

WEST HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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713-560-1889
morriscs@aol.com

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aauwhcnews@gmail.com

March Newsletter deadline:

February 15, 2021



February 20, 2021 Program

Don't Fall For a Scam!

Scam artists are skillful criminals, who successfully change their schemes on an ongoing basis to continue to steal money from their victims. The number of people caught in scams like foreign lotteries and the grandparent scam are increasing every day. Learn about the latest scams and how you can protect yourself from becoming a victim.

Jennifer Salazar, Program Director
The Better Business Bureau Education
Foundation
1333 West Loop South, Suite 1200
Houston, Texas 77027
Tel: 713-341-6184
Fax: 713-341-6192



Saturday, February 20 at 10:00 a.m.

We continue to Zoom for our programs, so look for an email blast with the link as the day gets closer.

Stay Informed

Branch website:

aauw-whc.org

National website:

aauw.org

President's Message

Dear West Harris County Members,



On Wednesday, January 13, 2021, you should have received a letter from Julia T. Brown, Esq., AAUW National Board Chair concerning the proposed membership change to the organization. Just in case you did not receive it or it was diverted to your junk mail folder, I am copying the letter from Julia Brown in the hopes that everyone will read and make a decision on the issue. You can make comments to memberinfo@email.aauw.org by February 5, 2021. When we receive the call for the vote, please respond.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Morris
President AAUW WHC

Dear Members,

As we reflect on the state of our country and the deep-rooted beliefs that perpetuate an unequal society, we must consider the role and impact of AAUW and its members in upholding our core values. In pursuing our vision of equity for all, we need to recognize and eliminate the barriers we put on ourselves and on our organization that prevent us from truly achieving our goals.

This spring, the AAUW membership will vote on an important proposal to amend the AAUW bylaws to open membership and eliminate the degree requirement to join AAUW. The national AAUW Board of Directors strongly supports the proposal, along with dozens of member leaders across the country. We believe this is an essential step toward making AAUW a more diverse and inclusive organization, better aligned with our mission, values and the needs of women today. Our full statement on the issue appears below this email.

Now through February 5, 2021, you can provide thoughts and comments on the proposed changes to the AAUW bylaws as well as proposed changes to the Public Policy Priorities. To learn more about the proposed changes and submit your feedback, please visit the [election page on the AAUW website](#).

We encourage your participation and look forward to hearing your thoughts. Please join us on Tuesday, January 19, at 4:00 p.m. ET for an interactive town hall on open membership. Please RSVP to attend. (Note: This event has already occurred. A link that features the recording of this town hall meeting will be available soon.)

Best regards,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julia T. Brown".

Julia T. Brown, Esp.
Board Chair

Please, see the following statement.



AAUW Board of Directors Statement on Open Membership

The AAUW National Board of Directors strongly supports elimination of the degree requirement for membership and will put the requirement up for a membership vote this spring. This important change is a critical step in bringing AAUW's bylaws and membership requirement in line with our mission of advancing equity for women and girls. While AAUW is fiercely committed to educational attainment for all women, given our commitment to inclusion, this is simply the right thing to do.

Proposals to eliminate the degree requirement for membership have come before the membership for vote a number of times. The Board feels very strongly that, while the degree requirement made perfect sense at AAUW's inception, this requirement is now counter to our mission and limits our ability to build the capacity needed to increase our impact as an organization.

Members can comment on the proposed amendment from January 11 through February 5, 2021, 5:00 p.m. ET. Voting will open on April 7 and close May 17, 2021, 5:00 p.m. ET.

We encourage respectful debate, which has always been a hallmark of the AAUW community. Please send any [comments](#) to let the Board know of your thoughts on this proposal and exercise your vote this spring.

