



West Harris County Branch

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Volume XXXXVI

February 2022 Newsletter

Issue 6

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Lilian Care

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February Deadline:

January 15, 2022

Stay informed

Branch website: aauw-whc.org

National website: aauw.org

Primary Election Date:
March 1, 2022

Early Voting:
February 14-25

Protecting the rights of assisted living
and nursing home residents.



WHC Branch Program Meeting
Saturday, February 19 at 9:30 a.m.
Tracy Gee Community Center and Zoom

On January 1, 2022, Texas HB 3961 became law. What is HB 3961? It's the requirement that information regarding the Texas Office of the State Long-term Care Ombudsman program be posted on the websites of long-term care facilities in the state of Texas.

What is the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program?

Under the federal Older Americans Act (OAA) every state is required to have an Ombudsman Program that addresses complaints and advocates for improvements in the long-term care system. Each state has an Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman (Office), headed by a full-time State Long-Term Care Ombudsman (Ombudsman) who directs the program statewide. Across the nation, staff and thousands of volunteers are designated by State Ombudsmen as representatives to directly serve residents. In brief, the Ombudsman program advocates for residents of nursing homes, board, and care homes, assisted living facilities, and other similar adult care facilities. State Ombudsmen and their designated representatives work to resolve problems individual residents face and effect change at the local, state, and national levels to improve quality of care.

Our speaker, Mr. Greg Shelley, Managing Local Ombudsman, Harris County Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program at Cizik School of Nursing at UT Health Science Center at Houston, will present information on this important program that ensures the rights of senior citizens at long-term care facilities all around Texas are upheld and respected.

Greg has over twelve years of service with the ombudsman program, contributing as a volunteer initially and serving six years as the volunteer coordinator and staff ombudsman for Harris County. During his time as an ombudsman, he has enjoyed getting to know thousands of individuals, while learning about their journeys, educating them about rights and options, and helping them resolve a wide range of issues related to long-term care. He also provides nursing home and assisted living staff in-service training in Harris County.

Lilian Care, Program Vice President

Dear West Harris County Members,

My book club did not gather to discuss Fahrenheit 451, but our first AAUW Contemporary Evening Book Club meeting of 2022 ended with participants scrambling to the door due to an electrical fire at the Los Tios Restaurant on Wilcrest and Memorial! Not the kind of drama any of us want in our lives. Isn't dealing with the virus enough?



Unfortunately, Covid and its variants continue to disrupt our lives. The state convention, that many of us were looking forward to attending at the end of April, has been cancelled as an in-person event. All the hard work the state organizers had already completed is presently being revamped to a Zoom event. By next month's newsletter, I should have specifics to share with you regarding the reconfiguration of the convention.

In the meantime, we will continue with our fantastic monthly branch meetings in-person at Tracy Gee Community Center if you are vaxxed and on Zoom if you are not vaxxed or prefer that option.

*Cheers,
Rose Ennis, President*

Membership



February is American Heart Month according to the American Heart Association and the card makers of America! We have eleven members that showed great big hearts during the Holidays by checking in with our WHC Branch members. There were some addresses pending and some health issues noted from these calls. Both reasons enough to keep in touch with our member base

It has been a rough couple of years for personal contact, but these calls can lift spirits, note changes, and offer help if needed. We have six Dual membership members plus two that, although they have moved from the Houston area still maintain full membership in WHC Branch. These members add strength to the mission of AAUW and especially to West Harris County Branch.



Thank you to the wonderful members that helped to contact our membership. It is amazing what a phone call or card can do to make a day a little brighter for some people. Please let me know if you have a name of prospective member or a WHC member in need of help.

Stay well, Carolyn Stoffel

Public Policy

Detailing the Impacts of SB8: Texas' New Abortion Ban

In September 2021, legislation banning abortion after the detection of a fetal heartbeat (SB8) went into effect in Texas. AAUW West Harris County member Amy Rose, who works as a senior analyst for the [Harris County Commissioners Court's Analyst's Office](#) recently published a memo, at the request of Harris County Judge Lina Hildago, on how the county might mitigate the negative impacts of the law. This article summarizes her memo and includes an overview of the impact of SB8 in Harris County and an overview of opportunities to support individuals impacted by the law or otherwise mitigate the law's negative effects.

