



West Harris County Branch

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Volume XXXXVII

February 2023 Newsletter

Issue 6

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March, 2023 Deadline:

February 15, 2022

Stay informed

Branch website: aauw-whc.org

National website: aauw.org

AAUW WEST HARRIS COUNTY BRANCH

Saturday, February 18, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive and Zoom

Please note there is a slight change in our schedule for the February meeting. Our speaker will arrive at 11:00 a.m. to give her presentation. The branch will meet from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. to conduct branch business and enjoy social time.

Dr. Irene Guenther

Honors College Faculty, University of Houston



As February 2023 marks the one-year anniversary of the war in Ukraine, we have invited Dr. Irene Guenther to come and give background into the history of Ukraine and the events that led up to the war that continues to this day.

Dr. Guenther specializes in 20th century American and European history. She received her doctorate from The University of Texas in 2001. Her teaching interests include genocide and human rights, the construction of "race" and the consequences of systemic racism in the United States, Nazi cultural policies, and comparative Second World War home fronts. Dr. Guenther has published on the Nazi takeover of the German-Jewish fashion industry; the contested politics of women's clothing in the four occupied zones of Germany after World War II; magical realism from 1920s Germany to 1940s Latin America; and the anti-war artists of the First World War. Her first book, "Nazi 'Chic'? Fashioning Women in the Third Reich," won the Costume Society of America's Millia Davenport Publication Award for best fashion history book of the year and the Sierra Prize, given by the Western Association of Women Historians. Her second book, "Postcards from the Trenches: A German Soldier's Testimony of the Great War," was published in late 2018 and was accompanied by a centennial exhibition of WWI soldiers' art.

*Lillian Care
Program Director*



Dear West Harris County Members,

2023 is off to a wonderful start for AAUW-WHC! We have some fascinating speakers lined up for our branch meetings at the Tracy Gee Center, plans are well underway for the Spring Fashion Show, and the Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship committee is preparing to start receiving applications soon. Along with some excellent cultural events being offered and our usual assortment of fun interest groups, this spring is shaping up nicely!



As promised in my last President's Message, I've been thinking about potential all-branch activities to fill the void left by the departure of EYH. Let me know if you'd like to be part of this initial brainstorming effort – I welcome your ideas and suggestions. Email me at Amador.aauw@earthlink.net

See you at our next branch meeting!

Anne Amador, President

Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship

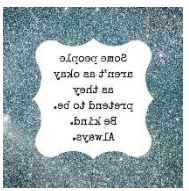
Celebration Time! AAUW Funds and Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund are celebrating a successful year of fund raising for AAUW and AAUW-WHC. The celebration will be from **12 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. on February 24, 2023**, at SBISD's Alharetta Yeargin Art Museum. There will be a brief program by the curator followed by a light lunch. After lunch, you may take a self-guided tour of the museum. Be sure to look at the fiber art done by our own Cindy Hickok. Cindy's work is also exhibited in art museums in Paris.



At the celebration, we will honor Marietta Hostak, Mary Dodson, Dana Cutts, Diana Guarniere, Patricia Dach, and Gwen Robberson (deceased). In 2005, these women were instrumental in setting up the Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund as a non-profit 501(c)(3). We will also honor Arlene Baker, and Carol Telfer (deceased) founders of the fund and Pat and Leon Thomsen. At the April, 2022, WHC Board meeting, the scholarship was renamed the Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund to honor member Pat Thomsen and her husband Leon for their generous donation. This celebration is totally underwritten by: Friends of AAUW Funds and Friends of Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund. It is open to all members of AAUW-WHC. Please RSVP to Carolyn Morris at morriscarolyn16@gmail.com. She will send you museum directions and parking instructions.

The Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Board

Membership



Happy Valentine's Day to everyone. February is identified as the month of love and hearts. Based on the time of year and health concerns of the last two years, this would be a good time to show some love and kindness. Please check in on members that you know don't get out much or that have been going through some health issues. Please pass their names along to me. We want to give support to members that may need some help.

We have another new member to welcome to West Harris County Branch.

