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October Newsletter deadline:  
September 15, 2021

### Stay Informed

Branch website:

[aauw-whc.org](http://aauw-whc.org)

National website:

[aauw.org](http://aauw.org)

## *Bridgette Mongeon and Eve*

**September Membership Meeting**  
**Saturday, September 18, 2021, 9:30 a.m.**  
**Tracy Gee Community Center (or Zoom)**

Our speaker for our September meeting will be Bridgette Mongeon, Houston's own renowned master sculptor. In addition, Bridgette is a published writer, educator and coach. Many of you will remember Bridgette was our key-note speaker at our final EYH in February 2019.

Bridgette breathes life into clay and bronze sculpture. She believes a portrait is more than a likeness; it is capturing the spirit and essence of each person. Her passion for life and her spirit enlivens each sculpture. Her work is diverse. She loves the commissions of children and portraits of pets and excites over the creating of school mascots. Adding whimsy to bronze by mixing literature and sculpture is a joy. She displays this in her monumental bronze of the Mad Hatter Tea party. Many of us have visited the Mad Hatter Tea Party sculpture at Evelyn's Park. It is indeed breathtaking!



In 2020, Bridgette was commissioned to create a sculpture of Eve, and she completed this monumental work during the pandemic. Bridgette will share her journey of how she brought Eve to life.

"It was not long ago that my sculpture of Eve was installed at Generation Park (north Houston). We never had a dedication because of the pandemic. Then, my client sent this email that came from the CEO of Apache Industries, who apparently is housed in the building where Eve resides. It lightened my heart. There are so many stories behind this sculpture. Many are miraculous to me. One day I hope to share." Bridgette Mongeon.

**Lilian Care**  
**AAUW - WHC Branch Program Chair**

## President's Message



Dear West Harris County Members,

As we began the 2021-22 AAUW-WHC year we were hoping the COVID pandemic would be behind us.

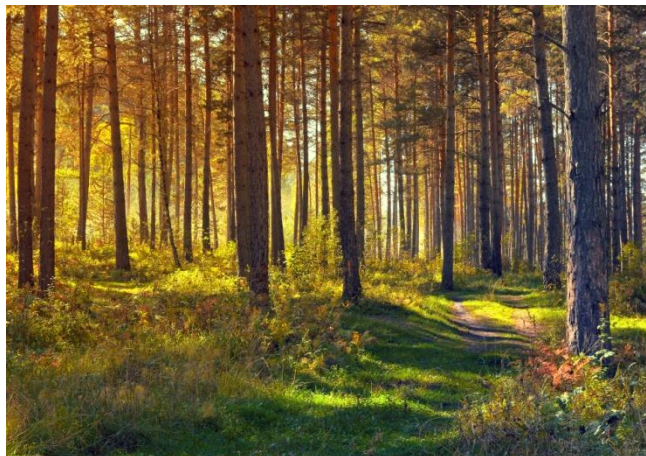
Unfortunately, the Delta and other variants have become way too familiar, and their impact continues to affect all of us. Having to cancel our Prospective Members' Coffee was disheartening, but thanks to Carolyn Morris' guidance this past year, we all learned to Zoom and cope in ways that kept many doors open rather than shut. Our branch will continue to meet face to face when appropriate or Zoom when either required or requested. *Safety first will be our mantra!*

This is the time of the year when we welcome new members and showcase the interesting activities they can participate in during the coming year. Please reach out to these new members whenever possible. Sharon Jorgeson, our activities chair, worked throughout the summer with representatives of each group to organize and plan another exceptional year! Since new members did not have an opportunity to visit and explore these fantastic programs at the coffee, our Zoom presentation gave them a glimpse into what AAUW-WHC has to offer to its members.

Our Directory Editor, Pam Doan, will have the directory printed and ready for delivery by mid-September. It will provide all of us with contact information within the organization, times and dates of meetings and activities, as well as background information on many of AAUW-WHC's accomplishments and goals. **Please make sure your contact information is current. Email Pam Doan by September 5<sup>th</sup> if you need any changes made.**

This year's goal is to make sure each and every member enjoys being part of such an incredible national organization. Our grassroots efforts promote and support a better life for women and girls so they will thrive through advocacy, gender equity, and education.

