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June Newsletter deadline:

May 15, 2021

Stay Informed

Branch website:

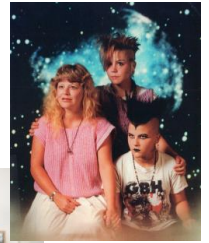
aauw-whc.org

National website:

aauw.org

Saturday, May 15, 2021

"Finding the Path to Your Family Story"



Stephanie Twyford's mission is to help individuals preserve their personal stories in timeless, high-quality multimedia presentations for succeeding generations. Her keen interest in creating personal videos led her to the creation of Legacy Multimedia, which allows her to combine her talents in the fields of visual art and writing and editing.

Twyford will share her knowledge of the importance of crafting a meaningful and engaging presentation for one's family and future family. Her commitment to high-quality work helps put people at ease as they capture their stories to pass on to loved ones. Knowing what to ask our aging family members and what to include in a collection of anecdotes simplifies our goals of defining the persona of someone one loves dearly.



Whether you feel it's time to create your own story or that of a loved parent, you will want to hear this award-winning artist tell her own tale of helping others to chronicle their life experiences. **Zoom with us at 9:45 a.m. on Saturday, May 15th.**

Cindy Hickock
Program Vice President

President's Message

Dear West Harris County AAUW Members,

Hopefully, you have received your COVID vaccine if it is appropriate for you to do so. Many of us have and are looking forward to getting out more. However, AAUW National has not yet given the go ahead for us to have in person meetings. Please be respectful of their guidelines.



The COVID guidelines will impact our end of the year luncheon. We have Plan A and Plan B for this event.



Plan A: A luncheon at Maggiano's on **June 12** with a limited number of guests. Karen North has offered to stream the presentation by Poppy Northcutt so all can participate.

Plan B: The entire **June 12** meeting will be held online.

With this in mind, you will receive a blast after the May 10, 2021, board meeting, letting you know the decision. This decision hinges on National releasing branches to have in person meetings.

Please continue to let either Susanne Dalati, Corresponding Secretary, or myself know of important events in member's lives. West Harris County wants to be a support system for our membership.

Stay Well!
Carolyn Morris
President AAUW-WHC

Membership

Although National AAUW is not allowing group gatherings, West Harris County Branch is preparing for our first opportunity! We are getting ready for the annual Branch Recognition Luncheon on **Saturday, June 12, 2021** at Maggiano's Italian Restaurant. The Baker-Telfer Scholarship presentation and a program by Poppy Northcutt will be on the agenda. Additionally, we are preparing for the Branch Membership Coffee at Memorial Drive United Methodist Church on **August 28th**. New and returning members will receive an invitation as time grows near and restrictions are removed.

It is important to renew your dues so you can participate in AAUW-WHC. Please help our branch by renewing your membership online. You received a renewal form unique to you on March 29, 2021, from Memberinfo@aauw.org. By renewing online with a credit card, you save the cost to national of paying someone to enter the information manually. If you prefer, you can send a check to Diane Roberts (5607 St. Paul St., Bellaire, TX 77401). This year dues are \$86.00.

Please also remember not all members are able to attend ZOOM meetings, but a card or a phone call is important to their feeling connected with WHC members.



Always important these days is staying safe. If anyone needs a ride for COVID vaccine, please give me a call. Thank you to all of you that continue make West Harris County Branch a vibrant organization.

Carolyn Stoffel
Membership Vice President

VOTER SUPPRESSION

Access to the ballot is key to democratic government. It allows the citizens to participate in shaping policy through direct referendums and choice of political representation. It is not only a right; it is a duty of every citizen to participate. Voter suppression is a means of depriving citizens of the right to voting access, i.e., disenfranchisement. A political party may choose to enact voter suppression measures to avoid the necessity of having to justify their agenda. It is a way of tilting the playing field to avoid competition in the marketplace of ideas and to avoid having to compromise. If you set the conditions of assured election wins, you never have to worry about appealing to more than a reliable, carefully chosen base. Voter suppression improves the ability of a particular party to retain power and to avoid accountability. It is a tactic favored by authoritarian leaders of every description. Voter suppression in any form has no place in a democracy.



Voter suppression takes many forms. They include banning drive through voting and 24-hour access to polls. Other such efforts include limiting early voting, closing polls at 7 p.m. regardless of voters remaining on line to cast a ballot, limiting access to mail-in ballot drop boxes, limiting polling places. There is disagreement about what is gained by demanding ID from people casting a ballot.