AAUW
1310 L St. NW, Suite 1000 • Washington, DC 20005
connect@aauw.org

Redistricting will be one of the key issues facing Texas Legislative Session 87. To learn more about this issue, join the League of Women Voters Virtual Lobby Day presentation on **Saturday, February 6, 2021, at 10:00 AM. Click [here](#) to register for this free event.**



THE AAUW PROGRAM

It's Official! AAUW-WHC is a Five Star Branch!

The Stars just continue to shine on our branch, and we have been awarded our 4th and 5th Stars in the areas of Programs and Advancement.

The Program Star required the branch to host 2 to 4 programs that aligned with both WHC and National's Strategic Plans. Sincere thanks to our President, Carolyn Morris, for coordinating and rolling out the Work Smart/Start Smart Program with Texas Southern University. Working with Dr. Michele Taylor, Assistant Dean of TSU's Graduate School, and a new branch member, a seminar was conducted in the spring at the University. The seminar coached students on how to prepare for interviews and negotiate salaries. Several WHC members attended and role played with the students at this event.

Our VP of Programs, Cindy Hickok, undaunted by the pandemic, worked tirelessly to set up several outstanding programs using Zoom so that the membership could access the monthly meetings without interruption. These outstanding programs supported AAUW objectives and were key in helping us to attain the Program Star.

Ann Amador, our Student Chapter Liaison, has done an excellent job working with several Rice University students. The AAUW-Rice University Student Affiliate is a dynamic group. They produced a standing room only program with a panel of notable women discussing their roles in bringing about meaningful change in the community. While the group has not been able to meet face-to-face this semester due to the virus, Anne has continued to mentor the group so that it can remain a vital part of the Rice experience. Anne's continued support of the group was invaluable in helping us to achieve the Program Star.

The Advancement Star was achieved by retaining our membership at 90% from the previous year, and we actually increased our membership to the 93% level. Many thanks to Carolyn Stoffel for keeping up with all our members and welcoming our new members. Kudos to Diane Roberts because she successfully submitted the dues to National by the required September 30th deadline. Also, a shout out to Mary Andersen for keeping all the data on the membership up to date. It is a weekly task! There were some tight deadlines to meet to reach our 5 Star goal, and their hard work paid off and is appreciated.

A final requirement of the Advancement Star was to increase our annual giving to the Greatest Needs Program by 25%. Please refer to the article Greatest Needs Needed You and You Responded in this newsletter to read about the outstanding response to our plea for additional funds.

Our branch continues to go way beyond in its outreach to contribute to the advancement of women and girls by involving all of us in so many valuable community programs.

Mary Peterson and Rose Ennis





"Greatest Needs" Needed YOU and YOU Responded

Yes, the response received from our branch was overwhelming and exceedingly generous to say the least! In October, our fundraising chair, Susan Dunten, had just concluded our traditional fall campaign, and she felt very grateful for the support of the membership. It just so happened though, around this same time, our branch was close to fulfilling all of the requirements to achieve National's 5 Star Recognition and receiving this award is a BIG DEAL. Among many other things, it specified that we would have to increase our Greatest Needs contributions by 25% from the previous year, and before the end of calendar year! That did not give us much time, for sure. After many meetings and looking at the data, it was concluded that another \$1300 would have to be raised quickly. Working with our WHC Board, it was approved to approach the membership with an additional appeal to come up with the shortfall. A second request was sent to the membership at the end of November.

Wow! The checks started coming in immediately. Our branch did not hold back and because of YOU we have achieved 5 STAR Recognition which is a significant accomplishment!

An additional \$4,230.00 was sent to the Greatest Needs Program, far surpassing the \$1300 which was our goal.

What a pleasure it has been working with Susan Dunten who jumped right in when we asked her to help with this additional appeal for funds with an incredibly short December 31st deadline!

Can you feel the glow of the stars shining on all of you?

Thanks from the bottom of our hearts,

Mary Peterson and Rose Ennis

A yellow-bordered box containing the text "Thank You!" in a cursive font, with a small heart icon above the word "Thank".