*Rose Ennis,  
President*





## Member Notification

Please send Becky French ([bfrench1@flash.net](mailto:bfrench1@flash.net)), Corresponding Secretary, any news about our members they give you permission to share.

This year we are sending digital birthday cards to all members for whom we have dates, so if you've had a birthday since mid-July, please check your email inbox for a card. We hope you enjoy them.

*Becky French  
Corresponding Secretary*



AAUW of Texas 2022 Convening  
"A Golden Opportunity"

Break out your golden bling  
and shine with us at the  
50<sup>th</sup> AAUW of Texas Convening

Hurst Conference Center

April 29-30, 2022

Save the date for the 50<sup>th</sup> AAUW of Texas Convening. We are planning a celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Convening and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Title IX. The Hurst Conference Center just northwest of Fort Worth will host us in their facility from Friday evening, April 29 through Saturday, April 30. Accommodations will be in the new, attached Hilton Garden Inn.

Since we will be celebrating the "Golden" 50<sup>th</sup> Convening and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Title IX, we are planning to have a little fun by encouraging everyone to wear gold- clothing, shoes, jewelry, scarves. The room will be "glowing" with the enthusiasm of the members for the mission of AAUW.

The current proposal is to have several dynamic speakers, an opening reception, and celebrations of members and branch accomplishments. There will be time for networking so we can make and renew friendships after the long Covid shutdown. We hope you can join us.

Covid restrictions will be monitored during the planning with attendee safety in mind. The plan will include alternatives if the situation at the time requires a different format. Watch for further updates.

*Carolyn Stoffel  
Membership Vice President*

## Public Policy

### AAUW-Texas Position Statements on Special Session Bills

The AAUW-Texas Public Policy Committee, with guidance from our lobbyist, prepared position statements on select bills to present to legislators during the 87<sup>th</sup> Legislature Called Sessions.

#### **Election Reform (SB 1/HB 3) - OPPOSE**

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As we have said many times during the regular session, election reform bills are solutions to problems that do not exist. There was little to no evidence of voter fraud in the last election cycle, so at most this bill will disenfranchise Texas citizens, especially the elderly population who already have difficulties voting. We hope that the legislature will consider the many negative impacts that this bill could have on the democratic process in Texas.

#### **Thirteenth Check (SB 7/HB 85) - SUPPORT**

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Since 2004, members of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas have not seen an increase in their retirement checks. Inflation since the last increase has eaten away at retired teachers' benefits, and the increased cost of living in many areas of the state has put many of our retired teachers in extremely difficult situations. After seventeen years without an increase, a raise is long overdue.

#### **Youth Sports (SB 2/SB 32/HB 185) - OPPOSE**

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It is incredibly unfortunate that the legislature is spending its time targeting transgender youth while there are so many other pressing issues facing the state. Numerous studies have shown that participating in youth sports has a positive impact on mental health. For a population that disproportionately struggles with mental health issues, youth sports can be a key outlet for these students to connect with their peers. The state should not be prohibiting students from participating according to their gender identity.

#### **Family Violence Prevention (SB 9/SB 72) - SUPPORT**

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We support the Governor's efforts to prevent family violence. However, we do have some concerns about allowing parents to opt-out. The reason that an opt out for parents was not included in previous iterations of this bill was that, in some cases, the abuser is the parent. In other words, allowing parents to opt-out may exclude children most affected by family violence. Nevertheless, while the bill is imperfect, we support it in its current form.

#### **Critical Race Theory (SB 3) - OPPOSE**

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Legislation targeting Critical Race Theory is completely unnecessary, as this theory is not taught in public schools. This bill will create uncertainty for, and will lead to intimidation of, our public-school teachers. We believe strongly that educators, not the government, should set the curriculum for students. While the bill itself is unnecessary, it sets an extremely dangerous precedent that should be rejected.

*Georgia Kimmel,  
WHCB Public Policy Chair  
AAUW Texas Public Policy Committee member*

## Become a Volunteer Deputy Registrar

Enable all who are eligible to register to vote by becoming a Volunteer Deputy Registrar (VDR). It is easy to attend training as it is via Zoom. Participants must log-in on time and attend the training in its entirety. Trainings are approximately one hour. VDRs serve two years with terms expiring on December 31 of even-numbered years. At that point you can reapply and take training again for another term.