Please note: **Karen McKibben Morris**
Eagles Trace
Austin Square, #414
Houston, Texas 77077
Karen.mckibben@gmail.com 713-392-4150

Thank You, Carolyn Stoffel, Membership, Vice President

Public Policy

The 88th Texas Legislative Session – 140 days to act

Lawmakers were sworn in on January 10 and will soon begin preparing a two-year budget and passing legislation. According to Maria Mendez's article in the Texas Tribune:

***How often does the Legislature meet?** The Texas Legislature is comprised of the 150-member Texas House of Representatives, known as the lower chamber, and the 31-member Texas Senate, known as the upper chamber. Lawmakers meet every odd-numbered year, to pass the state's two-year budget and other laws from January to May. This is known as the regular session. The governor can call a special session outside of this timeframe, in which lawmakers convene for up to 30 days to pass laws only on issues outlined by the governor.*

***How does a bill become a law?** Only around 1,000 bills will pass during a session. (In the two most recent sessions, more than 7,000 bills were filed.) First, a bill must be referred to a committee in the chamber in which it originates. Then a committee chair decides which legislation will be considered when the committee meets. If a committee takes up a bill, a public hearing is held and a committee can then choose to report, or advance, a bill to the rest of the chamber or to not take action on the legislation. Once a bill is out of a committee, it must be scheduled for a debate on the floor of the chamber. After debate on a bill, the majority of lawmakers in a chamber has to approve the bill twice in order for it to pass. After a bill is passed in the chamber in which it originated, it is referred to the other chamber, where it goes through the same process.*

***What is the pace of the Legislature?** The first few months of the session are usually slow. By late January, chamber leaders will name lawmakers to committees, which will begin holding hearings for bills. In February, the governor usually outlines his emergency items during his State of the State speech. In April and May, the pace quickens to meet key deadlines. May 29 is the last day of the legislative session.*

Texas Legislature 2023: Understanding how bills become law and more | The Texas Tribune BY MARÍA MÉNDEZ - JANUARY. 10, 2023

How is Texas AAUW advocating for legislation? The Texas AAUW Public Policy Advisory group meets with our lobbyist Kate Kuhlman of Hillco Partners. She provides a weekly list tracking bills for those topics that Texas AAUW has prioritized. Those bills will be followed especially as they are discussed in committees, scheduled to go to the house or Senate where amendments are introduced, and finally scheduled for a vote.



Texas AAUW will follow and support or oppose proposed bills on these priority topics:

- Women's Health: Medicaid 12-month expansion for post-partum women; easing abortion restrictions in select situations such as rape, incest, and when a pregnant patient's life is at risk.
- Voting – open elections.
- Gun Violence Reduction.
- Education: School vouchers, censorship, Teacher Retirement COLA, STARR testing, curriculum changes: history, science, and sex education.
- Pay equity: While this issue is addressed mainly in Federal legislation, there may be some Texas House or Senate bills that take up this issue.

The Texas AAUW Public Policy Public advisory group will also be collaborating with other organizations, such as the League of Women Voters and the Texas Retired Teachers, to have more impact when supporting or opposing specific legislation.

How can I follow bills and legislative meetings? Our lobbyist reviewed and highly recommended using the [Texas Legislature Online](#) website as a tool to learn who your representatives are and to follow legislation, committee activities, and actual legislative events. The [Legislature's website](#) is an excellent resource. You can find all of the bills that have been filed and follow their progress. A tab for "My TLO" allows you to follow specific bills and receive notifications as those bills work through the process including committee hearings. You can even watch broadcasts of committee meetings or activities in the House or Senate chambers.

The Houston Chronicle has a [2023 Texas Bill Tracker](#).

Another great source of information where you can also keep up with critical news of the Legislature is [The Texas Tribune](#). This nonprofit, nonpartisan public media organization publishes email newsletters that cover news of the Legislature from several news outlets. They also hold meetings with representatives via Zoom and available on YouTube. Their aim is to promote civic engagement and discourse on public policy.

