

National	\$59.00
State	13.00
Branch	<u>11.00</u>
	\$83.00

If you are a new member sponsor, it is important to keep in mind that your prospective member may sign **up while attending** any of our Branch Meetings for what is known as a "Shape the Future" reduced rate as follows:

National	\$29.50
State	13.00
Branch	<u>11.00</u>
	\$53.50

Please know that we no longer have half-year memberships. Memberships run from July 1 through June 30. Anyone signing up **at any time** between these dates pays either the full Regular or the full Shape the Future rate and the expiration date is June 30 of the sign-up year. If you have a friend who wishes to sign up at the current time, she can receive approximately fifteen months of membership at the Regular or Shape the Future yearly rate.

Please work with your prospective members toward understanding their options and let me know if I can help.

Sheila Jaynes, Membership VP

CONDOLENCES

Phyllis Green, a valued and faithful member of WHC, has passed away.

Phyllis was a former officer of WHC, having served on many committees and projects, participated in several interest group activities, and even presented a program at a branch meeting.



We will miss Phyllis' dedication, cheerful outlook, and love of AAUW.

A memorial service is scheduled for Sunday, April 15, at 1:00 p.m. at Dettling Funeral Home, 14094 Memorial Drive, Houston, TX. (Phone 281.497.2121 to confirm date and time.)

PUBLIC POLICY

Part 3, Gerrymandering: Looking Ahead

In this last segment on gerrymandering, we'll look at what's happening in the courts, possible remedies to restore more equity and competition in the voting process, and the role of the public. Although the evidence of Republican gerrymandering in Texas is quite apparent, it is a tactic used by both parties and is unhealthy in a strong democracy. As New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman so succinctly wrote in a recent Op-Ed column (Feb. 27, 2018), "computer-designed gerrymandering enables candidates to pick their voters, not have voters pick them." This trend needs to be reversed.

As a result of this concerted Republican gerrymandering in Texas, there have been numerous law suits filed against the state for violating Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, more than any other state. Even though the whites' share of the population has declined from 52% to 45%, they remain the majority in 70% of the congressional districts. Since 2000, Texas state redistricting maps/plans have been constantly before the courts on the basis of "racial" gerrymandering. They are too numerous and detailed to include in this discussion. While "racial" gerrymandering is illegal, "partisan" gerrymandering is not. So far the Republican Party has very skillfully used the distinction between the two to maintain a solid majority in the Texas Legislature and in Congress. This may be about to change. For the first time in many years the Supreme Court has agreed to hear two cases involving partisan gerrymandering this session, one case of a Republican redistricting plan in Wisconsin, *Gill v Whitford*, and one involving a Democratic redistricting in Maryland, *Benisek v Lamone*. On Friday, January 12, 2018, the Supreme Court agreed to hear a Texas redistricting case to determine if Texas' congressional and statehouse maps discriminate against minorities and need to be redrawn. (*Dallas Morning News*, Friday, Jan. 12, 2018). The 5 statehouse districts in question are located in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. The two congressional districts involved are District 35 (Austin-San Antonio) and District 27 in Corpus Christi. Redrawing these districts could give more of a voice to minorities and boost the Democrats. The decision to hear the Texas case was expected after the high court blocked two lower court rulings last fall that required the state to redraw some congressional and state House district lines the lower courts found discriminatory against minorities. (*Houston Chronicle*, Friday, Jan. 12, 2018). Frequently cases involving racially discriminatory drawing of district boundaries are at the same time acts of partisan gerrymandering since most minorities are Democrats.

The primary elections are increasing in importance, especially

in gerrymandered districts. When a district is securely in the hands of one party, the emphasis becomes which candidate, moderate, liberal, or conservative, will be the winner in that party's primary. Once elected, moderate leaders tend, in general, to be more receptive to open discussion, compromise, and working across the aisles. Open, fair elections based on full eligible voter participation are crucial. Encouraging voter registration drives, getting out the vote, and stressing the importance of participating in the democratic process even when one feels that one's vote doesn't count, and staying informed all contribute to equalizing the playing field. Five Republican Representatives and one Democratic Representative are retiring from Congress at the end of 2018, and one Democratic Representative is running for Ted Cruz's senate seat. This is an opportunity to shake things up a little.

Placing the redistricting process in the hands of a non-partisan, independent commission would be an important first step. Julian E. Zelizer, journalist for the Washington Post, states gerrymandering is not a main source of partisan polarization; however, it does exacerbate stonewalling, grandstanding, more extreme, inflexible, hardline positions on issues, and lack of responsiveness to the voice of the majority of the electorate. On a positive note Zelizer states "History shows that grass-roots partisan mobilization can overcome gerrymandering." In short, a democracy doesn't function well without an educated, informed electorate who consistently exercise the right to vote and participate in the electoral process. Many scholars maintain gerrymandering reform is not the single panacea to infuse competition and civil discourse in elections. Rather than single-member, winner-take-all districts that are favorable to gerrymandering, reform might include creating districts based on "proportional" representation, and/or multi-member districts. In proportional districts representation would reflect the percentage of Democrats and Republics living in the district. Multi-member districts would elect more than one representative per district.