Specific to Texas, Both HB 6 and SB 7 impose a gag rule on election officials that prohibit them from “soliciting” votes by mail applications from Texans, backed up by criminal penalties. The language is so broad that they likely prohibit local officials from even mentioning the mere existence of voting by mail unless first prompted by a voter. These bills also undermine confidentiality for voters with disabilities and limited English proficiency with invasive questions that may require disclosure of private or medically confidential information. Also, these bills would give partisan poll watchers free rein in polling places. Texas poll watchers have a notorious track record of intimidating Black voters and voters of color, including in 2020. Allowing poll watchers to videotape voters inside the polls is an intimidating tactic.

Any election law that makes it more difficult to vote, and may disproportionately discourage participation by Black or Brown voters, should be seen as an attempt at voter suppression. Many people struggle with shift work, transportation, and child care. The Supreme Court in 2013 in *Shelby V. Holder* removed the ability of the Justice Department to enforce the Voting Rights Act of 1965 provision allowing oversight of states inclined toward discriminatory election practices. The rationale was that racism is a thing of the past.

A continuing problem with our elections in this country is low voter turnout. The election of 2020 had one of the best rates of voter participation that we have seen in many years. Moreover, there seems to be widespread agreement that the election of 2020 was a very free and fair election. There seems to be agreement that the 2020 election had no widespread fraud. Lawsuit after lawsuit has failed to demonstrate otherwise. No proof has ever been offered of widespread fraud.

Forty-three state legislatures have brought forth election legislation in the name of promoting integrity and confidence in the electoral process. There is a saying “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” As voters we need to understand what these proposed bills seek to fix and how passing them would address potential fraud.

Diane Statham

AAUW WHC Branch Archives

Collection of documents

The end of the AAUW fiscal year is fast approaching, and it will be time to assemble the WHC Branch records/documents of our activities for the past year. Below are the guidelines for collecting them. Martha Ewell, Historian, is responsible for gathering these records for transfer to the U of H Library Carey Shuart Women's Research Collection. The fiscal year is always July 1 to June 30.

The U of H Library Archivist encourages us to collect as many digital, paper, and loose materials as possible. There is ample archival storage space to accommodate all materials that we collect that will contribute to our history and activities throughout the year.

Please send all documents to Martha Ewell, email: marthaewell@att.net

Documents to collect and person responsible:

- Items such as pictures, old WHC video tapes and ephemera that individual members would like to submit to the archives.
- AAUW special interest groups (contents of emails or other publications when appropriate, photos, etc.)—the Leaders of each special interest/activity group
- Obituaries of AAUW WHC Branch members—the Corresponding Secretary
- Records still held in the personal collections of past leaders and members
- Records of Student Affiliate's activities

Timeline:

- Data collection takes place on an annual basis at the end of the calendar year on **June 30**.
- All documents collected are submitted to the U of H Library Special Collections by the following August or September.
- The Branch Historian is responsible for collecting all documents both digital and paper.



Types of Documents:

- **Digital documents**—including primary digital documents. May be submitted on a zip/thumb drive or by email if appropriate.
- **Paper documents**—handouts, brochures, folders, any kind of paper document that supports the activity, etc. Paper documents are significant source of research material. Researchers like to “feel” the material and to view it in its original format. and find that these documents add to their understanding and appreciation of the materials by bringing it alive. Please make sure the documents are identified and dated.
- **Memorabilia**—any special items/artifacts that are pertinent to our activities but do not fall into the category of paper or digital documents.
- **Audio-visual materials**—Photos of meetings, events, special interest group activities—documented with date, activity, and the names of AAUW participants featured in the photo, power point presentations, videos. These may also be included in newsletters.
- **Photos**—it is essential to identify the members in the photos, the activity, the group, the date of activity and anything else which pertains to the photo. Without clear identification the photos have no meaning to the audience at large.

Martha Ewell
Historian

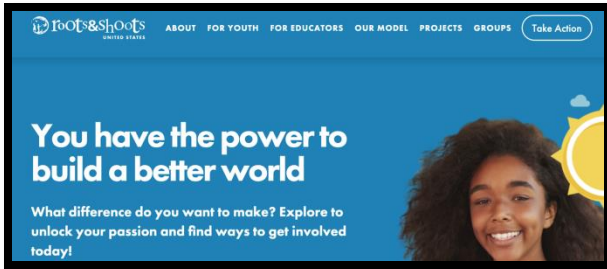
May, 2021 ACTIVITIES & INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Sharon Jorgeson, Activities Coordinator

WISE Activity Group

Please join us on **Monday, May 3rd at 10:00 a.m.** as we finish our conversation about Jane Goodall and her continued work on conservation.