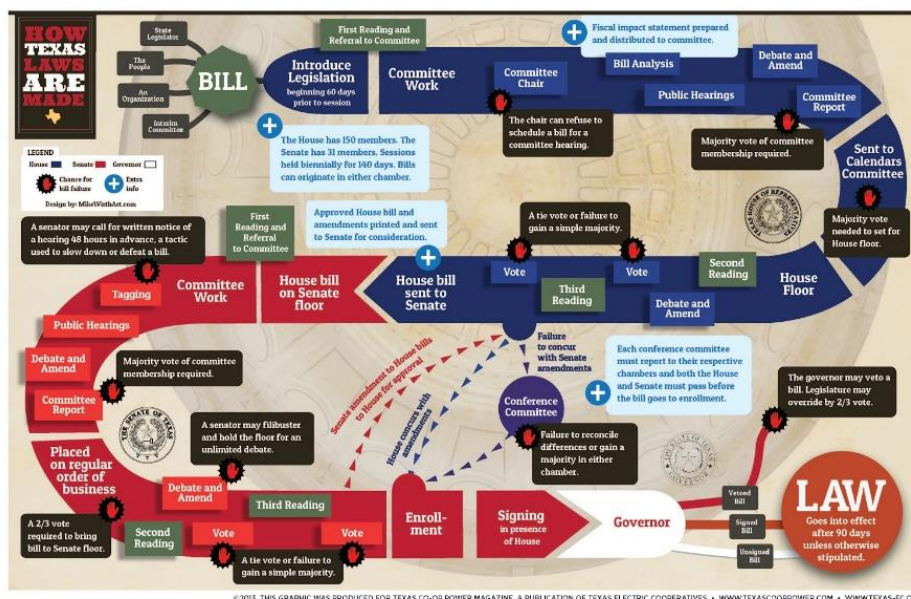
So how can I participate in the Legislature? Ideally you can build a relationship with the legislator and staff as soon as possible. Call or meet with your legislators. They represent you. Most of the time you will talk with or meet with their staff members. Staff members are important since they make recommendations to the legislators regarding bills and log your views. You can advocate for or voice your opposition to legislation. Be prepared to support your position. You are not expected to be an expert but your experiences and viewpoint can sway the legislator's opinion. Be sure you do your homework and understand the issue or bill and where it is in the legislative process. Your communication needs to be timely and not after a bill has been voted on.

If you can't call or personally meet with your legislator email works too. Typically select staff members read the email, logging your support or opposition and will send you a response. Advocates indicate that having many people voice their opinions on an issue impacts a legislator's vote.

Additional ways to impact the vote is to write a letter to the editor of your newspaper; participating at a lobby day at the capitol with a group, such as, the League of Women Voters or the Texas Retired Teachers; or to testify at a public hearing.

To keep Texas great each one of us needs to stay informed and advocate on issues important to women.

Georgia Kimmel
WHCB Public Policy Chair



Funds

Several Ways to Support National Efforts That Align with Your Values

This month, West Harris County Branch marches toward spring with our continued, strong support of women and girls around the nation!



Need a birthday gift for the person who has everything? The national website, aauw.org, allows you to earmark a gift for a specific "fund" when you make your donation via credit card (preferred). Optionally you can choose "in honor of" or "in memory of" someone. (Unfortunately National does not offer these options when you donate via check locally.)

As AAUW National has requested, most of us in WHC direct our donations to the **Greatest Needs Fund**. This fund provides *unrestricted* support, allowing national leadership to respond rapidly to critical issues as they emerge.

However, there are other national funds that some of us support in addition to ~ or even instead of ~ Greatest Needs. In no particular order, these include

- "**NickWhistle**" - our catchy nickname for the **National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL)**. By choosing NCCWSL, you fund conference scholarships for a broader and more diverse group of college women, giving them the leadership training, inspiration, and networking opportunities presented during this annual event.

This year's NCCWSL will be *in person* May 31 - June 3 at the University of Maryland College Park. Scholarships are available! Be sure to share this link with your favorite college students: www.aauw.org/resources/programs/nccwsl/attend/

- How does your retirement nest egg compare to a man's? **Through the Economic Security Fund**, your donation helps improve women's livelihoods through advocacy for fair-pay, legislation, researching the pay gap, training women to negotiate for the salaries they deserve, and advising employers on fostering fair cultures.
- **When you choose the Education & Training Fund**, you fight the barriers that prevent women from thriving in school and pursuing the careers of their dreams. That means championing equal access to education and ensuring women can learn in environments free from harassment and discrimination.

Which of these funds best aligns with your philanthropic values? While support for the Greatest Needs Fund remains our primary goal, the national website gives you several worthwhile options to choose from!