Overview of SB8

SB8 went into effect on September 1, 2021, and bans abortions in pregnancies where there is a detectable fetal heartbeat (typically six weeks gestation), except for in instances of medical emergencies. SB8 states that exceptions are provided in cases of a medical emergency. SB8 notably empowers private individuals, rather than the government, to enforce the law by permitting private residents to bring civil action against any individual that (1) performs or induces an abortion (such as physicians) after the detection of a fetal heartbeat; or (2) knowingly engages in conduct that aids or abets the performance or inducement of an abortion. Successful plaintiffs will be awarded "statutory damages in an amount of not less than \$10,000 for each abortion that the defendant performed or induced in violation [of this law], and for each abortion performed or induced in violation [of this law] that the defendant aided or abetted."



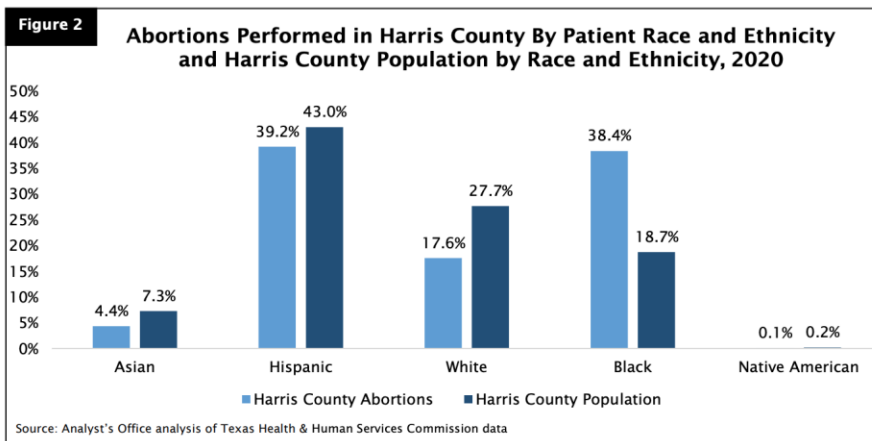
Impact of SB8

A study from the University of Texas at Austin's Texas Policy Evaluation Project finds SB8 would prevent the majority of pregnant individuals in Texas from obtaining abortion care—58% of those seeking abortions in Texas in 2018 were more than six weeks pregnant when they first called a clinic for care.

Due to the restrictions imposed by SB8, many women are expected to seek abortion care outside of the state. States neighboring Texas (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Oklahoma) have less restrictive abortion laws, however, they also have far fewer number of abortion facilities. Texans seeking care at these out-of-state facilities will likely strain capacity and/or face wait times that may push them past the legal timeframe to obtain an abortion.



It is expected that SB8 will likely disproportionately impact Black and Hispanic women in Harris County, who have the lowest average household incomes (\$62,255 and \$70,379, respectively) when compared to Native American (\$70,791), White (\$95,493), and Asian (\$101,827) households. Black women were disproportionately represented in the population of those who received an abortion in 2020 (38.4%) when compared to the population of Black individuals in Harris County overall (18.7%).



There are several opportunities for Harris County to mitigate the negative impacts of SB8 and support women seeking abortion, specifically:

Provide financial support to practical support organizations (that provide transportation, lodging, childcare, etc) for women seeking abortion. This could be done using federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Funds counties receive from ARPA, unlike most federal funds, are not subject to the federal Hyde Amendment, which prohibits federal funds to be used for abortion services.

Disseminate Information. Given the increased challenges in accessing abortion care for residents in Texas, and the recent nature of the change, Harris County could appoint a department to disseminate information related to available services, including in-state and out-of-state clinics, financial support to subsidize travel, etc.

Lobby to change or enact state laws and protections. The Commissioners Court could advocate for expanding access to abortion care to the County's legislative agenda.

While AAUW is nonpartisan, one of the core values is "AAUW trusts that everyone can make their own informed choices about their reproductive lives within the dictates of their own moral and religious beliefs."

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/position-repro/>

Amy Rose

Primary Election Coming Soon!

Your opinion counts.



Your next opportunity to vote in person is early voting in the Texas primary elections starting on Valentine's Day, February 14, and ending on February 25, 2022. Regular election day is on March 1, 2022.

