



West Harris County Branch

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

VOLUME XXXIII NUMBER 7

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2019

West Harris County Board of Directors

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Sharon Jorgeson

281.558.4382

sjorgeson@gmail.com

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Newsletter Editor

Melba Armstrong

mkar@consolidated.net

April Newsletter deadline:

March 18, 2019

Stay Informed

Branch website:

www.aauw-whc.org

National website:

www.aauw.org

MARCH ANNUAL MEETING ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Saturday, March 23, 2019 at 9:30 A.M.

***Tracy Gee Community Center
3599 Westcenter Drive, Houston 77042***

Plan to attend AAUW West Harris County Branch's Annual Meeting on March 23. It is an important meeting as we will be electing officers. The Nominating Committee has presented a slate of officer candidates (see page 2) and nominations will be accepted from the floor prior to voting. A quorum of 20% of branch membership is required. There will also be a vote on changing the bylaws (see page 2).

Following the meeting there will be a potluck luncheon, so bring a dish to share with other attendees.

Gender Pay Gap

Malinda Gaul, President of AAUW Texas, will be our speaker on March 23 and will address the gender pay gap in light of the upcoming Equal Pay Day on April 2. Malinda is eminently qualified to speak on this issue since she has been practicing employment law representing employees for more than 35 years. She received her undergraduate and law degrees from Baylor University. She is currently serving as President of the Texas Employment Lawyers Association and on the boards of the Equal Justice Center and San Antonio Youth Literacy. Malinda was selected by her fellow attorneys in 2018 as one of the four best lawyers in Texas in the area of employment law.



Malinda recently completed four years on the AAUW national board of directors, 2013-2017, including two years on the executive committee. Her other experience includes AAUW Texas President, 2002-2004; AAUW San Antonio President, 2006-2008; offices on committees at the branch, state and national levels from 1989 to the present.

Malinda's professional and volunteer work focuses on achieving equity for all people through education and work opportunities.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Congratulations to the Expanding Your Horizons Committee and the many branch volunteers for another successful EYH Conference. You are all branch treasures. Hopefully, you are filling up your spring calendar with the many activities and events our branch offers. Check out what is going on in this newsletter.



Please plan to attend our next branch meeting on **March 23 at 9:30 am**. Besides having our dynamic State President Malinda Gaul as our speaker, we will vote for next year's board leaders. We need your presence for a quorum so bring a salad or something else to share and enjoy fellowship with other members.

Your board continues to work toward keeping our branch strong and relevant for you. Currently, we are working on a five-year strategic plan. We have identified six areas in the plan on which to focus: Public Policy/Advocacy, Education & Training, Leadership, Membership, Programs and Community Outreach. I am requesting that you add your ideas for our future and submit suggestions you have concerning these areas to include in the strategic plan.

Sharon Jorgeson, WHC Branch President

Save the Date for a FUN Fundraiser
Invite your Friends and Family to the
Annual Spring Style Show
Benefiting AAUW Funds

Sunday, May 5
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Talbots in Town and Country



Come early to shop before the Style Show begins at 6:00 pm

Tickets are \$20 and will be on sale ahead of the event at the March and April Branch meetings.

Make checks payable to AAUW WHC.

NOMINEES FOR 2019 ELECTION

The 2019 nominating committee proposes the following nominations to fill the officer positions in AAUW-WHC for the 2019-2020 year:

President Elect: Carolyn Morris
Vice President Program: Cindy Hickok
Vice-President AAUW Funds: Laura Cahill
Corresponding Secretary: Suzanne Dalati
Finance Officer: Diane Roberts

Election of officers will take place at the **March 23** annual meeting.

Nominating committee members are: Pat Farnell, chair, Laura Cahill, Diana Guarniere, Mary Peterson and Jane Wood.

BYLAWS AMENDMENT TO BE VOTED ON AT ANNUAL MEETING

At the branch meeting on **March 23**, the "Annual Meeting," we will be electing officers and voting to amend the Bylaws of AAUW-West Harris County.

The change to the bylaws includes adding an assistant vice president for AAUW Funds as an elected officer serving a one year term. The following year she would become the vice president for AAUW Funds. This would bring the Bylaws into compliance with the practice our branch has had in recent years. If you want a copy of the exact wording for this proposed change in Bylaws, contact [Margaret Carlson](#), parliamentarian, at 713 419-2686.

To elect officers and amend the Bylaws at the Annual Meeting requires a quorum of 20% of the membership (47 members). Please attend the **March 23** meeting to ensure a quorum is present.