*Debbie Campbell and Diane Statham
AAUW Funds Vice Presidents*

FEBRUARY 2023 ACTIVITIES & INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Sharon Jorgeson, Activities Coordinator

Hiking Honeys



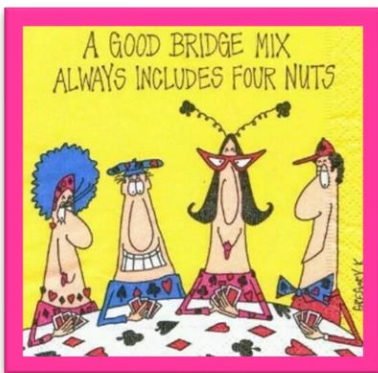
The Hiking Honeys will visit Lake Houston Wilderness for our hike on **Thursday, Feb 16**. Lake Houston Wilderness Park is a beautiful, lushly forested expanse of nearly 5,000 acres, located three miles east of New Caney (approximately 30 miles north of Houston) off Hwy-59. Most of the park is heavily forested with over 20 miles of trails which provide a quiet escape from the bustling city. The park offers a variety of outdoor experiences for people of all ages including camping, hiking, trail running, mountain biking, canoeing, kayaking, birding, fishing and horseback riding trails.

Park entry is \$3 for anyone younger than 65. We will carpool from the Barryknoll Street lot across from Memorial City Mall leaving at **9 AM**. For those wishing to drive directly to the park, the address is 25840 FM 1485, New Caney, TX 77347 (832-395-7690). Plan to arrive there at 9:45 AM. Inside-the-loopers who wish to carpool may contact Millie Hast at 713-663-7003 or milliehast@gmail.com to arrange time and place to meet. More details regarding where in the park to meet and lunch arrangements will follow later by email.

Mary Ann McMordie will be our hike leader. Please contact her at 713-806-0106 or mamcmordie@gmail.com if you plan to attend. Let her know which location you will meet us.

Gourmet Groups – Classic and Nouveau Combined

The Gourmet group does not meet in February. Please join us in March for our next dinner. For further information, please contact the coordinators: Barbara Cook 713-705- 7832 or Kris Bybee-Finley 304-610-8708.



Bridge

We currently have one bridge group. The group meets on **Third Thursday at 10:30 am**. Contact Coordinator Peg McNealy at 281-679-7299 or peg525@gmail.com to join the group as a substitute.

If you are interested in forming a new group and playing bridge on a regular basis, contact Sharon Jorgeson, 281-703-5939 or sjorgeson@gmail.com. Days and time to be determined later by those joining the group.

Book Groups

(After reading the synopses of all these books, I declare this a spectacular month. KBF)

Afternoon Contemporary Literature

Wednesday, February 1, 1:00 p.m. A Constellation of Vital Phenomena by Anthony Mara at La Madeleine (back room) 1001 Westheimer Road. Coordinator, Cheryl Smith, 402-651-2445 ccherylsmile@gmail.com, Co-Coordinator, Linda Morgan, 281-989-6499, amorgan352@sbcglobal.net.

Contemporary Readers

Wednesday, February 1, 1:00 p.m. Damnation Spring by Ash Davidson. The group will meet at MDUMC West Campus, 13186 Memorial Drive, Room 462. For more information, contact Coordinator, Sharon Pope (713-376-0940), or Co-Coordinator, Cathy Urquhart (832-454-5017).

Enjoying History Book Club

Monday, February 13 at 1:30 p.m. We will discuss The Premonition: A Pandemic Story by Michael Lewis. Leader and Hostess: Kris Bybee-Finley at 15914 Fleetwood Oaks Drive. 304-610-8708
RSVP Kris to let her know you will be attending. Please email me with any questions. Nancy Guilloud, nanguilloud@aol.com.

Evening Contemporary Literature

Monday, February 6, 5:00 p.m. at Los Tios Restaurant. The Woman in the Moonlight by Patricia Morrisroe. Coordinator, Jo Glidewell, 936-327-2085, WCGLIDE@gmail.com.