A great source of information on elections and candidates is www.vote411.org.

Georgia Kimmel

Legacy Circle

Ever since working on 5 Star Recognition for our branch last year, I have been very curious as to what was involved regarding becoming a Legacy Circle contributor. Legacy Circle has come up again in the next generation of 5 Star. My quest was to find the easiest way to set up a Legacy Circle bequest and then encourage other branch members to look into doing the same thing. Legacy Circle funds promote equity and benefit women and girls in the future.

My first step was to check out AAUW National's website and then contact a representative of Legacy Circle. I did not want to set up a trust, change my will, or affect any other retirement programs I already had in place. I found out all I had to do was set up a savings account at my bank naming AAUW as the Paid-on Death (POD) beneficiary. You don't need to open the account with thousands of dollars, a few hundred will do!

Most banks want a minimum of \$200.00 to open an account. Then, over time, you can add funds as you wish. Even after setting up the account, if you need to withdraw any money in the future, you can do that! Not my intention, but good to know I have that flexibility. Once you have opened the account, you fill out a simple form called Legacy Circle Enrollment Form and forward it to AAUW National. That form can be found on the national website. [AAUW Leave a Legacy](#)



If anyone would like to know more, feel free to contact me. I want to encourage other WHC members to participate in Legacy Circle now and in the years to come.

*Sincerely,
Rose Ennis
President, WHC*

West Harris County Finishes 2021 Strong



\$5,000
National
Goal

84% on
Dec. 31

Time to celebrate! Your December donations to National helped us finish the calendar year strong, putting West Harris County Branch within \$1,000 of our June 30 goal of \$5,000.

As yet another victory, most of you who donated in December (at a ratio of 8 to 1) went directly to aauw.org and used your AAUW member number (available from Debbie Campbell or Roslyn Metchis).

Put your hands up, bend your elbows, and pat yourselves on the back!

Debbie Campbell

February 2022 ACTIVITIES & INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Sharon Jorgeson, Activities Coordinator

Book Groups

Afternoon Contemporary Literature

Wednesday, February 2, 1:30 p.m. via Zoom
City of Thieves by David Benioff
Coordinator, Cheryl Smith, 402-651-2445
ccherylsmile@gmail.com, Co-Coordinator,
Linda Morgan, 281-989-6499,
amorgan352@sbcglobal.net

Contemporary Readers

Wednesday, February 2, 1:00 p.m. via Zoom
The Girl From the Channel Islands by Jenny Lecoat.
For more information, contact Coordinator, Sharon Pope (713-376-0940, spope576@gmail.com) or Co-Coordinator, Cathy Urquhart (713-939-0523, catherineurquhart@sbcglobal.net).

Enjoying History Book Club

Monday, February 14, 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.
Never Lost Again by Bill Kilday. Any questions?
Please email Nancy Guilloud nanguilloud@aol.com
or Nancy Gusler, ntgusler@gmail.com to be put on
the contact list.

Evening Contemporary Literature

Monday, February 7, 5:00 p.m.
The Vanishing Half by Brit Bennett
The scheduled meeting place is Los Tios Mexican
Restaurant, on Memorial and Kirkwood
Coordinator, Jo Glidewell, 936-327-2085,
WCGLIDE@gmail.com.

To friends, I joked that I was in
the middle of fifty books. To
myself, I pretended that I'd
decided to read them all as one
big book. --Antoine Wilson