Public Policy

2021 Texas Legislative Session and AAUW Priorities: Healthcare

For this session of the Texas Legislature, three clear top priorities have emerged: the budget, redistricting and the pandemic. All three address aspects of AAUW Legislative priorities: healthcare, education and pay equity <https://aauw-tx.aauw.net/publicpolicy/>. These priorities also overlap with League of Women Voters' (LWV) priority and urgent issues: voting rights, redistricting, healthcare and climate <https://my.lwv.org/texas/advocacy-issues/issues>. Take advantage of these great online resources to focus and formulate communications with legislators during the session.

Of immediate interest are proposals to expand Medicaid to extend the healthcare safety net to some 2.2 million poor Texans, the majority of whom are women, children, and the elderly. The League of Women Voters' action paper on the Women's Healthcare Safety Net has clear talking points for letter writing:

https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2019_action_paper_womens_healthcare_safety_net.pdf

Bills of interest include:

[HB 171](#), is sponsored by Rep. Diego Bernal (D) and would expand Medicaid eligibility requirements in the state under the Affordable Care Act.

[SB 191](#) is sponsored by Sen. Johnson (D) and would grant Medicaid funding for managed care providers who use social determinants for care provision.

[SB 166](#) is sponsored by Sen. Cesar Blanco (D) and would place cost-sharing limits on insulin prescriptions in Texas.

[HB 515](#) is sponsored by Rep. Oliverson (R) and would require health plan providers to handle telemedicine visits the same way they would in-person visits.

Much of the action plan for this legislative session will revolve around personal contact with legislators. Many groups provide some kind of email advocacy tool. However, personal communication by letter is more effective because it indicates a constituent has taken the time to study an issue, compose their thoughts, and address ideas specifically. Letter writing is also safe. When writing, remember these guidelines: let the legislator know you are one of their constituents and thank them for their service, discuss only one topic and a specific action you support, keep the communication short and focused.

*Janice McNeil
Public Policy*



Spammers Out There

Most of you are aware of spam emails and how to avoid them. However, a reminder never hurts.

- When you receive an email from someone, even someone you know, asking for something like money or gift cards, don't assume it is really from that person. The easiest check is to let your cursor hover over the sender's name, and you will be able to see the actual email address. If it is not the sender's normal email address, assume the email is spam until you verify its authenticity with the sender.
- Never click on links unless you know and trust the sender. Links in our branch newsletter are vetted. The best thing to do is go directly to the website yourself rather than using a link. I even do this when receiving communications from my bank or vendors I use. It is too easy for spammers to imitate them.
- When sending out group emails, use BCC (Blind Carbon Copy). Spammers look for group emails on the web and harvest those email addresses and the sender's name to use. When BCC is used, they cannot see the recipient addresses.



Mary Andersen
Database Manager



To Ensure Members Receive All WHC Communications

Every month I receive a call or two notifying me that a member is not receiving the newsletter and blasts from the branch. Most of the time this is because their email server is either sending it to their spam/junk folder or blocking it altogether because they are group emails. Though I have reduced the size of the groups, many providers have tightened their screening trying to keep spam emails out of inboxes.

I urge all members to add AAUW.Mary.Andersen@gmail.com to their contacts. To further ensure that all blasts are allowed by your email server, add this email address to your trusted senders list. To do this, open your email program and click on Settings. Programs will vary a little. In Outlook, the list is under Junk Email. Yours may be titled differently. If you have any problems, feel free to contact Mary Andersen at mande7707@hotmail.com or 713.503.8784 and I will glad to help.

Some members may not be aware they are missing communications from the branch. Please ask your member friends if they have been receiving the branch newsletter and blasts. If anyone has not, give them the information in this article.