Is there a lesson in all of this? Yes! Every vote counts. Starting at the local level all the way to the top nationally, we need to be active participants in the democratic process, to support democratic institutions, and to appreciate fully the right to express our opinions freely in civil discourse and in the power of the vote. Even a democracy needs nurturing. Looking forward, there's hope that healthy, competitive elections will once more become the norm along with the sound honest debate and compromise in the Texas Legislature and in Congress, but this will require the support, awareness, and action of every citizen.

Martha Ewell, Public Policy Chair



EXPANDING YOUR HORIZONS - 2018

EYH Student Evaluation Comments

Over 400 students registered, 328 students attended, 273 evaluations submitted

First Question: "HOW did you learn about the conference?"

- 98 learned from school for friends
- 1 said she was "forced" but did not indicate who forced her
- 51 misinterpreted the question and answered "WHAT did you learn at the conference?"
- 123 no answer

Opening Session – Key note speaker, Ginger Kerrick, NASA

- 273 responded that they enjoyed the key note speaker and gave the following comments:
 - I learned about never giving up.
 - Girls are able to do the same things as boys.
 - It's never too early to think about your future career.
 - Be whatever you want!
 - You need to work hard.
 - Never give up your dream.
 - Usually speakers can be boring but not this time!
 - Science is fun!!!
 - I learned about STEM and motivation.
 - She was very encouraging.
 - I loved it!

Session Comments are recorded on individual Presenter evaluation summaries. Criteria includes:

1. Did you enjoy the activity and learn information about this kind of job?
2. Did the presenter provide information about her educational background and reasons for her choice of profession?
3. Would you recommend this presenter's session to a friend?

General Student Comments about the Conference:

- Loved it!
- Can you do this in high school?
- Should have more involvement – overall interesting and entertaining.
- This was very fun and interesting and taught complex subjects in an easy fun way. Plus I liked the souvenirs.
- This was amazing because these women have wonderful jobs.
- A wonderful experience of expanding my knowledge and choices of careers.
- Some classes should be more exciting and creative.
- Super cool, fun, and informative.
- It was fun, I learned a lot about different things and I hope to come back NEXT YEAR!
- Great camp! Love the key note speaker!
- I had a lot of fun, and it was amazing to hear about all the amazing women that I met today.
- I really enjoyed it! THANK YOU!
- Personally, I enjoyed this. I wish they would do this for high school girls. It's a really great experience.
- This conference was very hands on and educational.
- I am so glad I went here.

Last Question: Would you recommend this conference?

232 yes, 19 maybe, 22 no comment

April 2018 Activities and Interest Group News

BOOK GROUPS



Afternoon Contemporary Literature

Wednesday, April 4, 1:30 p.m.

Circling the Sun by Paula McLain

Hostess: Pam Doan, 9646 Meadowcroft Drive,
832.269.5264

Contemporary Readers

Wednesday, April 4, 1:00 p.m.

A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles

Hostess: Sue Phipps, 12518 Old Oakes Drive,
713.461.9528

Enjoying History

Monday, April 9, 1:30 p.m.

Freedom's Forge by Arthur Hermann

Hostess: Nancy Guilloud, 11110 Tupper Lake,
713.785.6336

Monday Evening Contemporary Literature

Monday, April 2, 5:00 p.m.

A Man Called Ove by Frederick Blackmon

Meeting Place: Los Tios Mexican Restaurant,
14006 Memorial Drive at Kirkwood

Mystery

Tuesday, April 17, 1:30 p.m.

By Its Cover by Donna Leon

Hostess: Marilyn Arendt, 12414 Stafford Springs Drive
281.493.9090

Outstanding Literature Group

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

King Lear by William Shakespeare

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.

BYWAY BIRDERS



On April 6-8, the Byway Birders will visit Llano State Park. We will be staying at the Best Western. This is excellent for the beginners because birds come to the feeding stations, and you really get a good look at the birds. **This date for the activity is different from the published date in the AAUW Directory.** For additional information, please contact Sharon Jorgeson at sjorgeson@gmail.com or 281.703.5939.



CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Galveston's new Aquarium Pyramid at Moody Gardens

Join us on **Tuesday, April 24**, as we experience the \$37 million renovation of the Aquarium Pyramid at Moody Gardens. Upgrades include a Gulf of Mexico oil rig. You will also discover the ecosystems of the South Atlantic, the Pacific, and the Caribbean in tranquility with penguins, seals, sharks and jellies. In and around our touring, we catch lunch at Miller's Seafood Grill.

Our Precinct 3 bus will be ready for boarding on the south side of Barryknoll between Gessner and Memorial City Way at 9:00 a.m. that morning. We expect to return by about 5:30 p.m. if traffic cooperates! Guests are welcome if space permits on the bus.

Cost for the trip is \$15.00 (excluding lunch). (We'll also collect the usual \$1.00 for the driver's lunch as you enter the bus.)

