

WEST HARRIS COUNTY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

January, 2021 Program

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713-560-1889
morriscs@aol.com

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aauwwhcnews@gmail.com

February Newsletter deadline:

January 15, 2021



“What’s Not To Like About Chocolate!”

"Our Zoom program speaker for **Saturday, January 16** will be Annie Rupani of Cacao & Cardamom, tempting us with her beautiful and delicious handmade chocolates. Each piece is a little work of art, often flavored with an herb or other flavoring in addition to chocolate. Watch for a “blast” with more information in early January."

President’s Message

Dear Members,

Happy New Year! We are all anxious for 2021 to be more like 2019 than 2020. Our branch has done a great job of making 2020 a year of caring. Your generosity toward the Greatest Needs Fund and Baker-Telfer Scholarship exceeded our wildest dreams.



In the spirit of caring, I’ve seen members reaching out to others in creative ways. We have gone from Zoom newbies to old hands. Our programs, book clubs, gourmet groups, and Garden Divas have not missed a beat transferring their gatherings to Zoom. We look forward to seeing everyone in person but will do it slowly and cautiously.

Congratulations to Rose Ennis and Mary Peterson for working tirelessly on our 5 STAR application. Everything has been uploaded to the website. We should receive confirmation that West Harris County has successfully completed all 5 STARS in January.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Morris, Branch President

Five Star Recognition Program

Thank you for the branch's overwhelming response and incredible generosity to our recent appeal for \$1300 to the Greatest Needs Fund. In order to apply for the Advancement star, we had to show an increase of contributions of 25% from the previous year. You did it! We received well over our goal and checks are still coming in at this time. Next month's newsletter will report the total contributions received. Mary and I would like to extend our thanks to the following members who helped us with the collating and mailing of our request for additional funds: Carolyn Morris, Susan Dunten, Mary Edwards, and Diana Guarniere.



The good news continues! Our branch has been awarded two additional stars this month: Public Policy and Governance and Sustainability.

Georgia Kimmel, our Public Policy Chair, was responsible for our qualifying for the public policy star. She collaborates with the state public policy chair, contributes articles to our newsletter, and makes sure our website details the concerns between local, state, and national public policy initiatives. She encourages our membership to sign up for the Action Network. Visit our website if you have not already done so. In the coming months, Georgia will be attempting to set up Zoom meetings with U.S. and State legislators to discuss policies that will have an immediate impact on women and girls especially in the areas of health, economic security, and a myriad of other timely concerns.

The next star, Governance and Sustainability was achieved with the help of Diana Guarniere. This star required us to show how our board operates from year to year and ensures that new ideas and perspectives are included in our future leadership. Our 2019-2023 Strategic Plan delineates under the Leadership section how we recruit and train branch leaders. This plan can be viewed on our website by branch members and the public.

By next month we should be a 5 Star Branch thanks to all of you!

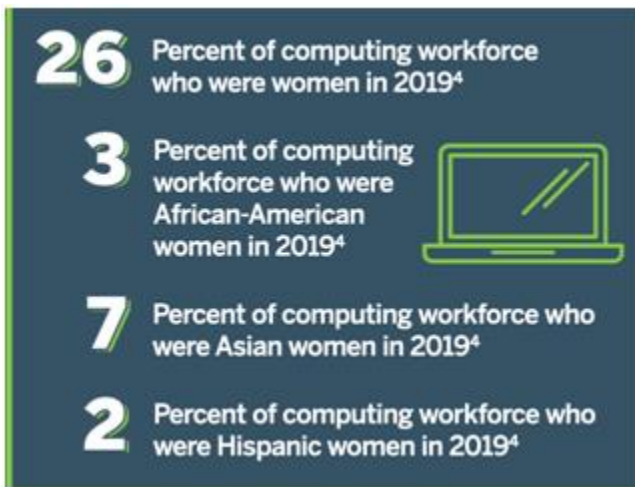
Mary Peterson and Rose Ennis



Public Policy - Advocate for Computer Science Education

AAUW believes that high-quality public education is the foundation of a democratic society and the key to improving economic prosperity and gender equality.