Mystery Book Club

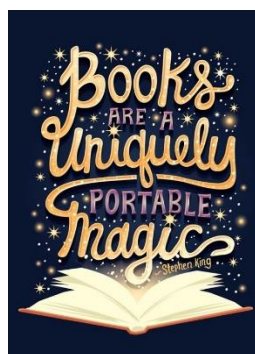
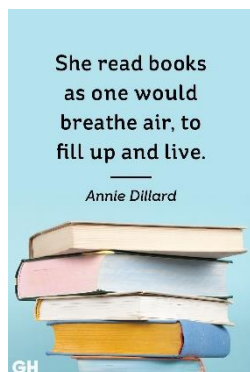
Tuesday, February 21, 1:30 p.m.
Eight Perfect Murders by Peter Swanson
Leader and Hostess: Kris Bybee-Finley
15914 Fleetwood Oaks Drive
Houston, TX 77079, 304-610-8708
Please text an RSVP to Kris
Contacts: Melba Armstrong, 281-392-3190, armstrong.melba@comcast.net and Pat Pease popeace@aol.com.

Outstanding Literature

The group will meet on **Tuesday, February 14, at 9:30 a.m.** We will have an excellent breakfast and a discussion of Beloved by Toni Morrison. Our meetings happen at La Madeleine, Carillon, The Wine Cave, 10001 Westheimer Road. Welcome to all new members and previous members! You know our motto, "We love our books and we love our laughs!" Coordinator Leigh Rappole, lseighrap@aol.com, 281-596-0161.

Zoom Eclectic Book Group

Thursday, February 23 at 2:30 p.m.
Circus of Wonders by Elizabeth MacNeal
Discussion Leader - Willette Norman
The Zoom Eclectic Book Group meets by Zoom. We welcome all members and guests. You may come for just one book or the entire year. Please email Carolyn Morris at morriscarolyn16@gmail.com for the Zoom invitation. Join us for the lively conversation and friendly faces.



Culture Group

Lunch at Culinary Institute Lenôtre



AAUW is going back to Culinary Institute Lenôtre on **February 9, 2023**, for a tour and luncheon. Our visit will include a demonstration by the students before we are seated for a three-course meal and loads of fun! There is a choice of beef chicken or fish for the main course. Culinary Institute Lenôtre is Houston's opportunity to enjoy French food as one hopes to find when visiting Paris! Third generation Lenôtres, of the well-known Lenôtre chefs on Rue St. Antoine in Paris, developed this phenomenal culinary school upon their arrival in Houston. Described as a "hidden diamond for French cuisine" by a client who reviewed the dining experience for the school's website, the school trains chefs in food preparation and presentation.

To reserve a seat at the table (and on the bus), send a check for \$42 payable to Mary Peterson at 1277 Country Place Dr. Houston, TX 77079. Space will fill up quickly. Don't forget to include your selection of an entrée (fish, beef, chicken). Note any food allergies with your payment. The bus will leave from Memorial City Mall at the Barryknoll Parking lot at **10:30 a. m.** with an expected return at 2:30pm. Bon Appetit!

If you have any questions contact Mary Peterson, mpetersonread@gmail.com or 713-530-9614.

Save the Date – More Culture is Coming Your Way

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR **WEDNESDAY MARCH 15**
RICE ARCHITECTURAL TOUR!

Led by one of AAUW-WHC's favorite tour presenters, Jim Parsons with The Houston Preservation Society, this Cultural Activities event is sure to be popular so sign up soon.

We all know Houston's Rice University is beautiful, but to experience seeing it with an expert guide is a wonderful opportunity. A brief description from Preservation Houston states: "The Rice University campus is one of the most beautiful places in Houston thanks to the Mediterranean-influenced designs of Boston architects Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson, who were responsible for the university's earliest buildings.

This walking tour circles the campus, exploring the history of the University itself, the story and murder of its founder and the development of Rice's signature architectural style. Highlights of the tour include Lovett Hall, the centerpiece of Cram & Ferguson's original plan; modern additions such as the Brochstein Pavilion, which has helped bring new life to a formerly neglected part of campus; and fascinating structures like John Outram's Duncan Hall, a Postmodern building whose walls have stories to tell." After the walking tour, lasting approximately 90 mins to 2 hours, we will eat lunch together at a nearby location.



Cost of the tour is \$15.00. Checks to reserve your spot should be mailed to Kathryn Motard at 4035 Grennoch Ln. Houston, TX 77025. Our Precinct 3 bus will leave from the usual spot promptly at **9:30 a.m.** Those wishing to meet the group at Rice can notify Kathryn at kdmotard@sbcglobal.net and instructions will be shared. (Rice University parking costs \$12.00 for those who plan to meet the group there). Look for additional details in the March newsletter.