In April we listened to Lessons on **Advocacy Strategies** and **Communication**. This month we will learn about her advocacy in action through [Roots and Shoots](#) and [Reasons for Hope](#). And can discuss next steps such as making connections with what the City of Houston is doing for conservation locally, <http://www.greenhoustontx.gov/>.



Please let Karen North know if you would like to join our Zoom conversation. knorth@me.com

Karen North

Byway Birders

Byway Birders will meet on **Friday, May 7 at 7:30 p.m.** on ZOOM. Be prepared to talk about the places you have been and the birds you have seen. High Island continues to be a great place to visit in May for spring migrants and cormorants, egrets and spoonbills at the rookery.

For more information contact Coordinator Pat Dach at 281-701-5846 or patdach@gmail.com.

Pat Dach



Hiking Honeys



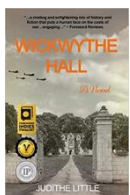
Hikes have been suspended indefinitely. When we start up again you will receive a notice from your coordinator. If you are interested in joining the Honeys, contact Melba Armstrong at 281-392-3190 or armstrong.melba@comcast.net.

Melba Armstrong

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



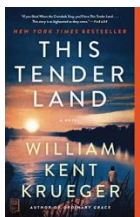
Wednesday, May 5, 1:30 p.m. Wickwythe Hall or Chanel Sisters (reader's choice) by Judithe Little. Coordinator, Daphne Scharar, 713-412-2140, dascharar@gmail.com, Co-Coordinator, Linda Morgan, 281-293-0976, amorgan352@sbcglobal.net.



Evening Contemporary Literature

Monday, May 3, 3:30 p.m. The Memory Painter: A Novel of Love and Reincarnation by Gwendolyn Womack. Coordinator, Jo Glidewell, 936-327-2085, WCGLIDE@gmail.com. Co-Coordinator, Sharon Jorgeson, 281-703-5939, sjorgeson@gmail.com.

Contemporary Readers



Wednesday, May 5, 1:00 p.m. This Tender Land by William Kent Krueger. Coordinator, Sharon Pope, 713-376-0940, slpope@comcast.net. Co-Coordinator, Cathy Urquhart, 713-939-523, catherineurquhart@sbcglobal.net.

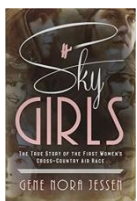
Mystery Book Club

Tuesday, May 18, 1:30 p.m. The Dry by Jane Harper. Coordinator, Melba Armstrong, 281-392-3190, armstrong.melba@comcast.net. Co-Coordinator, Pat Pease, 713-824-1681, popeace@aol.com.

Outstanding Literature

Tuesday, May 11, 9:30 a.m. I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou. Coordinator, Leigh Rappole, 281-596-0161, leighrap@aol.com. Co-Coordinator, Barbara Butler, 713-305-0570, barbarabutler1959@att.net.

Enjoying History Book Club



Monday, May 10, 1:30 p.m. Sky Girls by Gene Nora Jessen. Co-Coordinators, Nancy Guilloud, nanguilloud@aol.com, Nancy Gusler, ntgusler@gmail.com.

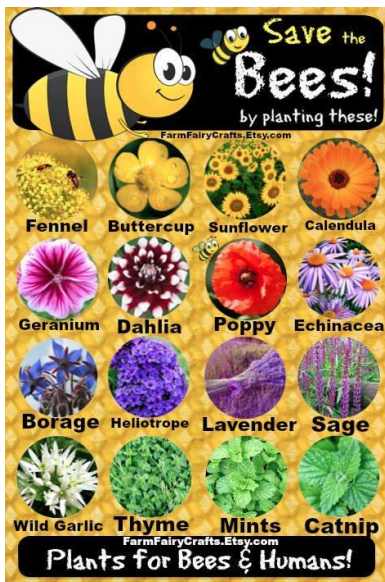


Garden Divas



The Garden Divas will get Ideas for Native Pollinators in their May Meeting.

The Garden Divas will explore some ideas to replenish their frozen landscapes as well as learn how to create an environment to help save beneficial bees. We will 'ZOOM' with **Jennifer Feeley**, a Texas Master Gardener. She will enlighten the group with her expertise on native pollinators. Jennifer currently works at Wabash Feed & Garden, and has been doing organic gardening for over 30 years. She had one of the Organic Farms in the Coastal area. We will have an onsite 'ZOOM' at Wabash Feed Store to get up close and personal with suggested specimens. Wabash Feed & Garden has one of the most extensive selections of organic gardening supplies found in Houston.