PUBLIC POLICY

The 86th Texas Legislature

The 86th Texas Legislature convened January 3, 2019, with 150 representatives in the House of Representatives and 31 senators in the Senate. The 2019 regular session consists of 140 days, with the session ending on May 27, 2019. The House and Senate will consider in excess of 6,000 bills, and most will not become law. By noon of the first day more than 400 bills had been filed. The leaders of both chambers and parties have targeted two bread and butter issues to focus on, namely property taxes and school finance.

Players

There's a new House Speaker in town—Republican Dennis Bonnen from Angleton. In previous sessions, Governor Greg Abbott and Lt. Governor Daniel Patrick have clashed with this new Speaker (he held leadership positions under former speaker Strauss.) However, since he was elected Speaker at the beginning of this session, the Governor and Lt. Governor have signaled they want cooperation. Indeed, lawmakers from both sides of the aisle have expressed optimism about the new Speaker's leadership and indicate they trust that he will allow members to have a voice in the legislative process. Hopes are high.

House Democrats

The November election gave Democrats a net gain of twelve seats. They expect to eventually have a total strength of 67 Democrats compared with 83 Republicans. If they can vote as a bloc they will influence legislation significantly. But voting as a bloc is never easy for Democrats.

House Republicans

When the session opened, the Republicans found their numbers fewer. Many lawmakers from both parties hope there will be fewer wedge issues in this session that tie up time and political capital. The question is: Which wing of the Republican party will lead—social conservatives or business conservatives?

The Issues

Marijuana:

There's agreement on marijuana. Texas is moving closer to legalizing the medical use of marijuana. The Compassionate Use Act passed in 2015 limited the medical use of marijuana. Many lawmakers want to give physicians more discretion in using marijuana to treat more conditions. The Governor signaled he would be willing to endorse decriminalizing possession of small amounts of marijuana, and the Republican Party of Texas also endorses limited decriminalization.

Criminal Justice:

There's agreement on criminal justice. Lawmakers are looking for a way to repeal the driver responsibility program. This program imposes a surcharge on traffic penalties, and the funds raised are designated for trauma care. However, each party disagrees on how to raise the replacement funds. In addition, both Democrats and Republicans want to end certain cash bail practices that crowd the jails and courts, and de-emphasize plea deals as the best means of getting free.

School Safety:

There's partial agreement on school safety. The lawmakers agree on the following: schools should have access to more mental health professionals and should coordinate better with local law enforcement. Disagreement occurs as to gun issues. Democrats favor proposals to allow judges to have the power to confiscate guns when people are deemed dangerous to themselves or others. Republicans lean towards firearm training for school employees and permitting employees, in certain instances, to bring their guns into the schools.

School Finance and Property Taxes:

There's no agreement on school finance reform and property taxes. Yet, these two issues (often considered one) are the defining legislative problems of the 86th Legislature session. In 2009, the state covered almost 46 percent of the state-local tab for schools. This year the state will pay only 38 percent. Local property taxes cover the rest. There seem few options for local school districts to fund themselves other than by raising taxes. Balancing property tax reduction with increased school funding will test the ingenuity of our lawmakers.

I have touched on just a fraction of the lawmaking that will be occurring until May 2019. Keep up with the progress of the 86th Legislature Session by going to www.Capital.Texas.gov. Follow the issues that excite you.

Sources:

"The 17 biggest issues the Texas Legislature..." Houston Chronicle 7 Jan. 2019. Internet.
 "Good, bad and ugly of upcoming legislative session..." Austin Chronicle 14 Dec. 2018. Internet.
 "Five things to watch in upcoming session of the Texas Legislature..." Texas Monthly 7 Jan. 2019. Internet.
 "Two years ago, the Texas Legislature started with a bang, this year, it's quieter..." The Texas Tribune 7 Jan. 2019. Internet.
 "Will 'kinder, gentler' Legislature be able to deliver on goal to curb Texas school property taxes?" Dallas Morning News 6 Jan. 2019. Internet.

Dorothy Lauterbach, Public Policy Committee

EXPANDING YOUR HORIZONS



SPOTLIGHT ON EYH!!

We did it again West Harris County Branch!! The 27th EXPANDING YOUR HORIZONS Conference took place on February 23, 2019, at Spring Forest Middle School. It was an enormous success! We had over 400 girls attend and there was so much enthusiasm and engagement in all the workshops. And of course, everyone was completely enchanted by our keynote speaker, the sculptor Bridgette Mongeon. Thank you, Bridgette!