As part of high-quality education, every student needs computer science education. Computing and computational thinking are increasingly important 21st-century skills. These skills lead the way for innovative solutions to all kinds of problems. Computing and technology knowledge and experience is in high demand in every industry. Digital skills are required in 71% of all US jobs. A computing career offers job security, high salaries, and meaningful work. Only 26% of the computing workforce in 2019 were women.



Technology permeates every aspect of society. Computer science drives innovation throughout the US economy, but is marginalized throughout K-12 education. Inadequate computing education shortchanges all students. Computer science opens more doors than any other discipline. Computer skills will help students in any career—from architecture to zoology. This matters greatly for girls and women.

Computer science needs to be integrated into all aspects of education. Just as students learn how to write an essay or how electricity works, it's important for every student to have a chance to learn how the internet works, create a website and design an app. Coding provides hands-on activities in a virtual environment. It teaches the skills to solve problems by practicing decomposition, pattern recognition, and algorithm development throughout K-12. Integrating computer science into the arts and nature is what builds interest in young girls. Continuing that interest with data science and graphic programming in high school will help build our future workforce. Combining that with nature and outdoor learning also helps children learn the power of one action maker. Our own WHC member, Karen North, is connecting with Green Houston <http://www.greenhoustontx.gov/> and the mayor's office to build internships for our youth that combine conservation and computing.

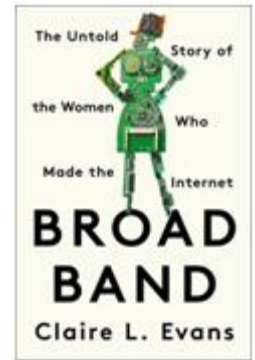
Computer science is offered in only 46% of Texas high schools. Texas is in the process of creating a plan for K-12 computer science as required by [HB 2984](#) (2019). A plan that articulates the goals for computer science, strategies for accomplishing the goals, and timelines for carrying out the strategies is important for making computer science a fundamental part of the state's education system. Locally there is no long-range computer science education plan as part of visioning in SBISD or most other Harris County school districts.

Here are a few ideas you can do to promote computer education:

- Write your Texas legislators to encourage them to fund computer education and help districts implement teacher training and computer science courses. Also request that computer science be required for graduation, as many states are starting to do. See the sample letters you can send to change policy from <https://advocacy.code.org/> Look for the take action box and the letter to local elected official
- Write our congresswoman, Lizzie Fletcher, who is supporting [HB 3266](#), a bill that provides funding from the defense department and will require every student in ROTC to take computer science.

● Add **Broad Band: The Untold Story of the Women Who Made the Internet** to your reading list to learn why we need to work together to promote change.

● Learn about Reinvented Magazine written for women in STEM by women in STEM which tells the untold stories of brilliant and inspiring women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. <https://www.reinventedmagazine.com/>



Our AAUW voices together can create change that is urgently needed. See the 2015 AAUW Report “Solving the Equation for Women’s Success” and see why you are needed as a variable. For more information you can visit these websites:

- Computer Science For Texas, <http://cs4tx.org/>
- National Center for Women & IT, <http://www.ncwit.org/>
- Texas Girls Collaborative Project, <http://www.txgcp.org/>
- National Girls Collaborative Project, <http://ngcproject.org/>
- Computer Science For All, <http://www.csforall.org/>
- Code.org Advocacy, http://advocacy.code.org/state_handouts/Texas.pdf

Lastly, you can also join our AAUW-WHC WISE group to keep informed.

*Karen North and Georgia Kimmel
Public Policy*

WISE Women

Please join us for a WISE Zoom Happy New Year on **Monday Jan 4th at 10:00** as we share a “cup of coffee” and continue our Goodall conversation. We will see what Jane learned about *Chimps and Humans*, and *Humans and the Environment*. After learning about *Animal Intelligence* last month, the big question we answered was: Where is Waldo? Curious?? The answer will be shared on Jan. 4th as we wonder where 2021 might take us. You can sign up for her course at <https://www.masterclass.com>.

Please contact Karen North, at 713-789-6482 or knorth@me.com if you would like to join our Zoom conversation. She will send out a link on Sunday, January 3rd.

Karen North



JANUARY, 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, January 6, 1:30 p.m. The Silent Patient by Alex Michaelides. Coordinator, Daphne Scharar 713-412-2140, dascharar@gmail.com, Co-Coordinator, Linda Morgan, 281-293-0976, amorgan352@sbcglobal.net.