For those who are residents of Harris County find information and the link to the application form and to RSVP for training at <https://voterregistration.harrisvotes.com/Voter/Deputy#VolunteerDeputyVoterRegistrar>

If you are a resident of Fort Bend County check out

<https://wwendcw.fortbountytx.gov/government/departments/county-services/elections-voter-registration/general-information/volunteer-deputy-registrar>

If you reside in another county, check your County's Voter Registrar website.

All VDRs can participate in voter registration events prior to fall elections in 2022!

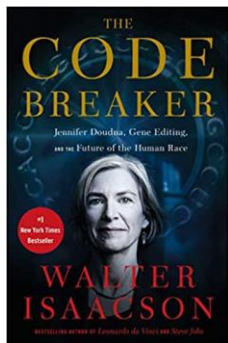
*Georgia Kimmel  
Public Policy Chair*



# September 2021 ACTIVITIES & INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Sharon Jorgeson, Activities Coordinator

## AAUW WISE - Women Interested in STEM Education



Please add [“The Code Breaker” by Walter Isaacson](#) to your reading list and mark October 14<sup>th</sup> on your calendar. Susan Dunten and Carolyn Morris will lead a discussion about *The Code Breaker* - the biography of Jennifer Doudna.

The book is about the life of Doudna and the virus-fighting trick used by bacteria, which has been battling viruses for more than a billion years. CRISPER is an immune system that can adapt itself to fight each new wave of viruses. “There’s a joy that springs from fathoming how something works, especially when that something is ourselves.” Jennifer Doudna relished that joy, and so can we. That’s what the book is all about. Doctor Doudna won the 2020 Nobel prize for chemistry. She is currently a professor at Cal-Berkeley.

At this time, we plan to meet at **10:00 Thursday October 14<sup>th</sup>** in the home of Susan Dunten for our discussion about this extraordinary woman. Walter Isaacson, a wonderful biographer, makes this book a “have to” read. Jennifer Doudna is a genuine heroine for our time.

Please let Karen North [knorth@me.com](mailto:knorth@me.com) know if you would like to join the WISE connections email list for updates.

This is an amazing and riveting read which covers the evolution of biotechnology in a compelling way. It is a thrilling tale of scientific discovery, gene-editing tech—and unlocking the mysteries of life. In “The Code Breaker” Walter Isaacson reprises several of his previous themes – science, genius, experiment, code, thinking differently – and meets his first female subject.

*Karen North*

## Byway Birders

On **Saturday, September 25 at 9:30 a.m.**, Byway Birders will visit Smith Point to see hundreds of hawks. We will have a picnic at Anahuac NWR and look for early migrants. Peg McNealy will be the contact person. 281-679-7299. To be added to contact list, email coordinator Pat Dach, [patdach@gmail.com](mailto:patdach@gmail.com). The date and location are subject to change depending on weather and Covid 19.



*Pat Dach*

## Hiking Honeys



A hike is tentatively planned for **Thursday, September 16**, but plans have not been finalized.

We are currently seeking input from our hikers as to their willingness to gather together for hikes, as well as trails they are interested in walking. All active hikers will receive further information as we come to a decision on when and where we will venture forth. If you are interested in joining the Honeys, contact Melba Armstrong at 281.392.3190 or [armstrong.melba@comcast.net](mailto:armstrong.melba@comcast.net).

*Melba Armstrong*



## Book Groups



### Afternoon Contemporary Literature

Wednesday, September 1, 1:30 p.m.

Karla and the Sun by Kazuo Ishiguro

(September will be by ZOOM)

Coordinator, Cheryl Smith, 402-651-2445

[ccherylsmile@gmail.com](mailto:ccherylsmile@gmail.com), Co-Coordinator,

Linda Morgan, 281-989-6499,

[amorgan352@sbcglobal.net](mailto:amorgan352@sbcglobal.net)

### Contemporary Readers

Wednesday, September 1, 1:00 p.m. via Zoom

The Midnight Library by Matt Haig

Please contact Coordinator, Sharon Pope, 713-376-

0940, [Spope576@gmail.com](mailto:Spope576@gmail.com). Co-Coordinator,

Cathy Urquhart, 713-939-0523,

[catherineurquhart@sbcglobal.net](mailto:catherineurquhart@sbcglobal.net). to be placed on

contact list.