Mystery Book Club

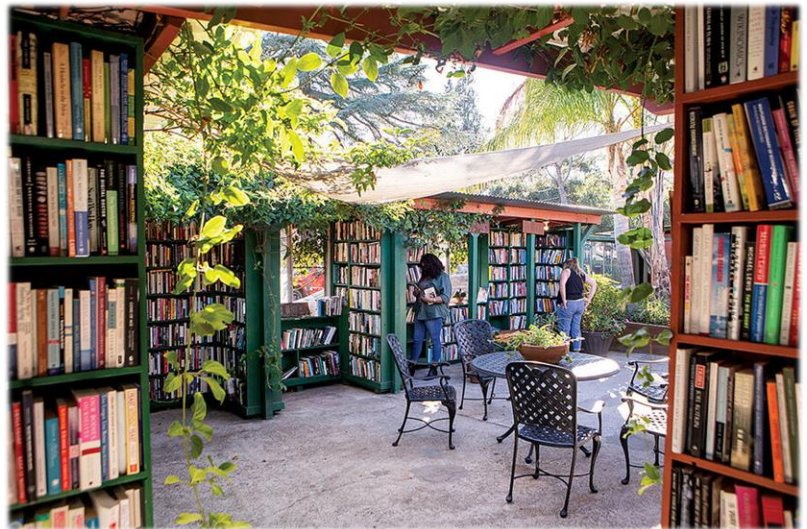
Tuesday, February 15, 1:30 p.m. via Zoom
The Wife Between Us by Greer Hendricks
and Sarah Pekkanen
Coordinator, Melba Armstrong, 281-392-3190,
armstrong.melba@comcast.net. Co-Coordinator, Pat
Pease, 713-824-1681, popease@aol.com.

Outstanding Literature

Tuesday, February 8, 9:30 a.m. Selected Poems by
Robert Browning. The group will meet at La
Madeleine, 10001 Westheimer. Please contact
coordinator, Leigh Rappole, 281-596-0161,
leighrap@aol.com.

Zoom Eclectic Book Group

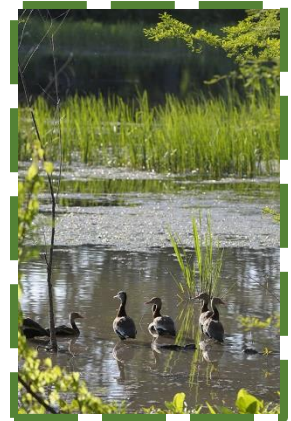
Thursday, February 24, 2:30 p.m.
The Personal Librarian by Marie Benedict and
Victoria Christopher Murray
Discussion Leader: Nancy Bowden
Email Carolyn Morris at morriscs@aol.com for the
Zoom invitation.



Byway Birders

Brazos Bend

On **February 5th** Byway Birders will visit Brazos Bend State Park located at about 21901 FM 762 Rd., Needville, TX 77461. Diane Statham is the contact person for this trip and can be reached at DiStatham@msn.com or [281-497-6259](tel:281-497-6259) Plan to meet at the 40 Acre Lake parking lot at **9:00 a.m.** This parking lot is the first left turn after you leave the entry gate area. We will first check out the lake from the viewing platform behind the restrooms. Late arrivals should look for us there. Plan on picnicking in the park for lunch.



Please work out your own travel arrangements. Note that Texas State Parks have an entry fee of \$7 per person. It is free to a holder of a \$70 annual park pass and their guests. A Texas Parklands Passport is available to Texas residents over 65 and provides a 50% discount off the entry fee. As the parks may be crowded on the weekend, please reserve a day pass.

Information from the Texas Parks and Wildlife regarding park entry:

To guarantee entrance, reserve passes online ([Texas State Park Passes](#)), or call the customer service center before you visit (512-389-8900).

Vicarious Voyagers: An interest group for travelers

Thursday, February 24, 10:00 a.m.

Portugal: Lisbon and the Heartland



Let's stroll Lisbon's back lanes and hear some soulful fado music. At nearby Sintra we'll marvel at fanciful castles and ramparts with grand views. We'll dance on the beach at Nazare, explore Batalha's abbey, revel with students in Coimbra, savor port wine, and explore the city of Porto. **Bring something to share for a potluck brunch. All those who are vaccinated are always welcome.**

Coordinator: Diana Guarniere, guarniered@gmail.com

Co-Coordinator: Carolyn Morris, morriscs@aol.com

Please **RSVP** your attendance to our hostess for this month:

Diana Guarniere

13814 Kimberley Lane, Houston 77079

guarniered@gmail.com

281-493-2997

Culture Group Headed to Huntsville to Visit Sam Houston

You are invited to join us on **Wednesday, February 16 at 8:00 a.m.** to learn more about Sam Houston and the town of Huntsville he called home. We will start at the Sam Houston Visitor Center, located next to the tallest statue dedicated to an American hero, erected in 1994, sculpted by David Adickes. From there, we will pick up our tour guide who will point out other notable Huntsville sights. Lunch will be at Sam's Table restaurant in the Downtown area. We will visit the Sam Houston Memorial Museum before heading back to Houston.