Evening Contemporary Literature

Monday, January 4, 3:30 p.m. Pale Horse, Pale Rider by Katherine Ann Porter. Coordinator, Jo Glidewell, 936-327-2085, WCGLIDE@gmail.com. Co-Coordinator, Sharon Jorgeson, 281-703-5939, sjorgeson@gmail.com.

Contemporary Readers

Wednesday, January 6, 1:00 p.m. The Huntress by Kate Quinn. Coordinator, Margaret Gruss, 281-589-0411, mgruss@att.net. Co-Coordinator, Sharon Pope, 713-376-0940, slpope@comcast.net.

Mystery Book Club

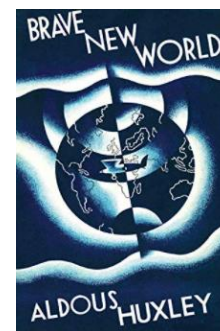
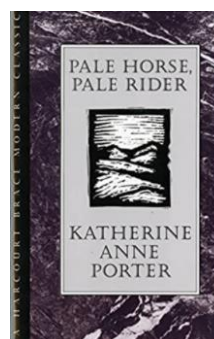
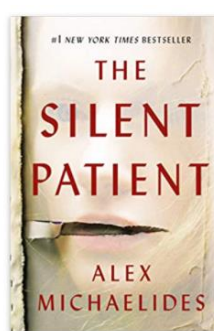
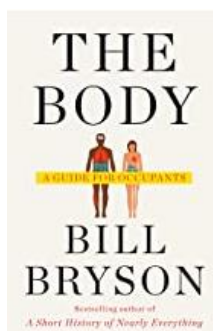
Tuesday, January 19, 1:30 p.m. The Silent Patient by Alex Michaelides. Coordinator, Melba Armstrong, 281-392-3190, armstrong.melba@comcast.net. Co-Coordinator, Pat Pease, 713-824-1681. popease@aol.com.

Enjoying History Book Club

Monday, January 11, 1:30 pm. The Body, A Guide for Occupants by Bill Bryson. Co-Coordinators, Nancy Guilloud, 713-785-6336, nanguilloud@aol.com, Nancy Gusler, 713-464-5932, ntgusler@gmail.com

Outstanding Literature

Tuesday, January 12, 9:30 a.m. Brave New World by Aldous Huxley. Coordinator, Leigh Rappole, 281-596-0161, leighrap@aol.com. Co-Coordinator, Barbara Butler, 713-305-0570, barbarabutler1959@att.net.



X 2

Hiking Honeys



There is no hike scheduled for January. If this changes, 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 Garden Divas will stay indoors for our January meeting and still enjoy the beauty of the garden. Join us for a Zoom get-together with both familiar and strange plants on the **second Tuesday of January (Jan. 12)**. Pick up some tips on plant identification and start dreaming about your spring plantings. Patio, pot, or yard gardeners welcome.



In addition to learning how to identify plants from our resident expert Loretta Coussirat; we will venture into the realm of AI (Artificial Intelligence) via a smartphone app designed to identify various plants in our region. Bring a leaf or two of a plant you absolutely know the identification and a leaf or two of some that you may not. We will test our skills with our newly acquired knowledge as well as practice with the phone app. If possible, download the PlantNet app (free) for your iPhone or Android prior to the meeting. We will walk through this process if you have difficulty.

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

Hope to SEE you in December.
Susan Boone

Byway Birders

Byway birders will check out local birding spots in small groups. Last month members reported some rare birds for our area. The Mountain Bluebird and a Painted Redstart were seen. We will discuss our finds by Zoom on **January 9 at 7:00 pm**. Anyone interested in being added to this group should contact Coordinator, Pat Dach at 281-701 5846 or patdach@gmail.com.



Pat Dach



Great Decisions



Great Decisions Thursday Afternoon Group

The First and Third Thursday Great Decisions group will meet on **February 4, 2021** and **February 18, 2021**. The topics of discussion will be "Global Supply Chains and National Security" and "Persian Gulf Security Issues." Meetings will take place on Zoom this spring at the regular meeting time from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. For further information, contact Martha Ewell at 713-782-2084 or marthaewell@att.net.