Mary Andersen
Database Manager

NOMINEES FOR 2021 ELECTION

The Nominating Committee presents the following as nominees for 2021-2022
Officers of AAUW West Harris Branch:

PRESIDENT ELECT: Anne Amador

PROGRAM VICE PRESIDENT: Lilian Care

FINANCE OFFICER: Diana Tiberia

FUNDS VICE PRESIDENT: Debbie Campbell

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY: Becky French



These women are to be commended for their willingness to participate in the governance of our branch. Election of officers will take place at the March meeting.

I want to thank the nominating committee member for their participation: Rose Ennis, Pat Dach, Linda Morgan and Jo Glidewell.

Sharon Jorgeson
Nominating Committee Chair



WISE Activity Group

Please join us on Monday **February 1st at 10:00 a.m.** as we share a “cup of coffee” and continue our WISE Goodall conversation. Answer to January’s question: Where is Waldo? - He is in Diana Guarniere's lap. See

<https://buildagarden.edublogs.org/bees/jane-goodall/zooming-2021/> for more details

on using tools. Animals (like Waldo) have minds and emotions like humans. Jane can understand the sound that chimps make, motivating Rose Ennis to listen to the sound of squirrels and looking up their vocalization so she can “talk” to them. We discussed language development in children. “*Is it the words teachers say, or the way they say it that is most important?*” Rose observed this in the classroom. Conversation continued with reflecting on how we can improve communication. No telling where our conversation will go in February as we learn what Jane is doing to deal with animal cruelty and climate change. Please join us to share your ideas.

You can sign up for her course at <https://www.masterclass.com>. Please let Coordinator, Karen North at knorth@me.com know if you would like to join our Zoom conversation. A link will be sent out on **Sunday January 31st.**

Karen North

FEBRUARY, 2021 ACTIVITIES & INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Sharon Jorgeson, Activities Coordinator

Book Groups

All groups are meeting via Zoom until further notice. Please contact Coordinator or Co-coordinator if interested in joining the group and to be put on contact list. Group members will be contacted prior to each book club meeting with Zoom information.

Afternoon Contemporary Literature

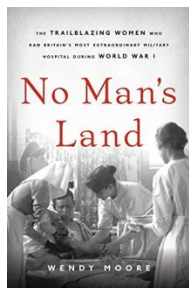
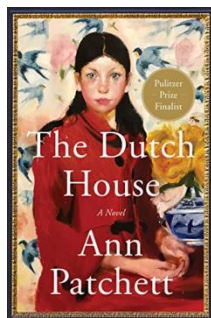
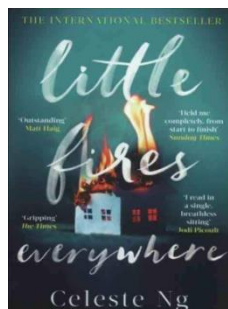
Wednesday, February 3, 1:30 p.m. Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng. Coordinator, Daphne Scharar, 713-412-2140, dascharar@gmail.com, Co-Coordinator, Linda Morgan, 281-293-0976, amorgan352@sbcglobal.net.

Contemporary Readers

Wednesday, February 3, 1:00 p.m. The Dutch House by Ann Patchett. Coordinator, Margaret Gruss, 281-589-0411, mgruss@att.net. Co-Coordinator, Sharon Pope, 713-376-0940, slpope@comcast.net.

Enjoying History Book Club

Monday, February 8, 1:30 pm. No Man's Land by Wendy Moore. Co-Coordinators, Nancy Guilloud, 713-785-6336, nanguilloud@aol.com, Nancy Gusler, 713-464-5932, ntgusler@gmail.com



Evening Contemporary Literature

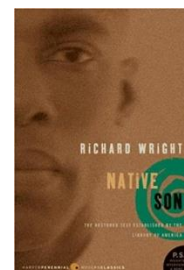
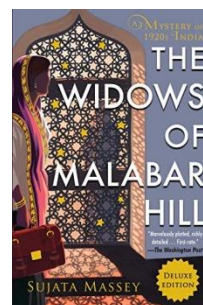
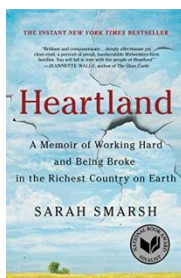
Monday, February 1, 3:30 p.m. Heartland: A Memoir of Working Hard and Being Broke in the Richest Country on Earth by Sarah Smarsh. Coordinator, Jo Glidewell, 936-327-2085, WCGLIDE@gmail.com. Co-Coordinator, Sharon Jorgeson, 281-703-5939, sjorgeson@gmail.com.