Thank you to the EYH 2019 Committee which worked so hard to bring this all together to make it the success that it was. Our EYH 2019 Committee: Sharon Jorgeson, Diana Guarniere, Mary Kain, Rose Ennis, Carolyn Morris, Mary Anderson, Karen North, Susan Boone, Pam Doan, Pat Dach, Mary Peterson, Laura Cahill, Lisa Buckner, Margaret Carlson, Pat Farnell, Susanne Dalati, Diane Statham, Carolyn Stoffel, Gail Rickey, Brenda Moss, and Debbie Campbell.

And a big thank you as well to the members of West Harris County Branch for their support and in volunteering their time and hard work in this huge endeavor.

Lilian Care, 2019 EYH Chair



MARCH 2019 Activities and Interest Group News

Jan Groves, Activities Coordinator



BOOK GROUPS

Afternoon Contemporary Literature

Wednesday, March 6, 1:30 p.m.

Leonardo Da Vinci by Walter Isaacson

Hostess: Daphne Scharar, 1202 Briarbrook Drive

713.783.2987

Contemporary Readers

Wednesday, March 6, 1:00 p.m.

Manhattan Beach by Jennifer Egan

Hostess: Judy Hamelers, 1126 Ben Hur Drive

713.464.2132

Enjoying History

Monday, March 11, 1:30 p.m.

God Save Texas: A Journey into the Soul of the

Lone Star State by Lawrence Wright

Hostess: Diana Guarniere, 13814 Kimberly Lane

281.493.2997

Monday Evening Contemporary Group

Monday, March 4, 5:00 p.m.

News of the World by Paulette Jiles

Los Tios Mexican Restaurant, Memorial Drive at Kirkwood

Mystery

Tuesday, March 19, 1:30 p.m.

White Nights by Ann Cleeves

Hostess: Pam Doan, 9646 Meadowcroft Drive

832.269.5264

Outstanding Literature Group

Tuesday, March 12, 9:30 a.m.

Ship of Fools by Katherine Ann Porter

The Egg and I, 9099 Westheimer Rd @ Jeanetta

BRIDGE GROUPS – Various



Current Bridge Groups:

1st Thursday (7:00 p.m.), Jane Judson, 713.528.6105

3rd Thursday (10:30 a.m.), Peg McNealy, 281.679.7299

3rd Monday (10:00 a.m.), Melba Armstrong, 281.392.3190

If you are interested in playing with a particular group, please contact the group coordinator listed above. Remember if you want to play easy relaxed bridge, there are foursomes playing at Tracy Gee every Wednesday. Just get on the sub list by letting Melba Armstrong know you are interested.



BYWAY BIRDERS

The Byway Birders will meet on Saturday, March 9 at 8:30 a.m. at Archbishop Fiorenza Park. Archbishop Fiorenza Park is on Eldridge South at Westpark near the Westpark Tollway. This 362.5 acre park has miles of paved trails which encircle large detention ponds. In those ponds and wetland areas are islands. Many migratory birds as well as eagles can be spotted there as well as resident birds who seem to like this particular area on a year round basis. We will do some birding there and head out to Sugar Land to bird first at Cullinan Park (12414 Hwy. 6 S) . Cullinan's Pumpkin Lake, and its more secluded sister lake, White Lake, are noted for waders and an assortment of ducks. Then on to Sugar Land Memorial Park (15300 University Blvd.) We will enjoy a picnic lunch at one of the parks in Sugar Land. Please contact Pat Dach at dachpd@hotmail.com or 281.701.5846 if you plan on joining this outing.



GARDEN DIVAS

Garden Divas will explore the McGovern Centennial Gardens in Herman Park on Friday, March 8.

To commemorate Hermann Park's centennial in 2014, Hermann Park Conservancy transformed the former Houston Garden Center site into the eight-acre McGovern Centennial Gardens. The Gardens were custom-made for Hermann Park and add a new dimension to Houston's garden attractions. Explore a variety of themed garden rooms situated along a spacious central lawn, the Centennial Green, that are home to more than 490 new trees of over 50 species, 760 hedge shrubs, 55,000 perennial bulbs, 650 azaleas and 4.5 acres of grass. They include the Arid Garden, the Rose Garden, the Celebration Garden, the Woodland Garden, and an educational Family Garden, which produces seasonal vegetables, herbs and fruit trees. The main entry into the Gardens is through the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, which was designed by Peter Bohlin, architect of Apple stores worldwide.