WISE - Women Interested in STEM Education

The WISE Group is fortunate to have Dr. Samuel Brody, a preeminent authority on the Ike Dike speak to us on **February 13, 2022**. Dr. Brody is a Regents Professor and George P. Mitchell '40 Chair in Sustainable Coasts; Director, Institute for a Disaster Resilient Texas, at Texas A&M University; Adjunct Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Rice University; and Senior Fellow, Water Institute of the Gulf. The WISE Group will gather at **9:30 a.m.** at the home of Carolyn Morris. The talk will begin at **10:00 a.m.** RSVP to Carolyn at morriscarolyn16@gmail.com for a map and gate code. Parking is limited so plan to carpool. Light refreshments will be served. Please respond in a timely matter since seating is limited. Karen North, Carolyn Morris, and Rose Ennis

Also, remember to put this on your calendar: Rose Ennis will be reviewing New York Times best seller The Song of the Cell: An Exploration of Medicine and the New Human by Pulitzer Prize winning author Siddhartha Mukherjee on **April 17th at 10:00 a.m.**

Great Decisions

First and Third Thursday Afternoon Group



The Great Decisions First and Third Thursday afternoon group will meet **February 2, 2023, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.** to discuss "Energy Geopolitics," and on **February 16, 2023**, to discuss "War Crimes." If interested in further



information and details, please contact group coordinator, Martha Ewell, (tel.) 713-782-2084.

Inside the Loop Group

The First Tuesday afternoon group will meet on **February 7 and February 21 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** via ZOOM. For further information please contact Coordinator, Pat Thomsen at 713-302-8899 or patthom2@sbcglobal.net.

The Wednesday Evening Group

This 2nd and 4th Wednesday Evening group will meet on **February 8 and February 21 at 7:00 p.m.** via ZOOM. For more information please contact Willette Norman at 281-497-3626 or willetten@gmail.com.

Byway Birders – Brazos Bend State Park

Byway Birders will visit Brazos Bend State Park on **Saturday, February 4**. Peg McNealy is leading the trip. She wants to meet up at the 40 mile lake at **9:00 a.m.** If the weather is nice bring a picnic lunch. There is a fee to enter the park. If you need a ride please call Peg. 281-679-7299.



Garden Divas



The Garden Divas February visit will be to the Willow Waterhole, 5300 Dryad Drive on **Tuesday, February 7**. Willow Waterhole is a bit of a happy coincidence that emerged from a Harris County Flood Control District project that could have been another ugly concrete jungle. The park has six small bodies of water. Trucks moved around 1.5 million tons of dirt to create 6 to 8-foot-deep lakes, mounding extra dirt into hills for a rolling landscape that feels natural, even if many decades ago the land was used for growing rice.

Seeded with wildflowers, the slopes and open land bloom with shimmering bluebonnets and other petals in an annual spring rite for visitors. The federal government gave Harris County a chunk of money for flood mitigation, and in 1999, Harris County Commissioners earmarked \$75 million of it for what is now Willow Waterhole, a flood control project disguised as a park. As far back as the 1990s, there has been an effort for land planners to connect flood control projects to parks, though such projects have only materialized recently.

After the exploration, we will consider the nearby food trucks for lunch (weather permitting). Those interested in carpooling from the Memorial City Mall should meet at **9:30 a.m.** in the parking lot off Barryknoll. If you live 'inside' the loop, you may want to arrange a carpool from there. Please contact Susan Boone, [smboone@gmail.com](mailto:samboone@gmail.com) to be included with specific details regarding this trip.

Susan Boone
[smboone@gmail.com](mailto:samboone@gmail.com)



Sara Dalton	Feb 2	Judy Dybell	Feb 12
Julia Dombrowski	Feb 4	Sheila Jaynes	Feb 12
Diane Clarke	Feb-5	Karen LaVelle	Feb 16
Marietta Hostak	Feb 10	Janis Groves	Feb 20
Ann Teague	Feb 10	Elaine White	Feb 21
Fatima Abdulla	Feb 12	Judith Peterson	Feb 22

New Member

Karen McKibben Morris
Eagle's Trace
Austin Square #414
Houston, Texas 77077
713-392 -4150
Karen.mckibben@gmail.com