Garden designs for pollinators do not need to be complicated, expensive or time-consuming. *That's the beauty of going native!* Pollinators have simple needs: they need a year-round supply of pesticide-free food and water, and bare ground or wood for nesting. Suggested plants include drought and heat tolerant plants that bloom and provide food most of the year, and are usually available locally.

Use **pollinator-friendly landscape management practices**. Avoid toxic pesticides, use organic alternatives instead which are safer for your family and pets. Limit pruning dead or dying branches with hollow stems; if possible, allow dead trees to stand or leave trunk stumps. Limit mowing grassy areas with low, dense cover. Limit artificial light sources, insects need natural light/dark cycles and protection from predators.

Most of all have fun! Your garden will delight you with new discoveries each day. Please let Susan Boone samboone@gmail.com know whether you want to learn about ways to help the area bees. The session will be **May 4, @ 10:00 a.m.** via ZOOM. If you are NOT on the Diva email list and want to be, please let me know.

Susan Boone

Bridge Groups – Various

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 May.

If there is a change to this, you will be advised by your coordinator.

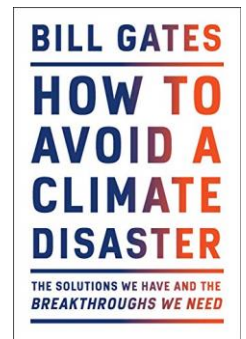


Great Decisions



Great Decisions Thursday Afternoon Group 2021

This group will meet on Zoom, **Thursday, May 6, 2021 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.** The topic for discussion will be “Role of the WHO”. On **May 20, 2021**, the group will discuss “The End of Globalization”. In a final meeting, **May 27, 2021**, we will discuss Bill Gates book, “How to Avoid a Climate Disaster: The Solutions We Have and the Breakthroughs We Need”. 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 meets at **3:30 p.m.** on ZOOM. The Zoom link will be sent in time for the meeting. All AAUW members are welcome. *For dates of May meetings and to be included on the notification list, contact Coordinator, Pat Thomsen at 713-302-8899, patthom2@sbcglobal.net or Co-Coordinator, Linda Marlin at 832-533-31265, 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** through May. The May meetings are on **May 12 and May 26**. The topics will be “Role of WHO” and “The End of Globalization”. For additional information contact Coordinator, Willette Norman at 281-497-3626 or willetten@gmail.com.

Vicarious Voyagers

Vicarious Voyagers completed their programs for this year. No more have been scheduled at this time. Future plans TBD. For further information contact Coordinator Diana Guarniere at 832-465-5578 or guarniered@gmail.com.



Gourmet Groups

Classic Gourmet



The Classic Gourmet group will meet **May 8 at 7:00 p.m.** to virtually eat together. More of us are getting vaccinated, but we're a long way from getting Coronavirus under control. In May, we will celebrate Cinco de Mayo. I will provide some Tex-Mex recipe suggestions; each person can prepare their own dinner or get it to-go from a local restaurant. We will eat together through Zoom. For further information, please contact the co-chairs: Barb Cook 713-705-7832 or Kris Bybee-Finley 304-610-8708.

Nouveau Gourmet

The Nouveau Gourmet dinner group will meet on **Saturday, May 1 at 6:30 p.m.** The theme is Picnic. Please contact coordinator, Diane Statham at 281-497-6259 or distatham@msn.com.



Cultural Tours

A Tribute to Priscilla List



As many of you know, Priscilla was in charge of the cultural tour activities and committee for years. She did an amazing job introducing us to Houston and surrounding areas always making sure that a special lunch time was included for socializing. The cultural tours ended up being the activity of the month, a fun filled day and excellent way to meet other members and make new friends.

Priscilla will be greatly missed. May her memory be a blessing.

As things start opening up again let's restart the tours. Please let Coordinator, Pat Farnell know if you are interested in being on the cultural tour committee. Contact her at farnellpat@gmail.com or 832-867-2908.



Judith Starr	May 04	Cindy Edwards	May 23
Janet Thies	May 8	Marilyn Watson	May 23
Sharon Jorgeson	May 12	Cheryl Smith	May 25
Marylois Miller	May 14	Pamela Doan	May 26
Marilyn Arendt	May 16	Edith Dunlop	May 27
Donna Harshman	May 16	Susan Wilson	May 28
Irene Infante	May 18	Janelle Meredith	May 29
Shari Mauthner	May 22		

Directory Updates

Margaret Gruss' new email:
mcgruss1210@gmail.com

Karla Dunn's new email:
karlacleo1@gmail.com