Great Decisions Inside the Loop

This group continues to meet via Zoom twice a month on **Tuesday from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m.** 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

The 2nd and 4th Wednesday Evening Great Decisions Group will meet via Zoom from **7:00 to 9:00 p.m.** on **February 10, 2021** and **February 24, 2021**. The topics for discussion will be "The Role of International Organizations in a Global Pandemic" and "Global supply Chains and National Security". For more information please contact Coordinator Willette Norman at 281-497-3626 or willetten@gmail.com.

Bridge Groups – Various



Sorry, wrong kind of bridge.

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.



Aurora Borealis



Festival of Lights in Lyon



Sunrise on Vembanad Lake

Vicarious Voyagers

Let's continue to travel vicariously. Road Scholar has posted new virtual learning opportunities that involve tours and lectures: <https://www.roadscholar.org/>. Rick Steves can be accessed on You Tube and Amazon Prime Video. Find joy in traveling to new places. Coordinator, Diana Guarniere, 281-493-2997, guarniered@gmail.com. Co-Coordination, Nancy Bowden, 281-589-7423, nanbowd@sbcglobal.net.

Diana Guarniere

Classic Gourmet



On **January 09, 2021 at 7 p.m.**, we will eat together virtually. Since we are unable to travel in person until Coronavirus is under control, this year we try to visit some of the places through food. In January, the dinner will be an Asian New Year celebration. I will provide some recipe suggestions and each person can prepare their own dinner. We will eat together through Zoom. 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

Barbara Cook will host a Zoom Nouveau Gourmet on **Saturday, January 2 at 6:30 pm**. The theme is New Years. The menu will feed two to four. You will create your own meal of citrus salmon, Hoppin' John, sauteed greens and poached oranges over ice cream. Appetizer is apple and grapes and honey with cheese.

If interested, please RSVP to Coordinator Diane Statham at distatham@msn.com or 281-497-6259.



Bonding Over Birth Dates

This month, the December birthday girls once again gathered for their collective birthday party, this time via Zoom, thirteen of us in all. We wore hats, ate donuts and brownies, drank beverages, and lit candles. We welcomed a new member, Jami Jones, and got her linked up with several interest groups. We checked in with our founder and past branch president, Barbara Hopkins, with help from her husband, John. We chatted with Bridgette Mongeon where she was celebrating her birthday inside her camper in Huntsville State Park. We reconnected with 93-year-old Anna Belle Anderson, an honorary life (50+years) AAUW member, and will be sending her cards. And we shared. For many, it was a way to catch up with people that we don't see any other time. We shared a common bond.

This was the first Interest group I joined as a new member back in 2011 but they have been going for some time. The December bunch, which included Barb Hopkins, Carol Telfer and Margaret Carlson were bemoaning the fact that with their December birthdays, they often got the "short shrift" due to the holiday season. In the early years, the group met in homes for their celebrations, but more recently have enjoyed their luncheon at Rudi Lechner's Restaurant, usually with 12 to 15 in attendance.

We can get too comfortable with our own existence, especially in a year like this one. Friendships need nurturing. New friendships cannot develop in a vacuum. I have two new friends now. We all need community, a place to belong.

Interest groups come and most of them thrive, but some fall away. I encourage you all to get YOUR birthday month party back up and running. You can get your month's names from Mary Andersen, our Database Manager. January is just around the corner. Common bonds are just an excuse, but it is a good one.

Jane Wood





Joyce Pritchard Jan 1
Pat Thomsen Jan 1
Julia Ray Jan 2
Barbara Butler Jan 6
Meredith Griffis Jan 6
Edie O'Brien Jan 7
Paula Wynhoff Jan 7
Elizabeth Kelly Jan 08
Nancy Guilloud Jan 11

Patricia Loeffler Jan 11
Enny Schissler Jan 14
Patricia Brice Jan 15
Frances Mayberry Jan 16
Mary Ann Jordon Jan 18
Suzanne Dalati Jan 22
Ligita Longo Jan 22
Roslyn Metchis Jan 30
Marjorie Pierce Jan 31

Directory Updates

Nancy Ennis new address:
3600 S. Lamar Blvd., #409
Austin, TX 78704

Barbara Kyse cell phone:
210-379-4804