Mystery Book Club

Tuesday, February 16, 1:30 p.m. The Widows of Malabar Hill by Sujata Massey. Coordinator, Melba Armstrong, 281-392-3190, armstrong.melba@comcast.net. Co-Coordinator, Pat Pease, 713-824-1681, popease@aol.com.

Outstanding Literature

Tuesday, January 12, 9:30 a.m. Native Son by Richard Wright. Coordinator, Leigh Rappole, 281-596-0161, leighrap@aol.com. Co-Coordinator, Barbara Butler, 713-305-0570, barbarabutler1959@att.net.



Hiking Honeys

Hikes have been suspended indefinitely. When we start up again you will receive a notice from your coordinator. If you are interested in joining the Honeys, contact Melba Armstrong at 281.392.3190 or armstrong.melba@comcast.net.



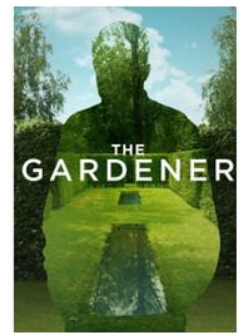
Melba Armstrong

Garden Divas



The Divas will participate in a movie review of 'The Gardener' for their February meeting. This documentary film reflects on the meaning of gardening. Influential gardener Frank Cabot recounts his personal quest for perfection at his twenty-acre English style garden in the Charlevoix County in Quebec. As spring is approaching; it will be a vicarious pleasure to watch this garden develop.

The film revolves around footage from an extensive interview with famed gardener Francis Cabot conducted a year before his death in 2011. A wealthy American with a patrician background, Cabot spent many years perfecting Les Quatre Vents, a magnificent 20-acre English-style garden on the grounds of his estate in Charlevoix Country, Quebec. It's an area that his family began traveling to in the 1840s and was also a frequent summer destination for President William Howard Taft.



The movie is 1 hour and 24 minutes. It is available on Prime Video or can be rented from YouTube for \$3.99 (or purchased for \$9.99). I will show via ZOOM prior to the Diva meeting for those that do not want to rent or purchase, or do not have Amazon Prime.

Mark your February calendars now and please contact Coordinator, Susan Boone at smboone@gmail.com if you would like to join in the viewing of the movie. We will watch it together on **Sunday afternoon, January 31 @ 3:00 p.m.** via ZOOM. If you are going to participate in the discussion of the movie, we will ZOOM on **Tuesday, February 2 @ 10:00 a.m.** Please RSVP so you can get the links to the ZOOM sessions. Join us as we marvel over the wonderful scenes in the garden and begin dreaming of our spring ventures.

Please contact Susan Boone - smboone@gmail.com if you would like the ZOOM link for this meeting.

Susan Boone

Byway Birders

Byway Birders will Zoom on **Saturday, February 6th** to discuss places we have visited and the birds we have seen. To be added to the link, please contact Coordinator, Pat Dach at 281-701 5846 or patdach@gmail.com. Anyone who would like to see more birds and learn to identify birds should try the Facebook site Birds of Texas. There are pictures of birds that are usually labeled.



Uvalde, Texas



Big Bend

Pat Dach



Great Decisions

Great Decisions Thursday Afternoon Group

This group will have its first meeting on Zoom, **Thursday, February 4, 2021 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.** The topic will be “Global Supply Chains and National Security”. The **February 18** meeting topic will be “Persian Gulf Security Issues”. All meetings will be via ZOOM until further notice. Briefing books for the spring discussions will have arrived in January. Please contact Coordinator, Martha Ewell if you would like to join this group or have any questions, 713-782-2084 or marthaewell@att.net.