There are two statues of women in the park which have an interesting history. We can celebrate International Women's Day and [Rosie the Riveter](#) by getting to know what is in the park in more detail. We are arranging a tour guide to share about design, history and horticulture of the McGovern Centennial Gardens.

We will walk over to the Pinewood Café for lunch. Located in Hermann Park's Lake Plaza, the Cafe features fresh salads, wraps, sandwiches, burgers, plus a fun build-your-own grilled cheese menu! The dining terrace overlooking McGovern Lake is an unbeatable setting for an enjoyable meal. And, if time permits, we will walk through the Japanese Gardens. Please let Susan Boone (713.854.7537) know if you would like to join us.

GIRLS' NIGHT OUT



On **Wednesday evening, March 20, at 7:00 p.m.**, the GNO group will gather at **North China Restaurant** to experience delicious Mandarin cuisine. The restaurant is located at 14525 Katy Freeway, 832.379.8881. The menu is extensive so you are sure to find something that will excite your palate. Check it out at Houstonnorthchina.com.

If you plan to join the GNO group for dinner, please email or call Jan Groves by Sunday afternoon, **March 17**, at 281.497.2295 or jamgroves@aol.com.

If you want to be added to our email list, please contact Jan Groves at jamgroves@aol.com or 281.497.2295

GOURMET DINING



Classic Gourmet

Please join us **Saturday, March 9, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.** for our fourth dinner in this year's series – "I Hear America Cooking". Our dinner will feature foods of New England. Our hostess will be Barbara Cook. To be included in the dinner or if you have questions, please contact the coordinators: Tina Simpson 281.558.1031 or Barbara Cook 713.782.4398.

Nouveau Gourmet

Note: A change of date for our March Dinner.

Our next Nouveau Gourmet Dinner will be on **Saturday, March 9, at 6:30 p.m. at Café Benedicte**, 15455 Memorial Drive. We will go to Ruth Fowler's house nearby for dessert after dinner. Please RSVP to Ruth Fowler at 281.759.5991.

HIKING HONEYS



The Hiking Honeys will attempt once more to hike the Lake Houston Wilderness Park. This hike was originally scheduled in October but was rained out. On **Thursday, March 21**, Gail Rickey will lead us through a varied landscape of heavy woods, creeks, and gullies spanned by wooden bridges. We will hike for 1-1/2 to 2 hours. Bring a picnic lunch and meet at 9 AM at the triangular parking lot on Barryknoll across from the Cinemark Theater in Memorial City.

If you would like to join us in March, let Gail know at patrickkey@aol.com. If you prefer to meet us at the park instead of the parking lot, let Gail know that and be there at 9:45 AM.

GREAT DECISIONS



Great Decisions is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. The groups meet twice a month from February to May.

1st and 3rd Thursday Afternoon Great Decisions Group will meet March 7 and March 21, at the following location: 13194 Memorial Drive, the Adult Learning Center, Memorial Drive United Methodist Church (to the left of TJ Maxx,) Room 460, **from 2:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.** The two topics for March will be *Nuclear Negotiations: Back to the Future?* and *The Rise of Populism in Europe*. Please contact Martha Ewell, 713.782.2084, or m.ewell@sbcglobal.net if you have any questions.

Inner Loop Great Decisions Group will meet on Tuesday, March 12, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., at the home of Hazel Kjos, 1100 Uptown Park Blvd. #112, 281.974.2888. The discussion topic will be "Nuclear Negotiations." The discussion will be followed by a light dinner at a nearby restaurant.

The Tuesday, March 26 meeting from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. will be held at the townhome facilities of Pat Thomsen, 300 St. Joseph Parkway (parking is on the street.) Meet in the lobby. 713.302.8899. The discussion topic is "The Rise of Populism in Europe." For those desiring, dinner will follow at a nearby restaurant.

Great Decisions Night Group March Meetings will be held as follows:

March 13, 2019 - We will meet at 7:00 p.m. at Toby and Arun Singhanian's home, 14222 Glasgow Place, Houston, TX 77077. The discussion topic is "Nuclear Negotiations." For more information call Toby at 281.584.9591.

March 27, 2019 - We will meet at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Pat and Mike Dach, 6014 Ballina Canyon Lane, Houston, TX 77041. The discussion topic is "Nationalism in Europe." For more information, contact Pat at 281.701.5846.

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, March 28, 2019 – 10 AM

This month we will travel to Bulgaria and Romania. We'll trace Bulgaria's complex history from ancient Thracian tombs to medieval Orthodox monasteries to Soviet monuments. In Romania, we'll tour the vibrant capital, Bucharest. Then head into Transylvania where everyday life feels like an open-air folk museum. Bring something to share for a potluck brunch. Visitors are always welcome.