### Enjoying History Book Club

We start the year with Susan Orlean's book, The Library Book. Discussion begins at 1:30 p.m. on September 13<sup>th</sup>. Emails will be sent to our history buffs closer to the time. We will decide on a Zoom meeting or in person as the time approaches. For any questions, please email Nancy Guilloud, [nanguilloud@aol.com](mailto:nanguilloud@aol.com) or Nancy Gusler, at [ntgusler@gmail.com](mailto:ntgusler@gmail.com).

### Zoom Eclectic Book Group

Thursday, September 16 at 2:30 p.m.

The Last Neanderthal by Claire Cameron

Email Carolyn Morris at [morriscs@aol.com](mailto:morriscs@aol.com) for the

Zoom invitation

### Evening Contemporary Literature

Monday, September 13, 5:00 p.m.

Hidden Valley Road by Robert Kolker

The scheduled meeting place is Los Tios Mexican Restaurant, but meeting may be changed to ZOOM depending on Covid situation.

Coordinator, Jo Glidewell, 936-327-2085,

[WCGSLIDE@gmail.com](mailto:WCGSLIDE@gmail.com). Co-Coordinator, Sharon

Jorgeson, 281-703-5939, [sjorgeson@gmail.com](mailto:sjorgeson@gmail.com).

### Mystery Book Club

Tuesday, September 21, 1:30 p.m. via Zoom

I Am Pilgrim by Terry Hayes

Coordinator, Melba Armstrong, 281-392-3190,

[armstrong.melba@comcast.net](mailto:armstrong.melba@comcast.net). Co-Coordinator, Pat

Pease, 713-824-1681, [popeace@aol.com](mailto:popeace@aol.com).

### Outstanding Literature

Tuesday September 14, 9:30 a.m. via Zoom

Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

Whether we meet in person will be decided on a month-by-month basis.

Coordinator, Leigh Rappole, 281-596-0161,

[leighrap@aol.com](mailto:leighrap@aol.com). Co-Coordinator, Barbara Butler,

713-305-0570, [barbarabutler1959@att.net](mailto:barbarabutler1959@att.net).

## Wine, Women & Wisdom



The Wine, Women & Wisdom will meet to enjoy beverages and enlightened conversation on **September 20<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 to 6 p.m.** at McCormick & Schmick, City Center location. Please be advised that there may be a change in plans depending on the Covid situation. Please contact Coordinator, Jane Cooper at 713-583-4611 or [xicooper@aol.com](mailto:xicooper@aol.com) or Co-coordinator, Marie Helmy at 281-787-6396 for status of the event.

## Garden Divas

The Garden Divas will begin the 2021 adventures on an outing (outside) to the *Habitat House*; 10037 Hazelhurst, 77080. We will meet on location at **11:00 a.m. on September 7.**

After raising her son on this beautiful property for 18 years, Selia thought "what now?" Soon the opportunity presented itself for her to acquire two additional adjoining lots. With "no adult supervision" her creativity took on a life of its own and the beloved *Habitat House* was born offering Short Term Housing Solutions for all walks of life.



Nestled in the heart of the oasis is a breathtaking garden, certified by the National Wildlife Federation's Backyard Habitat program. Backyard #11362, certificate #24714. Native flowers surround nine water features and 11 sitting areas to relax and unwind. Take a stroll to find aviaries with doves and finches, ponds with koi and turtles, tortoises, pigeons, ducks, one nice goose, wild birds, squirrels and a bunny.

Afterward, we will discuss these gardens at a nearby restaurant; Red Balloon. Weather permitting, we can enjoy lunch on the porch.

Address: 1800 W Sam Houston Pkwy N, Houston, TX 77043

Please contact Susan Boone, [samboone@gmail.com](mailto:samboone@gmail.com), to let her know you are interested in this trip. There is a \$5 expectation for a guided tour of Selia's gardens.