Cost for the trip is **\$8.00** which includes the guided tour, the museum entrance fee, and \$1 for the driver's lunch. Call Marie Helmy at 281 787 6396 or email her at Oolit3@aol.com to reserve your spot. It would be appreciated if you could send your check for \$8.00 to Marie Helmy because a deposit had to be paid to secure the tour. Her address is:

Marie Helmy
15522 Laurel Heights Drive
Houston, Tx 77084 3615
You will be on your own for lunch.

Plan to meet at the Memorial City Mall Parking Lot where our Precinct Bus will be waiting on the south side of Barryknoll between Gessner and Memorial City Way directly across from the Cinemark Theaters.

The bus will leave promptly at **8:00 am.** Expected Return is 4:45pm.

Save the Date for Women of Glenwood Tour March 8th



To celebrate Women's Month, we will be touring the beautifully treed and historic Glenwood Cemetery on the banks of Buffalo Bayou. The acclaimed Preservation Houston guide, Jim Parsons, will share stories of Famous and Infamous Houston Ladies who now call Glenwood home and even some that have just reserved their plot! Register with Sue Phipps, 713-204-3982 or at sbphipps@comcast.net.

WISE: Women Interested in STEM Education

Finding Your Roots: The Seedlings

Thursday, February 10, 2022 – 3:00 p.m.

Hostesses: Diana Guarniere and Rose Ennis

13814 Kimberley Lane, Houston 77079

guarniered@gmail.com 281-493-2997



Via the magic of technology and the comfort of a living room, we will view a condensed version of a science camp for students that uses science and research skills to explore the question, *Who Am I?* [Finding Your Roots](#)

The project is led by Henry Louis Gates Jr, host of the popular PBS series and Penn State University anthropology professor Nina Jablonski. This is a program that will give you JOY!

Please RSVP our hostess your attendance. Bring a snack to share. All vaccinated members and guests are welcome!

Bridge Groups

Please contact the coordinators of these bridge groups if you are interested in joining their group as a regular or substitute.

First Thursday (7:00 p.m.) Jane Judson 713-528-6105

Third Thursday (10:30 a.m.) Peg McNealy 281-679-7299

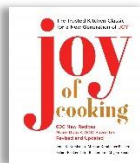


Third Monday AAUW Bridge

The AAUW 3rd Monday Bridge Group will disassociate with AAUW beginning in February 2022. We regret this action, but the number of AAUW players has diminished to the extent that we cannot field two tables monthly without inviting several non-members. Of our 18 regular and substitute players, only 8 are AAUW members. I want to thank everyone who has supported the Third Monday group in the past.

Melba Armstrong

Gourmet Groups



The Classic Gourmet group does not meet in February. Please join us **March 12** for our next dinner. The dinner will feature Mediterranean food prepared from the "Joy of Cooking" 2019 edition. For further information, please contact the co-chairs: Barb Cook 713-705-7832 or Kris Bybee-Finley 304-610-8708.

Nouveau Gourmet will not meet until **March 5** at the home of Laura Cahill. Please contact Diane Statham at (281)497-6259 or distatham@msn.com for more information.

Hiking Honeys



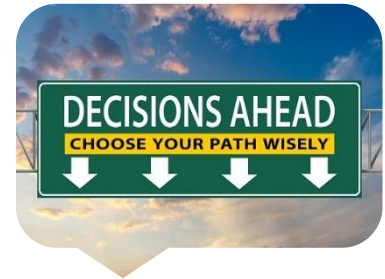
Memorial Park is the largest urban park in Texas, nearly double the size of New York's Central Park. It includes several trails that can be combined to create a desired hike length. On **Thursday, February 17**, Karen North and Susan Dunten will lead the Hiking Honeys on a route chosen by them. We will carpool from the parking lot on Barryknoll, across from Memorial City, leaving at **9:00 a.m.**

You may choose to meet us at the park instead of carpooling. More information regarding lunch arrangements and the park meeting place will follow via email closer to the hike date.

If you are interested in joining us on this hike, please contact Melba Armstrong at armstrong.melba@comcast.net or Susan Dunten at sdunten@aol.com and specify where you plan on meeting the group.