Please RSVP your attendance to Carolyn, our hostess for this month. She will give you the **gate code**:

Carolyn Morris
11159 Riverview Way
Houston 77042 (Gate code needed)
morriscs@aol.com
713.560.1889 (Cell)



WINE, WOMEN & WISDOM

The next meeting will be on **Monday, March 18, 2019**, at McCormick & Schmick's, City Centre location, for happy hour starting at 4:00 pm. All are welcome. For further information contact Marie Helmy at 281.787.6396 or Dorothy Lauterbach at 512.217.7899.



WISE...

Women in Stem, Entertainment, Enrichment and Education

Thanks to all our members who volunteered at our 27th EYH Conference. To continue our STEM outreach we will be gathering at the beautiful home of Carolyn Morris on **Saturday, March 2, at 10:30 a.m.** We will talk about the upcoming TEA Listening Tour on April 30/May 1. See <https://stemcenter.utexas.edu/news/tea-stem-listening-tour> for details.

TEA is conducting a statewide listening tour to inform the development of a new state plan required for the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V,) and the development of statewide frameworks for STEM education and Work-Based Learning (WBL).

Please let Carolyn Morris (713.560.1889) know if you will attend on **March 2**.



CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

“Downtown East” Preservation Houston Tour

On **Tuesday, March 19**, Jim Parsons, our favorite guide, will lead us on a walking tour of “Downtown East”- a unique area which has gone through many changes over the last century. Encompassing everything from Union Station to Discovery Green, this section which once was a highly-fashionable residential neighborhood, became increasingly commercial beginning with the construction of Union Station in 1911. As usual, Jim will share the historic story along with some interesting and amusing anecdotes which always make our tours with him so special. Cost for the tour will be \$15 which will be collected as you enter the bus. We'll also collect our usual \$1.00 for the driver's lunch. Exact change will be greatly appreciated.

Following our tour, we'll have lunch at Irma's Original Mexican restaurant which is just blocks away from our tour area and in keeping with its varied past. You'll be able to order from the menu and pay individually for your lunch either with cash or credit card.

We will meet our Precinct 3 bus at the usual location on the south side of Barryknoll between Gessner and Memorial Way, directly across from the Cinemark Theater in Memorial City Mall. We will leave promptly at 9:30 a.m. and expect to return about 2:30 p.m.

Note: This walking tour will last about an hour and a half with little opportunity for resting along the way, so those with mobility issues should probably wait for another event. Walking shoes are recommended.

To participate in this delightful day of rediscovering Houston's past, contact our leader Sue Phipps either at 713.461.9528 or sbphipps@comcast.net the sooner the better. Jim's tours are always sellouts!

Plus, save Saturday, April 6, for our long-awaited return to Schulenburg's Painted Churches Those who went with us several years ago have waited patiently for our return. Now Sheila Jaynes has made it happen. Watch the April newsletter for details, but if you want to be sure to be on the bus for what's likely to be a very popular outing, contact our leader Sheila Jaynes at 713.412.4586 or sjaynes50@yahoo.com right away. Or even better, send a check for \$15, made out to Sheila, to her at 23202 Spruce Falls Court, Katy, TX 77494 to secure your reservation now.

DIRECTORY UPDATES

We are pleased to welcome the following new member. Please update your directories with her information.

Smith, Loni I

201 Amarillo Terrace, #401

Houston, TX 77077

Cell Phone: 571-408-0871

Email: ralphandloni@comcast.net

Please update your directories with the following members' revised information:

Martin, Elizabeth

New Address: 3518 Grennoch Lane

Houston, TX 77025

**Cultural Tour
Channel 2 KPRC Studio – January 26, 2019**



Front: Priscilla List, Karen North, Jane Wood, Jo Glidewell, Cynthia Hickok, Martha Hebert
Back: Judy Dybell, Linda Albright, Diana Tiberia, Melba Armstrong, Linda Morgan

**Next WHC Branch Board Meeting
March 11, 2019**

The next branch board meeting will be at Sharon Jorgeson's home, 12518 Honeywood Trail, Houston, TX 77077 at 6:00 p.m. All members are welcome. Please RSVP your attendance to sjorgeson@gmail.com.

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 **Suzanne Dalati**, Corresponding Secretary, at sdalati@att.net, about any member news that is important to share with the membership and has been authorized to share by the member involved.