*Susan Boone*

## Bridge Groups – Various

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday (7:00 p.m.) Jane Judson 713-528-6105

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday (10:30 a.m.) Peg McNealy 281-679-7299

3<sup>rd</sup> Monday (10:00 a.m.) Melba Armstrong 281-392-3190

The bridge groups are not planning on meeting at this time. When this changes, you will be advised by your coordinator.



## Great Decisions Groups 2021

Great Decisions has three groups that meet in February through May. The Spring 2022 Topics will be announced in September or October. Check future newsletters for further information.

The Thursday Afternoon Great Decisions Group meets the first and third Thursdays, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. For further information, please contact Coordinator, Martha Ewell, tel. 713-782-2084.

The Tuesday Afternoon Group meets the first and third Tuesdays, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. For further information please contact Coordinator, Pat Thomsen at 713-466-7995 or [pthom2@bcglobal.net](mailto:pthom2@bcglobal.net).

The Wednesday Evening Group meets the second and fourth Wednesdays, 7: p.m. to 9:00 p.m. For further information please contact Coordinator, Willette Norman at 281-497-3626 or [willetten@gmail.com](mailto:willetten@gmail.com).

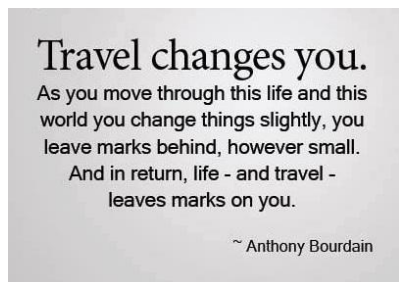
**VICARIOUS VOYAGERS: A travel interest group**  
Diana Guarniere and Carolyn Morris, Coordinators

**Thursday, September 30, 2021 – 10 a.m.**

Hostess: Diana Guarniere – 13814 Kimberley Lane, Houston 77079  
[guarniered@gmail.com](mailto:guarniered@gmail.com) 281-493-2997

After over a year's hiatus, we will gather in person with all those who have gotten their **vaccinations**. To reinvigorate our interest in travel and get reacquainted we will watch and discuss Rick Steves' DVD, *Why We Travel*. Brunch will be provided.

Please RSVP your attendance to the hostess.



## Gourmet Groups

### Classic Gourmet



Please join us **Saturday, September 11, 2021, at 7:00p.m.** for our first dinner in this year's series "The Joy of Cooking and Eating with Friends". Our first dinner will feature Thai Cuisine. We will follow CDC recommendations regarding COVID. If you have questions, please contact the coordinators: Barbara Cook at 713-705-7832 or Kris Bybee-Finley at 304-610-8708.

### Nouveau Gourmet

On **Saturday, September 18**, Hazel Kjos will host a Nouveau Gourmet event at her Sugar Land home at 6:30 p.m. The theme is Polish, i.e., Kielbasa, Perogis, Stuffed Sweet and Sour Cabbage. For more information contact Diane Statham at 281-497-6259 or [distatham@msn.com](mailto:distatham@msn.com)



## The Cultural Interest Group kicks off with a tour of an Iconic Neighborhood

We kick off our fall events on **Friday, October 22** with a walking tour of Broadacres. Near Rice University, Broadacres was among the Houston residential neighborhoods developed in the early 20th century. Its breathtaking oak allées and landscaping showcase the stately houses lining North and South boulevards.



Our 90-minute tour, led by the popular Jim Parsons of Preservation Houston, explores the architecture of these gracious homes and the stories of the oil, cotton, lumber, banking, and railroad leaders who built them.

Following lunch at Clebournes cafeteria, we will make a stop at the latest exhibit at the Menil Museum.

If you are interested in signing up for this event, please contact Elizabeth Martin at [elizamart349@gmail.com](mailto:elizamart349@gmail.com) or 713.542.0598. Details will be provided in the October newsletter.

### September Birthdays

Bernice Hotman	Sept 02
Misako Ajouz	Sept 04
Helen Maher	Sept 04
Laura Cahill	Sept 10
Susan Boone	Sept 11
Dorothy Harrison	Sept 12
Martha Ewell	Sept 14
Susan Hertz	Sept 15
Frances Haxby	Sept 18
Mary Adams	Sept 19
Noreen Smith	Sept 19
Georgia Kimmel	Sept 22
Jerry Morgan	Sept 22
Jeanne Wolbert	Sept 25