Great Decisions Inside the Loop

This group will meet via Zoom twice a month on **Tuesday from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. on February 9 and February 23.** Topics for February meetings will be “The Role of International Organizations in a Global Pandemic” and “Global Supply Chains and National Security”. Each topic will have a corresponding episode of GDTV that will broadcast on PBS and be available on DVD or streaming with Vimeo. The Zoom link will be sent in time for the meeting. All AAUW members are welcome. For more information please contact Coordinator Pat Thomsen at 713-302-8899, patthom2@sbcglobal.net or Co-coordinator, Linda Marlin at marlinl@comcast.net.

Great Decisions Evening Group

This group meets from **7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. the 2nd and 4th Wednesday February through May.** The group will have its first meeting on **February 10.** The topic will be “The Role of International Organizations in a Global Pandemic”. The February 24th meeting topic will be “Global Supply Chains and National Security”. For additional information please contact Coordinator Willette Norman at 281-497-3626 or willetten@gmail.com.



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



The bridge groups are not planning on meeting in November.
If there is a change to this, you will be advised by your coordinator.

Vicarious Voyagers

We will not meet in February but will meet via Zoom on **March 25**. With our nation and world facing enormous challenges, it may help us gain some perspective when we learn more about issues being tackled in other parts of the world and how we are connected. Rick Steves offers just such perspective in his program, *Hunger and Hope: Lessons from Ethiopia and Guatemala* aired August 4, 2020 on YouTube. Points made in this program will be the topic of discussion for our Zoom gathering on March 25. Please watch the Rick Steves' program and join us. Coordinators, Diana Guarniere, 281-493-2997, guarniered@gmail.com. and Nancy Bowden, 281-589-7423, nanbowd@sbcglobal.net.

Diana Guarniere and Nancy Bowden

Classic Gourmet



"The Bean" in Chicago

Ongoing safety concerns related to the Coronavirus mean we will not be able to gather in person to share a meal in the near future. We normally do not meet in February. On **March 13, 2021**, we will get together virtually to share food, a glass of wine and some conversation with friends until we can be together in person. As a salute to March weather we will eat foods from the Windy City. For further information, please contact the co-chairs: Barb Cook 713-705-7832, chefbjcook@sbcglobal.net or Kris Bybee-Finley 304-610-8708, brazitku@gmail.com.

Nouveau Gourmet

Nouveau Gourmet will not meet in February. Please see March newsletter for information concerning the next gathering. Coordinator Diane Statham at distatham@msn.com or 281-497-6259.



See you in March

'Twas a Meeting with Members in December!

Distanced lunches were enjoyed by Georgia Kimmel, Rose Ennis and Diane Statham at Pasta Lomonte's. Mary Peterson, Jane Wood, and Marilyn Arendt met for brunch at Hungry's patio.

Linda Morgan, Mary Andersen, Nancy Bowden, and Diane Guarniere lunched on Linda's patio.



A few groups made it happen
and enjoyed gathering to
celebrate the holidays together!



Sarah Dalton Feb. 2

Sandra Judson Feb. 3

Linda McClelland Feb. 9

Marietta Hostak Feb. 10

Ann Teague Feb. 10

Judy Dybell Feb. 12

Sheila Jaynes Feb. 12

Janis Groves Feb. 20

Judith Peterson Feb. 22

Elisha Buckner Feb. 25

Directory Updates

Nancy Bowden
c/o Linda Contreras
7 Treewood Court
Mansfield, TX 76063

Ruth Fowler
1205 Sandy Lake Road, #210
Coppell, TX 75019-7388
(keep cell phone #, delete home phone #)

Elizabeth Leachman
Evleachman30@gmail.com (new email)