This should be a very popular event with a real holiday atmosphere on the Island, so be sure to contact Marie Helmy at 281.787.6396 or oolit3@aol.com to get your reservation made early. Then just send your check made out to Marie Helmy to her at 8300 Queenston Blvd, Unit 228, Houston, TX 77095. Note: This address is different from the one in the directory and is new and correct.)

Plus, save Tuesday, May 22, when we'll celebrate our World Champion Houston Astros by touring Minute Maid Park. We'll follow that with another favorite American Pastime – a visit to the St. Arnold's Brewery for lunch. Watch the May newsletter for details, but if you can't wait, contact Melba Armstrong at 281.392.3190 or mkar@consolidated.net right now to get your name on the list. We might even get to see the trophy by then.

GARDEN DIVAS



If you share the prevailing bias that roses are hard to grow, fussy, need to be sprayed, need to be pruned in a certain way and are short lived, join the Divas on a Road Trip **Tuesday, April 10** to see the **Antique Rose Emporium** in Independence, TX.

These roses are different. For the past 30 years the Emporium's goal has been to give credibility to these plants. Be aware, however, that these are captivating plants, and once taken with them, you're likely to never be the same.

After our visit to the Emporium, we will enjoy lunch at Bevers Kitchen in Chappel Hill. With luck, we will have a chance to view the Brenham bluebonnets!

We will meet at 8:30 in the parking lot across from Sears off Barryknoll and carpool. The trip is about a 1 1/2 hour drive. We should return to Houston around 3:30. Hope to see you then.

Contact Susan Boone, sboone@gmail.com, for reservations. An email will be sent the week of April 2 with more details.

*** NOTE - The April outing to Eleanor's Park needed to be rescheduled for May.**

GIRLS' NIGHT OUT...



The Girls' Night Out group will not meet in April. Details of the May 9 GNO will be published in the May newsletter.

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, at jamgroves@aol.com

GOURMET DINING



Classic Gourmet

Classic Gourmet will not meet in April. Please join us in June for our final dinner in this year's series – A Trip Through Italy By Region. Our final stop will be Sicily. Contact the coordinators: Barbara Cook 713.705.7832 or Tina Simpson 281.558.1031 to be included in the dinner.

Nouveau Gourmet

This group will not meet in April.

Contact Diane Statham for additional information about the May dining event at 281.497.6259 or distatham@msn.com.

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. **Membership in the Thursday afternoon group is closed for this spring.**

The 2nd and 4th Tuesday afternoon group will meet from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at Portico at West 8 Club Room, located at 3003 Seagler Road. This group is chaired by Linda Marlin marlinl@comcast.net and Pat Thomsen Patthom2@sbcglobal.net. Husbands are always welcome.

The 2nd and 4th Wednesday evening group, chaired by Willette Norman, meets from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. **At this point, this Great Decisions group is closed for new members.** For further information call Willette at 281.497.3626.

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

The Vicarious Voyagers have completed their planned itinerary for this season. If you want to join this group's interesting travel experiences, contact Diana to be included in the group's distribution list next year.



WINE, WOMEN & WISDOM



The group's next Happy Hour is scheduled from 4:00 to 7:00 on **Monday, April 16** at McCormick and Schmick's 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

We continue to celebrate the success of EYH this year. If you would like more information on furthering STEM education with young women, contact Karen North, knorth@me.com, to join the mailing list, or tweet #aauwwsf and see aauwwsf.edublogs.org.

NEW DATE AND PLACE FOR WHC'S SPRING LUNCHEON

Hurricane Harvey has dealt WHC yet another blow.

Our planned venue, Lakeside Country Club, is not available to us this year as it is still under repair from damages inflicted by Harvey.

As a result, the June luncheon will be held on **June 9** at Maggiano's Italian Restaurant in Memorial City from 10:30 – 1:30 p.m.

The May 2018 newsletter will contain more information.



DIRECTORY UPDATES

Please update your directories with the following:

Erney, Maureen

New Address:
Westminster - 335
4100 Jackson Avenue
Austin, TX 78731
Home Phone: 512.519.9363
Email: maureenerney@gmail.com

Lauterbach, Dorothy

Add Cell Phone: 512.217.7899

Also please add returning member:

Gordon E. Tinker (Gordy)

1623 Nocturne Lane
Houston, TX 77043
Home Phone: 713.463.5823
Cell Phone: 713.301.3559
Email: egtinker@sbcglobal.net

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 wzglide@gmail.com.

WHC Branch Board Meeting April 9, 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.



WHC SPRING STYLE SHOW

COME JOIN US!!

WHEN: SUNDAY, MAY 6

WHERE: TALBOTS in TOWN AND COUNTRY

TIME: 6:30 - 8:30

COST: \$15

BENEFITING the AAUW EDUCATIONAL FUND

Checks should be made to: AAUW-WHC.

Tickets can be purchased from:

NANCY ENNIS, 281-468-8564, 1122 BEN HUR DR, 77055

HAZEL CHAHAR, 713-849-4866, 5702 BALLINA CANYON LANE, 77041

TICKETS also AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR THE NIGHT OF THE SHOW.