Great Decisions

The three Great Decision Groups will begin meetings in February 2002 and continue twice each month until the end of May. The first two topics of discussion will be "Changing Demographics" and "Outer Space". All three groups will meet on ZOOM.



The First and Third Thursday Afternoon Group will meet from **2:00 to 4:00 p.m. February 3**, to discuss "Changing Demographics and Outer Space," and on **February 17**, to discuss "Climate Change." Please contact Coordinator Martha Ewell, Tel: 713-782-2084 or marthaewell@att.net for more information.

The Second and Fourth Wednesday Evening Group meets from **7:00 - 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday evenings. The first meeting will be February 9th.** Please contact Coordinator Willette Norman at 281-497-3626 or willetten@gmail.com.

Great Decisions 2022 Inside the Loop on Zoom. We meet every other **Tuesday from 3:00-5:00 p.m.** Please order your Briefing book online, or ask Brazos bookstore, 2421 Bissonnet Street, phone 713 523 0701. Or contact national sales at 1 (800) 477-5836 or sales@fpa.org.

February meetings are on **Tuesday, February 8 and 22.**

The topics are February 8, "Changing Demographics" and February 22, "Outer Space".

If you have any questions, please contact Pat Thomsen, 713 302 8899, patthom75@att.net or Linda Marlin, Marlinl@comcast.net

Garden Divas

The Garden Divas will visit [Blackwood Education Land Institute](#) in Hempstead on **Tuesday, February 1**. We will carpool from the Memorial City Parking lot at **9:30 a.m.** and plan to arrive at the Institute at 10:30 a.m. Please note that there is a \$20 fee to this non-profit for the tour. We must have 10 people in order for them to arrange the tour. Afterwards we will lunch at [Waller County Line BBQ](#) on 290. Another dining option may be available; we will keep you advised.



We will stroll through the gardens, woods, and prairies with one of Blackwood's staff members and learn about their seasonal highlights. The guide will share their favorite spots, visit the farm animals, and discuss how Blackwood is working toward modeling a closed loop food system.

In 2000, Cath Conlon established Blackwood Educational Land Institute as a nonprofit organization to remind students of humanity's intrinsic bond with the land, to teach the interconnectivity of all living things, and to suggest that great things can happen only if we realize that this interdependence extends to our families and our communities as well.

In the beginning, school groups lived on the land, working to improve the soil and build a sustainable habitat, all while studying their traditional classroom lessons. In 2008, Blackwood Nature Camp was launched. This summer experience was created to give campers the opportunity to explore and adventure through the outdoors and be free to discover or renew a relationship with the natural world. In 2012, the Hopscotch Garden was built to expand Blackwood's growing capacity. Two high tunnels were added to create 11,000 square feet of climate-regulated growing space. In addition to this, two cabins were built to provide space for educators to plan their lessons. These cabins are now rented to the general public as well as to visiting groups.

For nearly two decades, adults have savored Blackwood as well, participating in Mornings in the Country, private retreats, Farm to Table Experiences, and group workshops.

In 2014, Blackwood evolved and changed its focus from nature education to resilient agriculture. The gardens were always there, and it was time to connect people to their food and model a closed loop food system.

Please contact Susan Boone, smboone@gmail.com if you are interested in learning more about Blackwood.

Susan Boone
smboone@gmail.com

February 2022



Sara Dalton	Feb 2
Diane Clarke	Feb 5
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
Elaine White	Feb 21
Judith Peterson	Feb 22
Elisha Buckner	Feb 25

MEMBER INFORMATION CHANGES

New Members:

Ginger Richard
1317 Reddleshire Lane
Houston TX 77043
C: 346-317-1490
Email: gingerlynr@gmail.com

Diane Clarke
203 Austin Square, Apt. 417
Houston, TX 77077
C: 256-412-4526
Dclarke99@aol.com



Returning Member:

Edie O'Brien
1310 Mission Chase
Houston TX 77077
C: 281-467-9047
Email: edie.obrien@yahoo.com

New Address:

Susan Dunten
13710 Park Row Drive Apt. 9307
Houston TX 77084

Note Email Address Corrections:

Rose Ennis
roseleeennis@gmail.com

Sharon Rodgers
Srodgers1018@me.com